

II.

NOTE OF AN INCISED CROSS STONE NEAR THE BURYING-GROUND.
ISLE MARTIN, ONE OF THE SUMMER ISLES, WEST ROSS-SHIRE.
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Isle Martin is one of the largest of the beautiful group of about twenty small islands lying at the mouth of Loch Broom, West Ross-shire, and known as the Summer Isles.

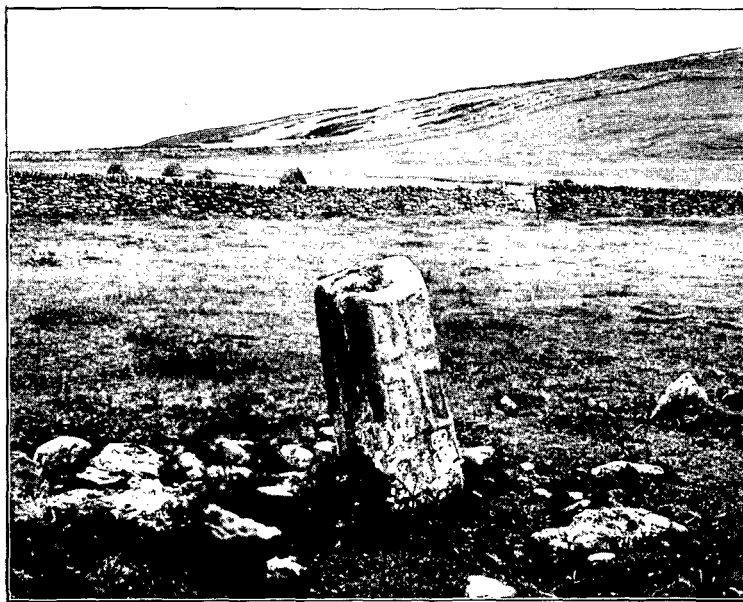


Fig. 1. Stone with incised cross on Isle Martin.

The island was called after a priest of that name, and is about a mile long and a little less in width. It is situated quite near to the mainland in Kannaird Bay, under the shadow of Ben More, or the black rock

of Coigach, which rises at this point almost perpendicularly from the sea to a height of over 2400 feet.

The few houses are all situated on the east side of the island, one of which still retains the fire on the hearth in the centre of the room. The oldest inhabitant is said to be 103 years of age, and she is still able to go out and about her house.

The burying-ground is quite near the shore of a little bay, at the south-east corner of the island. The ancient stone (fig. 1), standing about four feet in height, with the cross carved on it, adjoins the burying-ground.

The local tradition is that the priest lived a part of his life on Isle Martin, and died there, and his grave is marked by the stone in question. Regarding the priest's character, one tradition says he was a particularly good man ; another affirms that the Bishop of the diocese had this priest banished to Priest Isle (the one farthest out towards the Minch) as an incorrigible, and that thence he made his way to Isle Martin.

These traditions are very vague, and it is evidently not known whether he belonged to the old Celtic Church or to the Roman Catholic, though the form of the cross favours the presumption that he was of the former.