

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08013-2 - Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language: Chiefly Collected and Drawn by George Petrie: Volume 1

Edited by Margaret Stokes

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The discovery of material remains from the recent or the ancient past has always been a source of fascination, but the development of archaeology as an academic discipline which interpreted such finds is relatively recent. It was the work of Winckelmann at Pompeii in the 1760s which first revealed the potential of systematic excavation to scholars and the wider public. Pioneering figures of the nineteenth century such as Schliemann, Layard and Petrie transformed archaeology from a search for ancient artifacts, by means as crude as using gunpowder to break into a tomb, to a science which drew from a wide range of disciplines - ancient languages and literature, geology, chemistry, social history - to increase our understanding of human life and society in the remote past.

Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language

George Petrie (1790–1866) grew up in Dublin, where he trained as an artist. He became fascinated by Irish antiquities and travelled around the country studying ancient sites while working for the Ordnance Survey of Ireland and the Royal Irish Academy. He won awards for his publications on art and architecture, including the influential *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, Anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion* (1845), which is also reissued in this series. This collection of Irish-language inscriptions was edited after Petrie's death by Margaret Stokes (1832–1900), the archaeologist daughter of his friend William Stokes, and published in two volumes between 1872 and 1878. Volume 1 is devoted to the important early medieval monastery at Clonmacnoise. It opens with an essay on the historical background, and contains drawings of over 170 inscriptions connected with the monastery. Each is accompanied by notes on its subject, date, script, decoration and linguistic features.

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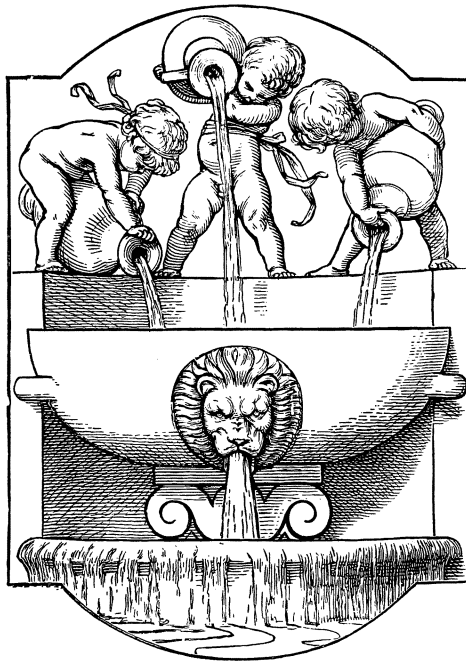
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