

ST ORAN'S ALTAR and RELICS.

- † 1164 - SOMERLED buried on the *Epistle Side* (south)
- † 1207 - REGINALD buried on the *Gospel Side* (north)

“This came to be the standard position for the burial of founding patrons.”

“depositio ad sanctos”

KINGS AND SONS BURIED EACH SIDE OF ALTAR & ITS SAINT'S RELICS

'The solidarity of kindred and tradition.'

*“Torredelbach on the southern side of it,
Ruaidhri on the other lofty side”*

“depositio ad sanctos”

- † **1156** – *Torredelbach Ua Conchobair*, over king of Connaught, *Ard Rí na hÉireann*, was buried *“beside St Ciaran’s altar”* at Clonmacnoise, and
- † **1198** – his son and successor Ruaidhri, was buried on the **north** side of the altar (Annals of Four Masters).

Annals of Connaught, 1224: *“the King who built most monasteries and houses for religious communities”* - ob. Cathal O’Conner (Conchobair).

THE FOUNDER OF IONA ABBEY AND NUNNERY

REGINALD MAC SOMERLED, REX INSULARUM (d. 1207).

GRAVESLAB No. 161 – AUTHOR’S ORIGINAL ATTRIBUTION SUMMARY.

A - THE POSITION IN ST ORAN’S CHAPEL

1. Reginald as the accepted founder:- the standard or popular position for abbey founders was the Gospel side or the north of an altar. The new Abbey church was barely started and St Oran's was preferred in any case – the “*most hallowed spot*”, “*most ancient*”, “*Royal fellowship*”, etc. Also note alter burials of St Bridget and Archbishop Conleod, Kildare;
2. *Solidarity of kindred* customary burial as proved in contemporary Ireland:- buried near his father, Somerled, who had prime position in his chapel, on the other side of the altar (eg, as per Clonmacnoise c.1200 for the O’Connor “royal” dynasty;
3. “*Depositio ad sanctos*”. A **Cult of Saint’s** ritual:- buried near St Oran’s relics/altar;

B - THE GRAVESLAB.

1. Slab has a pilgrim’s staff (‘3’ - RCAHMS) :- Reginald was a known pilgrim to Rome, Jerusalem and the Abbey Founder; “*a (staff) symbol referring to the rank or status of the deceased.*”
2. Slab has an “*aristocrat’s*” sword:- Reginald was “*the greatest warrior*”; King of the Western Isles – *nobilis Rex Insularum*;
3. Slab is the right design age, earlier 13th c. :- stands out as pre-Iona School.

