

HISTORIC SCOTLAND : PLEASE EXPLAIN TO CLAN DONALD CHIEFS AND ALL MACSOMERLED CLANSMEN WORLDWIDE, WHAT ARE YOUR REASONS FOR ATTRIBUTING THIS 15th CENTURY "CRUDE", SLATE SLAB No. 191 **TO REGINALD, died, c.1207?**

1. Slab 191 is made of slate. ALL the 8 slate slabs on Iona were made after c.1350 (read the RCAHMS analysis of nos. 135, 145,159, 170, 181, 191, 197, 198 - all of them post 14th - 15th century). THE FOUNDER REGINALD MAC SOMERLED, died c. 1207. Most are in fact "late medieval" and most are from the Nunnery. Slate was not used in the Early Christian carved stones. It was not used anywhere in the whole abbey complex at all, until the 15th century re-build and only then in roof tiles on the choir and transepts (slate from Easdale - Vol 4, p.57). Slate was not used for late medieval monuments until the late medieval Loch Awe school, because, it had the local "Slate Islands" deposits nearby of Easdale, Seil, etc.
2. Slab 191 is currently regarded as "*of no recognised school*" : "*does not bear the characteristics of any particular school*" (RCAHMS). I think it is Loch Awe though. As are probably all the slabs from no 184 to 198 (no recognised school). And once again, NONE of them are 13th century, let alone anywhere near 1207 which is close enough to be even classed with late 12th century! They are all 14th - 16th. THE FOUNDER REGINALD MAC SOMERLED, D.1207
3. HES has agreed (with my proposition) that the burial location of the founder of Iona Abby, Reginald, is probably next to the altar in St Oran's Chapel - the Gospel side, "Depositio ad sanctos" (see Official Guide Book - Somerled on the Epistle side). BUT, slab 191 was "formerly in" the Reilig Odhrain! It was never in the chapel, so how could it be the founder's slab? Cannot have it both ways.
4. Sword quillons are far too long for 13th century when they were *VERY* short. The casket designs are obviously 15th to 16th century! The very similar Eglinton Casket is c.1500 and the Fife Casket is "late 15th or early 16th" – "*caskets that once may have been common in the West Highlands*" - Caldwell D.; 1982. Their museum dating corroborates that no. 191 is NOT c.1207.
5. Why is anyone taking seriously the 19th c. musings of Dr J Cameron Lees who was an 'amateur antiquarian'? He was a full time churchman (scholarly maybe, but no subject expert, with no corpus of prior research). He was not an archaeologist, or an epigrapher, or a historian. Then Trenholme (another churchman) 1909, Graham and others, including D. Caldwell (2012), simply copy him – *but*, with a "?" mark! They are *guessing* that the (15th to 16th century!) "*casket*" is "*understood*" to "*possibly*" symbolize "*the founder*" or "*builder*" or "*donor*" of "*some church*". And these ideas have already been discredited as "*unlikely*" by RCAHMS. Is this sound evidence now by HES? Is this professional, modern research? **Are we to rely on the casual, uninformed guess of an 'amateur antiquarian' in 1878 which is then repeatedly plagiarised?**

Is slab no.191 Reginald's?

Iona, St Oran's Chapel & graveyard – by period, material, type, style, technique....

Re-foundation "early character" period

"West Highland" 'Iona School' starts in 14th.

+ other, later schools period...

1200 - Reginald died c.1207.
Buried CHAPEL.

1400

1500

1300

style.....

MATERIALS

ALL SANDSTONE 13th c.

? **CHROLITE - SCHIST** *predominately*

SANDSTONE *infrequent*

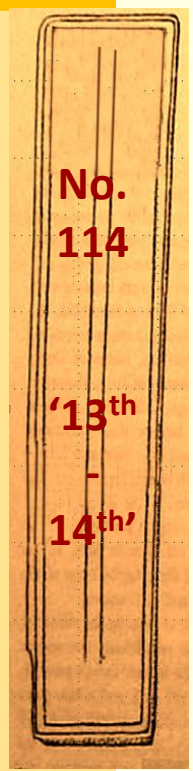
SLATE *infrequent*

ONLY COPED SLABS
C. 1200



No. 110

SANDSTONE,
INCISED
OR "FALSE RELIEF"
CARVING
ONLY



No. 114

'13th
-
14th'

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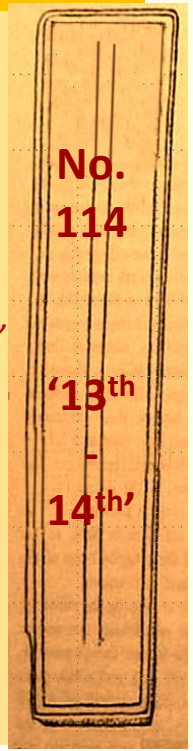
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"Late medieval monumental sculpture in the West Highlands", p.13

The advent of the two religious orders is represented architecturally at Iona by the nunnery, and by some remains of Romanesque work in the abbey, but no sepulchral monuments attributable to the late 12th or 13th century can now be seen on the island, except possibly for the emaciated figure of a mitred abbot in the abbey museum (Pl. 9A), and a few plain copped stones.² In several of the pre-Reformation churchyards on the mainland of Argyll

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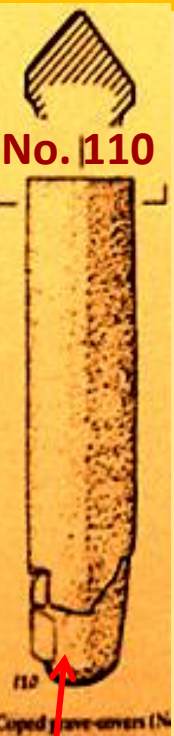
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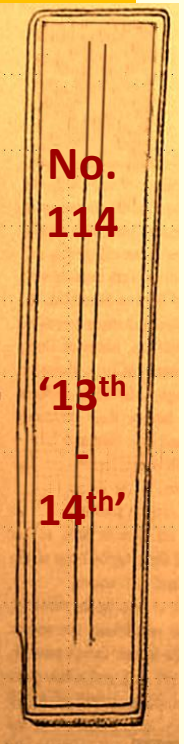
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IAN MACDONNELL, 2018



Kilbrandon
No. 4

SLATE

CRUDE

"c.1500"

"Loch Awe"

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No.4, Slab from Kilbrandon, Isles of Seil, made from **SLATE**, from Seil, "Loch Awe School, c. 1500" ("ARGYLL 1975/02 - 187 (p.140)"); of which the bulk are 15th c. and many slate. And same "casket" design at bottom as no.191. ANOTHER **CRUDE** SLAB! Also see no.191, St Oran's GRAVEYARD, **SLATE**, "Loch Awe School, 14-15th c."

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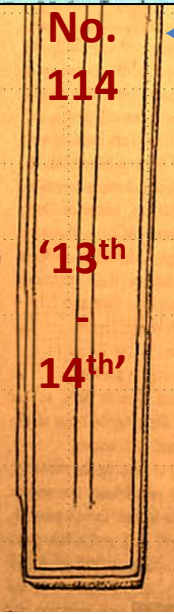
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(114) Nunnery, in a row of stones E of the church. Tapered sandstone slab, 1.45m long by 0.41m at the head. The upper surface has a roll-and-hollow-moulded margin, and a central longitudinal shaft 60mm wide is defined by deep channels. Probably 13th-14th century.



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A DIFFERENT "CLASS" ENTIRELY!



C.1500

Nat. Museum Scotland.

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St Oran's CEMETERY

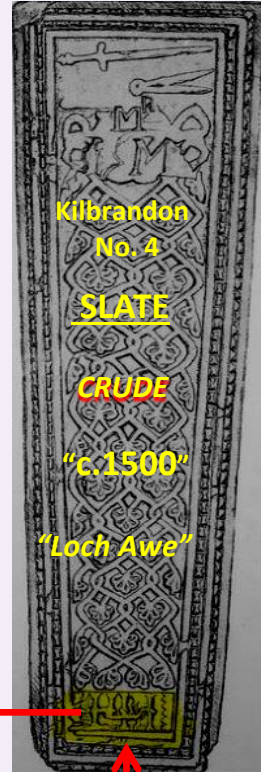
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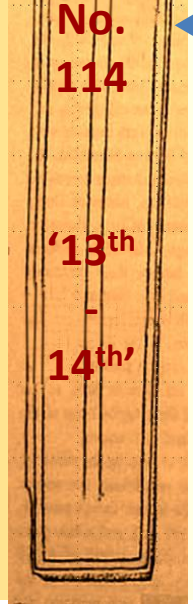
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No. 110

Coped grave-slabs (N)

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A DIFFERENT "CLASS" ENTIRELY!

THESE TWO (on right) BEAR ABSOLUTELY NO RESEMBLANCE TO EARLY 13TH CENTURY CROSS-SHAFTED SLABS IN ANY CHARACTERISTIC, OR ESPECIALLY TO VERY EARLY, ie, 1203, FOR REGINALD IF COPED SLAB USED! INCL., THESE ON RIGHT ARE LOW-RELIEF CARVED. AND, eg, SWORD QUILLONS FAR TOO LONG FOR 1203-1300. AND "DECORATIVE MOTIFFS" NOT USED ANYWHERE NEAR 1203, INCL. "CASKETS": "LATE 15TH OR EARLY 16TH" – "caskets that once may have been common in the West Highlands".

IAN MACDONNELL, 2018



St Oran's CEMETERY
'No. 191'

SLATE

RCAHMS:-
"CRUDE"

"15th c."

"School"?



Kilbrandon
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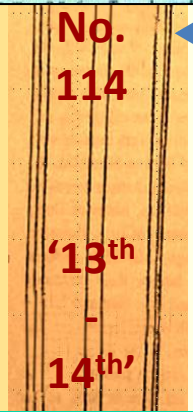
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GAPPING ERROR PERIOD OF AT LEAST 200 YEARS.
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