



# ST PATRICK

## in County Down

Ulster-Scots Translation

### ST PETHERICK

In

### THA COONTIE O DOON

St Petherick is weel mindit an weel thocht o iverie-quhaur fur bein tha yin that brocht tha wurd o Christ tae Airlann in tha 4 hunnèrs. Strange thaing is we ken about his wark frae his ain scrivins, his ain life-story Confession an his Lettèr tae tha Sodjers o Coroticus. Baith these is in tha Latin, lake tha twa auldest accoonts o Petherick's life forbye, by Muirchú an Tírechán, in tha 6 hunnèrs. Later buiks pit mair flesh on tha banes o tha story, maist o aa tha lang Thrie-pairt Life, writ in Gaelick about 900.

It is haird tae pit doon a shoart accoont o tha ins an oots o Petherick, but, here's tha banes o it. He wus boarn (aiblins at tha enn o tha 3 hunnèrs) somequhaur near tha shores o wastren Britain. As a saxteen yeir-auld callan he wus capture't wi raiders an brocht tae Airlann as a slave. Aar-eadie a Christ-yin, his faith got strang'r unnèr capture (near Slemish in mid Antrim). Eftèr sax yeir he run aff an got awa in a boat tae France, an fun his wye hame tae Britain. The angel, Victor, bad him gan bak til Airlann, tha mair yins wus agin him in Britain, an leaved tha rest o his day praichin tha gospel in Airlann.

This accoont is frae Petherick himsel, but he disnae gie iz onie wurd o quhaur or quhan it wus he wrocht. It wus left fur later writers tae wark oot tha 'quhaur?' an tae modren scholars tae wrastle wi tha 'quhan?'. Naeboadie kens fur sure quhan he leaved, but tha maist feck o fowk houl he cum bak tae Airlann in 432 an dee'd in 461. Muirchú's accoont taks ye throch Petherick's wark in Lecale, an tha Thrie-pairt Life maks mention o twathrie ither kirks in tha Co. Doon. This guide-caird gies a shoart accoont o tha main sites in tha coontie that's tied in wi Petherick in tha auld scribeit papers or in locyal fowk historie.

### Saul

Muirchú tells quhit-wye Petherick cum ashore at Inber Slane (taen fur a burn the' caa tha Slaney) an convertit tha locyal chief, Díchu, that leaved 'quhaur Petherick's barn is theday'. Eftèr landin in on his oul maistèr near Slemish he went bak tae Mag Inis (Lecale), an 'he thocht weel o tha districk abane aa ithers, an tha faith begoud spreadin oot thonner'. Quhaniver he wus dee'in, he wus telt wi tha angel tae 'gan bak tae tha place that ye cum frae, like, tae Sabul', quhaur he dee'd. Sabul is Auld Gaelick fur a barn, an later scrivins gie iz mair o tha yairn, anent Díchu giein Petherick tha uise o his barn. Saul cums up in some scrivins as tha spot quhaur Petherick wus bury't. An richt eneuch in 1293 tha Annals mak tha claim that tha burials o Petherick, Bridgit an Columba wus fun at Saul, but maist likelie this wus naethin mair nor a bit o a yairn frae tha 'Airish Faction' agin tha claims o Doonpetherick. Tha auld steidin noo haes a buryin grunn an tha Parish church, bigged in 19&33 tae mairk 1500 yeir frae Pethericks furst cumin. It's sut on flet grun on a stye brae, wi a guid sicht oot N. tae tha Quoile wattèr. There's nae stuff frae Petherick's day, but a wheen o thangs pointin tae auld kirk daeins at tha steidin. Stane-biggit graves an a 'cave' is reportit. There's an important collection o ten or mair stanes wi crosses carve't on thaim, wi dates

rinnin frae tha 7 hunnèrs tae tha 11 hunnèrs, twa staunin yit in tha buryin grunn (yin showed in tha pictur). In tha NW. pairt o tha buryin grunn is twa wee, rubble biggins wi stane roofs. Yin is uised fur a vault an rendèr't, but tha ither is clear. The'r a story that Petherick uised this tiny wee space fur a dwellin hut, but it cudnae be onie aulder nor tha 10 or 11 hunnèrs. It is yin o a group o Ulstèr 'mortuarie hooses', wee biggins pit up fur tae houl a halie burial or banes shiftit frae some-quhaur else. Mair 'hooses' lake this can be seen at Banagher an Bovevagh (Co. Lunnonderrie) an, yin gyelie lake Saul, at Movice (Co. Dinnygal).

In tha middle o tha 11 hunnèrs St Malachie brocht Augustinian Canons intae Saul. Frae tha middle ages ye hae a gavel waa W. o tha kirk there theday, an a stane coffin-lid, bigged intae yin o tha gate pillars S. o tha kirk. Saul's historie throch tha days o tha Normans wus reuch, but tha abbey carried on tae tha 15&40s, quhaniver it wus daen awa wi. Tha auld steidin haes carried on getting uised fur buryins an Church o Airlann parish warschip.

## **Raholp**

Muirchú writ that quhaniver he wus jist aboot tae dee, Petherick tuk tha sacrament frae bischop Tassach. Later scribevins add that Tassach wus yin o Pethericks wrichts: 'he is tha furst yin tae mak a case for Jesus's staff, an Raholp tae tha aist o Doonpetherick is his kirk'. This in anent tha makkin o a shrine-case fur tha precious cruik, tha Bachall Ísu, yin o Airlann's main relics tae it us destroy't in 15&38. In calendars recaird is made o Tassach's festive boord day as Aprile 14. Naethin mair is kent tae tha 1306 taix leet in quhilk tha 'kirk o Rathcolpe' is listit. Tha kirk wus reportit as in ruins in 16&22.

Raholp (Rath-colpa, forth o tha stirk) lies 2 mile E. o Saul an 1 mile frae tha shore. Tha kirk, knowed in tha districk as St Tassach's or Templemoyle, is stuid on a wee knowe amang a kin-traside o laich hills. Tha knowe is bigged up a bit, pairtlie wi burials, an its sides is faced here an there wi dry-stane dykes an big fleg-stanes.

Tha kirk is a plain fower-square biggin o slatey stane, furst bigged wi clie in place o lime mortar. Tha waa-heids wus bigged up new in 19&15 wi F. J. Bigger quha daen a hale lot o new wark oot o his heid, lake biggin up tha gavel was, tha S. waa an tha altar. But gaun bak tae tha furst this is a biggin frae tha furst days o tha Christ-yins, maist likelie tha 9 Or 10 hunnèrs. It had a dorr-heid abane tha W. dorr, but eftèr cum tha N. an S. dorrs.

Tha mair tha E. wundae is pairt rennyvate't, tha wundae heid is auld, wi wee crosses mairked oot licht, an the'r wee boles on baith sides o tha altar. Bigger fun a grave unnèr tha altar an ither burials in tha kirk. Aist o tha kirk is a big fleg-stane wi a hole cut throch it, tha fit o a cross, forbye a wee plain pillar-stane. The'r a recaird o aboot ten slabs carve't wi plain crosses fur Raholp, but maist hae gaun loast in tha last wheen o yeirs. We wud be gled tae get wurd o onie o thaim, maistlie fur pittin thaim bak in tha kirk. Tha halie wal, a spring o wattèr SE. o tha kirk, haes bin maistlie hid by fairmin.

## **Doonpetherick**

By tha 6 hunnèrs tha quhaur-aboots o Petherick's buryin wus aareadie a threap, an the' wur a bit o a wrasslin match owre it aqween tha men o Ulstèr an yins further wast. Muirchú's accoont maks nae banes aboot it bein Doonpetherick – 'Dú Lethglaisse, quhaur Petherick lies bury't'. On tha ither haun, bits addit on tae Tírechán's scribevins gies in yin pairt 'Sabul Patricii, in tha kirk near tha sey' as tha buryin site, but in anither owns that 'quhaur his banes is nae man kens'. Tha ootcum is we dinnae ken if Doonpetherick's claim on Petherick's burial gans bak til tha 4 hunnèrs or no, but fur certes it daes gan bak tae tha 6 hunnèrs, an wus made mair o in later writins. A bischop o Doon kythes in 584, but jist frae tha middle o tha 7 hunnèrs dae ye keep gettin mention o a kirk an kirk-fowk at Doon. A roon touer stuid SW. o tha cathedral tae tha enn o tha 17 hunnèrs, an tha cross E. o tha cathedral an ither bits o crosses ye hae frae tha auld kirk on tha tap o tha hill.

In tha 11 hunnèrs tha claim o Doon that it wus tha place quhaur Petherick wus bury't cums bak tae tha fore. Tha Welsh traveller, Giraldus Cambrensis, gies an accoont o quhit-wye tha corpses o Petherick, Bridgit an Columba wur fun (in 1185), 'throch divine revelation', in Doon, inside o a tomb divid in thrie. Jhone de Courcy, tha Norman conqueror o Ulstèr, had brocht in Benedictine monks frae Chester tae Doon in 1183, an it's fair eneuch tae see tha 1185 'discoverie' as a bit o jiggerie-pokerie tae bring some auld heirskip ontae tha new owre-loads.

Tha story gans that Petherick wus bury't in tha **buryin grunn** S. o tha cathedral, his grave noo mairk't wi a granite bouldèr, set up in 1900 by F.J. Bigger. It is carve't wi a cross (fuuny eneuch it's a soart ye wudnae fin in Ulstèr) an tha name PATRIC. **St Petherick's Bell** wus thocht tae hae bin uised wi Petherick an bury't along wi him. Maist likelie it's tha bell made mention o in tha accoont o Columba findin it in tha grave in 553 an gien tae Armagh. It wus yin o Armagh's maist precious relics, an in about 1100 it wus pit inside a bricht an braw shrine-case. Tha bell is o sheet airn, rivetit an dunk't in bronze. Bell an shrine is baith in tha National Museum in Dublin.

### Tha Wals o Struell

Tha Struell Wals is yin quare clump o halie wals, doon a wee hidden roakie glen along tha line o a burn rinnin tae tha SE. Tha mair the'r kent by tha name o St Petherick's Wals, tha link isnae true historie, but cums oot o tha nearness o Saul, 1\_ mile awa. We ken that springs o wattèr an burns wus important tae 'Celtick' religion afore tha days o tha furst Christ-yins, an wals ir tae tha fore in tha auld accoonts o Petherick's wark.

Struell (frae sruthair, burn) furst cums intae writins in tha 1306 taix leets quhaur tha 'Chapel o Stro-hull' is listit, an some cut stanes frae tha middle ages ir on tha site yit. It leuks lake it maun hae bin a place pilgrims went til in tha middle ages. In 15&17 a bischop frae Italie taak't o a burn that 'gushed oot frae tha moontain an fell far doon intae an apen biggin', that cud weel a bin Struell. The'r an accoont o tha site by Faither Edmun M'Canan in about 16&43 an anither by Waltèr Harris in 17&44. Tha pilgrims pad tuk in tha wals, a clatter o stane cairns at tha fit o tha glen an roaks, lake St Petherick's sait or bed, on tha glen side. But by about 1800 Struell wus reuch gettin wi ructions an by tha middle o tha 18 hunnèrs tha wals wurnae as weel frequentit. Pilgrims uised tae cum maistlie on St Jhone's Eve (mid-simmer) an tha Friday afore Lammas.

Tha **kirk** is a lang fower-square biggin, staitit in tha middle o tha 17 hunnèrs, but it leuks lake it wus niver finish't. Forenent it is tha **drinkin wal**, a wee roon wal-hoose wi a corbell't stane roof. Inside tak tent o tha mairks o wattle foarm-wark: timmers hel up wattle mats quhaur tha new-biggitt stanes an mortar dried oot abane. Tha burn carries on rinnin unnèrgrunn tae tha **ee wal** cover't wi a wee square wal-hoose wi a pyramid roof o big stane corbels (cover picthur).

Tha unnèrgrunn burn rins on tae tha **men's bath-hoose**, a square biggin wi a stane roof an thrie ruims. Tha twa up tha steps wus fur men, tha furst yin, wi stane benches, wus fur pittin claes on an tha seyconn yin wus fur bathin, its big wattèr tank got at doon steps an tha rinnin wattèr turn't aff wi a sluice. Tha thurd ruim, got intae frae tha E. doon at a lower level, wus tha **weemin's claes ruim**. Forenent its dorr is tha ingaun tae tha weemin's bath-hoose, noo athoot a roof. The'r twathie wee boles in its waas an tha wattèr rins in frae abane, a bit lake a modren shower.

Ye cudnae say fur sur quhit age these plain biggins is. The' gae along wi tha corbell't wal-hooses an pig crews in ither pairts o Lecale, an maist lakelie date frae eftèr tha 16 hunnèrs. Struell is an eerie spot wi an owre ocht feelin about it. It's no haird tae think o it wi trippers cumin tae it fur hunnèrs o yeirs, mebbe even thoosans o yeirs!

Fower ither Co. Doon sites is made mention o in tha Thrie-pairt Life, sae, cum about 900 the' wur pairt o tha story o Petherick, tha mair we hinnae onie praper link wi tha saunt bak in tha 4 hunnèrs.

Petherick travelled S. frae Saul fur tae preach tae Ross, sin o Trichem, that leaved at Derlus. The writer gaes on 'there stauns a wee toun (cathair) theday, **Bright**, quhaur bes bischop Loairn'. The Church o Airlann parish church o Bright is stuid on a roakie knowe an is thocht tae be sut on the auld steidin. Straucht eftèr this bit, the Life tells quhit-weye Petherick met a callan herdin pigs, wi the name o Mochaoi. Petherick preach't, baptise't an tonsure't him. This wus Mochaoi o **Nendrum**, the islann monastrie on Strangfirt Lough, quhaur there's a when o auld biggins. Among the men leevin alang wi Petherick wus Dongairt, sin o Echaid: 'he wull rise Petherick's relics jist afore Dooms-day. His kirk is Rath Murbuilc on the side o Sliabh Slánge'. This is **Maghera**, in-lann frae Newcaissle, quhaur the stump o a roon touer an a kirk o the middle ages mairk the auld steidin. Slieve Donard, the maist heich moontain o the Mournes, taks its name frae this saunt. The'r a wee mention o a kirk that cud be taen fur **Cummer**: 'Conlae sin o Coelbad tuk Petherick in tae his hoose, hummle-like, an gien him Domnach Comhair'. The Annals gie a report o the burnin o Cillcomhair in 1031, but naethin mair is kent about the auld kirk. Petherick, as the story haes it, plantit the yew tree that gien **Newry** its name. **St Petherick's Wal** is doon at the shore at Sheeplann Beg.

Raloph, Struell Wals, Nendrum an Maghera ir aa rin wi the Mannystrie an apen aa the quhile. The buryin grunns at Saul, Doonpetherick an Bright can be got intae forbye. The St Petherick Heirskip Centèr is in Doon Museum in Doonpetherick.

