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More Feet Washing

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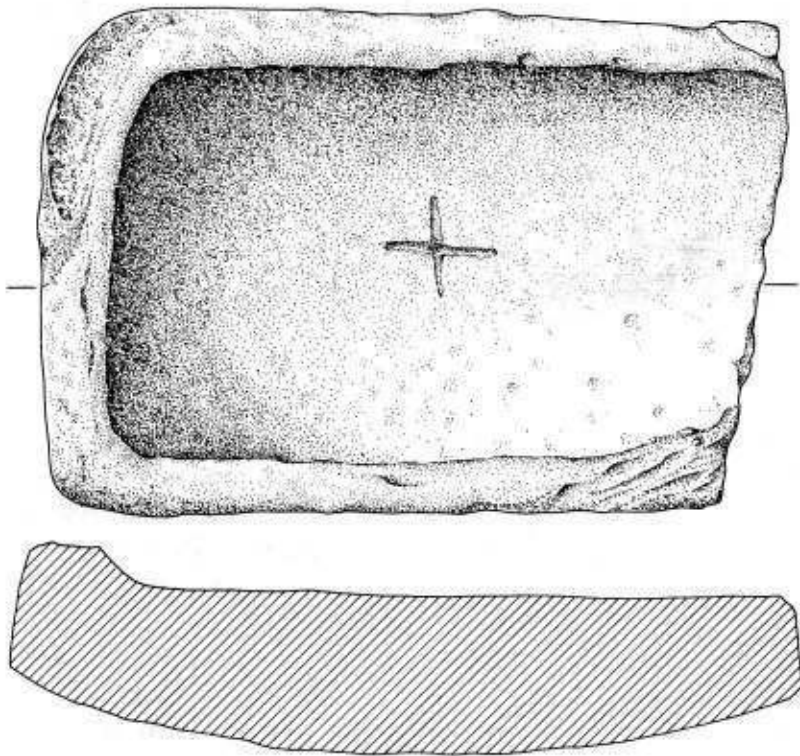
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More Feet Washing

By Mark Hall, Perth Museum and Art Gallery

In the previous issue of *Peregrinations* Mark Hall brought to readers' attentions the probable pilgrim's footbath from Iona Abbey, Iona Island, Scotland and asked if anyone knew of other examples. There have been no further notifications as yet but a second probable example has recently been published following archaeological survey and excavation on the monastic island of Inishmurray, Co. Sligo, Ireland.



It is published as a cross-incised stone basin. It is broken at one end but is otherwise a rectilinear stone basin of very shallow depth, the bowl incised with a cross, the whole measuring 0.93m (L) x 0.63m (W) x 0.2m (Th). The basin stands adjacent to a cross-inscribed pillar and has generally been seen as a water font but a personal comment by Cormac Bourke suggests it could 'have been a ritual foot-washing basin for pilgrims or clerical visitors' (p. 90). The publication drawing is reproduced here by permission of Tomás Ó Carragáin. The full details of the excellent publication volume are: O'Sullivan, J and Ó Carragáin, T 2008 *Inishmurray Monks and Pilgrims in an Atlantic Landscape Volume 1: Archaeological Survey and Excavations 1997-2000*, Cork: Collins Press (www.collinspress.ie/), the entry for the foot bath is at p. 89-90 and fig. 20