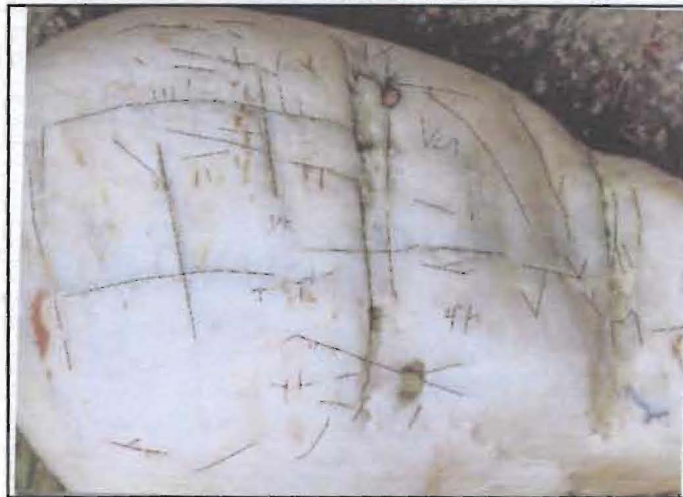


Decipherment of a Garden Stone from Vienna

Stuart L Harris, January 2016, Carbondale, Colorado

- 1 A man comes to escort Käy.
Farewell maiden's waist, modest limbs, the wit to shout.
- 2 I drink to marry a big man.
- 3 Wretched to marry a man who beats a wife.
I have limbs made of iron,
arms to quarry a stone bench.
A real man will not topple a poor pitiable creature.
- 4 I tried some ten drinks for men the night of mother's
wedding party for poor Käy.
I spoke of the manly figure I have, got full of manly beer,
and walked straight into the one who bore me.
- 5 Every single man especially the married
put down as many as ten to ruin
poor shy lovely Käy.

Figure 1: Garden stone from Vienna, inscriptions highlighted with thin black lines.



Christine Pellech of Vienna identified a white stone with inscriptions scratched on the surface. The stone exhibits two kinds of ancient writing in the Finnish language:

Syllabic writing used at first by Camonians in Italy then among many others including the Picts of Scotland and the Rhaetic of the Po Valley who moved to Switzerland and Austria

Alphabetic ogham used by Picts in Scotland, which is different from Irish ogham

This stone raises the possibility that Pictish ogham predates Irish ogham - that this stone is the earliest example anywhere of ogham.

Pictish syllabic writing derives from Val Camonica in northern Italy. Their distinctive style of writing ended in 30 BC when Rome conquered the valley and the language changed from Finnish to Latin.

However, the script was resurrected among the Picts of Scotland at the time Roman Legions built Hadrian's Wall in 130 AD. Because Picts also spoke Finnish, some soldiers defected to the Pictish side and took their writing and stone-working skills with them. Pictish clan chiefs soon erected highly decorated gravestones called Symbol Stones composed almost entirely of Pictish writing.

Pictish Ogham is said to be modeled on Irish Ogham. The vowels are the same but not the consonants. It was written from 550 AD to 950 AD, until Scots conquered Pictland and Gaelic replaced Finnish.

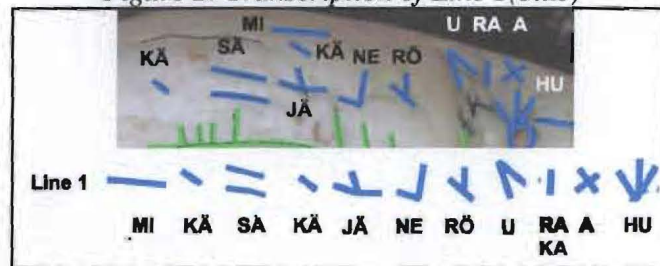
Irish Gaelic ogham is securely dated no earlier than 400 AD, but many think it originated in the first centuries BC. If so, it may not have been Gaelic.

Line 5: The scribe says she was not the only one to get drunk; all the men, especially the married men, got drunk and tried to ruin her poor, shy, lovely sister.

Garden Stone Line 1

A man comes to escort Käy.
Farewell maiden's waist, modest limbs, the wit to shout.

Figure 2: Transcription of Line 1 (blue)



Translation

English

A man comes to escort Käy.
Farewell maiden's waist, modest limbs, the wit to shout.

Finnish

Mies käy saa'aa Käy.
Jää neien röijy, ujojen raajojen, aju huu'aa.

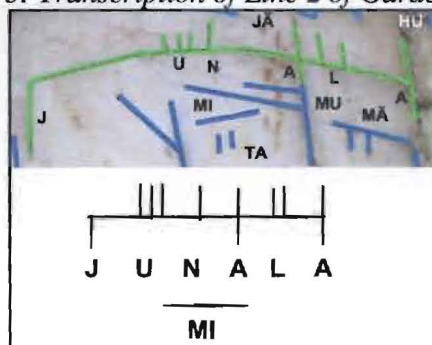
Syllables

MI KÄ SA KÄ.
JÄ NE RÖ, U RA, A HU.

Garden Stone Line 2

I drink to marry a big man.

Figure 3: Transcription of Line 2 of Garden Stone.



Translation

English: I drink to marry a big man.

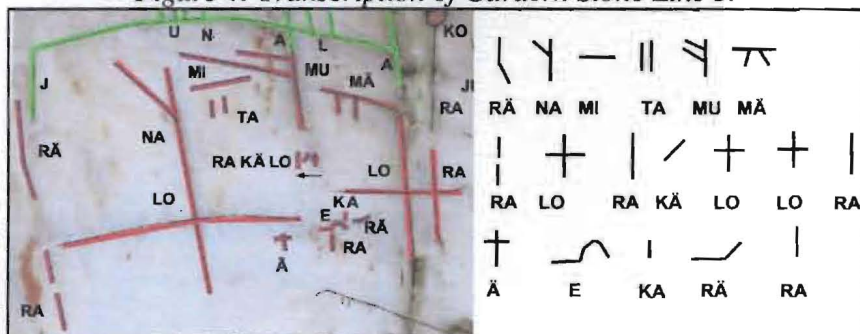
Finnish: Juon naia laajan miehen.

Syllables: JU NA LA MI.

Garden Stone Line 3

Wretched to marry a man who beats a wife.
I have limbs made of iron,
arms to quarry a stone bench.
A real man will not topple a poor pitiable creature.

Figure 4: Transcription of Gardern Stone Line 3.



Translation

English

Wretched to marry a man who beats a wife.
I have limbs made of iron,
arms to quarry a stone bench.
A real man will not topple a poor pitiable creature.

Finnish

Rähjä naia miehen ta'oo muujan.
Mä rajojen loihe rauan,
Käein louhia louhen rahin.
Äijä ei kaau rajän rahjus.

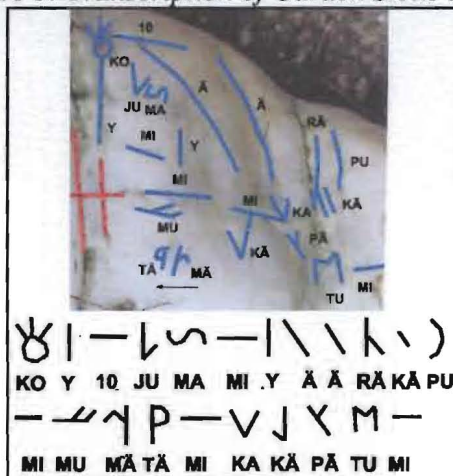
Syllables

RÄ NA MI TA MU
MÄ RA LO RA,
KÄ LO LO RA.
Ä E KA RÄ RA.

Garden Stone Line 4

I tried some ten drinks for men the night of mother's wedding party for poor Käy.
I spoke of the manly figure I have, got full of manly beer, and walked straight into the one who bore me.

Figure 5: Transcription of Garden Stone line 4.



Translation

English

I tried some ten drinks for men the night of mother's wedding party for poor Käy.

I spoke of the manly figure I have, got full of manly beer, and walked straight into the one who bore me.

Finnish

Koin yhet kymmenen juomat miehen yö äidin-häihin rähjän Käy.

Puhuin miehuuen muo'on mä, täy' yin miehuuen ka'jan, kä'in päin tuojan mie.

Syllables

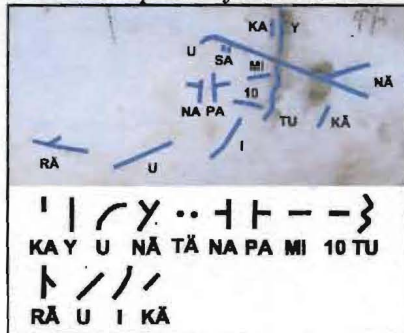
KO Y 10 JU MA MI Y Ä Ä RÄ KÄ.

PU MI MU MÄ, TÄ MI KA, KÄ PÄ TU MI.

Garden Stone Line 5

Every single man especially the married
put down as many as ten to ruin
miserable shy lovely Kāy.

Figure 6: Transcription of Garden Stone Line 5.



In Line 5, the scribe says she was not the only one to get drunk; all the men, especially the married men, got drunk and tried to ruin her poor, shy, lovely sister.

Translation

English

Every single man especially the married
put down as many as ten to ruin
miserable shy lovely Kāy.

Finnish

Kai yhen uro näöstä nai'u
Pa'a min kymmenen tuho'a
Rähjän ujon ihan Käyn.

Syllables

KA Y U NÄ-TÄ NA
PA MI 10 TU
RÄ UI KÄ.

Notes on translation

U < uro 'man', common abbreviation
 PA < pa'a 'put down', from *panna*
 NA < nai'u 'the married', from *naitu*
 U < ujon 'shy, modest, blushing'

Page 8