

# The Epigraphic Society

Volume 11, No. 276

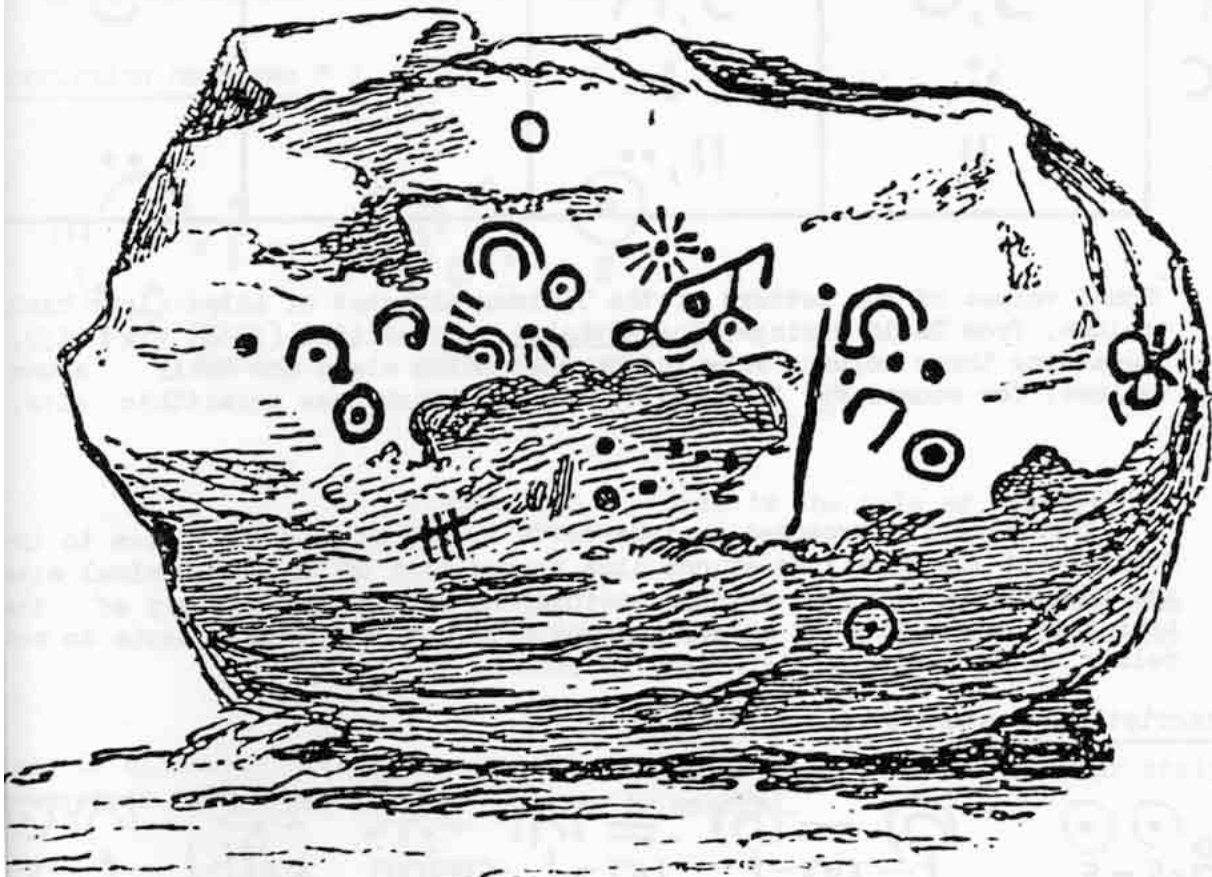
December 1983

## Occasional Publications

### Tifinag in Irish Megalithic Rock Engravings

Warren W. Dexter and Barry Fell

On some of the megaliths that have been re-used to form the so-called "Tomb of Ollamh Fodhla" at Lough Crew, County Meath, Ireland, we observe signs of the Libyan Tifinag alphabet, indicated on the illustrations given in E. A. Conwell's work on this subject (Dublin 1873). We give a table of the signs and their phonetic values on page 242 of this volume. It would appear that, when the Libyan sound values are assigned the letters on the cited Irish stones, Gadelic roots, lacking the vowels of course, are recognizable on the megaliths. In this preliminary paper we cite examples.



Stone # 8 at the Lough Crew site

Tifinag letters  
of Libyan script  
Diringer p. 174

Lough Crew  
Co. Meath  
Stone # 1

Lough Crew  
Co. Meath  
Stone # 8

Lough Crew  
Co. Meath  
Stone # 16

A	•	•	•	•
S	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
R	○	○	○	○
T	☉	☉	☉	☉
Gh	∴	∴	∴	∴
D	└	└	└	
N	—	—	—	
W,Ua		∴		
M	☪, ☵	☪, ☵		☵
K,C	∴	∴		
L		, ∴		∴

Sound values of the letters of the Tifinag alphabet of Libya (left hand column, from David Diringer The Alphabet, 2nd edition (1968) fig 14-15). Remaining three columns show the corresponding signs and their sound values, for stones #s 1, 8 and 16, at the Lough Crew megalithic site.

The following proposed decipherments by one of us (Fell) seem to indicate that the megaliths at one time formed part of an astronomical site and that later they were removed to form the underground masonry of the tomb that was covered by an earth tumulus. Thus the Tifinag texts do not relate to the tomb.

Inscription on stone # 8

⊙ ⊙ ⊙	☉ = ☉	= ☉	☀	☪	☉
ā-s-s	t-ua-t	ua-t	grian	suilbl	t-s
Ass	tuat	eit	grian	suil Bel	tess

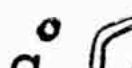



  
 a-t      g d-s  
 at      ag deas

Grian (sun) and suil (eye) are written as idiograms.

Translation: "Away from the north passes the warm weather; Once more the south has the sun, the eye of Bel!"

This stone must originally have marked the autumnal equinox and onset of winter.

Inscription on stone # 16




  
 a-t      t-r-s      r-m      r      relan      g-l

relan (the full moon) is represented by an idiogram.  
 The O. I. text is : At tress, reim re, relan gel.

Translation

"A third time, a lunar cycle, a bright full moon" (The reference may be to the bright full moon of October).

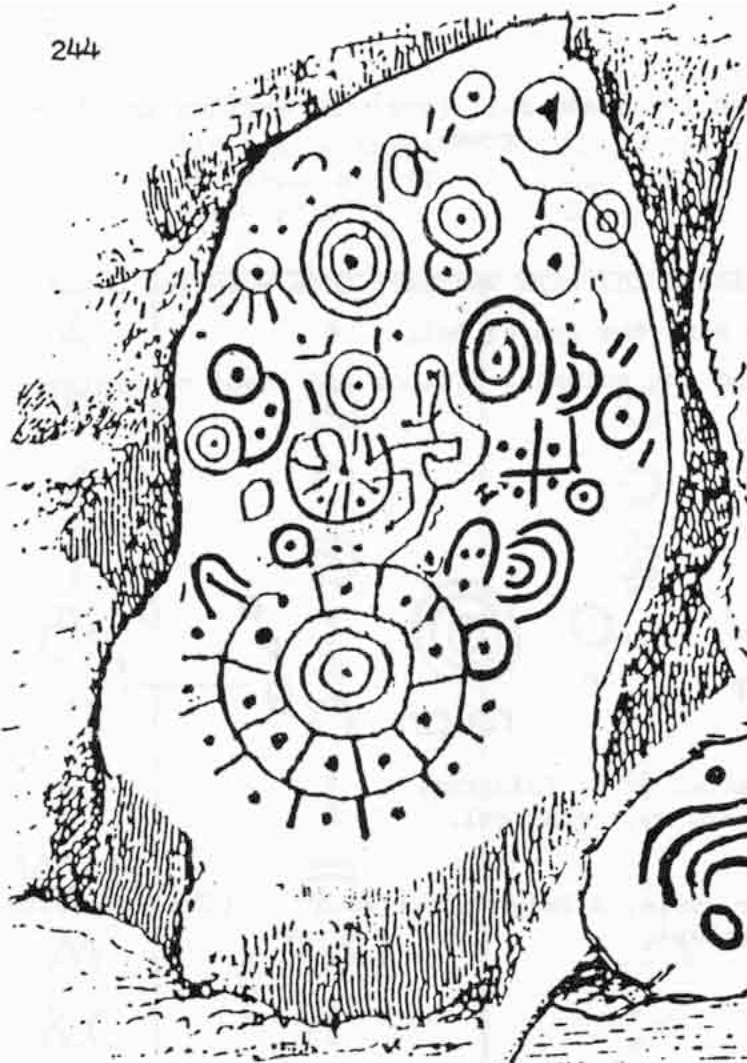
Inscription on stone # 1

  
 Muil      redlu      seo.

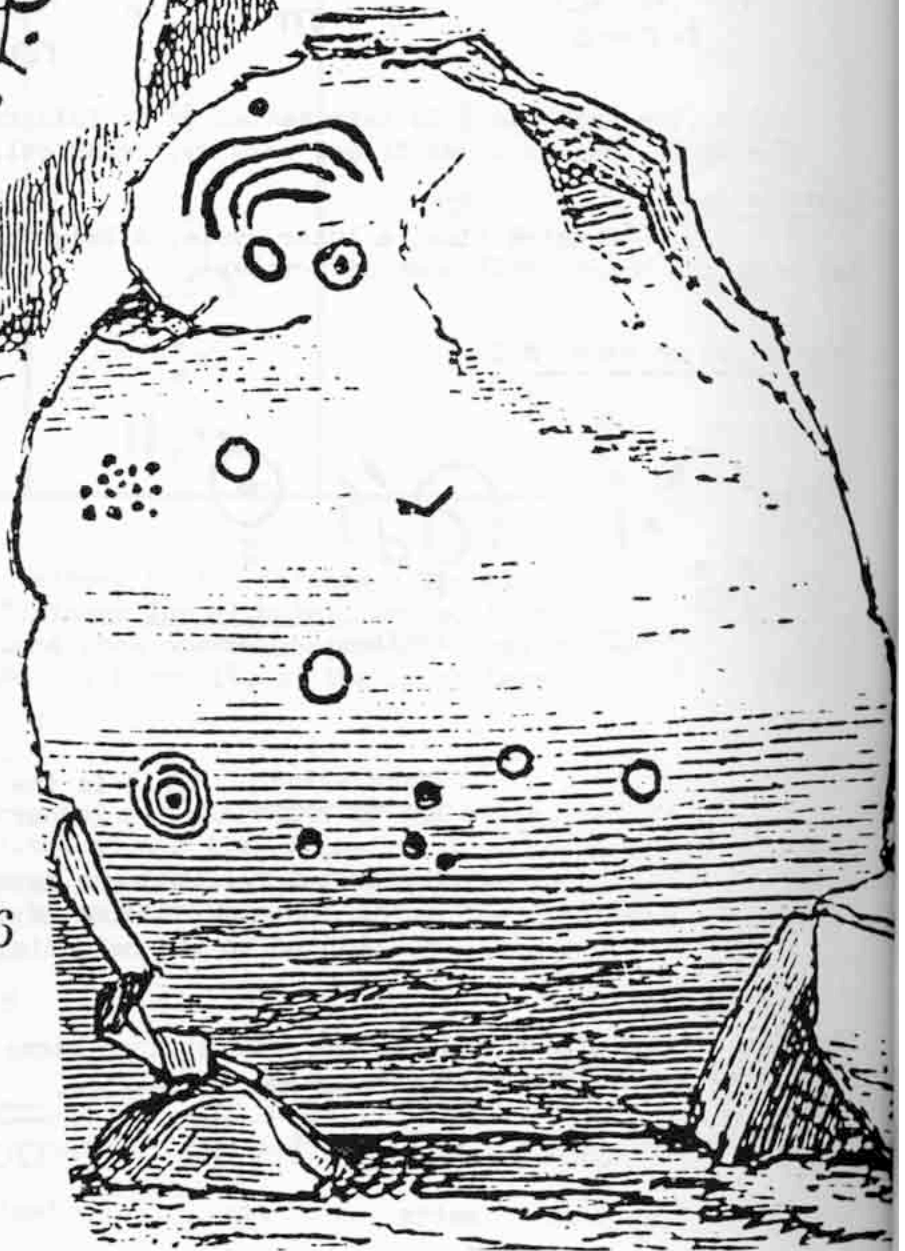
Translation "This is the pole of revolution of the stars"

A mark resembling a pointing arrow-head lies to the right of the text, and may originally pointed to the celestial north pole.

There is obviously more information inscribed on stone # 1, but further study is required before the decipherment may be reached.



No. 1.



No 16