

# glenullin

Gleann An Iolair 'the eagle's glen'

# Inauguration Stone

This is an unusual ancient monument, but it is not unique, as other inauguration stones exist throughout Ireland. Known as the Saint's Track (after Saint Adamnan), Shane's Leap or the Giant's Footsteps it consists of two footprints (roughly size 8!) and some small circular hollows forming a cruciform shape carved in a basalt outcrop.

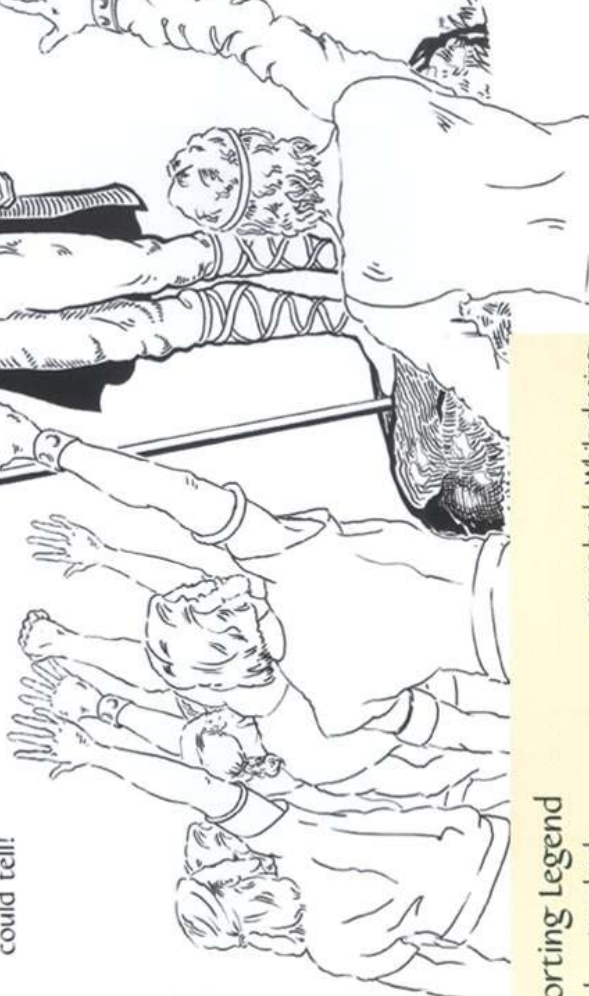
Like any other inauguration stone this one was used during inauguration ceremonies. Up until the 16th Century it is believed the local chieftain or Gaelic ruler stood in the footprints with his spear resting in one of the circular hollows as part of his inauguration ceremony, symbolising his right to follow in the footsteps of his forefathers.

Local legend has it that the footprints on this stone were

caused by the Saint when he stood on the stone to pray. It is more likely that the stone dates from the Irish Iron Age and was given later Christian significance. When standing on this monument it is easy to see why this site was chosen - the new chief standing on this rock overlooking his people,

facing the rising sun, in the footsteps of all his predecessors. With a little imagination, this is a place where history comes alive; where it is easy to be transported back to another age and to see, in the mind's eye, a young man standing on this rocky outcrop pledging to lead his people.

If stones could speak, what tales this one could tell!



prayer book. While chasing the eagle he stood on this rock to get a better view. The eagle dropped the prayer book at Ballintemple and St. Adamnan believed that this should be the site for the new church.

Interestingly the Errigal Old Church site is visible from this inauguration stone, by standing in the footprints and looking ahead, slightly to the right, through the clearing in the forest boundary.

## The Supporting Legend

(Colmille's) biographer and in 679 came to be the Abbot of Iona, the monastery founded by St. Columba. He founded Errigal Old Church at Ballintemple in the mid 7th Century. According to local legend this church was not meant to be built there. It had been planned for the

A local legend involving this inauguration stone, and thought to have given Glenullin its placename - Gleann An Iolair (the Eagle's Glen) - is the legend of St. Adamnan and the eagle. St. Adamnan is one of the more famous Irish Saints. Born in Donegal c.625, he was St. Columba's

