

**Reading the Stones:
The Pictish Monuments on Tarbat Peninsular, Easter Ross**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Pictish carved stones from the Tarbat peninsula, which include the cross-slabs at Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll, as well as the numerous fragments from Portmahomack. While many of these have been previously mentioned by scholars, they have never been closely studied as a group that might express a coherent political and/ or spiritual program, and which may contribute to the understanding of the Pictish settlements on the peninsula.

In order to do so the known cultural background of the early medieval world is initially investigated to provide a context within which to study this group of carvings. This investigation includes a survey of the historical and literary texts, and the history and liturgical practices of the church in the Insular world. Once this background is presented, each individual site and carving is thoroughly explored as regards historiography and archaeological context (as it is known so far). The decoration on each monument or carved fragment is then scrutinized in order to place the work in an art-historical context. Once this has been done, the iconographic significance of the images carved on these stones is determined, and the iconology of the monuments surmised.

The monuments of the Tarbat peninsula thus emerge as complex conveyers of meanings both sacred and secular. Placed within the context of the 8th to mid 9th - century Insular world they strongly support the argument that the Tarbat peninsula was home to an important and influential monastic estate with possible royal ties, which had established links with other ecclesiastical sites throughout Britain and Ireland, and contacts with the Continent and the Eastern Mediterranean.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ANCL* = *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*. 1867-1897.
- Bull* = *The Tarbat Discovery Programme, Bulletins* 1-7. 1995-2002
<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins.html>
- CASS* = *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. Ed. R. Cramp. 1984-2001.
- CCSL* = *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*. 1953-2003.
- CSEL* = *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*
- ECMS* = Allen, J. Romilly and Anderson, Joseph. *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*. 3 parts in 2 vols. 2nd edn. Belgavies, Angus, 1993.
- EH* = Colgrave, B and Mynors, R.A.B., eds. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Oxford, 1969.
- FONTES* = *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici: A Register of Written Sources Used by Anglo-Saxon Authors* <http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk/data/>
- NPNF* = *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. 1886-1899
- PL* = *Patrologia Cursus Completus Series Latina*. Ed. J.P. Migne, 1844-1855, 1862-1865.
- PSAS* = *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*
- RCAHMS* = Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
- SASLC* = Biggs, Frederick, Thomas Hill, and Paul Szarmach, eds. *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version*. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 74. 1990
- TR Sculp. Cat.* = 'The Illustrated Catalogue of Sculptural Fragments found at Tarbat to April 1999,' included in *Bull*.
<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/sculpture.html>

CH 1:INTRODUCTION TO THE SCULPTURE AND THE TARBAT PENINSULA

The Tarbat Peninsula and the Picts

The Tarbat peninsula, north of Inverness in the county of Easter-Ross, juts into the North Sea and is surrounded by the 'Firthlands': the Moray Firth, the Dornoch Firth, Cromarty Firth, and the Lower Ness (fig 1.1). The peninsula is home to several seaboard villages, a lighthouse, excellent farmland, and the remains of an early medieval settlement, the subject of continuing archaeological investigations. First called to attention by aerial photography in 1984, which revealed a crop-mark enclosing the Portmahomack harbour and extending beyond the churchyard of Tarbat Old Church (fig. 1.2), limited investigation began from 1991, with a full-scale program being undertaken in 1994 by Martin Carver, FAS (Field Archaeology Specialists), and the University of York. The results of these excavations (announced in *Tarbat Discovery Programme* Bulletins 1-7) have pointed to a Pictish settlement dating from at least the 6th century, with some evidence for later Viking incursions, though no proof of permanent Scandinavian settlement.¹ After at least one period of disuse, the site was reoccupied and shows continuing activity through the later Middle Ages. Many of the material finds, as well as the excavation of Tarbat Old Church, have both strongly suggested that the early medieval settlement was ecclesiastical in nature, most likely a monastery.² This early settlement at Portmahomack is not the only evidence of early medieval Christian occupation on the Peninsula. Three Pictish cross-slabs, which display both Christian iconography and Pictish symbols) are associated with the present day sea-board villages of Nigg, Shandwick, and Hilton of Cadboll,

¹ *Tarbat Discovery Programme*, Bulletins 1-7 (1995-2002)
<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins.html>. See also M. Carver, 'An Iona of the East: The Early Medieval Monastery at Portmahomack, Tarbat Ness,' *Medieval Archaeology* (forthcoming 2004); 'Sculpture in Action,' in S.Foster (ed.) *Able Minds and Practiced Hands: Scotland's Early Medieval Sculpture in the 21st Century*, (forthcoming 2004).

² *Ibid.*

while the Portmahomack site has produced fragments from at least three cross-slabs, numerous grave-markers and architectural sculpture.³

While other clusters of Pictish monuments also exist, most notably the groups that can be seen at St Vigean in Angus, or Meigle in Perthshire, the assemblage at Tarbat is unique in a number of ways. The carved monuments at both St Vigean and Meigle comprise local collections that have been placed together in their respective museums, with no certainty where they were originally erected.⁴ In contrast, the carved stones on the Tarbat Peninsula were found and are still mostly preserved in, or very near, their original locations. For instance, the cross-slab at Shandwick is believed to be *in situ*,⁵ while that presently located within the church at Nigg is thought to have stood originally in what is now the churchyard.⁶ The original position of the Hilton of Cadboll stone is more problematic but the evidence strongly suggests that its position was either in the Hilton of Cadboll community itself, or within its vicinity.⁷ The locations of all three cross-slabs lie within a five-mile radius of the Portmahomack site, which features its own collection of cross-slab fragments and other carved sculpture, the most abundant group to have been found in the Highlands.

The proximity of the slabs to each other suggests that the stones are closely related, and, indeed, current thinking has proposed that the ecclesiastical estate at Portmahomack expanded sometime in the 8th century to incorporate the entire peninsula, placing satellite chapels and stone monuments at Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll.⁸ Both the iconography and the stylistic details depicted on the cross-slabs at these locations support this argument, and it is likely that

³ See Chapters 2-5.

⁴ A. Ritchie, *Meigle Museum: Pictish Carved Stones*, (Edinburgh, 1997); 'Meigle and Lay Patronage in Tayside in the 9th and 10th centuries AD', *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal* 1 (1995): 4-7.

⁵ See Chapter 3.

⁶ See Chapter 2.

⁷ See Chapter 5.

⁸ For a full discussion, see Carver, 'An Iona of the East,' (forthcoming) and 'Sculpture in Action,' (forthcoming).

they were carved by a 'school' of stone-carvers probably based at Portmahomack.⁹ Furthermore, the iconography and decorative details carved on these stones reveal a cultural program related not only to the function of the settlement in regards to its pastoral and political role on the peninsula, but also to the peninsula's relationship with the rest of the Insular world, and indeed, the greater European world.

A study of these images, therefore, can add much to our understanding of the Pictish church in this region, about which little is known. Historical records relating to the subject are slim, relying primarily on brief accounts in Bede, Adomnán, and the *Irish Annals*. For instance, Adomnán reports that St Columba set out from Iona in 565 on a mission to convert the Picts. Travelling along the Great Glen and by Loch Ness, he eventually met the king of the northern Picts somewhere near modern-day Inverness and engaged him and his court magicians in conversation and spiritual contests. While there is no evidence that Columba converted the king, or even many of the people during this or subsequent trips to Pictland, Adomnán does report that monasteries were founded at this time, which still survived in his own day (the early 8th century).¹⁰ Considering the late 6th-century date of the earliest graves excavated in the Old Church at Portmahomack, it is quite possible that this settlement was one of these Columban foundations.¹¹

According to Bede, the Picts received a mission from Northumbria in the early 8th century. In 710 the Pictish king Nechtan sent to Jarrow/Wearmouth for information about the

⁹ Considering the evidence for metal, glass, leather, and possible parchment-making workshops located on the archaeological site, it is reasonable to assume that stone carving also took place there, though no definitive proof has yet been uncovered. See *Bull* 2-7.

¹⁰ See *Life of Saint Columba, Founder of Hy*. Written by Adomnán, Ninth Abbot of that Monastery, ed. William Reeves (Edinburgh, 1874), I:1, I:33, 34, I:37, II: 32, 33-34, II:42, pp. 12-13, 62-64, 73-74, 145-150, 166-171.

¹¹ Carver, 'An Iona of the East'; 'Sculpture in Action' (forthcoming 2004); Cf. S. Taylor, 'Place-Name and the Early Church in Eastern Scotland,' in B.Crawford (ed.), *Scotland in Dark Age Britain*, St John's House Papers 6. (1996), pp. 93-110.

practices of the Northumbrian church concerning the dating of Easter and the mode of tonsure, as well as in the 'Roman' method of building in stone.¹²

Although it has been argued that the close relationship reported by Bede was the result of political propaganda rather than actual reality, most academics believe that Nechtan's request resulted not only in an alignment of the Pictish church with the Northumbrian, but also in an explosion of sculptural activity throughout Pictland.¹³ For instance, Henderson, Stevenson, and Foster all agree that the high relief characteristics of later Pictish cross-slabs were generated by the influence of stylistic innovations practised on the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments.¹⁴ Indeed, MacLean argues that even the earliest Pictish cross-slabs, those featuring low relief, were carved after the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments, reiterating that the Pictish carving techniques were the direct result of Northumbrian training.¹⁵

Unfortunately, the historical records are too sparse to support any definitive statements about the results of Nechtan's actions on either the practice of Pictish Christianity or Pictish politics. Likewise little is known about the succeeding kings of Pictland, and while the Pictish *King Lists* and the *Irish Annals* do provide some information concerning the ruling dynasties, they do not sufficiently explain the cultural background of the Picts, or their relations with the

¹²Ch. III.V. See Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, eds. B. Colgrave and R. Mynors, (Oxford, 1979), pp. 220-225.

¹³ A. Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men: Scotland AD 80-1000* (London, 1984), pp. 60-62, 74-78.

¹⁴ I. Henderson, *The Picts* (London, 1967); 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' in D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick, D. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 79; 'Pictish Vine-Scroll Ornament,' in A. O. Connor and D.V. Clarke (eds.), *From the Stone Age to the Forty-Five: Studies Presented to R.B.K. Stevenson* (Edinburgh, 1983), p. 248; 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-Boss Motif on Pictish Cross-Slabs and the Iona Crosses,' in M. Ryan (ed.), *Ireland and Insular Art: AD 500-1200* (Dublin, 1987), pp. 56-65; 'The Shape and Decoration of the Cross on Pictish Cross-Slabs Carved in Relief,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (eds.), *Age of Migrating Ideas* (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 210, 217; R. Stevenson, 'The Chronology and Relationships of Some Irish and Scottish Crosses,' *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquarians of Ireland* 86-87 (1956-7): 84-96, *passim*; 'Sculpture in Scotland in the 6th - 9th centuries AD,' in V. Milojevic (ed.), *Kolloquium über Spätantike und Frühmittelalterliche Skulptur* (Mainz, 1971), pp. 71-73; S. Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots: Early Historic Scotland* (London, 1996), p. 93.

¹⁵ D. MacLean, 'Snake-Bosses and Redemption at Iona and in Pictland,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (eds.), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 247-48. The Ruthwell monument is generally dated to the mid 8th-century while Bewcastle receives a slightly earlier date. See R. Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, vol. 1: County Durham and Northumberland* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 19-22; R. Cramp and R. Bailey, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, vol. 2: Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North-of-the-Sands* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 61-71.

world beyond Britain and Ireland.¹⁶ The images carved on the Tarbat stones, therefore (along with a consideration of the archaeological context) are the best evidence we have with which to reconstruct the intellectual, religious, and political climate of the early medieval period in this region. By analysing the significance of the iconographic images carved on the Tarbat collection of monuments, as well as drawing art-historical parallels, it is possible to establish lines of communication between the Tarbat peninsula, the rest of the Insular world and even the Continent. In turn, these lines of communication might point to political or religious leanings and add a great deal to our knowledge of the beliefs and practices of not only a small segment of the Pictish world, but to a greater understanding of early medieval Scotland as a whole.

Methodology:

Analysis of the images contained on the Tarbat collection of monuments is best approached through the iconological method. According to Panofsky, who pioneered the study, iconology is the interpretation of iconography.¹⁷ As such, it depends upon both the correct identification of iconographic images, and an understanding of the historical context within which the work was created. Thus, Panofsky argues, we must 'read what we see' according to the manner in which objects and events are expressed by forms created under varying historical conditions. For example, it must be determined whether a city floating in the sky in a 12th-century miniature exemplifies an inability to portray perspective, or represents a celestial city, in accordance to an accurate assessment of the historical context. An exact identification of the images also relies upon a familiarity with specific themes or concepts as they are transmitted

¹⁶ See S. MacAirt and G. MacNiocaill (eds.), *Annals of Ulster to AD 1131, Part 1* (Dublin, 1983); W. Stokes (ed.), *Annals of Tigernach* (Felinfach, 1993); W. Hennessy (ed.), *Chronicum Scotorum: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from Earliest Times to AD 1135* (Wiesbaden, 1964); A. O. Anderson and M.O. Anderson (eds.), *Early Sources of Scottish History AD 500-1286*, new edn (Stamford, 1990); M. O. Anderson, *Kings and Kingship in Early Scotland*, rev. edn (Edinburgh, 1980); W. F. Skene (ed.), *Chronicles of the Picts, Chronicles of the Scots and Other Early Memorials of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1867); G. MacNiocaill (ed.), *The Medieval Irish Annals*, Medieval Irish History Series 3 (1975).

¹⁷ E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origin and Character* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953), pp. 131-148; *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (New York, 1955), pp. 26-54.

through literary sources, whether acquired by purposeful reading or by oral tradition. However, knowing the sources is not sufficient; the context of the work must also be determined in terms of other works with the same or similar theme. Therefore, both the artistic tradition and the advent of literary ideas must be taken into consideration.

If these conditions can be met the iconologist can then move into an analysis of the iconographic images by ascertaining the underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, period, class, or religious or philosophical persuasion, as it is qualified by the artist and condensed into a single work. According to Panofsky, this work can then be seen as a symptom of something else which expresses itself in a countless variety of 'symbolical' values'; often unknown to the artist himself and sometimes even emphatically different from what he consciously intended to express. In short, iconology depends first upon the correct identification of the images in question and secondly upon an in-depth knowledge of the cultural context within which the artistic work was created. This context includes political leanings, religious persuasion and themes and concepts transmitted through literary sources as well as through contemporary artistic representation.

While this method has its limitations, primarily resulting from the vast amount of historical, literary, religious and art-historical knowledge required to correctly interpret a single image, let alone an entire iconographic program,¹⁸ iconology has proved an invaluable tool with which to analyse Insular art and culture, especially since other art-historical considerations such as aesthetic theory, style analysis, and the relative 'genius' of the artists cannot be applied to early medieval art in the way they can be applied to Renaissance and post-Renaissance works. However, Panofsky and other Renaissance scholars like him have two essential advantages over the early medieval art historian, namely access to extensive historical documentation and biographies of the artists and, often, descriptions of the artistic programs being commissioned.

'Dark Age' Insular scholars do not have such luxuries. Comparatively sparse historical records, the anonymity of most of the artists, and the difficulty of assigning a specific textual knowledge to the patron, artist or audience, all contribute to the limits of iconographic analysis of Insular images. In addition, the multiple and often contradictory levels of meaning expressed by early medieval Insular images must also be considered. While Gombrich believes that the symbolism of Renaissance images is capable of conveying several nuances, he argues that it can really only function in support of a 'dominant meaning' that reflects the principle purpose of the painting.¹⁹ Medieval iconography, on the other hand, is multivalent, and it has been argued that the medieval audience, especially the monastic, was trained to interpret images on several different levels at once.²⁰ Although these multiple meanings may appear to be contradictory and antithetical to modern viewers, they were understood and encouraged by the medieval audience.²¹ This 'principle of multivalence' has been discussed in several works by Ó Carragáin, who stresses that no element of the possible meanings behind a particular image should be excluded, either by tying the image down too firmly in time or place, or by restricting its symbolic import by identifying it too closely with a single narrative moment.²² At the same time, iconographic analysis of early medieval Insular art must also be founded upon the specific

¹⁸ See E. H. Gombrich, *Gombrich on the Renaissance vol. 2: Symbolic Images*, 4th edn (London, 1985), pp. 1-25, for a full discussion of the problems inherent to an iconological investigation.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 15-17.

²⁰ C. Neuman de Vegvar, 'The Echternach Lion: A Leap of Faith,' in C. Karkov, R. Farrell and M. Ryan (eds.), *The Insular Tradition* (Albany, New York, 1997), pp. 171-172.

²¹ J. Benton, *The Medieval Menagerie: Animals in the Art of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1992), p. 112.

²² E. Ó Carragáin, 'Traditio Evangeliorum and Sustentatio: The Relevance of Liturgical Ceremonies to the *Book of Kells*,' in Felicity Mahony (ed.), *Book of Kells: Proceedings of a Conference at Trinity College, Dublin* (Aldershot, 1994), p. 418; 'Christ over the Beasts and the Agnus Dei: Two Multivalent Panels on the Ruthwell and Bewcastle Crosses,' in P. Szarmach, (ed.), *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, Studies in Medieval Culture 20 (1986), pp. 378-379; 'The Ruthwell Cross and the Irish High Crosses: Some Points of Comparison and Contrast,' in M. Ryan (ed.), *Ireland and Insular Art: Proceedings of a Conference at University College Cork* (Dublin, 1987), pp. 122-123; 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony: Visual and Literary Uses of a Eucharistic Motif,' in P. Wallace and G. Niocaill (eds.), *Keimeila* (Galway, 1989), p. 38. Cf. P. Meyvaert, 'Review of O.K. Werkmeister, 1967, *Irish-Northumbriische Buchmalerei des 8. Jahrhunderts un Monastische Spiritualität* (de Gruyter, Berlin),' *Speculum* 46 (1971): 411.

realities of Christian spirituality, since almost all of the art was commissioned and produced within an ecclesiastical environment.²³

Determining this is particularly problematic in terms of Pictish art, since no native records exist, and all must be inferred by analogy with the Anglo-Saxon and Irish records. In a sense, Panofsky's methodology must be turned on its head when analysing the Pictish cross-slabs. Rather than using known factors of historical, religious, or political attitudes to interpret the significance of the Pictish images, the images themselves are used to shed light upon the probable cultural context of early medieval Scotland. In other words, by analysing the images in terms of their significance to the rest of the early medieval world and determining their context by their appearance in other early medieval works of art, particularly that in the rest of the Insular world, it may be possible to construct a cultural history of the Pictish church.

With these aims and limitations in mind, I have attempted to analyse the significance of the images that occur on the cross-slabs of the Tarbat peninsula by surveying the Scripture, early Christian exegesis and other early medieval literature that may have informed their appearance.²⁴ At the same time, it became apparent that some of the Tarbat sculpture may have been carved in response to knowledge or practice of the early Christian liturgy. Since particular rites may have been specific to, or originated in either the Anglo-Saxon or Irish liturgy, I have also found it necessary to investigate the differences between the early Irish and Anglo-Saxon churches and monastic systems. Such an investigation then allows for speculation about the context of the ecclesiastical estate on the Tarbat peninsula.

Hawkes has argued that certain images carved on Insular sculpture were used not only to explain and propagate the subtleties of the Christian view of life to both a literate and non-literate

²³ *Ibid.* See also Neuman de Vegvar, 'The Echternach Lion,' pp. 171-172.

²⁴ Such an analysis depends upon knowledge of the availability of these texts in the Insular world; for that purpose, I have usually limited the discussion to those sources for which there is some evidence of Insular use (see Appendix 1A). The detailed results of this study are contained in Chapters 2-5.

audience, but to also symbolise a political identity and allegiance.²⁵ Knowledge of the competing branches of Insular Christianity is therefore also necessary in order to determine if certain images on the Tarbat collection actually signified an allegiance or identity with a specific monastery, federation of monasteries, or religious movement. Although the monastic systems and church hierarchy in early medieval Ireland and Britain were similar in many respects, there were key differences, differences that probably led to the Synod at Whitby and the later decision by the Pictish King Nechtan to align himself with the Northumbrian Church. Since these conflicts may have affected the choice of iconography carved on the Tarbat collection of sculpture, a short discussion of the Church in the Insular world is necessary.

The Churches of the Insular World:

In the last twenty years the traditional view of monasteries as isolated religious communities cut off from society and secular politics has been reworked to reveal powerful entities that not only were responsible for the spread of Christianity throughout Britain and Ireland and the pastoral care of its inhabitants, but were also powerful political forces.²⁶ While the debate continues as to the nature of monasticism, and the relationship between the monastic estates and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, a short survey of these arguments can serve to suggest

²⁵See J. Hawkes, 'Symbolic Lives: The Visual Evidence', in J. Hines (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxons: From the Migration Period to the Eighth Century* (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 313; 'An Iconography of Identity? The Cross-Head from Mayo Abbey', in C. Hourihane (ed.), *From Ireland Coming: Irish Art from the Early Christian to the Late Gothic Period and its European Context* (Princeton, 2001), *passim*; 'Figuring Salvation: An Excursus into the Iconography of the Iona Crosses,' in S. Foster (ed.), *Able Minds and Practised Hands: Scotland's Early Medieval Sculpture in the 21st Century* (forthcoming 2004).

²⁶For instance see A. Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in early Anglo-Saxon England,' in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 137-170; T. Charles Edwards, 'The Pastoral Role of the Church in the Early Irish Laws,' in Blair and Sharpe, *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, pp. 63-80; R. Sharpe, 'Some Problems Concerning the Organization of the Church in Early Medieval Ireland,' *Peritia* 3 (1984): 230-70; 'Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland,' in Blair and Sharpe, *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, pp. 81-109; A. MacQuarrie, 'Early Christian Religious Houses in Scotland: Foundation and Function,' in Blair and Sharpe, *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, pp. 110-133; B. Hudson, 'Kings and Church in Early Scotland,' *The Scottish Historical Review* 2:96 (1994): 145-170; T. Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted: Archaeology and Early Church Organisation on Iveragh and Dingle, Ireland,' in M. Carver (ed.), *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300-1300* (York, 2003), pp. 127-152.

some of the key differences between the early medieval religious institutions in Ireland and England.

Through a study of historical and ecclesiastical documents Richard Sharpe has painted a portrait of the early medieval church in Ireland and has argued against the traditional view that the episcopal hierarchy introduced by Patrick was replaced by a monastic framework in the mid-6th century. On the contrary, there is no evidence that Patrick organised the church in Ireland in a hierarchical structure with a canonically recognised metropolitan centre, or that the growth of the church in Ireland was ever subject to any form of control. Instead, what appears to have materialised in Ireland was an organic growth of churches that formed complex relations with each other, the laity, and local governments. He further theorises that while the first churches had clear pastoral functions, the early isolation of Christians from surrounding society made them form religious communities that became the basis of monasteries. These then grew into large estates, or even towns that lost their strict monastic definition, though many still incorporated small religious communities within them.²⁷

Within these communities, the Latin term *monachus* (from the OIr. *manach/manaig*) was used to describe everyone to whom a particular church owed pastoral care, not just actual monks. This included the church or community's economic dependants and 'extramural' labourers and anyone else who fell within the remit of the church. While in England this could be defined as the *parochia*, which can be translated loosely as 'parish', in Ireland, the *paruchia* referred to all of the churches dependent on a specific mother church; these churches could be widely scattered and even fall within the geographical radius of a different mother-church. In addition to the dependencies of a mother-church, there were two other types of 'tied' churches that existed in Ireland: those that were royal property, and those that were in hereditary control of the founding

²⁷ Sharpe, 'Some Problems,' pp.230-249, 260-266; 'Churches and Communities,' pp. 98-103.

family.²⁸

The heads of the mother-churches were termed *princeps*, and had control over extensive lands, tenantry and stock, as well as over the smaller churches forming the *paruchia*, and they received considerable revenues. By the 8th century the hereditary office of the *princeps* was combined with the office of abbot who was thence in charge of the properties and political rights of the church's estate. These rulers also came to be known as 'co-arbs' or *commarba*, the 'heir of the saint' and in some situations wielded a political power that rivalled that of kings.²⁹ Some of these ecclesiastical estates formed federations with other *monasteria*, thus making up a *familia* such as that comprising Iona, Durrow, Derry, Tiree, and later Kells.³⁰ While it is unclear if all of the monasteries founded by Columba or monks from Iona were considered part of the Columban *familia* or *paruchia*, given the non-geographical relationship between a mother-church and its dependencies within Ireland it is certainly likely that some kind of relationship continued to exist between Iona and its foundations in Scotland and England.

Sharpe has further argued that the relationship between the *monasteria* and the Irish bishopric was complex but not necessarily hierarchical, with the bishops and the 'co-arbs' wielding an equal power in the separate spheres of spiritual matters and secular temporalities. While a bishop had no jurisdiction over the secular and proprietary interests controlled by the abbots, he did have the greater authority in regards to matters of pastoral care. However, this power could be rather haphazard as it had no distinct territorial boundaries.³¹ For example, during the 8th and 9th centuries, several bishops sought to extend their control over small independent churches with varying success, and proponents of a 'Roman-style' church hierarchy convened several synods in attempts to regulate the behaviour of bishops who were prone to

²⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 255-258; pp. 84, 94-97, 102-106.

²⁹ Sharpe, 'Some Problems,' pp. 255-258, 263-264. See also Charles-Edwards, 'The Pastoral Role of the Church,' pp. 67-72.

³⁰ See M. Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba* (Dublin, 1996).

³¹ Sharpe, 'Some Problems,' pp. 253-259; 'Churches and Communities,' pp. 100-101, 105-107.

invading the 'sees' of their fellows.³² What becomes clear is that neither the organisation of the *monasteria*, nor the episcopate (such as it was) were dependent on either the authority of Rome, or upon the local leaders, though the goodwill of kings was often sought.³³

The picture painted by Tomás Ó Carragáin differs from that presented above in several particulars. By approaching the issue through a study of the archaeological evidence on the Iveragh and Dingle peninsulas, Co. Kerry, Ó Carragáin has concluded that the church in certain areas of Ireland was organised along well-defined territorial lines with principle churches controlling the land and resources within their immediate vicinity. This territory could include secular and ecclesiastical settlements. A high density of stone churches (likely dating from the 9th century) are found within the territories of the principle churches on Iveragh and Dingle. These were probably privately owned chapels transmitted from one generation of non-celibate clergy to the next, rather than satellite sites in charge of pastoral care because their stature (usually under 12m²) was too small to support a congregation or a pastoral role. Other churches, found outside the territorial boundaries of the principle churches, most likely remained independent and served primarily as reliquary-chapels, usually for local saints.³⁴ While this portrait argues against the disorganised, 'organic' growth of the *monasteria*, negates a pastoral function for the smaller ecclesiastical foundations, and insists on firm territorial boundaries that are geographically based; it must be noted that Ó Carragáin's evidence does not invalidate the previous model in regards to the proposed relations between the abbots and bishops, and the Irish church's relationship with the church of Rome.

The workings of the early *monasteria* and the episcopate in Anglo-Saxon England is somewhat clearer, though the situation in Northumbria was quite complex as it was the product

³²K. Hughes, 'Evidence for Contacts Between the Churches of the Irish and English, from the Synod of Whitby to the Viking Age,' in P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (eds.), *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 52.

³³MacQuarrie, 'Early Christian Religious Houses,' pp. 110-133: 112-113; Hudson, 'Kings and Church,' pp. 146-148.

³⁴T. Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' pp. 129-131, 142.

of two different missions, the Irish and the Roman. Under the Gregorian mission, Augustine was granted the *pallium* and given the authority to set up an episcopal hierarchy, which he did by creating twelve bishops and two seats of archiepiscopal authority: one at Canterbury and one at York. While Augustine took control at Canterbury, Paulinus, credited with the conversion of King Edwin, was eventually appointed archbishop of York.³⁵

Unfortunately, while the seat of power in Canterbury remained steady and a stronghold of the Roman-style hierarchy, the fledgling archbishopric of York was abandoned with the death of Edwin (c. 633) and, due to warfare and political power plays between the two different kingdoms of Northumbria (Bernicia and Deira), was not reinstated until 735.³⁶ In the meantime, Oswald, Edwin's eventual successor (c. 635), requested a bishop from the Irish rather than from Rome or Canterbury, and in this way the Irish mission made its presence known in Northumbria and quickly gained precedence. Bishop Aidan of Iona was granted the tidal island of Lindisfarne for his episcopal see, and the monastery quickly grew in influence and power, providing a homebase for the spread of the Irish/Ionan mission through the activities of its priests and the building of numerous churches.³⁷

By requesting a bishop from Iona and granting that bishop the see of Lindisfarne, Oswald had effectively circumvented the ecclesiastical hierarchy set up by Augustine. The fact that Aidan's successors, Finan (651-661) and Colmán (661-664) were also consecrated in Ireland (or Iona) and were, therefore, also outside the official Anglo-Saxon hierarchy was quite likely one of the 'ecclesiastical matters,' along with the correct calculation of Easter and style of tonsure, which led to the necessity of a synod at Whitby; Colmán's belief in the authority of St Columba rather than St Peter spoke of an allegiance to the monastic *familia* of Iona rather than to the authority of Rome and its ecclesiastical representatives in England. When Wilfrid argued successfully for the enforcement of Roman practices, Colmán was forced to leave the

³⁵ *EH* I.29, II.17, pp.104-107, 194-197.

monastery.³⁸

After the Synod (AD 664), the bishops of Lindisfarne were appointed by the archbishop of Canterbury, and bishops were again appointed to York (one of whom was the rather short-lived Wilfrid).³⁹ By the year of Bede's death (735) York had again become the seat of an archbishopric, with the king's brother Ecgbert receiving the *pallium*.⁴⁰ Furthermore, by the mid-8th century, York had also surpassed the see of Lindisfarne (which included Monkwearmouth and Jarrow) as a centre of scholarship.⁴¹

The state of the monasteries within this unsettled episcopal situation is unclear, especially because, much like in Ireland, the very definition of a monastery has been called into question. Studies of various ecclesiastic documents have shown that the Latin term *monasterium* was used to denote communities of very different size and status, and that while some, like Wearmouth and Jarrow, were close to the Benedictine ideal, most were not. Instead, as Thacker points out, many were loosely organised establishments ruled by an abbot or abbess, which housed priests and other inmates variously described as *monachi* or *clerici*. *Clerici* included deacons and priests as well as those of a lower ecclesiastical grade, while *monachi* referred not only to all the resident men and women, who were in some sense vowed to the religious life, but also to the 'extramural' labourers, clients, and dependants of the church. The label *monasteria*, therefore, generally referred to a large estate with at least one church that functioned as a centre, not only for the actual inmates of the *monasteria*, but also for the geographical *parochia*, which surrounded it. Some of these estates incorporated extremely large amounts of land and a hierarchy of dependant churches and, as self-sufficient farming communities that might also have received ecclesiastical dues, wielded a power not strictly answerable to the established

³⁶ *Ibid.* II:20, III.1, pp.202-207, 212-215.

³⁷ *Ibid.* III:3, pp. 218-221.

³⁸ *Ibid.* III:25, III: 26, pp. 294-311.

³⁹ *Ibid.* III:28, IV:2, IV:12, IV:28, pp.314-318, 334-335, 370-371, 436-439.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* pp.572-573.

ecclesiastical hierarchy.⁴²

The formation of these *monasteria* were also varied. Morris has suggested a number of different models, such as foundation by eremitic saints searching for seclusion; royal foundations to serve the needs of the king, his family and 'comites'; and 'pseudo-monasteries', which were communities exempt from military service, and characterised by a profound lack of religious discipline.⁴³

Land grants were made by benefactors in exchange for prayers and advice during life, and intercession for the soul and burial close to the force field of a saint after death.⁴⁴ Some communities received more land than could be administered from one centre, or the population became too large, leading to a division into two centres, or clusters of *monasteria*, and to *monasteria* with satellite religious sites. Federations between monasteries were also formed, with kinship often playing a vital role.⁴⁵ Indeed it has been argued that Wilfred sought to set up his own federation to rival the Irish, envisioning an alliance of monasteries throughout Northumbria, Scotland and even Northern Ireland.⁴⁶

Clearly then the Anglo-Saxon *monasteria* varied widely in the make-up of their communities and commitment to a spiritual life, though by the late-7th century, there was a growing emphasis on building an ecclesiastical organisation with a focus on discipline and a consistency with the institutional affairs of the Church.⁴⁷ Nominally subordinate to the episcopal diocesan, some of the *monasteria* had papal dispensations that exempted them from this

⁴¹M. Garrison, J. Nelson, and D. Tweddle (eds.), *Alcuin and Charlemagne: The Golden Age of York* (York, 2001), p. 6.

⁴²Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care,' pp. 137-147.

⁴³ See Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989), pp. 113-118, 126-138; Cf. Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care,' p. 139. See also 'Letter of Bede to Egbert, Archbishop of York' in D. Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents vol. 1: 500-1042* (London, 1968), pp. 735-745, for Bede's opinions about laxity in the 'false monasteries'.

⁴⁴ Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, pp. 113-117. Cf. H. Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England*, 1st edn (London, 1972), pp. 148, 156-157.

⁴⁵ Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ Charles-Edwards, 'The Pastoral Role of the Church,' note 19; Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, pp. 156-167.

⁴⁷ Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 123.

authority, while others, especially the royally-founded monasteries, which were closely associated with the administrative centres of royal estates, actually had a greater authority, and often, like Whitby, influenced royal policy.⁴⁸ It was a situation clearly resented by the episcopacy, and several church councils attempted to legislate episcopal rights and authority.⁴⁹

In essence then, the Anglo-Saxon Church differed from the Irish in two significant ways: the nature of the episcopate, and the relationship between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the *monasteria*. The founders of the Anglo-Saxon Church envisioned a structured hierarchy involving priests, bishops, and archbishops, and while some bishops were 'unofficially' consecrated by a synod of other bishops, or on the Continent, the general rule seemed to be that only confirmation by an archbishop was considered official.⁵⁰ The situation in Ireland is unclear, though Warren has argued that consecration by a single other bishop was the norm.⁵¹

The great Irish *monasteria* had much in common with the Anglo-Saxon. Both types could be large estates that wielded a great deal of political power. Both could be responsible for the pastoral care of all who resided within a geographical territory and could house mixed communities made up of priests, clerics, laymen and even isolated religious communities in the strict Benedictine sense. However, in contrast to the Anglo-Saxon, the Irish *monasteria* were an integral part of the hierarchy of the Church rather than an anomalous feature. This hierarchy, however, was not based upon the Roman system of parish, diocese, and archdiocese. Rather, it seems to have grown up organically in response to the needs of the Irish as they gradually became Christianised. Bishops and abbots fulfilled different roles within this system, and those of the great churches or *monasteria* enjoyed a high status equivalent to that of Irish kings.

Despite their independence from a Roman-based hierarchy, the commitment of the Irish

⁴⁸Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care,' pp. 143-153, 160-165; See also 'Letter of Pope Paul I to Eadberht, King of Northumbria, and his Brother Egbert, Archbishop of York'; 'Letter of Bede to Egbert,' in D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, pp. 735-745, 764-765.

⁴⁹ C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650-c.850* (London & New York, 1995), pp. 191-203.

⁵⁰ *EH* III:28, IV:2, pp.314-317, 332-337,

⁵¹ F. Warren, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* (Oxford, 1881), pp. 68-69, 77.

bishops and *princeps* to provide an 'orthodox' Christian ministry to the people was powerful, and enforced by secular law. The *Córus Bréscani* depicted the relationship between the church and the laity as a contract whereby material wealth passed from the *túath* to the church and pastoral care passed from the church to the *túath*. If the pastoral care was inadequate or non-existent then the *túath* was entitled to end all payments.⁵² Although the English arrangement was similar, it was not enforced by law until the 11th century.⁵³

Especially intriguing is the fact that Irish canon law declared that the heads of *monasteria*, and the *monasteria* themselves, could lose their status if they were accused and convicted of schismatic practices. The direction from which these threats came is not made clear, but it appears that the *princeps* had more to fear from their neighbours than from Rome. Secular rulers wishing to undermine the independence of a church or seize church property could use the accusation of heresy or schismatic practices, as could rival *monasteria* seeking to spread their power. Such a threat was likely behind the actions of Adomnán, who, after the Synod of Whitby, attempted to convert Iona to the Roman practice of Easter and mode of tonsure.⁵⁴ Interestingly enough, due to a quirk in the law, a church was relatively safe providing its head was considered orthodox.⁵⁵ Therefore, since Adomnán had declared his support for the Roman party, Iona remained immune from attack, even though its monks refused to convert.

The churches and *monasteria* in Scotland and Pictland were almost certainly affected by the events in Northumbria. After the Pictish King Nechtan wrote to Ceolfrith, the abbot of Jarrow, for instruction in the Roman practices (c. 710) he enforced the orthodox dating of Easter and tonsure throughout his kingdom, and by 717 also expelled the Columban *familia* '*trans dorsum Brittanie*'.⁵⁶ The necessity for this expulsion seems somewhat questionable. Even

⁵²Charles-Edwards, 'The Pastoral Role of the Church,' pp. 70-71.

⁵³Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care', p. 148.

⁵⁴EH V:15, pp. 504-509.

⁵⁵Charles-Edwards, 'The Pastoral Role of the Church', pp. 72-73.

⁵⁶EH V:21, pp. 532-553; MacAirt and MacNiocaill, *Annals of Ulster*, pp. 172-173; Hennessy, *Chronicum Scotorum*, p. 93.

though Adomnán's arguments had failed, Bede reports that a Northumbrian monk named Egbert was able to convert Iona to the Roman practices in 716.⁵⁷ Logically, the members of the Columban *familia* should have followed suit, and there should have been no reason to expel them from Pictland. If, however, Iona did not convert until 718, as reported in the *Chronicum Scotorum*,⁵⁸ then accusations of schism could have forced their removal, and, due to their own laws, they would have had to accept their expulsion without a fight. Although it has been argued that Nechtan was 'patently a pious king',⁵⁹ it is equally likely that Nechtan was as concerned with the power, money and land that could be gained from legally seizing the Columban *monasteria*, and beset by conflicts for his throne and continuing hostilities with Northumbria, the last thing Nechtan could afford was a fight with Columban supporters in the *Dal Riada*.⁶⁰ The lack of records makes such theories speculative, but they do fit the known facts as does the conclusion that the Columban *monasteria* in Pictland had not followed the lead of Iona and were, therefore, agents in their own downfall.

It has been argued that Nechtan's actions paved the way for Roman-based hierarchical organisation of the Pictish church, which would accord with secular forms of administration, as well as royally-founded *monasteria* in Pictland.⁶¹ Although the centre of Nechtan's new church has never been satisfactorily proved, candidates include Abernethy, Dunkeld, St Andrews, Brechin, St Vigean, Meigle, and Deer, all of whose foundation-legends and/or historical records suggest royal connections, some as early as the first half of the 8th century.⁶²

Very little is actually known about the state of the Pictish Church for the next century or so. However, both Clancy and Wormald have argued that the *Céli Dé* reform movement, begun

⁵⁷ *EH* III:4, V:22, pp. 220-225, 552-555.

⁵⁸ Hennessy, *Chronicum Scotorum*, p. 93.

⁵⁹ See S. Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots*, p. 90.

⁶⁰ *EH* V:24, pp. 566-567; Hudson, 'Kings and Church in Early Scotland', pp. 148-151.

⁶¹ Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots*, pp. 90-93.

⁶² See MacQuarrie, 'Early Christian Religious Houses in Scotland,' *passim*; Hudson, 'Kings and Church in Early Scotland,' p. 152; Henderson, 'The Insular and Continental Context of the St Andrews Sarcophagus,' in B. Crawford (ed.), *Scotland in Dark Age Europe*, St John's House Papers 4 (St Andrews, 1994), pp. 76, 81, 92-93.

as early as 814 in Iona, could have been making inroads into Pictland by the second quarter of the 9th century, though it did not manifest its full strength until after the *Dal Riada* dynasty was in complete control (c. 850).⁶³ Wormald, in particular, has argued that the successful Scottish take-over of the Pictish kingdom was intricately linked to the Columban reform of the Pictish church: 'Since the Picts had sent his [Columba's] clergy packing in 717, the Scots could now portray themselves as agents of his irate return,' in a political mission that carried religious authority.⁶⁴

It is probable that the ecclesiastical estate at Portmahomack was affected in some way or another by all of these religious issues and political events, and, in lieu of any Pictish written records, the monuments and their iconography may provide the best indication of the type of *monasteria* it was, the extent of its borders, its association with the ruling powers in Pictland, and its relations with the competing branches of the early Christian Church in Britain.

For instance, some of the iconography on the Tarbat collection of monuments suggests knowledge or practice of certain liturgical rituals. As discussed in the following chapters, certain of these may have been specific to the practices of the Anglo-Saxon or Irish Church, and, therefore, further arguments can be made about the Tarbat estate's relations with the Insular churches. At the same time, some of the iconography points to knowledge of or participation in the Cult of the Cross, which originated in the Eastern Mediterranean and gradually travelled West, most likely reaching the Insular world sometime in the 8th century (see below). In this case, knowledge of the rites does not so much indicate a particular association with either the Anglo-Saxon or the Irish church as it suggests participation in the trends of the wider Christian empire.

⁶³ T. Clancy, 'Iona, Scotland, and the *Céli Dé*,' in B. Crawford (ed.), *Scotland in Dark Age Britain*, St John's House Papers No. 6 (St Andrews, 1996), *passim*; P. Wormald, 'The Emergence of the *Regnum Scotorum*: A Carolingian Hegemony?', in B. Crawford, *Scotland in Dark Age Britain*, *passim*.

⁶⁴ Wormald, 'The Emergence of the *Regnum Scotorum*,' p. 143.

The Liturgy:

As the primary means by which Christian beliefs were articulated, the liturgy was pivotal, and the individuals entrusted with its performance were believed to have access to the sacred. As discussed earlier, gifts of land and goods to monasteries and churches were made in exchange for liturgical mediation such as prayer during the life of the benefactor, and intercession for the soul and burial near to the 'force field' of the monastery's founder saint after the benefactor's death.⁶⁵ It was essential, therefore, for a monastery to be seen to employ an effective and authorised liturgy, and discrepancies could lead to accusations of schism and heresy and to the loss of status and property.⁶⁶ At the same time, within the monastery, the liturgy literally shaped the life of a monk. As Ó Carragáin points out, literary texts such as patristic commentary were used primarily for private meditation, whereas liturgical texts were commonly sung daily, weekly, and on great feasts like Good Friday, and 'must have been seen as familiar landmarks spacing out a monk's life in the community.'⁶⁷

This liturgy, consisting of the fundamental acts of worship such as the celebration of the Eucharist and the rite of baptism, prayer in common and the liturgical sermon, were all argued to have originated in the example of Jesus himself. Easter, together with its extension over the ensuing fifty days and its weekly repetition on Sundays was celebrated from the very earliest period, while the various feasts of the Martyrs, Christmas, and Epiphany, were added throughout the 2nd to 4th centuries. By the end of the 6th century, the religious structuring of the entire year from Advent to Pentecost was complete.⁶⁸

Until the 4th century no regularised liturgical texts were used during Mass.⁶⁹ Once the

⁶⁵In addition, the benefactor could benefit from a founder saint's advice: Columbanus counselled Childebert, Aidan advised Oswald, and Ethelwald frequently visited Cedd at Lastingham. See Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, pp. 113-117.

⁶⁶ See discussion above, pp. 16-18; R. Walker, *Views of Transition: Liturgy and Illumination in Medieval Spain* (London, 1998), pp. 21-22.

⁶⁷ Ó Carragáin, 'Christ over the Beasts,' p. 380.

⁶⁸T. Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, 2nd edn (London, 1979), pp.5-9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 10-18. Cf. Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, pp.172-173, who argues no official mass-books were used in Rome until the late 6th century.

practice of writing down the liturgy became established, however, four parent rites crystallised, from which all other variations grew. Three of the four parent rites originated in the patriarchate cities of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, while the fourth, known as the Gallican rite had a more disparate source of origin in the East.⁷⁰ This rite spread throughout Western Europe, borrowing from the Roman liturgy and incorporating local variations.⁷¹

From the 5th century, these liturgical traditions were collected into books called Sacramentaries. The so-called Leonine Sacramentary, (possibly compiled as early as the 4th century by Ambrose) contains some of the oldest rites as they were practised in Rome, and was used primarily in Italy and Africa.⁷² Under Gregory the Great and his immediate successors, the liturgy of the Roman church was recorded in the so-called Gregorian Sacramentary (as well as in the 'Gregorian' *Antiphonary*, the '*Capitulare evangeliorum*' and the Roman '*Ordines*').⁷³ However, only the popes in Rome were certain to have used the Gregorian Sacramentary, while priests in the basilicas and monasteries elsewhere probably followed rites such as those represented by the so-called Gelasian Sacramentary. This sacramentary contained pre-Gregorian Roman rites (for which the Leonine Sacramentary may have served as model) as well as Gregorian prayers and local Gallican adaptations. Probably compiled in France, the oldest extant Gelasian Sacramentary dates from the mid-8th century, but it is possible that its origins are as early as the late-6th century.⁷⁴

The Gallican rite was gradually supplanted by the Roman in Western Europe through the

⁷⁰ Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, p. 46. Cf. Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual*, p. 163; J. McNaught, *The Celtic Church and the See of Peter* (Oxford, 1935), p. 61.

⁷¹ Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, pp. 56-72.

⁷² *Ibid.* pp. 21-23, 73. Cf. A. Fortescue, 'The Liturgy of the Mass,' <<http://newadvent.org/cathen/09790b.htm>> (23 March 2002).

⁷³ The *Antiphonary* provided the singers with their part in the worship, the *Capitulare evangeliorum* showed the deacon which section of the gospels were to be read on each liturgical day, and the *Ordines* gave directions to the clergy concerning the ritual procedures to be observed at each liturgical function. See Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, p. 45. The oldest surviving copy of the Gregorian Sacramentary is dated c. 812, but was in use in Rome by 650. See Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, p. 172-173.

⁷⁴ Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, pp. 54-59, 73; Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity* pp. 172-173, 272; A. Fortescue, 'Liturgical Books,' *The Catholic Encyclopaedia Online* <<http://newadvent.org/cathen/09296a.htm>> (29 March 2002).

wishes of local bishops or monarchs who wished to conform to what was being practised in Rome. For instance Charlemagne tried to regularise the various rites practised in the provinces, smaller localities and even individual cities, by sending for Roman-trained monks to teach in his cathedrals. Unfortunately, these monks taught different systems as well, showing that the Roman rite was just as diversified as the Gallic in the late-8th century. Indeed, his later dispatch of Frankish monks to Rome to be trained 'properly' merely resulted in a hybridisation of the two liturgies that came to be practised even in Rome. In another attempt to obtain a uniform liturgy within his empire, Charlemagne obtained a copy of a *Gregorian Sacramentary* from Pope Adrian I in 785 or 786. However, since this copy was incomplete, he commissioned Alcuin to fill in the gaps by combining the Gregorian Roman rites and the mixed Gallican and Roman rites represented by the Gelasian Sacramentary. This then became the standard liturgy of the Frankish church, and consequently spread throughout Europe.⁷⁵

The Liturgy in the Insular World:

It has been argued that the first liturgy practised in Britain and Ireland was the Gallican, though it was probably introduced in several different waves and with a variety of different adaptations.⁷⁶ When Augustine arrived in England (c. 597) he found a profusion of liturgies already in existence and asked the Pope which was the proper one to embrace. Gregory's reply indicates that the liturgy in Rome was probably just as diverse and that no real attempt had yet been made to impose any regulation on the practice of the rites on any churches outside Rome.⁷⁷

Unfortunately, there are no records of which liturgical books Augustine might have brought with him or used, although it has been argued that a certain extant Gospel Book was

⁷⁵Walker, *Views of Transition*, p. 27; Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, pp. 72-75; Fortescue, 'Liturgical Books,' <<http://newadvent.org/cathen/09296a.htm>> (29 March 2002)

⁷⁶McNaught, *The Celtic Church*, pp. 61-63; Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual*, p. 58, 77.

⁷⁷ *EH* I:27, pp. 78-103.

his.⁷⁸ On the other hand, there is evidence that by the late-7th century a mass-book containing the old Roman rites was in circulation in Anglo-Saxon England, and by the mid-8th century, mass-books of the Gregorian type were known and regarded as authoritative. In fact, the canons of the Council of Clovesho (747) sought to regularise their use throughout the Anglo-Saxon Church.⁷⁹ Evidence for Anglo-Saxon use of the Gallican liturgy is more fragmentary, but certain Gallican rites were practised (and even endorsed by the Council of Clovesho) and it is probable that a Gelasian Sacramentary was in circulation in the 8th century.⁸⁰

The Irish liturgy (an adaptation of the Gallican rite) would have been well known in Northumbria due to the Columban mission.⁸¹ While the Irish influence may have waned after the decisions made at the Synod at Whitby, the liturgy continued to be practised for quite some time, and it has been argued that certain rituals were still being practised in York at the close of the 8th century.⁸² The fact that the Council of Clovesho had to order the general adoption of Roman sacramental usage throughout the Anglo-Saxon dioceses demonstrates that the Roman rites were still only in partial use at that time, as does Alcuin's letter to Archbishop Eanbald of York (c. 796) protesting his continued use of Irish rites.⁸³

Ironically, despite the fact that aspects of the Irish liturgy continued to be practised in Northumbria until the close of the 8th century, the liturgy as it was being practised in Rome was being imitated in Ireland as early as the mid-7th century. In 631, delegates from a southern Irish Synod (Mágh Léine) travelled to Rome to determine the correct dating of Easter. In addition to relics, the delegates brought back books and careful recordings of the Roman liturgical ceremonies. By the middle of the 8th century, the desire to imitate Rome was being actively

⁷⁸ Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Library, MS 286. See S. Greenfield and D. Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*, (New York & London, 1986), p.9, note 11.

⁷⁹ Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 125-152; Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, pp. 273- 275.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Sharpe, *Life of St Columba*, pp. 25, 347; note 34, argues that despite slight variations, the Columban liturgy remained essentially Irish.

⁸² J. Meissner, *The Celtic Church in England after the Synod of Whitby* (London, 1929), pp. 9, 14-17, 134-158; Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual*, pp. 76-77.

encouraged by the Popes, and was beginning to be seen as the ‘universal rule’ not only in Northumbria, but also in Ireland. At the same time, the desire to imitate Rome did not preclude the necessity to adapt the Latin ceremonies for local audiences, who were sometimes versed only in the vernacular and did not wish to abandon their own traditions.⁸⁴ The resultant mixture of local, Gallican and Roman rites can be seen in the Irish *Stowe Missal*.⁸⁵ Indeed, the mixed Irish liturgy was not entirely replaced by the Roman until the mid-12th century under St Malachi, the bishop of Armagh, who not only demanded, but also received the *pallium* from the Pope, thence becoming the first archbishop invested with legatine authority over the Irish Church in Ireland.⁸⁶

It is likely that the Irish liturgy was also introduced into Scotland and Pictland via the Columban mission.⁸⁷ Indeed, liturgical fragments found in the Scottish *Book of Deer* show strong similarities to those found in Gallican Missals and to similar passages in the Irish *Book of Dimma*, *Book of Mulling*, and the *Stowe Missal*.⁸⁸ While there is no written documentation of a Pictish liturgy, certain images carved on their monuments do suggest either the continued use of certain Irish rites, or perhaps, the reinstatement of the Irish liturgy with the advent of the *Céli Dé* movement.⁸⁹

Within this context, it is most probable that the monastery in Tarbat began with the mixed Gallican rite as practised by the Irish and Columban monasteries and continued with these rites at least until the close of the 8th century, when the Roman rites might have gained precedence. This does not preclude earlier knowledge of the Roman rites, either through circulation of Roman mass-books or contacts with Anglo-Saxon or Irish monasteries. Likewise, it is highly

⁸³ See above, note 79; Alcuin, *Epistola* 115, *PL* 100: 345-347; see also letters 4-6 in S. Allot (ed.), *Alcuin of York c. 732 to 804: His Life and Letters* (York, 1974), pp. 5-10.

⁸⁴ Ó Carragáin, ‘*Traditio evangeliorum*’ pp. 400-411; McNaught, *The Celtic Church and the See of Peter*, p.63.

⁸⁵ Dublin, Royal Irish Academy Library, MS D II.3. The *Stowe Missal*, which also contains an Old Irish Treatise on the Mass, has been variously dated from the 7th- 9th centuries. See G. Warner (ed.), *The Stowe Missal: MS D. II.3 in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin*, (London, 1906), 2: xxii-xxxix, 37-42.

⁸⁶F. Warren (ed.), *The Manuscript Irish Missal Belonging to the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford* (London, 1879) p. 44.

⁸⁷Sharpe, *Life of St Columba*, pp. 5, 33, 284, note 125.

⁸⁸*The Book of Deer*, Cambridge, University Library, MS Ii. 6. 32. See

<<http://www.bookofdeer.co.uk/homepage.html>> (15 May 2003). See also Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual*, pp. 163-164.

probable that the Irish/Columban liturgy was re-instituted once the Scottish dynasty was in full control of Pictland, or that it was reintroduced by *Céli Dé* missionaries even earlier.

Along with certain aspects of the Roman and Irish liturgy, attitudes towards the symbol of the cross in the early church are also relevant to an understanding of the monuments erected on the Tarbat peninsula. In addition to its place in the liturgy, a whole system of beliefs about the Cross was to be found in more diverse literary, legendary and exegetical texts. Of these, two separate traditions were particularly resonant.

The Cross in Early Christianity:

The first early Christian tradition regarding the Cross was adopted from Semitic and Old Testament traditions of a cosmological tree that was located at the centre of the earth.⁹⁰ Early Christian writers subsequently conflated the Cross with the Tree of Life by locating the middle of the earth at Golgotha in order to correspond with the site of the crucifixion.⁹¹ The association between the Cross and the Tree of Life was most completely expressed in *De Pasha*, a Christian poem probably written in the 4th century, and mistakenly attributed to Cyprian and copied among his works until the 9th century.⁹² Also attributed to Tertullian under the title *De Ligno Vitae*, the poem provides one of the fullest accounts in Western literature of the cosmological tree of the Cross, conflating several key ideas that were subsequently represented artistically throughout the Middle Ages.⁹³ In essence the poem describes a tree that is identical with the Saviour and the

⁸⁹ See Chapter 2.

⁹⁰ See Ezekiel 5:5, 17:22-24, 38:12; Daniel 4: 7-14.

⁹¹ For example, see Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catachesis* 13:28, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:89; Jerome, *Commentariorum in Ezechielem* 2:5.5, *PL* 25:52; Appendix 1B.

⁹² *De Pasha* is included in Cyprian's *Opera Omnia* up until the late 19th century. See G. de Hartel, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vindobanae, 1868-71), 3:305. Three different Carolingian MSS dating from the end of the 8th century include the poem, attesting to its popularity in the early medieval world. See E. Greenhill, 'The Child in the Tree: A Study of the Cosmological Tree in Christian Tradition,' *Traditio* 10 (1954): 338-342, 351-352.

⁹³ Ps-Tertullian, *De Ligno Vitae*, *PL* 2:1113-1115. In addition, *De pascha* was attributed to Priscillian and Martin of Braga, and was available in Ireland before 800. See Appendix 1A. For a survey of the medieval artistic representations possibly inspired by knowledge of this poem, see J. O' Reilly, 'The Trees of Eden in Medieval

Church, is located in the middle of the earth on Golgotha, reaches up like a ladder to Heaven, has a fountain of baptism at its base, and provides refuge and nourishment (identical with the Eucharist) for everyone under its branches.⁹⁴ These ideas were further reflected in the work of Gregory the Great, whose *Moralia* features closely related imagery that equates the Saviour and Church with the Tree, whose branches are full of the souls of the blessed in the form of birds, and which goes through the same phases of death, burial, Resurrection, and glorification as Christ.⁹⁵

The second early Christian tradition about the Cross was adapted from the Greek cosmological concepts of the universal soul (*Logos*) and of the *Chi*, which the Christian exegetes applied to Christ and the Cross. Greek fathers such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa believed the global dimensions of the Cross were impressed as a *Chi* on the universe,⁹⁶ while 3rd-century Latin texts, such as the *Divinae Institutiones* by Lactantius, identified the Cross with the *Logos* made flesh.⁹⁷ Familiar with the majority of these authors,⁹⁸ Augustine furthered these ideas by applying Paul's description of Christ's boundless love (Ephesians 3:17-19) to the universal dimensions of the Cross.⁹⁹

From the early-4th century, the Cross also began to be seen as a sign of Victory rather than a sign of Death.¹⁰⁰ This belief was no doubt popularised by stories of Constantine's victory

Iconography,' in P. Morris and D. Sawyer (eds.), *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden* (Sheffield, 1992), *passim*.

⁹⁴ See Appendix 1B; C. White, *Early Christian Latin Poets*, (London and New York, 2000), pp. 136-39.

⁹⁵ Gregory the Great, *Moralia sive Expositio in Iob* 18:1.3, *PL* 76: 97; Appendix 1B.

⁹⁶ Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 1:60, *ANCL* 2:58; Irenaeus, *Epideixis* 1:34, in J. Smith (ed.), *Ancient Christian Writers* (London, 1952) 16: 69-70; Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Catechetica* 32, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 5: 500; Appendix 1B.

⁹⁷ Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones* 4:26, *PL* 6: 530; *ANCL* 7, p. 77; Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechises* 13:28, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:89; Appendix 1B. There is evidence that *Divinae Institutiones* may have been used by Bede in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. See *FONTES* (03-August 2003).

⁹⁸ A. Fitzgerald, *et al* (eds.), *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 123, 457, 489-490.

⁹⁹ For example, Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 8:5, *CCSL* 38:51.17-24; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 51:12, *CCSL* 39: 631-632: 18-37; *De Doctrina Christiana* 2:41:62, *CCSL* 32: 75-76.16-30; *In Evangelium Iohannis Tractatus* 118:5, *CCSL* 36: 657.1-20; *Epistola* 55:14.25, in A. Goldbacher (ed.), *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vindobanae, 1895), 34:2.169-213; Appendix 1B.

¹⁰⁰ Athanasius, *De Incarnatione Verbi* 26-31, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 4:50-53.

after seeing a vision of a glowing cross in the sky.¹⁰¹ The conceit also found its way into the general folklore of the time, and Cyril of Jerusalem describes a wonderful cross of light, extending from Calvary to the Mount of Olives, which appeared in the air on the ninth of May, in a letter to Emperor Constantius.¹⁰²

Early Christians also came to believe that those parts of the Cross that touched Christ's body ascended to Heaven to become the eschatological cross of the Second Coming,¹⁰³ and the Patristic Fathers began to formulate a theology which conflated the Cross with figurations of judgement such as the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament, and Christ's Judgement throne in Revelations.¹⁰⁴

Thus, the Cross was viewed as a symbol of both the Passion and Redemption, as well as the Tree of Life, a sign of victory and the harbinger of the Second Coming and the Last Judgement. All of these various concepts of the Cross were combined and repeated in various liturgical texts and rituals in the early medieval Church. For instance, *Pangue Lingua*, one of three hymns written by Venantius Fortunatus (c. 569) to celebrate the arrival at Poitiers of a relic of the Sacred Cross, and later incorporated into the feasts of the *Adoratio Crucis* and the *Exaltatio Crucis* (see below), not only venerates the actual wood of the cross, but also conflates the Tree of Life, the Crucifixion Cross, the Cross of Victory, and the eschatological Cross of the

¹⁰¹ See Eusebius, *The Life of Constantine* 1:28-29, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 1: 490. While Rufinus translated Eusebius's *Historiae Ecclesiasticae* into Latin, he did not translate Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*. However, the story of Constantine's vision and the making of his standard were incorporated into the Greek histories of Sozomen and Socrates, and subsequently into the Latin Ps-Cassiodorus *Tripartite History*. See Appendix 1A. To compare accounts of Constantine's vision, see Socrates *Ecclesiastical History* 1:2, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2:2; Sozomen *Ecclesiastical History* 1:3, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2:241-242; Cassiodorus *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita* 1:4, *PL* 69:888; Appendix 1B. The *Tripartite History* was definitely known in Anglo-Saxon England by the time of Aelfric as he used it in the composition of several homilies. See Appendix 1A.

¹⁰² While the letter is extant among Cyril's works until 1165 AD, his authorship has been argued, and Sozomen's account of the vision and the letter (*Ecclesiastical History* 4:5, *NPNF* 2nd series, 2:302) is considered to be full of interpolations. See P. Schaff (ed.), *A Religious Encyclopaedia or Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology*, 3rd edn (Toronto, New York & London, 1894), 1:595.

¹⁰³ See M. Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page in the *Book of Durrow*: The Cult of the True Cross, Adomnan, and Iona,' *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990): 216, note 207.

¹⁰⁴ For instance, see Leo the Great, *Sermo* 59: *De Passione Domini* 8: 6-7, *CCSL* 138A:356-358.145-149, 161-174; Appendix 1B. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of Leo's sermons.

Second Coming.¹⁰⁵ Lines from both the *Pangue Lingua* and Fortunatus's *Crux Benedicta* also appear in the antiphons of the *Liber Responsalis*, which was included in the Gelasian Sacramentary.¹⁰⁶

Almost all of these concepts were familiar in the medieval Insular world. The belief that the Cross and Jerusalem were located at the centre of the earth is reported by Adomnán in *De Locis Sanctis*, and in the early-middle Irish poem *Saltair na Rann*.¹⁰⁷ The association between the Cross and the Tree of Life was made in a number of works read and copied in the Insular world, such as the Hiberno-Latin *Commentarius in Evangelium Secundum Marcum*, which not only delineates the concept of the extensions of the Cross to the four corners of the world and up to the heavens as well as below the earth, but also explores the relationship between the first Tree of Knowledge and the Second Tree of Life.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, the prologue to the Hiberno-Latin *Expositio Quattuor Evangeliorum* conflates the extensions of the four arms of the cross with the four rivers of the garden of Eden, the four virtues, and the four evangelists, as well as connecting

¹⁰⁵ Venantius Fortunatus, *Pangue Lingua*, PL 88: 88-89; Appendix 1B. See also *Crux Benedicta*, and *Vexilla Regis*, PL 88: 87, 95-96; Appendix B, Both of these hymns also celebrate the Tree of Life and the Cross of Victory. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of Fortunatus's works.

¹⁰⁶ See *Liber Responsalis Sive Antiphonarius: In Exaltatione Sanctae Crucis*, PL 78: 803-804; Appendix B. While Hall, 'The Cross as Green Tree', p. 303, note 22, thinks the attribution to Gregory the Great is doubtful, he does argue that the antiphons most likely reflect 9th-century Frankish liturgical practices and probably bore some relationship to contemporary Anglo-Saxon practices. The anonymous authors of the OE *Martyrology* and *Evangelium Ps. Matthaei* both refer to the *Liber responsalis*, also arguing for its Insular circulation. See FONTES database entry Ps. Gregory: *Liber responsalis* (09 May 2003).

¹⁰⁷ Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 1:12, PL 88: 787-788; D. Meehan, (ed.), *Adomnán's De Locis Sanctis*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 3 (Dublin, 1958), 3:49-50. Appendix 1B. Adomnán refers to both Jerome and to Cyril of Jerusalem. See above, note 91. Cantos 4-12 in the *Saltair na Rann* show a dependence upon the apocryphal *Life of Adam and Eve*, which states that the head of Adam was carried to Golgotha by the Flood, and remained there to mark the spot on which Christ's cross would stand. See D. Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish: A Preliminary Investigation', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 73 (1973) C:307. Never translated in its entirety, cantos 4-12 can be found D. Green and F. Kelly (eds.), *The Irish Adam and Eve Story from Saltair na Rann*, Text and Translation vol. 1, (Dublin, 1976). Until recently, it has been accepted that the *Saltair na Rann* was written in the late 10th century, but more recent views propose a 9th-century date of composition. See J. Carey, *King of Mysteries: Early Irish Religious Writings*, (Dublin, 2000), p. 276.

¹⁰⁸ Ps-Jerome, *Commentarius in Evangelium Secundum Marcum* 15, PL 30: 637-638; Appendix 1B. The treatise was possibly written in the third quarter of the 8th century. See Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' p. 211. For the circulation of the Pseudo-Jerome, see B. Bischoff, 'Turning Points in the History of Latin Exegesis in the Early Middle Ages: AD 650-800,' in M. MacNamara (ed.), *Biblical Studies: The Medieval Irish Contribution*, (Dublin, 1976), pp. 129-31.

the Cross to the Old Covenant as it was exemplified by the Ark and the rod of Aaron, and to the New Covenant as it is exemplified by the four Evangelists and the Church.¹⁰⁹

Bede's exegesis seems to incorporate almost the entire matrix of ideas surrounding the Cross in the early medieval period. For instance, he explores the relationship between the Tree of Life and the Cross in his hymn on the Passion of St. Andrew (*In eodem festo ad crucem dicendus*), and his Commentary on Psalm 1, while his description of the Tree of Life in his Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel has most of the same attributes as the Tree in Gregory's *Moralia* and *De Pascha*.¹¹⁰ Likewise, Bede identified the universal extensions of the Cross with the extensions of both Christ and the Church in a number of works, and explored the intimate connection between the Passion Cross, the Victory Cross and the Second Coming in his *Homily for the Easter Vigil*.¹¹¹

The last section of the Old English poem *Christ*, (also known as *Christ III* or *The Last Judgement*)¹¹² cements the relationship between the crucifixion Cross, the Cross of Victory, and the Day of Judgement, with lines that describe the voice of the trumpets, the host of angels, and the shining, towering Cross, which is a sign of the ruler's might, as well as the day of terror when every soul is summoned before the Lord. Further on in the poem, the Rood, stained with blood

¹⁰⁹ See Ps-Jerome, *Expositio Quattuor Evangeliorum: Prologus*, PL 30: 533-534; Appendix 1B. This work may also have influenced *Vercelli Homily 5* and *Irvine Homily 5*. See *FONTES* (05-October 2003).

¹¹⁰ Bede, *Hymn 13: In eodem festo ad crucem dicendus*, PL 94:634; *De Psalmorum Libro Exegesis: In Psalmum Primum*, PL 93:486-487; *In Lucae Evangelium Expositio* 4:13.18-19, CCSL 120:270.1566-73; G. Henderson, *Bede and the Visual Arts*, Jarrow Lecture (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1980/81), pp.16-17; Appendix 1B. See Appendix 1A for Bede's use of Gregory's *Moralium*.

¹¹¹ Bede, *In S. Joannis Evangelium Expositio* 19, PL 92: 913; *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* 10:11, CCSL 121: 49-50.35-36, 44-52; *Homiliae: In Vigilia Paschae*, PL 94:133-134; L. Martin (ed.), *The Venerable Bede: Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Kalamazoo, 1989), pp. 96-97.

¹¹² The poem appears in the *Exeter Book* (Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS 3501) after Cynewulf's *Ascension (Christ II)*, and like *Genesis B*, may be a translation of an Old Saxon original. Material for the poem is taken from Caesarius of Arles, Ephraem Syrus, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, and may also have been influenced by Ps. Jerome's *Commentarius in Evangelium Secundum Marcum*. While the manuscript can be dated to around 1000 AD, both the authorship of the poem, and its date of composition has been the subject of critical disagreement. See Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History*, pp. 130, 164-65, 183, 193-194; T. Hill, 'Literary History and Old English Poetry: The Case of Christ I, II, and III,' in P. Szarmach (ed.) *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, Sources in Medieval Culture 20(1990), p. 22; C. Kennedy, *Early English Christian Poetry*, (New York, 1963), pp. 254-257.

and gore, is transformed into the brightest of beacons to illuminate all creation, except for the sin-stained men who will receive no grace.¹¹³

In short, patristic and Insular exegesis and poetry saw both the Tree of Life and the Golgotha cross as types of the Cosmological Tree which rose from the centre of the Earth, supported Heaven, united creation, and extended God's will through all things. Divided into four, it echoed the four divisions of the universe. This Cross/Tree of life was prefigured by the rod of Aaron, the brazen serpent of Moses, and the Ark of the Covenant, and was conflated with both Christ and the Church, both of which also demonstrated universal dimensions. At the same time the Passion Cross also came to be associated with the Cross of Victory, a symbol not only of the Resurrection, but also of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement, and which thus became conflated with the Judgement throne in Revelations.

The many ideas surrounding the cross both fuelled and were fuelled by the Cult of the Cross, begun during the 4th century and manifested in several different, yet related, liturgical rites in the early Middle Ages: the *Inventio* (discovery of the True Cross), the *Adoratio Crucis* (veneration of the wood of the Cross), and the *Exaltatio Crucis* (exaltation of the True Cross).

The *Inventio* rite celebrated the discovery of the True Cross, supposedly by Constantine's mother Helen, in 326 AD. The feast was possibly celebrated as early as 335 AD under Pope Sylvester I, and by 350 AD, fragments of the True Cross had been disseminated to various Christian centres while the primary reliquary was kept in the Church at Golgotha.¹¹⁴ The Discovery of the Cross and the subsequent celebration of this event was one of the elements leading to the treatment of the Cross as a sign of Victory and the Second Coming, rather than just a sign of Christ's crucifixion.¹¹⁵ Established by the 6th century in the Roman liturgy, and

¹¹³ See 'Judgement of Christ' in B. Muir (ed.), *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry: An Edition of Exeter Dean and Chapter MS 3501*, rev. 2nd edn (Exeter, 2000), 1:85-87, lines 195-202, 215-236; Appendix 1B.

¹¹⁴ W. Smith and S. Cheetham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, Comprising the History, Institutions, and Antiquities of the Christian Church from the Time of the Apostles to the Age of Charlemagne*, (London, 1875), 1: 503-505; Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 181, 204.

¹¹⁵ A. Di Berardino (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church*, (Cambridge, 1992), 1:210.

introduced into Gaul in the 8th century, the *Inventio* feast is marked on 3 May in the *Mozarabic Calendar*, the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, and in the *Bobbio Missal*.¹¹⁶ Knowledge of the feast may not have reached England until the mid 8th century, since it is mentioned in the *Pontifical of Egbert* (Paris, Biblioteque Nationale Lat. 13246) who was Archbishop of York from 735-766 AD, but not by Bede.¹¹⁷ However, it is possible that it was known as early as the late 7th century, since one of the feasts in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, British Library Cotton Nero D.IV) is marked by a pericope for the *Inventio*.¹¹⁸

Celebrated on 14 September, the origins of the *Exaltatio Crucis* are unclear, though it has been argued that it began either as a celebration of the consecration of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem by Bishop Marcarius at the command of Constantine in 335 AD, or that it began as a commemoration of the vision of the Cross seen by Constantine. Observation of the *Exaltatio* rite in Jerusalem was recorded as early as the 5th century in the *Acta* of the Egyptian penitent Mary, and in the 6th century by Eutychius in Constantinople. Regardless of its origins, under Pope Honorius I (*obit* 638 AD) the festival came to commemorate the victory of Heraclius over the Persian Empire (c.627) and the subsequent restoration of the True Cross to its shrine on Golgotha where it was once more exalted.¹¹⁹ The *Exaltatio* feast, incorporating lines from the *Pangue Lingua*, was included in both the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, suggesting that knowledge of the rite may have reached Britain in the 8th century. Indeed, Ó Carragáin has

¹¹⁶ The *Bobbio Missal* (Paris, Biblioteque Nationale, MS lat.13246) is a mid 8th-century Gallican Missal discovered in Bobbio, a northern Italian monastery founded by the Ionan monk, Columbanus. Argument exists as to whether it was written by an Irish or Italian scribe and whether its contents primarily reflect Irish or Gallican liturgical rites, though the preceding discussion in this chapter would suggest that there would be many similarities between the two, and lines of communication between Bobbio and Iona would most likely predicate a further mixture. See McNaught, *The Celtic Church and the See of Peter*, p. 65.

¹¹⁷ Accounts of the *Inventio Crucis* are contained in at least eight Insular manuscripts including various English *Martyrologies*. See Biggs, Hill, and Szarmach, *SASLC*, p. 13.

¹¹⁸ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' p. 198.

¹¹⁹ Smith and Cheetham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, pp. 502-503. Cf. A. Fortescue 'The Cross and Crucifix in the Liturgy', *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Online Edition, <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04533a.html>> (11 April 2002).

argued that knowledge of papal use of the *Exaltatio* and other rites may have inspired the erection of the Ruthwell cross.¹²⁰

The *Adoratio*, or veneration of the sacred wood of the True Cross, was recorded in Jerusalem as early as the late-4th to early-5th century by the pilgrim Egeria, who recorded the rite as it was performed on Good Friday in the chapel situated behind Calvary. Essentially, she described a silver casket that contained the sacred wood of the Cross that was placed on the altar, so that the entire congregation could pass by, bow down, and touch and kiss the cross.¹²¹ Adomnán's account of Arculf's travels to Constantinople depicts a similar ceremony involving a relic of the true cross in the late 7th century. He describes a wooden reliquary containing three beams from the Cross, which is placed on the altar for three consecutive days (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday) so that worshippers may kiss 'the salutary cross' when the chest is opened. Certain details of this account are most intriguing, such as Adomnán's choice of language when he describes how all kiss the 'gibbet of honour' and the 'victorious wood'; his insistence that there are three, not two, pieces of the True Cross within the Chest; his description of the wondrous fragrance that arises when the chest is open; and the account of the oil-like liquid which is exuded from the knots in the three beams that will cure any sick or diseased person.¹²²

The *Ordines Romani* suggest that by the mid-7th century, the *Adoratio* ceremony, (within which the Cantic of Habakkuk 3:2, Psalm 90:13, the *Pangue lingue*, and the antiphons from the *Liber Responsalis* were all recited), had become part of the Holy Week services in Rome.¹²³ The eighth stanza of the *Pangue Lingua* hymn was of particular importance during the *Adoratio* rite;

¹²⁰ Ó Carragáin, 'Liturgical Innovation Associated with Pope Sergius and the Iconography of the Ruthwell and Bewcastle Crosses,' in R. Farrell (ed.), *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England: Papers in Honour of the 1300th Anniversary of the Birth of Bede, Given at Cornell University in 1973 and 1974*, British Archaeological Reports (Oxford, 1978), p.141; 'The Ruthwell Cross,' p. 118.

¹²¹ M. McClure and C. Feltoe (eds.), *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, Translations of Latin Literature Series 3 (1919), pp. 74-75.

¹²² Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 3.3, PL 88: 810; Appendix 1B.

it preceded the recitation of the rest of the verses, and also was repeated (alternately by the first four or the last two lines) in between each verse.¹²⁴

Ó Carragáin seems to argue for the practice of the rite in early medieval Britain when he states: 'At Rome, and thus in Northumbria, an extract from the canticle [of Habakkuk]...was sung...at the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday.'¹²⁵ He also argues that knowledge of the *Adoratio Crucis* influenced the carving on the Ruthwell Cross, stating that both the iconography on the west face and the second half of the runic poetic lines contain clear references to the liturgical ceremony.¹²⁶ Werner likewise argues that it is likely that Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop were present for *Adoratio* ceremonies in Rome, and thus brought word of them back, and that the ceremony could have been introduced into England as early as the 7th century by Theodore, and known about in Ireland by the mid-7th century, via lines of communication between Columbanus's continental foundations and Iona.¹²⁷ In addition, Insular knowledge of the rite is suggested by the inclusion of Good Friday *Adoratio* prayers, possibly assembled at Lindisfarne, in the early 9th-century *Book of Cerne* (Cambridge University Library MS. L1. I. 10).¹²⁸ The rite was certainly observed in Anglo-Saxon England by the 10th century as it is described in St Aethelwold's *Regularis Concordia*.¹²⁹

Whether or not the specific rites were practised in early medieval Britain and Ireland, it is highly likely that elements of the Cult of the Cross were recognisable, if only through second-

¹²³ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 189-190, 199. See T.P Gilmartin, 'Good Friday' *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Online Edition, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06643a.htm> (02 May 2002), for a detailed account of the *Adoratio* rite as it appears in the *Romanes Ordines*.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*; Appendix 1B.

¹²⁵ Ó Carragáin, 'Traditio Evangeliorum,' p. 422. Cf. Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of St Paul and St Anthony', pp. 4-6, 20, note 2; 'Christ over the Beasts,' pp. 383-388; 'The Ruthwell Cross,' pp.118-119.

¹²⁶ Ó Carragáin, 'The Ruthwell Cross,' p. 118, *The City of Rome and the World of Bede*, pp. 32-36; 'The Necessary Distance,' pp.195-199.

¹²⁷ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp.190-191, 199-200.

¹²⁸ See A. Kuypers (ed.), *The Prayer Book of Aedulald the Bishop, Commonly Called the Book of Cerne*, (Cambridge, 1902) pp. xx-xxx.

¹²⁹ T. Symons (ed.), *Regularis Concordia*, (London, 1953), pp. 41-46.

hand reports.¹³⁰ In addition, Werner believes there is a possibility that the Iona community possessed a fragment of the True Cross around 685 AD.¹³¹ Three entries in the Old Irish treatise at the end of the Stowe Missal may also be indicative of the 'Cross Cult' theology in Ireland. These entries (numbers 11, 16 and 17) inform the celebrant of the significance of the confection of the host into seven pieces and direct him to lay out the fragments on the paten in the shape of a cross since, 'the Host on the paten is Christ's Flesh on the Tree of the Cross.'¹³²

The Christological debates taking place from the 5th through 7th centuries also informed the growing Cult of the Cross, which reflected the orthodox middle ground. Following upon the heels of the Arian heresy which held that Christ was not co-eternal with the Father, but created by him, and therefore not fully divine, the Christological disputes showed the early Church's attempts to come to terms with a God who was at once fully divine and fully human. The Monophysites (centred in Alexandria) denied the corruptibility of Christ's flesh whereas the Nestorians (centred in Antioch) insisted upon Christ's humanity and his agony upon the Cross.¹³³ The Christological debates were known about in Anglo-Saxon England, and most likely in Ireland as well, through pilgrims, religious delegations, and contacts with monasteries on the Continent such as Bobbio.¹³⁴ The Hatfield Council was convoked in 679 AD by Theodore in order, among other things, to prevent Monothelite ideas taking hold in England. Happily, Bede was able to report that the 'reverend bishops of the island of Britain' were united in the orthodox catholic faith.¹³⁵

The theology contained in the responses and hymns of the Cross-Cult ceremonies embodied the orthodox faith by providing a Christ who was both divine and human. By

¹³⁰ For instance, see Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 3:3, PL 88: 810; Appendix 1B. This work became known in Anglo-Saxon circles by the end of the 7th century and had a wide circulation soon after on the Continent. See Meehan, *De Locis Sanctis*, pp. 4-6.

¹³¹ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp.190-191, 220.

¹³² Warren, *The Stowe Missal*, p. 41.

¹³³ See K. Aland, *A History of Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1985), 1:185-86, 198-206, for a full account of the Christological controversy.

¹³⁴ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 193-197. See also Hughes, 'Evidence for Contacts,' pp. 49-68.

¹³⁵ *EH* IV.17, pp. 384-387; Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 10, 21, 64, 252-3.

presenting a life-giving Tree that was the instrument of Salvation as well as the physical witness to Christ's Passion, in addition to being the perpetual proof of the Second Coming and Redemption, Christ could be seen as a transcendently triumphant God as well as a sentient being in agony on the cross.¹³⁶ Therefore, even if the Cross-cult ceremonies of the *Adoratio*, *Exaltatio*, and *Inventio*, were not actually practised in Ireland or Britain, the theology that informed them was known, and quite probably lay behind the various representations of the monumental crosses.

It is probable that the ecclesiastical estate at Portmahomack was affected in some way or another by all of these religious issues and political events, and, as will be seen in the succeeding chapters, the Tarbat monuments may be able to tell us what type of *monasteria* it was, the expansion of borders, its association with the ruling powers in Pictland, and its relations with the competing branches of the early Christian Church in Britain, as well as on the Continent and Eastern Mediterranean.

Though necessarily painted with broad brush-strokes the preceding picture of the probable historical, intellectual, and liturgical background of the medieval Insular world provides a springboard from which it is now possible to engage with the specific iconography and decorative details carved on the individual Tarbat monuments. In so far as possible, the archaeological and historical contexts as suggested so far by the ongoing excavations will be discussed along with a brief survey of the historiography and geology of each monument. This will be followed by a detailed description of both the figural and decorative carving. Next, the iconographic schemes will be identified, and the art-historical sources and parallels to both the iconography and the decorative ornament discussed. Finally, through a consideration of the possible cultural context and the literary and liturgical sources behind the decoration, the probable meanings conveyed by each monument or fragment will be theorised.

¹³⁶ See R. Woolf, 'Doctrinal Influences on the *Dream of the Rood*,' *Medium Aevum* 28 (1958): 37-53.

With the exception of some small fragments of both figural and decorative sculpture recently found at the Hilton of Cadboll site (see chapter 4) and at the Portmahomack site (see chapter 5) all of the Pictish carved monuments and fragments located on the Tarbat peninsula will be addressed. The smaller, recently uncovered fragments will not be discussed, for several reasons. First, most of these fragments bear only decorative designs, and while analysis of decorative styles is a part of this thesis, the main thrust is interpretation of the iconography, which is primarily revealed by figural sculpture. Secondly, the figural carving that is contained on a few select fragments is difficult to contextualise in so far that exceedingly few fit together to form any sort of identifiable scene. It is very difficult to garner any sort of meaning out of an isolated human head, or fragment of an animal. Third, while the fragments uncovered at the Hilton of Cadboll site most likely originate from the damaged cross-slab, the fragments from the Portmahomack site may originate either from one of at least three attested cross-slabs (which are addressed within the chapter), or from a fourth, theoretical cross-slab, or even from architectural sculpture. So again, the context of these fragments is next to impossible to surmise. Fourth, the amount of information to be considered during a study of the three main cross-slabs on the Tarbat peninsula and the attested cross-slab fragments and architectural sculpture at Portmahomack precludes the capacity for an adequate discussion of any of the recently excavated fragments.

As will be seen, a number of themes, motifs, and decorative designs are repeated from monument to monument. In order to keep each chapter to a manageable size, I have begun with a monument that displays the greatest number of these so that I may refer back to it for the primary discussion. It is for this reason, and no other that I chose to begin with a consideration of the monument at Nigg, and end with the discussion of the myriad fragments uncovered at Portmahomack. Each chapter, therefore, builds upon the information presented in the preceding chapter.

CH 2: THE CROSS-SLAB AT NIGG (NH 856747)

INTRODUCTION

This upright rectangular slab, topped by a roughly triangular pediment, and decorated in relief and incised ornament on both faces is currently located inside the church at Nigg. As it is currently displayed (missing a section from the upper half of the monument) the cross-slab is 236cm high, 103cm wide, and only 13cm thick, making it the thinnest of the Tarbat cross-slabs. Carved from yellow micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs or 'Liesegang' rings, the Nigg slab is part of the same geological group as those at Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll, as well as the Portmahomack fragments, TR1, 10 and 20.¹

Recorded by Charles Petley between 1811-1812, a letter from his widow upon publication in 1831 points out that Petley had relied upon 'some manuscripts of the traditionary [sic] accounts which he picked up at the time he made the drawings,' pointing to earlier accounts which are now lost.² John Stuart re-recorded the stone in 1856, repeating Petley's assertion that the slab had always stood in the churchyard at Nigg; unfortunately, neither scholar speculated how long the churchyard itself had been in existence.³ Citing both the earlier antiquaries, Allen and Anderson further claimed that the stone was thrown down by a storm in 1727 and placed against the east gable of the church, where it remained until the late-18th century when it was moved in order to gain admittance to a family vault.⁴ Broken during this operation, several pieces were subsequently lost, although one fragment recently has been recovered by Niall

¹ N. Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving: The Tarbat Geological Research Project: First Report 1999,' in *Bull* 4. <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000).

² C. Petley, 'A Short Account of Some Carved Stones in Ross-Shire, Accompanied with a Series of Outline Engravings,' *Archaeologia Scotica* 4 (1831): 352.

³ J. Stuart, *The Sculptured Stones of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1856), 1:11, plate XXVIII. Cf. Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' p.352.

Robertson.⁵ The early 19th-century drawings made by Charles Petley, and subsequently copied by Allen and Anderson, are the only records of the decoration contained on the still missing sections, as well as the subsequently damaged areas of the stone.⁶

Stuart wrote that when the stone was initially re-erected the larger fragment was turned upside down, which he corrected in order to draw the stone in 1856.⁷ By the time Allen and Anderson viewed the stone, roughly 50 years later, it had been repaired by joining the two pieces together with cement and metal clamps, and had been placed in a new stone base outside the west end of the church. Since then the pieces have been separated again, remounted on a concrete slab with spaces to allow for the missing fragments, and re-erected inside the church.

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION

SIDE A (Fig. 2.1)

The cross on the slab at Nigg extends to each edge of the rectangular slab, dividing the field of decoration into left and right areas that are further subdivided into separate panels by thick mouldings. The cross-face of the slab can thus be divided into 5 main fields of decoration: the pediment (field 1), the cross (fields 2A-F), the areas above the cross-arms (fields 3A-B), and the four panels of decoration underneath the cross-arms (fields 4A-B and 5A-B).⁸

Field 1. The Pediment:

Two human figures with long, belted robes, and curly hair, bend over books held in their

⁴ *ECMS* 2:76.

⁵ This triangular fragment, featuring a key pattern believed to be from the missing 'Pictish beast' (see *ECMS* 2, fig. 79) can currently be viewed at the 'Tain Through Time' Visitor Center in Tain, Easter-Ross.

⁶ *ECMS* 2, figs. 73, 79, 80-81. Cf. Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' plates xxiv-xxvi.

⁷ Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, p. 11. Cf. *ECMS* 2:76.

hands. Facing inwards, both figures lean on two inward-facing quadrupeds, also in profile, with blunt muzzles, thin tapering torsos and tails curling between their legs. A bird with a circular object in its mouth flies down between the figures while a thin-stemmed vessel is placed directly below, between the two beasts. Plant-like borders run upwards along the edges of the pediment to terminate directly above the heads of the human figures.

Field 2. The Cross:

Different types of decoration separate the crosshead from the shaft. Despite damage to the stone, it can be seen that the cross-head (fields 2A -E) featured a squared centre, three equal squared arms, a rectangular lower arm, and double-squared hollow armpits, turning a standard Anglo-Saxon type 2A cross-head into what Allen and Anderson classified as type 98A.⁹ The centre of the cross (field 2A) is filled with a dense circular interlace pattern, while each of the arms is filled with zoomorphic designs comprising intertwined, elongated quadrupeds forming complex patterns. The tails and extended torsos of the creatures often force their delicate limbs into what is known as the 'Anglo-Saxon lock,' a configuration in which the leg that is further away from the spectator is shown in front of the passing object, while the leg that is closest is crossed over by the passing object.¹⁰ The cross shaft (field 2F) is filled with a diagonal key pattern that creates a design characterised by lozenge shapes. As revealed by the drawings of Petley, the cross-shaft also had an additional, lower panel of interlace; unfortunately, this is now

⁸ The following description focuses on the most salient details of the decoration. For a full description see Appendix 2A.

⁹ *ECMS* 1:76. Cf. R. Cramp, 'Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament: A General Introduction to the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture,' in *CASS* 1:xvi.

¹⁰ C. Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art* (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 123; T.D. Kendrick, *Anglo-Saxon Art to AD 900*, (London, 1938), pp. 140-141. The late 7th century *Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero D IV, fol. 94v) display the earliest known examples of this configuration. See J. Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, (London, 1981), p.48, plate 28.

hidden by its present setting.¹¹

Field 3. Above the Cross-Arms:

The left and right panels located above the cross-arms (fields 3A-B) are both missing their lower sections; although the original configuration of both panels, featuring four large bosses, several smaller bosses and centrally-located lozenge-shapes can be seen in Petley's drawings.¹² While the two large bosses in field 3A are identical, decorated with triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped connections, the bosses in field 3B differ; each has a central triple-band spiral, but that on the left is surrounded by a key pattern while that on the right is surrounded by interlace.

Field 4. Directly Below the Cross-Arms:

The two panels directly below the cross-arms, in contrast to fields 3A-B, are different in composition, but feature very similar details. The bosses in both panels display the same tightly woven curvilinear interlace, and the creatures spiralling around these bosses all appear to be snakes, though their attitudes vary in each panel. The left-hand panel (field 4A) features a large circular boss in each corner of the rectangular panel, and two lozenge-shape bosses in the middle. The serpents originating from, and surrounding each boss frequently cross necks, but do not bite each other. A series of smaller bosses arranged in pairs and connected by very low relief peltae complete the composition.

The right-hand panel (field 4B) comprises eight circular raised bosses surrounded by

¹¹ Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' plate xxv; *ECMS* 1:77; *ECMS* 2, fig 80.

¹² *Ibid.*, plate xxvi; *ECMS* 2, fig. 73.

serpents that cross, and, in certain instances, bite each other's necks.¹³ Lozenge-shapes filled with interlace (perhaps formed by the tongues of the serpents)¹⁴ are carved in the interstices of the crossing snakes, and echo the lozenge motif in the left panel (field 4A). Various plant-like scrolls and flourishes, as well as two miniature bosses complete the decorative composition.

Field 5. The Lower Panels:

Much like the panels immediately above, bosses permeate the designs in these lower panels. While the slab's current setting now covers the lower fourth of these panels, by using Petley's drawings and the remains of the ornament, it is still possible to construe the basic designs of the panels.¹⁵ The original design in the left-hand panel (field 5A) was most likely composed of a geometric pattern of medium and small bosses arranged symmetrically around two larger bosses. Only one of these larger bosses now exists. The remaining smaller bosses are interconnected by C-shaped peltae, and though they now appear smooth, it is very likely that they were once carved with triple-band spirals.¹⁶ The right-hand panel (field 5B) also featured a geometric design based on two circles, though only one complete circle and the upper portion of the lower circle can now be seen. Within the remaining complete circle, six bosses rotate around a central boss, joined together with C-shaped peltae. Several additional bosses and connecting peltae complete the composition.

SIDE B (Fig 2.2):

¹³For a dissenting view, see I. Henderson, 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-Boss Motif on Pictish Cross-slabs and the Iona Crosses,' in M Ryan (ed.), *Ireland and Insular Art: AD 500-1200* (Dublin, 1987), p. 58, who does not believe there is any indication of a biting motif.

¹⁴ Thanks to D. MacLean, 'Snake-bosses and Redemption at Iona and in Pictland,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (eds.), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 250, for pointing this out.

¹⁵ Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' plate xxv; *ECMS* 2, fig 80.

Unlike Face A, there is no separation between the rectangular slab and the top pediment. Instead, separate panels of geometric ornament create a frame along the two sides and along a gentle arch at the top which does not follow the cut of the stone. The borderwork and the central pattern thus form two major fields of decoration. However, due to the break in the stone and the missing sections, they will be treated differently, field 1A containing the remnants of the ornament in the central panel above the break, and field 1B containing the figural composition below the break. Field 2 (A-O) comprises the various panels of ornament within the frame.

Field 1A: The Symbols

In addition to missing a section, this area has been greatly worn away or defaced. At the top of the composition, under the framing arch, is a large bird, identifiable by its beak and wings. The head has been damaged and its feet are missing. Although extremely large, the bird is quite naturalistically portrayed with various striations marking out the body, wings and tail feathers. According to Petley's drawings, a Pictish beast, decorated with a key pattern characterised by interlocking H and L-shaped bars on a diagonal axis, was carved directly below the bird.¹⁷

Field 1B: The Figural Composition

The figural composition below the break is also greatly damaged by both weathering and vandalism. Although more details can be seen in the 19th-century drawings than exist today, it is obvious that a significant amount of the damage had already occurred by that time, particularly

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.* plate xxvi; *ECMS* 1: 344-345; *ECMS* 2:81, fig 79. A fragment believed to be from this beast was recently found by Niall Robertson, see above, note 5.

in the central part of the composition.¹⁸ Nevertheless, certain elements of the configuration can still be deciphered. The figures can be viewed as three groups, set one above the other. The uppermost group contains a right-facing human figure, no longer retaining its head, but featuring clearly visible feet in profile. This figure clasps a long, thin pole and a rectangular form topped with hemispherical crests in its left hand. To the right of this figure are the faint remains of three profile quadrupeds, the upper animal facing left while the two below face right. The shadowy remains of another humanoid figure, identifiable only by the downward hanging feet, are visible against the right-hand border of the panel. Below this is the second group of figures. To the left is a left-facing quadruped with a curly coat standing beside a triangular shape filled with horizontal lines. To the right of these features is a human figure, identifiable as such only by the forearm and a swathe of drapery, which is paired with a right-facing, rearing quadruped whose hindlegs are clearly visible, even if its head is not. The lowermost group comprises a human figure in the left corner, who holds circular objects in its hands, a rearing horse with the remains of a human rider, and a pair of right-facing quadrupeds, one of which appears to be biting the other.

Field 2. The Decorative Frame:

The frame is divided into sixteen different panels of decoration, each ornamented with a different key pattern or interlaced knots, though the opposing panels along the vertical sides of the frame echo each other closely. There are two minor exceptions to this general rule. Field 2A (bottom panel on the left) features a lozenge pattern containing cruciform shapes while opposite panel (field 2O) features lozenge shapes filled with straight line spirals. In contrast, fields 2G and

¹⁸ Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' plate xxvi; *ECMS* 2, fig 81.

2I, the panels on either side of the defaced apex of the arch, both display key patterns that are practically indistinguishable from each other. With the exception of Fields 2C and 2M, which are filled with incised knotwork, all the ornament is carved in relief.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material

SIDE A

Field 1. The Pediment:

Concerning the layout and figural style of the panel, Henderson has noted parallels with folio 202v (The Temptation of Christ) in the *Book of Kells*, arguing that even though the *Book of Kells* page depicts a different subject, 'figures tucked into spandrels and odd corners are commonplace in the *Book of Kells*, whereas the pediment is unprecedented in Pictish art and must have had a model.'¹⁹

The identification of the figures in the pediment of the Nigg slab as Saints Paul and Anthony is unquestioned among scholars, due to their similarity to the figures on the Ruthwell monument who are named by inscription.²⁰ The only Anglo-Saxon monument to depict the meeting of Paul and Anthony, the Ruthwell panel features two inward-facing, standing figures

¹⁹ Henderson, 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' p. 88. The *Book of Kells* (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 58 A1.6) is generally dated from the late 8th to the early 9th century and is almost certainly the product of a Columban monastery, most likely Iona. See C. Nordenfalk, 'One Hundred and Fifty Years of Varying Views on the Early Insular Gospel Books' in M. Ryan, *Ireland and Insular Art AD 500-1200* (Dublin, 1987) pp. 1-6; Meehan, *The Book of Kells: An Illustrated Introduction to the Manuscript in Trinity College Dublin* (London, 1994), p. 91.

²⁰ C. Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings at St Andrews and Nigg, Scotland,' *Antiquity* 10 (1936):434-35; Henderson, *The Picts*, pp. 147-148, 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' 89-90; E. Kitzinger, 'Interlace and Icons: Form and Function in Early Insular Art' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (eds.), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 9; R. Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish and Related Harps: Their Form and Decoration,' in D. Henry (ed.), *The Worm, the Germ and the Thorn: Pictish Studies Presented to Isabel Henderson* (Belgavies, Angus, 1997), p. 168; E. Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony: Visual and Literary Uses of a Eucharistic Motif,' in P. Wallace and G. M. Niocaill (eds.), *Keimelia* (Galway, 1989), pp. 1-58, *passim*. All of the above have discussed the pediment scene, but Ó Carragáin's is the most comprehensive.

that both bow slightly over a circular loaf grasped in the hands of each figure.²¹ Unlike the composition on Nigg, however, the Ruthwell scene contains no descending raven, flanking quadrupeds or object that can be identified as a chalice. However, many of these details can be seen in depictions of the pair on other Pictish monuments and on Irish high crosses.

Thus, the figures carved on St Vigean's 7, comprising two inward-facing, seated figures grasping a loaf in their hands, and the remains of what may be the head of a raven, have been identified as the remains of a Paul and Anthony scene.²² Ó Carragáin has cautiously identified the two inward-facing seated ecclesiastics revering a small cross on the reverse of the cross-slab at Dunfallandy as Paul and Anthony, an interpretation resting primarily upon the composition's similarity to a scene on the smaller cross-slab (no.2) at Fowlis Wester.²³ Here, the human figures are located to either side of the shaft of a cross that extends to all four edges of the slab; the two saints are identified by their respective symbols: a date palm for St Paul and a winged figure for St Anthony.²⁴

The Irish representations are more numerous and readily identifiable. Appearing on at least ten high-crosses, a number of the depictions share certain details, but no single scene displays them all. For instance, the 10th – century Muirdach's Cross at Monasterboice, Co. Louth, the 9th-10th century Market Cross at Kells, Co. Meath, and the 9th-century North and South Crosses at Castledermot, Co. Kildare, all feature standing ecclesiastics with a descending raven and loaf, while both Muirdach's Cross and the Kells Market Cross also incorporate a

²¹ ECMS 2, fig. 468b.

²² Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' p. 8; I. Henderson and G. Henderson, *The Art of the Picts: Sculpture and Metalwork in Early Medieval Scotland* (London, 2004), p.140; ECMS 2, fig. 278.

²³ Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' p. 6; ECMS 2, fig. 305b.

²⁴ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 222.

chalice into the design.²⁵ The 9th-century Buadan's Cross, at Culdaff, Co. Donegal, and the 8th to 9th-century Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells, feature seated ecclesiastics revering small crosses, while the 8th-9th century crosses at Moone, Co. Kildare, and Duleek, Co. Meath, depict seated figures with a descending raven and loaf.²⁶

Against this background, the composition on Nigg constitutes the fullest Insular treatment of the episode, incorporating as it does kneeling saints, the descending raven with the loaf, the chalice, and even perhaps the identifying symbol of Paul, if the borderwork plant ornament can be taken for a date palm. In addition, the Nigg configuration includes the two beasts that are featured in none of the aforementioned scenes, but are instrumental to a multivalent reading of the composition (see further below).

Field 2. The Cross

Even with the double-squared hollow armpit modifications to the basic Anglo-Saxon style A2 cross head, the resulting 98A type of cross depicted on Nigg is found on seventeen other Pictish monuments, the closest geographically being located at Portmahomack on a small graveslab (TR29).²⁷ What makes the Nigg crosshead unique are the interlaced quadrupeds inhabiting its arms.²⁸ This occurs on no other Insular cross-slabs or high crosses. On the other hand, interlaced quadrupeds with many similarities to those found on Nigg cross-head can be

²⁵ P. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland: An Iconographical and Photographic Survey* (Bonn, 1992), 2: figs. 101, 107, 330, 485.

²⁶ *Ibid.* figs. 122, 243, 346, 518.

²⁷ *ECMS* 1: 49; *TR Sculpt. Cat.* no. 29. <<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/sculpture.html>>

²⁸ The knotwork found in the center of the cross (pattern no. 708) is also singular, but sees a close parallel with the pattern of knotwork interlace found on the TR2 cross-shaft fragment (see Chapter 5) and on the Ulbster cross-slab, in Caithnesshire. The key pattern on the shaft of the cross is found on eight other Pictish monuments, but does not occur anywhere else on the Tarbat peninsula. See *ECMS* 1:348.

found on the St Andrews Sarcophagus and on a recently uncovered fragment from the base of Side A of the slab at Hilton of Cadboll (see Chapter 4).

On St Andrews Sarcophagus, the animal interlace is located on the two front panels flanking the central figural scene.²⁹ Otherwise known as the 'deer-head' panel, the left-hand panel features two pairs of elongated quadrupeds with deer-like heads, whose extremely long, sinuous necks and torsos cross in a symmetrical configuration that leaves their hindquarters in the centre of the panel to interlace with two pairs smaller confronted serpent-like beasts. Both the forelegs and hindlimbs of the quadrupeds also exhibit the 'Anglo-Saxon lock,' and the interlaced tails of the smaller beasts create a lozenge shape in the very centre of the composition. The right-hand panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus, known as the 'lion's mane' panel, because of the striations representing hair carved on the shoulders and forelegs of many of the beasts, depicts eight creatures with snake-like heads that are divided into symmetrical units at the top and bottom of the panel.³⁰ Necks and torsos cross and separate, placing the shoulders of the animals in the opposite corners; a pose, as Henderson points out, that parallels the arrangement of the uppermost quadrupeds in the lower arm of the Nigg cross-head (field 2E).³¹ The hindquarters of the creatures cross interlace in the centre of the configuration, often displaying the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.'

While there are many small differences between the configurations of the beasts in the panels on the Sarcophagus and those inhabiting the cross-arms on the Nigg slab, the basic motif of pairs of animals interlaced in very complicated configurations is the same, and is not matched

²⁹ *ECMS 2*, fig. 365; Henderson, 'Variations on an Old Theme', plate 8.2 and fig 8.2; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 189.

³⁰ Henderson, 'Variations on an Old Theme,' plate 8.3 and fig. 8.3.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 153.

anywhere else on Pictish, Irish, or Anglo-Saxon Stonework, with the exception of the fragmented composition seen on the bottom of the Hilton of Cadboll slab.

The very clearly delineated, though fragmented, remains of zoomorphic ornament on Side A of Hilton of Cadboll are located on either side of the stepped base to the cross (see Chapter 4.). On the left, the bodies of two quadrupeds, clearly differentiated by individual body features of hair and scales are entwined along with a third element that may be either plant or animal; a long thin strand, bisected by a median incised line. This strand interlaces with the tongue of the only beast on the fragment to still retain its head, which is itself characterised by a blunt muzzle and fangs much like the heads of the topmost animals in the top arm of the Nigg cross (field 2D), as well as the head of the beast on Side A of TR20 at Portmahomack (see Chapter 5).³² In general, compared with the designs on Nigg and St Andrews, the animal configuration to the left of the cross-base on Hilton of Cadboll is loose and unstructured, possibly the result of the awkward space available, which does not comfortably allow for a symmetrical design. Despite this, the remains of the addorsed, interlaced beasts on the right of the cross base do form a balanced composition. The torsos of the now headless beasts cross and loop around each other in the centre of the design while the dangling hindquarters, with interlaced limbs and tails forming the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' are located at the bottom of the composition. In contrast to the creatures on the left, neither of these creatures displays distinguishing body markings.

Models for this sort of ornament can be seen in a variety of media that could have been in circulation in the Insular world. For instance, the zoomorphic designs on the Mercian ivory shrine known as the Brunswick casket, which feature long sinuous quadrupeds interlaced with

their own tails and entwined in plant foliage, suggest the influence of portable ivory models on the decoration of the Nigg cross.³³ Interlaced animals are a primary feature of Insular metalwork, with particularly intriguing Pictish examples to be found on the 'Erchless Pendant,' found near Beauly in Inverness-shire, and on the silver-gilt pommel from the St. Ninian's Isle treasure. The back of the 'Erchless Pendant' features a rather crudely incised serpentine animal entwined around itself in a complex pattern, while the front exhibits an A2-style cross with hollow armpits inhabited by a series of geometric patterns and interlaced serpentine animals in the background.³⁴ The pommel from St Ninian's Isle, Shetland, is incised with extremely long-torsoed quadrupeds interlaced in symmetrical designs with the dangling limbs forming the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.'³⁵ However, in terms of details and placement of the interlaced animals, the most closely comparable compositions are found in the pages of Insular manuscripts, such as the early 8th-century *Lindisfarne Gospels*. The way the forelimbs of the creatures in the rectangular panels set in the corners of the cross-carpet page on folio 138v hook around the necks of their fellow creatures is almost identical in layout to several of the Nigg configurations, and in the semi-triangular panels of the cross-carpet page on folio 94v, the limbs of the quadrupeds are also forced into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.'³⁶ Intertwined beasts with many individual characteristics that can be paralleled with the creatures inhabiting the Nigg cross are also found throughout the

³² An additional fragment recovered from the Hilton of Cadboll site (not yet published) features this same type of beast head.

³³ J. Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings in Early Medieval England* (London, 1972), plates 10-13. Also known as the Gandersheim Casket, this Southumbrian ivory shrine is dated to the late 8th century. See J. Luckhardt (ed.), *Das Gandersheimer Runerkästchen: Internationales Kolloquium, Braunschweig, 24-26 März 1999*, (Braunschweig, 2000), *passim*.

³⁴ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, figs. 126-127.

³⁵ *Ibid.* fig. 164.

³⁶ Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, plates 28, 34. In addition, interlaced birds ornament the *Chi* on folio 29r, and the first three letters of *Liber generationis* on folio 27r. A mixture of birds and beasts are interlaced in the initial on folio 95r. See Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, plates 25, 26, 29.

pages of the late 8th to early 9th –century *Book of Kells*.³⁷ It may be noteworthy to point out, that like interlaced serpents (see below) entwined quadrupeds often decorate the pages illustrating Christ's passion, such as on folio 124r and folio 183r.³⁸ Most intriguing, however, is the way in which the zoomorphic ornament inhabits the actual crosses themselves on folio 26v of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, and on page 220 of the *Gospels of St Chad* (also known as the *Lichfield Gospels*-see figs 2.4, 2.5)³⁹ Although there is no evidence that the sculptors at Nigg followed exactly any of the particular designs found in the pages of manuscripts, it is quite likely that they were greatly influenced by the manuscript occurrences of the motif, and therefore considered interlaced beasts an appropriate form of ornament with which to decorate their cross.

Field 3A-B. The Decorated Bosses:

Elaborate, ornamental bosses are a prevalent motif on the Tarbat peninsula, adorning the Shandwick cross (see Chapter 3) and two fragments from the Portmahomack collection, where they are surrounded by highly decorative wreaths.⁴⁰ Bosses with wreaths are also carved on the centre of the crossheads of St John's and St Martin's crosses on Iona.⁴¹ Since the Nigg bosses are not surrounded by wreaths, however, more numerous analogies might lie with the Irish material, where raised bosses decorated with either spirals or interlace and connected by C-

³⁷ To cite each example and its specific attributes and configurations would be to repeat the excellent analysis already done by Henderson, *Variations on an Old Theme*, pp. 156-159. Suffice it to say that the closest analogies to the ornament on the Nigg cross are found on folios 3v, 7v, 27v, 28v, 29r, 38v, 114r, and 129v. See F. Henry, *The Book of Kells: Reproductions from the Manuscript In Trinity College, Dublin: With a Study of the Manuscript*, (London, 1974), plates 6, 10, 20, 22,23, 26,45, 47, 50, 55.

³⁸ Henry, *Book of Kells*, plates 47, 55.

³⁹ The *Gospel of St Chad* (Lichfield Cathedral, Chapter Library) has a possible Welsh provenance, and dates to the second quarter of the 8th century. See J.J.G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts: 6th-9th centuries*, (London, 1978) p. 48; C. Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting* (London, 1977), plate 26; Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, plate 24.

⁴⁰ ECMS 2, figs 91, 92.

⁴¹ I. Fisher (ed.), *RCAHMS, Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments, volume 4: Iona* (Edinburgh, 1982), nos. 6.82 and 6. 83.

shaped peltae can be seen on a variety of high crosses, such as the 9th to 10th-century cross at Durrow, and the early 10th-century Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise, both in Co. Offaly, as well as on the 10th-century Muirdach's Cross at Monasterboice.⁴² However, the Irish carved bosses have more in common with the plainer style of bosses that can be found on such monuments as St Madoes or Meigle 11, rather than the extremely ornate bosses on Nigg.⁴³ Though unadorned, Meigle 11 does, nonetheless, share a basic design layout with the left-hand panel bosses on Nigg (field 3A) in that a central spiral is surrounded by six others. However, the closest sculptural parallel with the Nigg bosses lies with the interlace-covered boss located at the centre of the 98A-style cross-head found on the left end panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus (fig 2.5). Surrounded by four smaller spiral bosses located in the corners of the square panel, it is perhaps significant that shape of this crosshead is identical to that at Nigg.⁴⁴

The stone boss with a decorative relief has obvious ties to metalwork, especially to the raised metalwork bosses found on Irish shrines, usually characterised by a central jewel or smooth metalwork stud and surrounded by filigree wreaths.⁴⁵ These elaborate metalwork bosses can also be found on the 8th – century Derrynaflan paten and Ardagh chalice.⁴⁶ The boss motif may also be related to the numerous examples of decorative spirals embellishing the pages of

⁴² Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs. 135, 137, 143, 146, 246, 476.

⁴³ *ECMS* 2, figs. 309a, 345b.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* fig. 365d; Henderson, 'Primus inter Pares: The St Andrews Sarcophagus and Pictish Sculpture,' in S. Foster (ed.), *St Andrew's Sarcophagus: A Pictish Masterpiece and its International Connections* (Dublin, 1998), plate 6; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 170.

⁴⁵ See for example the shrine from Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh, the Abbadia San Salvatore Shrine, and the Monymusk Shrine. Metalwork bosses with decorative wreaths also appear on several detached mounts most likely coming from house-shrines. See S. Youngs (ed.), *The Work of Angels: Masterpieces of Celtic Metalwork, 6th-9th Centuries AD* (London, 1989), nos. 128, 129, 141, 142; R. Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries of the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1994), plate 7.

⁴⁶ M. Ryan, *Early Irish Communion Vessels* (Dublin, 2000), plates 10, 13, 14.

Insular manuscripts, such as the highly ornamented curvilinear circles appended to the Chi of the monogram page (folio 34r) of the *Book of Kells*.⁴⁷

Field 4A-B. Serpents and Snake-Bosses:

Placing serpents in close proximity to crosses was a popular motif in both Pictland and Ireland, as well as on Iona and Western Scotland. While many Pictish carved monuments exhibit only a single serpent on either side of the cross-shaft, others feature interlaced serpents much like those carved on either side of the Shandwick cross-shaft (see Chapter 3).⁴⁸ Three Pictish monuments show a particularly close affinity with the decoration on Nigg, in that they are carved with serpent bosses in addition to other serpent ornament. Aberlemno 3 features four interlace-covered bosses surrounded by serpents placed within the hollow-angled armpits of the cross, as well as entwined serpents and beasts immediately below the left and right cross-arms.⁴⁹ While the recumbent monument Meigle 26 does not have a cross, it does display twelve worn bosses divided equally between the four fields formed by a *Chi* imposed on a square. Each of the bosses, worn smooth with time, but perhaps once covered with spirals, has at least one very thin snake coiled about it. The heads of these snakes move away from the bosses to touch noses or the edges of the panel, but are not interlaced (fig. 2.6).⁵⁰ The left end-panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus also contains two snake-bosses although the one in the upper right-hand corner is almost completely destroyed. The boss in the lower left-hand corner however, still retains its

⁴⁷ Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plate 29.

⁴⁸ Ulbster features a single serpent on the cross face of the slab, while Farnell, in Angus, displays two single serpents on either side, and slightly below, a small cross on the back of the slab. St Vigeans 1, in Angus, exhibits two pairs of intertwined serpents on either side of the cross shaft, while Inchbrayock, also in Angus, features two panels of interlaced serpents above the cross-arms. See *ECMS 2*, figs. 30, 31, 66, 66b, 232b, 235a, and 250a.

⁴⁹ *ECMS 2*, fig. 228a.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* fig. 318a.

fine interlace mesh and the heads of the two serpents coiled around it (fig. 2.5).⁵¹ The closest analogy to the serpent decoration on Nigg however, is contained on the TR2 fragments from Portmahomack, which feature the remains of serpents, small spiral bosses and connecting C-shaped peltae on either side of a cross-shaft filled with geometric designs (see Chapter 5). It is quite likely that the TR2 serpents originated from bosses before the cross-slab was damaged, and indeed, a semi-rhomboid-shaped fragment excavated from the Portmahomack site in 1999 displays the same fine mesh-interlace covering the Nigg lozenge-shaped bosses, and may originally have come from the same monument as the TR2 fragments.⁵² In general, the remains of the decoration on TR2 are so close to that on Nigg that it is even likely that the same carver worked on both stones.

It is also likely that the serpent bosses on Nigg are related to the prominent bosses with intertwined serpents on the high-crosses of Iona, and at Kildalton, Islay.⁵³ At the same time, though not formed of serpents, the bosses on the 9th-century South Cross at Clonmacnoise are covered in a fine, mesh interlace that is very similar to that which the serpents form on the Nigg bosses, while numerous intertwined snakes bite each other on the bottom panel of the west face of the cross.⁵⁴ Likewise, serpentine ornament not associated with bosses is found on a number of Irish high crosses. While the decoration on the 10th-century North Cross and Cross of Scriptures, at Clonmacnoise, and Muirdach's Cross at Monasterboice cannot have had any stylistic affect on upon the appearance of the Pictish serpents, their appearance on the Irish material is important as

⁵¹ *ECMS 2*, fig. 365; Henderson, 'Primus Inter Pares,' plate 6.

⁵² The geology of the unpublished fragment TR39 may, however, point to a closer relationship with the TR20 fragment from Portmahomack, which is also a yellow micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain than to the TR2 fragment, which is a gray-green micaceous sandstone with an extremely fine-grain (see Chapter 5).

⁵³ RCAHMS, *Argyle*, vol. 4: *Iona*, nos. 6, 80, 82, 83; *ECMS 2*, fig. 410.

⁵⁴ See Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs, 132, 133.

evidence of the continuing popularity of the motif in Ireland.⁵⁵ In any case, it may be important that several of the late 8th and early 9th -century crosses that do feature actual serpent bosses are located on sites associated with St Columba, such as the Cross of Patrick and Columba and West Cross, at Kells, and the cross at Moone.⁵⁶

Like the ornamental bosses in field 3A-B, the serpent ornamentation on Nigg was also quite likely related to the appearance of the motif on early medieval ecclesiastical metalwork. For instance, serpents decorate the bosses on the Irish bronze reliquary finials in the Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St-Germain-en-Laye (fig. 2.7), and the finial fragments, possibly from the same shrine, found in a Viking grave at Gausel, Norway.⁵⁷ Likewise, three raised serpents that bite at each other decorate an early 9th-century metalwork fragment of a mount, also probably from a shrine) that has been found in Sunndal, Norway.⁵⁸ In addition, entwined snakes decorate the 8th-century Derrynaflan paten (fig. 2.8).⁵⁹ It is possible that the popularity of the motif on saint's reliquaries might have informed the decision to decorate the Nigg cross-slab similarly, and that the relationship between reliquaries and the slab is closer than one of just artistic influence (see further below). Likewise, the relationship with interlaced snakes found throughout the *Book of Kells*, most often on the folios illustrating or textualising Christ's Passion or the Resurrection, suggests that a particular significance was attached to the serpents on the Nigg slab that went far beyond mere decorative motif.⁶⁰ For instance, interlaced serpents inhabit individual panels of the structural art on folio 114r, which portrays the Arrest of Christ, and

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* figs. 129, 131, 138, 141, 477, 487, 490, 492, 497.

⁵⁶ H. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells* (Dublin, 1988 reprint), plates 4, 5, 16, 18; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 515.

⁵⁷ O'Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries*, p. 15; MacLean, 'Snake-bosses and Redemption,' p. 251.

⁵⁸ Youngs, *Work of Angels*, pp. 145-6, no. 139.

⁵⁹ Ryan, *Early Irish Communion Vessels*, plates 10, 13, 14.

⁶⁰ Thanks are due to Henderson, 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-Boss Motif,' pp. 55-65, for pointing out this connection.

inhabit the border around the decorative text *'Tunc crucifixerant XPI cum eo duos latrones'* (Then the two robbers were crucified with him) on folio 124r. Likewise, interlaced serpents begin the text of Matthew 28:1-5, *'Vespere h(audem)'* (In the evening), which details the episode of the women at the empty Sepulchre on folio 127v, and they also appear underneath the *Un* of *Una Autem* on folio 285r, in which the text refers to the Resurrection.⁶¹ It may also be significant that, outside its occurrence in Insular manuscripts, serpents did not tend to be found in Anglo-Saxon art.

Field 5A-B. The Spiral Ornament:

The patterns carved in the lowest panels on the Nigg cross-slab are unique to that slab, though from the remains of the decoration seen in the lower right-hand panel on TR2, which features small raised spiral bosses and C-shaped peltae, the two designs may have been extremely similar (see Chapter 5). The designs on Nigg also bear a strong resemblance to spiral designs in the late 7th-century *Book of Durrow*,⁶² the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, and especially to the extremely ornate configurations found throughout the *Book of Kells*, particularly those on folio 29r (*Liber generationis*), those on the cross-carpet page on folio 33r, and those on folio 34r (the *Chi-Rho* page).⁶³ This latter design also features almond-type flourishes in the connecting peltae much like those at Nigg.

⁶¹ Interlaced serpents also decorate other pages not associated with the Passion such as the Chi-Rho page (folio 34r) and folios 130r, 203r and 291v, and 292r, to cite just a few. See Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 29, 45, 47, 48, 51, 69, 89, 94, 95.

⁶² *Book of Durrow* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 57, fols. 3v, 193r). See B. Meehan (ed.), *The Book of Durrow: A Medieval Masterpiece at Trinity College, Dublin* (London, 1996), pp. 18, 65.

⁶³ See Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 23, 27, 29.

SIDE B

Field 1A. The Pictish Symbols:

As a Pictish symbol, the bird appears on nine other Pictish monuments; only three of which are cross-slabs (Mortlach, Banffshire, and nos. 1 and 2 at St Vigean, Angus),⁶⁴ while the rest are 'Class 1' stones with no Christian iconography. As the third most popular symbol, the Pictish beast, here situated underneath the bird, is carved on thirty-three other stones, eighteen of which are cross-slabs. The nearest cross-slab carved with the Pictish beast is at Shandwick (see Chapter 3). No other stone features these two symbols paired together.

Field 1B. The Figural Composition:

The central group of figures in the figural panel, comprising the badly damaged human figure paired with the leaping quadruped, and the curly-haired quadruped and stringed triangular object, have together been universally identified as David the lion-slayer along with the diagnostic sheep and harp.⁶⁵ It is quite likely that the other human figures in the composition also refer to David, though this is far more open to suggestion. If they do have a Davidic identity, the man on horseback may be David the hunter, the figure on foot with shield or spear may be David the warrior, and the man with discs in his hands, David dancing before the ark,⁶⁶ or more likely, one of David's musicians.

A popular motif in Pictland, David is pictured slaying the lion on seven other cross-slabs, the fullest treatment appearing on the St Andrew's Sarcophagus, where he is the largest figure

⁶⁴ *ECMS 2*, figs 162, 250b, 253.

⁶⁵ *ECMS 2*, pp. 80-81, Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings', pp. 430-32, 437; Henderson, 'The "David Cycle" in Pictish Art,' in J. Higgitt (ed.), *Early Medieval Sculpture* (Oxford: 1986), pp. 88, 92; Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish and Related Harps,' p. 159.

⁶⁶ Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' pp. 430-32, 437;

and placed on the left of the panel (fig 2.9). Here, the frontally faced David is pictured with shoulder length curly hair, long robes with flowing lines of drapery and a swathe flying out from his left arm. The slim lion with well-defined ribs, tufted-tail curling between its legs, and a curly mane, approaches David from the left and rears up at his waist where its jaws are wrenched apart by David's enormous hands. David also carries a large dagger on his right hip. While there is no harp in this scene, a clearly depicted ram is situated above David's right shoulder. Two other human figures in this composition may refer to David scenes: the lion-hunting horse rider in the centre of the panel and the left-facing warrior in a short tunic with a spear and shield striding along the bottom edge of the panel.⁶⁷

The style of the David compositions on both Nigg and St Andrews has been characterised as the 'Gilgamesh' type, featuring the frontal stance of the human figure, elaborate folds and pleats of the costume, a sword with an interlacing pattern on its sheath, shoes instead of sandals, and a small, rearing, 'Assyrian' type of lion.⁶⁸ While these characteristics can be seen clearly on the St Andrews panel they are, with the exception of the frontal stance and rearing posture of the lion, almost entirely obliterated at Nigg slab. Nevertheless, these remains are enough to securely place the Nigg composition within one of the different styles typically carved by Insular sculptors. For instance, in addition to the Nigg and St Andrews representations, David and lion scenes of the 'Gilgamesh' type can be seen on a fragment from Kinnedar, Moray, and in the bottom right-hand corner of the reverse side of Aberlemno 3.⁶⁹ Likewise, Trench-Jellicoe has identified a similar composition on the recumbent monument at Kincardine, Sutherland.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' pp. 92-98.

⁶⁸ Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' pp. 430-431. Cf. Henderson, '*Primus inter Pares*,' p. 121, for different view.

⁶⁹ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' plates 5.3b, 5.4 a; *ECMS* 2, fig. 228b.

⁷⁰ Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish Harps,' pp. 169-170, fig. 5; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 202.

A second type depicts both David and the lion in opposed profiles. This type is carved on Aldbar, in Angus, and Dupplin and Gask 1A, both in Perthshire. Both Aldbar and Dupplin depict left-facing lions who hang in mid-air with paws held straight out as if pushing themselves away from David's right-facing body, while Gask 1A features a right-facing David grappling with a left-facing lion.⁷¹ A similar composition to Gask is carved on the outside of the cross-arm on the north side of the Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells, which features a human and quadruped in opposing profiles.⁷²

A third type of David and Lion configuration depicts both David and the lion in profile (facing the same direction) with David placing one knee upon the lion's back and wrenching the head back towards his body. This style seems to be limited to Irish representations and can be seen on the another lion combat panel on south side outer cross-arm on the Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells, as well as on the Tall Cross at Monasterboise, and on the cross at Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare.⁷³

The fourth type seems to combine characteristics of the 'Gilgamesh' type with the Irish: without placing his knee on the lion's back, David wrenches the head back as the animal passes in front of his body. Examples of this type can be seen on the high cross at Durrow, where David faces left, and on the Anglo-Saxon Masham column, where David is frontally faced.⁷⁴ In addition, a swathe of drapery flies out from the Masham David's right shoulder.

Models for these various representations of David slaying the lion existed in both Eastern

⁷¹ *ECMS 2*, figs. 259b, 334a-b; Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish Harps,' fig. 4.

⁷² Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, plate 6. This scene might portray Samson slaying the lion, since a different configuration of David slaying the Lion is portrayed on the outer cross-arm on the south side of the cross. The scene on the north side is characterized by a structure curving up around the human's head, which suggests the Gates of Gaza and may point to a conflation of the two episodes.

⁷³ Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, plate 3; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs 489, 535.

prototypes and Insular manuscripts. Lion-hunting scenes as well as a cycle of scenes from the life of David are etched on a series of Byzantine silver plates. For instance, Heracles and the Nemean Lion (6th century) depicts a nude left-facing figure wrestling with a right-facing lion, while 'King Killing Leopard' (4th century) depicts a frontally-faced figure stabbing a rearing, outward-facing, leopard in the back.⁷⁵ Two of the plates from the David cycle (most likely made in the imperial workshop in Constantinople to commemorate Emperor Heraclius's victory over the Persian Empire in 627 AD)⁷⁶ depict David wrenching back the head of either a lion or a bear, with his knee planted firmly on the backs of the animals. In the first, David is frontally faced, despite his knee on the right-facing lion's back, and is wearing a short tunic with a cloak that flows out from his right shoulder. What appears to be the headless, hairless carcass of a sheep is abandoned under the lion's feet. In the second plate David is also wearing a cloak that streams outwards from his left-shoulder.⁷⁷ Yet another David plate, also from the early 7th century, depicts a frontally faced David fending off an attack from a rearing lion with a shield and short sword in his right arm. Here, he wears a short tunic characterised by intricate folds of drapery and a long cloak that flows outwards from his right-shoulder. In addition, the left-facing lion also has clearly delineated ribs, much like the lion depicted on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, and the Kinneddar fragment.⁷⁸ While damage to the stone at Nigg prevents us from determining if the David figure was wearing or carrying a knife, or if the lion had delineated ribs, several of the

⁷⁴ Harbison, *The High-Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 248; J. Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church in Ninth-Century Anglo-Saxon England: The Case of the Masham Column,' *Hortus Artium Medievalium: Journal of the International Research Center for Late Antiquity and Middle Ages* 8 (2002): 339, fig. 8.

⁷⁵ 'Heracles and the Nemean Lion' silver plate (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles); 'King Killing Leopard' silver plate (Leningrad, Hermitage State Museum). See J.M.C. Toynbee and K.S. Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity AD 300-700,' *Archaeologia* 108 (1986): nos. 35, 62, plates XVIa; XXVa.

⁷⁶ K. Weitzmann, *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century, Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum Art* (New York, 1979), pp. 475-83.

⁷⁷ New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. See Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' nos. 68, 69, plates XXVIc; XXVIIa.

other characteristics displayed on the plates do appear at Nigg, such as the flowing cloak, the frontally-faced position of David, and the rearing stance of the lion.

Access to such models was prevalent in the Insular world, and it has been demonstrated that the David and Lion configuration in the 8th-century Mercian Vespasian Psalter (folio 53r),⁷⁹ and on the early 9th-century Masham column, were both dependent on a model such as the first Byzantine plate cited,⁸⁰ as well as other early Italo-Byzantine sources.⁸¹ In addition, it is possible that the *contraposto* pose, and the style of drapery displayed by the Scottish 'Gilgamesh' group of Davids were also inspired by Italo-Byzantine sources, such as ivory plaques based on the panels carved on the 6th-century throne of Archbishop Maximilian in Ravenna (see fig 2.10).⁸² Objects such as the throne, which were produced in imperial workshops, were emulated by provincial craftsmen, and, as Henderson argues, it is highly likely that such portable plaques, possibly showing abbreviated images of Old Testament figures exemplifying salvation, found their way into Pictland.⁸³

The solitary warrior located in the top left corner of the Nigg figural composition has been identified as a representation of David the warrior, and as such parallels the solitary warrior on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, also placed within a David context.⁸⁴ Both figures are dressed in short robes, hold spears and carry almost identically shaped shields; the only difference is the vertical, rather than horizontal, orientation of the shield in the Nigg configuration. While Henderson has identified other possible versions of this motif, most attributes of 'David the

⁷⁸ Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' no. 75, plate XXIXa.

⁷⁹ London, British Library. MS Cotton Vespasian A1. See D. Wright (ed.), *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile vol. 14: The Vespasian Psalter* (London, 1967) plate IIb.

⁸⁰ Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' no. 68.

⁸¹ Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church,' p. 340; Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' pp. 97-111.

⁸² Henderson, 'Primus Inter Pares,' pp. 126-130.

⁸³ *Ibid.* p. 129.

⁸⁴ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' p. 92.

warrior' are somewhat doubtful, since there are no clear indications of a Davidic context.⁸⁵

More recently, Henderson has referred to the St Andrews and Nigg figures as the 'master of animals and patron of the chase.'⁸⁶ On the other hand, folio 172v of the early 8th-century *Durham Cassiodorus* does depict David in a war-like stance. Here, David is identified by inscription, frontally faced, holds a spear across his body, and tramples upon a serpent.⁸⁷ Although this configuration has nothing in common with the warrior figure on Nigg stylistically, the manuscript portrait is surrounded by a decorative border made up of separate panels filled with interlaced knots and diaper-patterns that are based either on the cross-shape or on the lozenge. These patterns and the use of a decorative frame around a David figure may have inspired the decision to carve a decorative frame around the figural scene at Nigg.

The human figure in the lower left-hand corner of the Nigg panel has also been identified David, as he danced before the Ark of the Covenant,⁸⁸ unfortunately, there are no clear models which would account for this identification. While it is perhaps unlikely that all of the human figures in the Nigg composition were meant to be seen as David in his various manifestations of secular rule, divinely inspired prophet and faithful servant, it is very likely that they were still meant to be associated with a cycle of David iconography. For instance, the Nigg figure has alternately been identified as one of David's musicians.⁸⁹ Other musicians, also placed within arguable Davidic contexts, can be found on cross-slabs at Lethendy, Perthshire, where confronted figures play a harp and triple pipes, on Monfieth, Angus, where two horn-holding figures stand behind an enthroned figure playing a harp, at Ardchatton, Lorn where hooded

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 95, 97, 98-99, for possible identifications of David the warrior on Aberlemno 2, Ardchatton, Durrow, and the Tall Cross at Monasterboice.

⁸⁶ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 125.

⁸⁷ Durham Cathedral Library MS BII.30. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, no. 17, illustration 75.

⁸⁸ Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' pp. 430-432.

⁸⁹ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' p. 92.

figures play a harp, the triple horn and a single horn, on St Martin's Cross at Iona, which depicts a harper and a figure playing the triple horn, and on the Irish cross at Durrow, where a horn-player is seated in front of an enthroned harper.⁹⁰ In addition, both Hilton of Cadboll and Aberlemno 3 (see chapter 4) depict a pair of trumpeters, although neither of these are associated with any other Davidic iconography.

It has been argued that the cymbals, harps, and trumpets portrayed on the Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll slabs indicate the presence in Easter Ross of a model depicting a courtly scene of David surrounded by his musicians.⁹¹ Such a scene is illustrated on folio 30v of the *Vespasian Psalter*, where an enthroned David is shown surrounded by musicians (fig. 2.11).⁹² Unfortunately, with no cymbal player, this particular miniature cannot account for the depiction of the figure on the Nigg cross-slab. On the other hand, two 9th-century Carolingian manuscripts may help explain the question of identity of some of the figures within the Nigg composition, even though they bear no stylistic relationship with the scene. Folio 215v of the *Count Vivian Bible* (the First Bible of Charles the Bald) depicts a scene of David as the Cosmic Musician.⁹³ Centrally located, the standing, crowned figure plays a harp while two musicians are seated above him and two below him. In the upper left-hand corner, a musician blows a curved horn, while in the upper right, the musician holds a pair of sticks in each hand to which possible cymbals are attached. The lower left-hand figure plays some sort of stringed instrument, while the lower right-hand figure holds a long slender horn in his hand. It is possible that these instruments reflected the use of contemporary instruments used in Charles' court, and that while

⁹⁰ *ECMS* 2, figs. 275a, 393, 397a; Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' pp. 91, 94; Harbison, *Irish High Crosses*, 2, fig. 248.

⁹¹ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' pp. 91-103.

⁹² Wright, *The Vespasian Psalter*, frontispiece.

⁹³ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 1. See H. Holländer, *Early Medieval*, (London, 1990), fig. 67.

the motif of a cymbal-playing musician was a necessary part of the iconography, its depictions varied from place to place.

Additional figures in this miniature include two soldiers placed to either side of David. Like the musicians, they are named by inscription, and, therefore, are not manifestations of David the Warrior. All of these figures are enclosed by a mandorla, while personifications of the four virtues are located outside, in the four corners of the page. The entire miniature is intended as a counterpart to the depiction of Christ in Majesty in the same bible on folio 59r.⁹⁴ Here, an enthroned Christ is supported by the symbols of the four evangelists, all within a lozenge-shaped mandorla. Four prophets (identified by inscription) are located in the medallions attached to the points of the lozenge, while the four evangelists themselves are located in the four corners of the page.

It may be argued that the mid 9th-century date of this manuscript is too late to have influenced the iconography on the Nigg cross-slab.⁹⁵ However, models for this manuscript most likely existed earlier, and could have been known in the Insular world. Certainly the conception of the cosmological properties of Christ and the extensions of his love, signified by the lozenge-shaped mandorla and confirmed by the extensions of the Word, which were personified by the evangelists and the prophets, was found in the writings available to, and produced in the Insular world (see Chapter 1). It is therefore possible that the counterpart images of David as both ruler and musician, surrounded by musicians, soldiers, and virtues was also either a literary or artistic concept known in the Insular world. Such a model might also explain the greatly damaged human figure to the right of David at Nigg; a figure no one has ever been able to identify. It may be that this figure was meant to represent one of the virtues, hence balancing a representation of

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 84, fig. 59.

one of David's musicians, and one of his soldiers.

At the same time, this shadowy figure behind David may have another explanation. In the 9th-century Carolingian *Psalterium Aureum* (also known as the Golden Psalter of St Gall), the divine inspiration behind David's composition of the psalms was made explicit by the placement of the outstretched hand of God and an angel in the spandrels of a composition depicting David and his musicians.⁹⁶ Since the downward-hanging feet of the Nigg figure suggest that it could be seen as ascending or flying, it may be that an angel, symbolising the divine inspiration behind David's composition of the Psalms (invoked by the presence of the harp), was once included in the Nigg figural composition.

In any case, it can be argued that the Nigg figural panel incorporates the greatest number of Davidic references into a single composition out of all the Insular representations. By depicting a single warrior, a single musician, a harp, a lion, and a sheep, as well as a possible personification of a virtue, or an angel, the sculptor has conflated several of the accepted images of David iconography, and so simultaneously refers to the Salvation of God, the divine-Psalmist, and the King of Israel (see further, below). While the closest stylistic parallels are again found on the St Andrew's sarcophagus, it may be that the decision to include all the associated figures was inspired by common access to continental models.

Field 2A-O. The Frame:

The segmented arch making up the frame is unique in Insular art, both sculptural and manuscript.⁹⁷ On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, the inspiration for surrounding a Davidic

⁹⁵ A full discussion of dating is contained in Chapter 6: Conclusion.

⁹⁶ St Gall, Stifsbibliothek MS 22. See Wright, *The Vespasian Psalter*, plate VIg.

⁹⁷ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 131.

scene with a frame filled with geometric designs, some of which are based on the cross and the lozenge-shape, might have come from a miniature such as folio 172v of the *Durham Cassiodorus*.

Several of the fretwork and interlace patterns filling the individual panels of the frame bordering the central figural scene on Nigg are unique to that stone, such as the configurations in fields D, F, J, and N. However, the closely related designs opposite to D and N, (fields L and B) do have parallels on other Pictish and Irish monuments.⁹⁸ All of the other panels repeat patterns that can be found on other monuments,⁹⁹ with the exception of the lower left-hand panel (field A) with its distinctive 'diaper pattern' filled in with cruciform shapes. While this latter is unique to stone, it is related to similar designs in Insular manuscripts such as *The Gospels of St Chad*, the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and the *Book of Kells*.¹⁰⁰

Summary:

In general, the most numerous parallels to the ornament carved on the Nigg cross-slab are to be found on the St Andrew's Sarcophagus, TR2 and in the pages of Insular manuscripts, primarily in the *Book of Kells*. In fact similarities between the zoomorphic ornament, the crosshead shape, the serpent bosses, the ornamental bosses and elements of the David iconography on the Sarcophagus and on Nigg points to either the work of one man or workshop,

⁹⁸ Interlace pattern no. 702 in field L also appears on Drainie 9, Sueno's Stone and on the Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells, while the combined interlace patterns (nos. 607 and 613) found in field B also appear on Golspie, St Andrews Sarcophagus, Brodie, Glamis 2, Denino, and Meigle 4. See *ECMS* 1: 235, 237. For the Cross of Patrick and Columba, see Roe, *The Irish High Crosses*, plate 2.

⁹⁹ The nearly identical incised interlace (no. 662) found in fields C and M can also be seen at Strathmartine 3 and Barrochan. Key pattern no. 980 in field E can be seen at Tullibole, while that in field K (no. 974) can be seen at Farr, Reay, Rosemarkie 1 and 2, St Vigean's 24, Meigle 4 and St Andrews 1, 7, 8, 14 and 20 as well as being duplicated on Shandwick. In addition, the nearly identical key pattern (no. 958) filling fields G and I is also found at Ulbster, Cana Burghead 9 and 12, Aberlemno 3, Ardchatton, Abercorn, and Kilmartine. See *ECMS* 1:259, 348, 353, 354.

or to access to common models.¹⁰¹ However, some of the most intriguing elements on the slab, such as the construction of a cross inhabited by interlaced serpentine beasts, the cymbal-playing musician, and the unidentified figure in the David composition may be dependent on prototypes illustrated on Continental metalwork or manuscripts, suggesting that the Tarbat peninsula was conversant with the themes and motifs of the wider Christian world. This suggestion is underlined by a survey of the intellectual sources that may have informed the iconography of the slab.

(B) Iconographic significance

SIDE A

Paul and Anthony:

The scene portrayed at Nigg is a conflation of several different narrative accounts of the Lives of Paul and Anthony, Christian commentaries, a variety of Biblical passages, as well as liturgical practices and hymns, and while it has been discussed by many scholars, Ó Carragáin provides the fullest treatment.¹⁰² The primary source behind the iconography at Nigg was most likely Jerome's *Vita Sancti Pauli*, which details the meeting of Paul and Anthony in the desert, the raven arriving with a whole, rather than half, loaf for the saints to share, and the subsequent contest of courtesy, wherein they argue over who is to break the bread and then agree to break it together.¹⁰³ In addition, Jerome's *Vita* also includes the episode of the two lions that arrived to help Anthony bury Paul, thus possibly explaining the identity of the two beasts supporting the

¹⁰⁰ Henderson, 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' p. 88.

¹⁰¹ Henderson, 'Variations on an Old Theme,' p. 154.

¹⁰² See, for instance, Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' pp. 434-5; Henderson, *The Picts*, pp. 147-148; 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' pp. 89-90; Kitzinger 'Interlace and Icons,' p. 9; Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish Harps,' p. 168; Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' *passim*.

¹⁰³ Jerome, *Vita Sancti Pauli*, PL 23: 17-28.

saints on the Nigg Pediment.¹⁰⁴

The episode in which the saints share the sustenance brought by the raven was considered a re-enactment of the eucharistic rite begun by Christ at the Last supper, and continued by his disciples. In addition to the sacrifice commemorated by the breaking of the bread, the ritual act also refers to the recognition of Christ while he was in the act of breaking bread by his disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:30-31).

Ó Carragáin argues that the extreme popularity of such scenes in Ireland and Scotland was due to the fact that Paul and Anthony were revered as prototypes of Irish monasticism and as exemplars of the rite of *co-fractio* (as practised at Iona), wherein when two priests were present they broke the bread for communion together.¹⁰⁵ While the Nigg scene does not actually show the saints engaging in *co-fractio*, since the loaf is still in the descending raven's beak, the allusion is there, and, in addition, the depiction of the Nigg scene may reflect another Irish liturgical practice. It can be seen that the loaf in the raven's beak has a segment missing from the lower left-hand corner, which may allude to a specific rite in the Irish mass wherein the priest would break off a piece from the eucharistic loaf and insert it into the wine. A description of the of this rite in the early 9th-century Old Irish treatise attached to the Stowe Missal,¹⁰⁶ explains that

The particle that is cut off from the bottom of the half which is on the (priest's) left hand is the figure of the wounding with the lance in the armpit of the right side; for westwards was Christ's face on the Cross, to wit, *contra ciuitatem*, and eastwards was the face of Longinus; what to him was the left to Christ was the right.¹⁰⁷

The piece is then dipped into the Chalice, signifying 'the submersion of Christ's Body in

¹⁰⁴ Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' pp. 434-35; Henderson, *The Picts*, 148.

¹⁰⁵ Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Anthony,' pp. 3-6, 31-38; Sharpe, *Life of St Columba*, I:44, p. 147.

¹⁰⁶ Warner, *The Stowe Missal*, 2: xxii-xxxix, 37-42.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 41.

His Blood after His wounding on the Cross.’¹⁰⁸ If the Nigg carving does indeed depict this rite, then the thin-stemmed vessel located between the two saints is most likely a chalice, and as Ó Carragáin’s argues, the details ‘provide reliable evidence of the way in which the communion rite was performed at Nigg when the scene was carved’.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, a close analysis of the loaf has revealed that it was most likely not carved initially with the lower left-hand segment missing (see fig. 2.12). It is nevertheless possible that a later modification was made in order to represent the introduction of this rite onto the Tarbat peninsula.

Ó Carragáin has also taken a deeper look at the identity of the two crouching animals in the scene. In addition to a visual reference to the two lions that helped Anthony bury Paul, their ‘dog-like’ appearance may be an allusion to Matthew (15:21-8) and Mark (7:24-30), in which Christ compares the Gentiles to dogs,¹¹⁰ or, more likely, to the anonymous beasts who recognise the Lord in a passage from the Old Latin text of the Canticle of Habakkuk: ‘*In medio duorum animalium innotesceris; dum appropiaverint anni cognosceris.*’¹¹¹ This passage was explicated at length by Jerome, Augustine and Bede, and it has been argued that the canticle was a familiar part of the Insular liturgy (see further, below).

Jerome set the standard for interpretation of Habakkuk 3:3, stating that the *animalia*, and whom, or what, they recognise, or make known, could be understood in a variety of ways: God as he is known through the Son and the Holy Spirit, the mystery of the trinity between the two seraphim, the covering of the Ark of the Covenant (believed to be the ‘mercy-seat’ or footstool of God) between the two cherubim, Christ between the two thieves; Christ surrounding himself

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Ó Carragáin, ‘The Meeting of Saint Paul and Anthony,’ p. 9.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 10-11.

¹¹¹ Habakkuk 3:3. The Old Latin text of this canticle, which is not in the Vulgate, can be found on folio 145r of the *Vespasian Psalter*, along with eight other Canticles used in the Roman rite specified by St Benedict. See S. Kuhn (ed.), *The Vespasian Psalter* (Ann Arbor, 1965), p. 150.

by both the circumcised and un-circumcised (clean and unclean persons), or Christ as the fulfilment of the Old Testament and made known in the New Testament.¹¹² Augustine and Bede both repeated many of these associations, and further interpreted the verse as an allusion to Christ at the transfiguration, between Moses and Elias.¹¹³ Certainly, the association with the Old and New Testaments, made by all three exegetes, might be alluded to by the books placed in the hands of Paul and Anthony in the Nigg scene.

According to Ó Carragáin, however, Insular sculptors, or at least the sculptors of the relevant panel of the Ruthwell Cross, consciously associated the *animalia* of Habakkuk 3:3 with the lion, dragon, asp and basilisk trampled on by the Lord in Psalm 90:13.¹¹⁴ Not only was the Canticum of Habakkuk sung every Friday morning at Lauds in the Roman office, there is also evidence that it was used weekly in 'those Celtic monasteries of which we have evidence.'¹¹⁵ Likewise, it was one of the responses, along with Psalm 90:13, which was sung at Nones during the *Adoratio Crucis* rite, possibly explaining why the sculptors at Ruthwell made a visual connection between the two verses. It is quite possible the sculptors at Nigg also had this connection in mind when they carved the crouching 'lions' on the Nigg pediment.

In essence then, the scene on the pediment at Nigg recalls a variety of biblical and exegetical texts as well as possible references to the liturgy as it may have been practised at Nigg. Through a knowledge of these texts and liturgical rites, an educated viewer would be

¹¹² Jerome, *In Abacuc* 2:3.2, CCSL 76A: pp. 620-621.52-68; Appendix 1C. This work was most likely known in the Insular world, at the very least in Ireland where the compiler of the *Irish Reference Bible* was reliant on Jerome's commentaries on the minor prophets. See Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' p. 29, note 1; Appendix 1A.

¹¹³ Augustine, *Civitate Dei* 18:32, CCSL 48:623.5-10; Bede, *In Cantico Abacuc* 3:2, CCSL 119B: 383.60-68; Appendix 1C.

¹¹⁴ Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁵ Bede, *In Cantico Abacuc*, CCSL 119B: 381.1-6; Sean Connolly (ed.), *Bede: On Tobit and On the Canticum of Habakkuk* (Dublin, 1997), p. 65; Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony: pp. 4-5; 'Christ over

reminded of three linked ideas, of the sustenance sent from heaven in the form of the Eucharist and the sacrifice of Christ which that implied; that in the breaking of the bread Christ is to be recognised; and that Christ is also to be recognised ‘*in medio duorum animalium*’, which can refer to actual animals (perhaps those mentioned by name in Psalm 90:13), or to the Old and New Testaments, seraphim or cherubim, or to ecclesiastics representing the monastic community. Therefore a scene in which Anthony and Paul bow in adoration before a heavenly loaf that they will presently break apart in memory and recognition of Christ, combined with two beasts who confront a eucharistic chalice, is particularly significant in its layered eucharistic symbolism.

The Cross:

The Nigg cross-slab is typical of other Pictish cross-slabs in that it does not feature a depiction of Christ on the cross. However, due to currently circulating exegesis, an ornamented cross (particularly the *crux gemmata*) was standard iconography for the Resurrection, and the Second Coming.¹¹⁶ At the same time, the Pictish reluctance to depict the actual crucifixion may reflect knowledge of the Christological debates current on the Continent; it may even show a sympathy with the Monophysite position, wherein the corruptibility of Christ’s flesh was denied and the divinity of Christ was stressed above his humanity.¹¹⁷ It has been suggested that the Monophysites preferred abstract compositions, plain depictions of crosses, and isolated iconic images rather than narrative cycles that illustrated Christ’s Passion.¹¹⁸ While the Picts cannot be

the Beasts,’ pp. 383-88; ‘The Ruthwell Cross,’ pp. 118-19; ‘*Traditio evangeliorum*,’ p. 422. Ó Carragáin does not name specific ‘Celtic’ monasteries.

¹¹⁶ See Chapter 1, pp. 26-30.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 33-34.

¹¹⁸ Werner, ‘The Cross-Carpet Page,’ p. 187, note 42.

accused of depicting plain crosses, there are certainly no narrative cycles of Christ's passion, nor any crucifixions portrayed on any Pictish cross-slabs.¹¹⁹ Instead, what may implicitly refer to Christ's Passion on the Nigg cross are the interlaced beasts that inhabit its arms. As pointed out earlier, interlaced beasts and serpents predominate on the pages illustrating Christ's Passion throughout the *Book of Kells*, and this association between interlaced zoomorphic ornament and the Passion may also have been current on the Tarbat peninsula.¹²⁰ At the same time, the interlaced beasts inhabiting the cross arms may be a reference to the creatures sustained within the Tree of Life, which was frequently conflated with the Cross,¹²¹ or they might be performing an apotropaic duty (see below).

Serpents and Snake-bosses:

The interpretation of the plethora of interlaced serpents placed to either side of the cross-shaft depends upon various early medieval literary, liturgical and cultural associations. In the Christian literary tradition the serpent had a dual or even triplicate nature. Associated with the fall of man in Genesis, its wise and cunning nature was simultaneously deplored and admired throughout the bible and exegesis. It was frequently affiliated with the dragon as the enemy of mankind; while at the same time its ability to renew itself was seen as a symbol of Christ's resurrection.

In the Old Testament, serpents, or asps were to be feared and overcome, and their venom

¹¹⁹ While crucifixions, or fragments of crucifixions can be seen identified (sometimes doubtfully) on seven early medieval monuments, (or their fragments), six of them are from free-standing crosses representing Scottish, rather than Pictish work: Camuston, Kingoldrum 3, and Monfieth 4, all in Angus, Abernethy 4, in Perthshire, and Lasswade, in Lothian. The seventh, a roughly hewed stone at Kirkcolm in Dumfries, contains no Pictish symbols and is likely an early monument related to the mission of Ninian. See *ECMS* 2:424, figs. 263a, 268, 275a, 325, 514.

¹²⁰ See the discussion of zoomorphic ornament in the *Book of Kells* and on the Nigg cross-slab, above.

¹²¹ See Chapter 1, pp. 24-25.

often used as a metaphor for the evils resulting from gossip or drunkenness.¹²² Significant departures from this general characterisation occur in Genesis, where the serpent is given a personality as the tempter of Adam and Eve, and in Exodus (4:2-4, 7:8-13) and Numbers (21:9) where the rod of Moses and the brazen serpent are the embodiments of God's power. Though generally as reviled in the New Testament as in the Old, the subtlety and cunning of the serpent was praised in Matthew 10:16, when Jesus instructed his disciples to go out and preach to others: 'Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.'¹²³ Elsewhere in the New Testament, the serpent fulfils the same role as it does in the Old Testament, and in Revelations; it is simply used interchangeably with the dragon to signify the evil of Satan.

Within the various Apocryphal texts available to the Insular world the serpent was characterised in much the same way as it was in canonical accounts; what is interesting, however, are the accounts of both the infant Jesus' and the various Apostles' ability to banish, or destroy the beasts. In Pseudo-Matthew 41 (which repeats the childhood miracles of Christ from the Gospel of Thomas) the child Jesus heals the snakebite on his brother James's hand, and causes the serpent to burst.¹²⁴ Ps-Abdias's *Historiae Apostolica* 10:2 relates the story of how Philip banished a dragon, while *Historiae Apostolica* 4:9 recounts a contest with the Manichaean court magicians of Xerxes, in which Simon and Jude demonstrate a superior power to charm snakes. Likewise, in *Historiae Apostolica* 7:2, 4, Matthew is able to send snakes and dragons to sleep and cure their bites through the power of the Cross.¹²⁵ In addition, Gregory of Tours'

¹²² See Deuteronomy (32:23-24), 2 Kings (18:4), Psalms (58:3-4, 140:1-3), Proverbs (23:32), Isaiah (14:29), and Amos (5:18-19), for several examples.

¹²³ *Ecce ego mitto vos sicut oves in medio luporum estote ergo prudentes sicut serpentes et simplices sicut columbae.*

¹²⁴ M.R. James (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament*, (Oxford, 1924), pp. 53-54, 65, 82. It is likely that Ps-Abdias's *Historiae Apostolica* were known in Britain to some extent. See Appendix 1A.

¹²⁵ James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 465-466, 469.

version of the apocryphal *Acta Andreae* 19 (*Liber de miraculosis beati Andreae apostolica*) reports how Andrew is able to destroy 'a great serpent' through the power of the Lord and also heal a child who is bitten by the beast.¹²⁶ Clearly then, the power of Christ, and the Cross was seen as being able to vanquish the evil inherent in the serpent, and it is this interpretation which is most often assigned to compositions that features crosses and serpents.

That serpents represented an evil to be overcome though faith and prayer is confirmed in exegesis and the liturgy. Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nyssa, among others, used the serpent as a symbol of heresy and unbelief,¹²⁷ while both Ambrose and Augustine identified serpents as the sins of iniquity in their commentaries on the Psalms.¹²⁸ Augustine's exegesis on Psalm 41 (Vulgate) draws together the hart and the serpent, commenting that after destroying the serpents, the hart longs for the water of life. He then states, 'The serpents are thy vices, destroy the serpents of iniquity; then wilt thou long yet more for 'the Fountain of Truth.'¹²⁹ This might be especially pertinent as Ryan has pointed out that the Psalm 41 commanded a special place in the liturgy of the early medieval world: it was recited on Easter Saturday when the catechumens achieved their initiation, was used as the tract for the blessing of the font during the Easter Vigil,

¹²⁶ Gregory of Tours, *Opera*, part 2, in M. Bonnet (ed.), *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum* (Berlin: 1885), 1: 826-46; James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 343. It is difficult to ascertain whether this 6th-century work was known in Early medieval Britain or Ireland. See Appendix 1A.

¹²⁷ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* 16, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:5; *Catechesis* 15:27, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7: 113; Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius: Preface to Letter 2*; *NPNF*, 2nd series, 5:34; *Catechesis: De Trinitate* 30, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 5:498; Letter 17: *To Eustathia, Ambrosia and Basilissa*, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 5:542; Appendix 1C. It is possible that some chapters of Cyril's *Catechesis* were in circulation in early medieval Britain or Ireland, but there is no evidence that any of Gregory of Nyssa's writings were known in the Insular World (see Appendix 1A).

¹²⁸ Ambrose, *In Psalmum XLVIII Enarratio: hujus titulus est: in finem filiis Core, psalmus David*, *PL* 14:1155; Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 41.3, *CCSL*: 461-462, 1-26. While it is unknown whether Ambrose's exposition on the psalms were specifically known in the early Insular world Augustine's *Enarrationes* were most likely known by the 7th-century, and were used by Bede and the anonymous author of the OE *Exodus*. See Appendix 1A; *FONTES* (29 August 2003).

¹²⁹ *Serpentes vitia tua sunt: consume serpentes iniquitatis, tunc amplius desiderabis fontem veritatis*. See Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 41.3, *CCSL*: 461-462, 1-26, for the whole passage: Appendix 1C.

and was chanted by the Pope, clergy and catechumens in the early Roman *Ordines*.¹³⁰ Likewise, Psalm 139, which was used as a tract in the Mass of the Catechumens on Good Friday,¹³¹ included the lines: 'Deliver me O Lord from the evil man: rescue me from the unjust man....They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent: the venom of asps is under their lips.'¹³² It is clear that in the liturgy there was an established tradition of association between serpents and evil.

Nevertheless, this was not the only nature of the serpent to be investigated by exegetes. Augustine expounds the wisdom of the serpent in one of his Gospel homilies, and in doing so gives a Christian interpretation to the snake's ability to cast off its old skin and 'spring forth into a new life.' Unexpectedly, he does not equate the serpent's ability with Christ's resurrection; instead, he instructs his audience to imitate the snake's behaviour by putting off 'the old man,' or 'temporal good', which he equates with the serpent's old coat of skin, and to embrace a new life of truth. In addition, he advises good Christians to emulate the serpent's instinct to protect its head, since the head of man is Christ.¹³³ The *Physiologus*, an early medieval compendium of animal lore given a Christian interpretation, repeats both of Augustine's injunctions to follow the behaviour of the serpent.¹³⁴ Parts of the *Physiologus* were definitely known in Britain and Ireland, and Henderson has argued that at the very least, the chapter on serpents was known in Pictland.¹³⁵ It should be noted that the link between the serpent shedding its skin and Christ's

¹³⁰ M. Ryan, 'The Menagerie of the Derrynaflan Paten,' in C. Karkov, R. Farrell, and M. Ryan (eds.), *The Insular Tradition* (Albany, 1997), p. 251.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Erue me Domine ab homine malo a viris iniquis serva me...exacuerunt linguam suam quasi serpens venenum aspidis sub labiis eorum semper....* Psalm 139:1-4.

¹³³ See Augustine, *Sermo* 64: 3 (On Matthew 10:16), *PL* 38: 425-426; *NPNF* 6: 305-306. Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 3:10.21, *CCSL* 50A: 148.54-67; *NPNF* 3: 64; Appendix 1C.

¹³⁴ M. Curley (ed.), *Physiologus* (Austin, 1979), pp. 16-19.

¹³⁵ Henderson, *Pictish Monsters: Symbol, Text and Image*, H.M. Chadwick Memorial Lectures 7 (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 9-13; Appendix 1A.

resurrection is never made explicit in either biblical exegesis nor in the *Physiologus*, and yet this is an interpretation given by many scholars when it comes to explaining the multiple appearance of serpents on Irish or Scottish crosses or Pictish Cross-slabs.¹³⁶

This may have something to do with the exegetes' focus on the figurative role of the serpent as a *type* of Christ and as a symbol of God's power. For instance, Augustine believed that the rods of Moses and Aaron, which God turned into serpents in order to demonstrate his power over the Egyptian gods (Exodus 4:2-4, 7:8-13), symbolised Christ and the kingdom of God, while the brazen serpent (Numbers 21: 4-9) was a prefiguration of the Lord's death on the Cross.¹³⁷ Augustine treats this latter subject most fully in his treatise *On the Gospel of John* when he comments,

a serpent is gazed on that the serpent may have no power. What is this?
A death is gazed upon that death may have no power. But whose
death? The death of Life...but in Christ's death, death died....¹³⁸

It can be seen that Augustine saw the brazen serpent simultaneously as a metaphor for Christ, who swallows up the ungodly and is the death of Death, as the kingdom of heaven, and also as Death itself.

It must be emphasised that Augustine did not view the serpent itself as a *type* of Christ. Rather, he insisted on the difference between the figure (*figurata imaginem*) and the real thing (*rem ipsam*) throughout his commentaries.¹³⁹ However, a direct association between the serpent and Christ was made by several Christian sects deemed heretical, such as the Manichaeans, the

¹³⁶ See, for instance, Henderson, 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-boss Motif,' pp. 57-58; MacLean, 'Snake-Bosses and Redemption,' p. 250.

¹³⁷ See Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 12:28,12:30, PL 42: 269, 270; NPNF 4: 192,193; *Sermones De Vetero Testamento* 6:7, CCSL 41: 65. 104-109; *Sermones De Vetero Testamento* 8:3, CCSL 41: 81-82. 72-85, *De Trinitate Libri* 3:10.21, CCSL 50A:148. 54-67; Rotelle, *The Works of St. Augustine*, 3:1:229-30, 242; NPNF 3:64.

¹³⁸ *Adtenditur serpens, ut nihil valeat serpens. Quid est hoc? Ad tenditur mors, ut nihil valeat mors. Sed cuius mors? Mors vitae.... Sed in morte Christi mors mortua est....* Augustine: *In Iohannis Evangelium* 12:11, CCSL 36: 127.19-46; translation from NPNF 7: 85. See Appendix 1C for the full passage.

Ophites, the Naasenes and the Basilidians.¹⁴⁰ In addition, the early Christian *Crux Commissa* (the *Tau*, or Egyptian cross) was often portrayed with a serpent wound around its shaft, simultaneously referring to Gnostic beliefs as well as to the brazen serpent of Moses, which was believed to have been set upon a *Tau*-shaped cross.

This latter belief can be traced back to one of the first Christian fathers, Justin Martyr (c. 100-165), who wrote,

Moses, by the inspiration and influence of God, took brass and made it into the figure of a cross, and set it in the holy tabernacle and said to the people, "If ye look to this figure, and believe, ye shall be saved thereby."¹⁴¹

It is difficult to determine if Justin deliberately misread the passage from Numbers 21:9, which in the Vulgate reads 'So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live,'¹⁴² or if the pre-Vulgate texts he was working with already contained this translation.¹⁴³ Whichever is the case, by reporting that Moses formed a brazen cross, Justin Martyr succinctly conflated the symbols of the brazen serpent with the Cross, and as such confirmed a connection made initially by Christ himself when he said to Nicodemus, 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have life everlasting.'¹⁴⁴ Likewise, Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil of Caesaria, Augustine, and legitimate and pseudonymous works by Ambrose all repeat this conception of the brazen serpent either forming sign of the

¹³⁹ See for example, Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 12:11, CCSL 36: 127.44-46; NPNF 7:85; Appendix 1C.

¹⁴⁰ K. Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 17, 84-86, 93-94, 97-99, 104, 145, 247.

¹⁴¹ Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 1:60, ANCL 2: 58.

¹⁴² *fecit ergo Moses serpentem aeneum et posuit pro signo quem cum percussi aspicerent sanabantur.*

¹⁴³ It is outside the realm of this study to pursue which version of the *Septuagint* Justin Martyr may have been consulting.

¹⁴⁴ *Et sicut Moses exaltavit serpentem in deserto ita exaltari oportet Filium hominis ut omnis qui credit in ipso non pereat sed habeat vitam aeternam.* John 3:14-15

Cross, or being lifted on a cross.¹⁴⁵

The image of the brazen serpent as a prefiguration of Christ on the Cross quickly became enshrined in early medieval art. Upon visiting Rome in 402, and seeing artwork that stressed the correspondence of the two Testaments, Prudentius wrote a number of verses to accompany the cycles of paintings. Regarding the brazen serpent, he wrote 'The dry way through the wilderness was swarming with deadly serpents and now their poisoned bites were destroying the people with livid wounds; but the wise leader hangs upon a cross a serpent wrought in brass to take its force from the venom.'¹⁴⁶

There is no doubt that both the rod of Moses and brazen serpent and were seen as prefigurations of Christ and the Cross in the Insular world as well. Moses's rod can be found in Pseudo-Bede's commentary on *Exodus*, which equates Moses's rod with the Cross of Christ,¹⁴⁷ while Aldhelm believed that the typology of the brazen serpent and the crucifixion was better than any pagan myth. In his letter to Wihtfrith, Aldhelm decried the monks' continuing fascination with pagan stories when the 'heroic style of epic' could be found throughout the Bible: 'What is the use...to record in the heroic style of epic; when a serpent once was raised at the end of a rod and presented to the gaze of the Hebrew assembly that is, when the nourishing

¹⁴⁵ For Augustine, see note 137; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 13:20, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:87; Basil of Caesaria, *Homily on the Spirit* 14:31, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 8: 20; Ps-Ambrose, *Sermo* 46: *De Salomone* 2.4, *PL* 17: 695-696, Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministorum*, 3.15.94, *CCSL* 15: 188-189.29-37; Appendix 1C. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of these works in Britain and Ireland.

¹⁴⁶ *Fervebat via sicca eremi serpentibus atris, Jamque venenati per livida vulnera morsus Carpebant populum: sed prudens aere politum Dux cruce suspendit, qui virus temperet, anguem.* Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, *Dittochaeon* 12, *PL* 60: 96. Translation from C. Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art 300-1150: Sources and Documents* (Toronto and London: 1986), p. 27. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of Prudentius's *Dittochaeon*.

¹⁴⁷ PS-Bede: *In Pentateuchum Commentarii: Explanatio in Secundum Librum Moisis* 14, *PL* 91: 310; Appendix 1C. This Hiberno-Latin Commentary was in circulation by Alcuin's time, was possibly a direct source for the anonymous author of the OE *Exodus*, and was probably used by Aelfric in his preface to Genesis. See Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. 89, 93-94; *FONTES* (05 October 2003).

staff of the Gibbet was affixed with the death of Death?'¹⁴⁸ Likewise, Bede was also fully conversant with the typology as demonstrated by his discussion of the pictures brought back from Rome by Benedict Biscop, which showed 'how the Old Testament was foreshadowed by the New,' and which included a set in which 'the Son of Man lifted up on the cross was paired with the serpent raised up by Moses in the desert.'¹⁴⁹

This typology might also lie behind the Insular liturgical rite reported by Warren, wherein a procession bearing a serpent-headed staff travelled down to the Church door on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Eve. At the church door, a fire was first blessed, then used for lighting a candle in the serpent's mouth, which was subsequently used to light all the other candles.¹⁵⁰ In this way the connection between the redemptive power of the brazen serpent and the crucifixion was enacted ritualistically on the anniversary of Christ's death.

It can be seen then that a familiarity with the liturgy and the exegetical writings circulating in the Insular world would have allowed the viewer to assign several different multivalent interpretations to the serpents on the Nigg Cross-slab. At the same time, a pre-existent pagan belief in the apotropaic power of interlaced beasts might also have informed the

¹⁴⁸ *Quidnam, rogans quaeso, ... heroico stylo historiae caraxare; quae altato quondam sceptri in vertice chelidro Hebraeae cautionis obtutibus praesentato, hoc est, alma affixa, solo tenus diruta evanuerit? PL 89: col. 102; Translation from M. Lapidge and M. Herren (eds.), *Aldhelm: The Prose Works* (Ipswich and Cambridge), p. 154.*

¹⁴⁹ *Pauli apostoli de concordia veteris et novi Testamenti summa ratione compositas exhibuit: verbi gratia, Isaac ligna quibus immolaretur portantem, et Dominum crucem in qua pateretur aeque portantem, proxima super invicem regione, pictura conjunxit. Item serpenti in eremo a Moyse exaltato, Filium hominis in cruce exaltatum comparavit. Bede, *Vita Sanctorum Abbatum Monasterii in Wiramutha et Girvum*, PL 94: 720-721; D. Farmer (ed.), *The Age of Bede: The Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, (New York, 1983), p. 194.*

¹⁵⁰ Warren, *The Liturgy of the Celtic Church*, p. 53. According to Warren, this rite was 'Celtic in origin and was practiced in York until the late 8th-century. It is also reported in the *Apostolatus Benedictinorum*, a 17th-century document compiled to prove that England had always been Benedictine. See C. Reyner, *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia Sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigrorum S. Benedicti in Regno Angliae*, (1626), Appendix, p. 87. At the same time it is described in the *Regularis Concordia*, the 10th-century document of monastic reform written by Ædelwold. See P. Symons (ed.), *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque* (London, 1953), p. 39.

motif.¹⁵¹ Although there is a danger in interpreting every instance of animal interlace this way, it is quite likely that the interlace that appears on entrances to churches or along paths to a sacred area (such as on the steps leading to the Merovingian funerary chapel Hypogée des Dunes, in Poitiers) were carved with an apotropaic purpose in mind.¹⁵² In light of this consideration, it is possible that the interlaced serpents (as well as the interlaced beasts on the Crosshead) performed an amuletic, protective duty as well as suggesting to the viewer multivalent layers of Christian meaning.

In the final analysis, the interpretation of the meanings conveyed by the serpents carved upon cross-slabs might rely upon their placement within the slab's composition. For instance, had they been placed underneath the cross, the most likely meaning would have been the victory of Christ or the Cross over evil and death. However, placed on either side of a cross-shaft as they are on the cross-slabs at Nigg, Shandwick, and on the TR2 fragments, they might refer to any of the more benign symbolic meanings attached to serpents, such as their wisdom, ability to shed their skin and begin a new life, and protect their heads, all of which have been given a Christian interpretation. At the same time, the serpents could equally have been intended to remind the viewer of the brazen serpent and the rod of Moses, both prefigurations of the Cross and Christ. It is also possible that the sheer amount of snakes on the Nigg cross-slab is a reflection of liturgical practices at Nigg, which may have involved a rite such as that reported by Warren. In all of these cases, it is also possible that the serpents on the cross-slabs functioned apotropaically, harnessing the power of the snake to keep further evil away.

In terms of this amuletic duty, the Nigg and TR2 serpents can be directly compared to those decorating the St Germain shrine finials or the mount found in Norway, and like the

¹⁵¹ Kitzinger, 'Interlace and Icons,' pp. 3-6.

affinities between the decorative stone bosses and the metalwork studs on Insular house shrines, suggest the stone might have been conceived artistically as a stone reliquary.¹⁵³ According to MacLean, the stylistic parallels point to a relationship with a specific reliquary, the shrine that produced the St Germain finials, and those found in the Viking grave.¹⁵⁴ MacLean further argues that the finials might have originated from the shrine of Adomnán that was recorded in the *Annals of Ulster* as having been stolen from Donaghmoyne, Co Monaghan, in 832 AD.¹⁵⁵ Serpents were a particularly appropriate motif to decorate the shrine of Adomnán (and, MacLean implies, the shrine of Columba) because of the story within Adomnán's *Life of St Columba* that Columba had died secure in the hope of salvation little more than a week after he had rendered the poison of vipers harmless.¹⁵⁶ In essence then, the serpents on the shrines, having been rendered harmless by Columba and the power of God, now functioned apotropaically and carried within them the hope of salvation.¹⁵⁷ It is therefore possible to theorise that the serpent ornament on Nigg (and TR2) may have been inspired by a local saint's shrine and it is not entirely unreasonable to suppose that a relic of St Columba, the proposed founder of the monastery at Tarbat, was enshrined there, and that the container for such a reliquary was ornamented with serpents and snake bosses.

As a final note, the frequency of the lozenge-shapes created by either the form of the snake-bosses or by the activity of the serpents' tongues or tails must also be stressed. This geometric shape is an aniconic representation of the Christ in that its mathematically

¹⁵² *Ibid.* fig. 1.5.

¹⁵³ Henderson, 'The Cross on Pictish Cross-Slabs,' p. 216.

¹⁵⁴ MacLean, 'Snake-Bosses and Redemption,' pp. 250-251.

¹⁵⁵ *Annals of Ulster*, Dublin Trinity College Library MS 1282. See MacAirt and MacNiocaill, *The Annals of Ulster*, pp. 288-89.

¹⁵⁶ Reeves, *Life of St. Columba* 2:28, 3:23, pp. 142, 228-242.

¹⁵⁷ MacLean, 'Snake-bosses and Redemption,' pp. 251-252.

symmetrical appearance potentially incorporates a cross that fills and quarters the field, thus alluding to the cosmic dimensions of the divine order and fourfold harmony of the universe.¹⁵⁸

Within Insular and Carolingian art, however, lozenges, or rhomboid-shapes, represented not only the cosmic dimensions of the Cross and Christ, but were also multi-faceted references to the various cosmic quaternities that contained in their essences a revelation of Christ, such as the four seasons, four rivers of Paradise, four elements, four winds, four beasts of the Apocalypse, and the four Evangelists; ideas that were thoroughly explored in Hiberno-Saxon exegesis.¹⁵⁹

Considered within this context, it would therefore be impossible to assign a negative interpretation to the serpents on the Nigg cross-slab, when their very bodies frequently make up a symbol of the universal dimensions of Christ. While snakes might ultimately be seen as a symbol of the evil that Christ and the Cross overcame, in this case the weight of evidence is on their interpretation as symbols of salvation and redemption.

SIDE B

The Frame and the Pictish Symbols:

It is outside the remit of this study to engage seriously in a discussion of the possible meanings or functions of Pictish symbols. Recent theories have proposed that the symbols are cultural echoes of the accoutrements worn and used by the Caledonian warrior aristocracy (c. 100 BC- 100 AD); that they are indicators of rank, status, or titles to land; that they represented

¹⁵⁸ J. Hawkes, *The Sandbach Crosses: Sign and Significance in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture* (Dublin: 2002), pp. 97-101; J. O' Reilly, 'Patristic and Insular Traditions of the Evangelists: Exegesis and Iconography,' in A.M. Luiselli-Fadda and E. Ó Carragáin (eds.), *Le Isole Britanniche E Roma in Eta Romanobarbarica* (Rome, 1998), *passim*, but particularly pp. 84-85.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* For examples of the pertinent exegesis see Chapter 1, pp. 28-29; Ps-Jerome, *Commentarius in Evangelium Secundum Marcum* 15, PL 30: 637-638; *Expositio Quattuor Evangeliorum: Prologus*, PL 30: cols. 533-534; Appendix 1B.

marriage alliances between Pictish tribes; that they function as commemorative inscriptions for the non-literate.¹⁶⁰ One of the most recent theories comes from Cummins, who following the work of Samson, interprets the symbols as names.¹⁶¹ However, where Samson believes that the symbols represent theoretical names, and only in conjunction with each other, Cummins has asserted that each individual symbol refers to a specific, discernible name, primarily taken from the Pictish king-lists. For instance, he believes that the bird symbol and the presently missing 'Pictish beast' on the reverse of the Nigg cross-slab can be translated exactly into the names of the person who commissioned the stone, and the person being commemorated. In this case it is 'Dunodnat, son of Edern.'¹⁶² Considered in conjunction with the Samson's theories,¹⁶³ then it can be surmised that the Nigg slab was erected by Edern as a memorial to his son Dunodnat. It is, of course, impossible to prove such a conjecture, and it may be that such a proposal ought not be seriously considered. On the other hand, by following Cummins' system, it is possible to draw up a pedigree that fits the entire peninsula (see fig. 2.13).¹⁶⁴ It may be that while the specific names are a chimera, the interrelated symbols present on the peninsula do represent the patronage of one elite family.

The Figural Composition:

As noted above, it is likely that the majority of the figures in the central panel on the reverse of the Nigg slab relate to a David cycle of iconography. As the largest figural pair in the

¹⁶⁰ See Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, pp. 168-171, for an excellent survey of the various theories attached to the Pictish symbols.

¹⁶¹ R. Samson 'The Reinterpretation of the Pictish Symbols,' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 145 (1992): 29-65, William Cummins, *The Picts and their Symbols* (Gloucestershire, 1999).

¹⁶² Cummins, *The Picts and their Symbols*, pp. 113-115. Cummins gets most of his names from the Pictish King Lists, but in some cases relies on other historical documents.

¹⁶³ Samson, 'The Reinterpretation of the Pictish symbols,' pp. 34-45.

composition, it is probable that David slaying the lion is central to the interpretation of the scene. This event is referred to in 1 Samuel 17:34-37, which details David's rescue of his father's sheep from the jaws of the lions and bears:

Thy servant kept his father's sheep and there came a lion and a bear and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him and delivered it out of his mouth: and he rose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear...The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.¹⁶⁵

Clearly the emphasis is on the protective powers of the Lord and the salvation that is possible through belief. At the same time, this episode has been interpreted as a pre-figuration of Christ and his ability to deliver humanity from the power of evil by his victory over death and the Devil.¹⁶⁶

This typology is believed to have originated with Augustine's commentary on Psalm 7, though unlike his commentary related to serpents, the connection between the *type* and *antitype* is never made explicit. Augustine stresses David's cry to the Lord for help from all who persecute him, especially from one who will 'tear my soul as a lion', at which point Augustine refers to 1 Peter 5:8 and equates the lion to the devil.¹⁶⁷ Likewise, Augustine's commentary on Psalm 56 focuses on Christ drawing out souls from the midst of lion's whelps, but again, does not connect this to the actions of David.¹⁶⁸ On the other hand, exegesis by Jerome and Cassiodorus does solidify the typology. According to Jerome's list of Hebrew names, David's

¹⁶⁴ The possible 'names' of the symbols on the other stones and fragments will be discussed in the following chapters.

¹⁶⁵ *Pascebat servus tuus patris sui gregem et veniebat leo vel ursus tollebatque arietem de medio gregis et sequebar eos et percutiebam eruebamque de ore eorum et illi consurgebant adversum me et adprehendebam mentum eorum et suffocabam interficiebamque eos nam et leonem et ursum interfeci ego servus tuus erit igitur... Dei viventis et ait David Dominus qui eruit me de manu leonis et de manu ursi ipse liberabit me de manu Philisthei huius.*

¹⁶⁶ Hawkes, 'Old Testament Heroes,' p. 156.

¹⁶⁷ Augustine, *Enarrationes In Psalmos 7:2*, CCSL 38: 36, lines 273-276; NPNF, 8: 20; Appendix 1C.

name meant 'strong hand' (*David, fortis manu, sive desiderabilis*).¹⁶⁹ These names formed part of the prefatory material in Insular Gospel-Books, so would have been well known by the educated.¹⁷⁰ In addition, Cassiodorus elaborated upon the definition of David's name in his commentary on Psalm 27:

We have said that David signifies the strong hand. And when should such a name be used except in reference to the glorious battle of the Passion of our Lord? Strong hand, who through his own endurance laid low the Prince of Darkness, who by dying overcame death, who freed the captive human race by the dispensation of the Crucifixion.¹⁷¹

This tradition obviously had a great resonance within the Insular world judging by the number of times 'David rending the lion's jaws' is depicted on Irish and Pictish monuments.

As regards the cymbal-playing figure in the left-hand corner of the composition, the reference is most likely to Psalm 150:3-5, which instructs: 'Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals, praise him with loud clashing cymbals!'¹⁷² Musicians, dancers and harps all symbolised David's role as the divinely inspired composer of the psalms. Considered the most important of the prophetic books in the Old Testament, since it foretold the details of the Passion and humanity's future salvation, the entire Psalter was read each week in the monastery and known intimately.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Augustine, *Enarrationes on Psalmos* 56:10-11, PL 36: 667-668: Appendix 1C.

¹⁶⁹ Jerome, *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum: De Regnorum Librum 1*, CCSL 72: 103.11

¹⁷⁰ Henderson, 'Primus inter Pares' p. 128.

¹⁷¹ *Diximus David significare manu fortis. Et quando tale nomen debuit poni nisi cum passionis dominicae gloriosa certamina referuntur? Fortis utique manu, qui per tolerantiam suam prostravit principem tenebrarum, qui mortum moriendo superavit, qui humanum genus captivum crucifixionis suae dispensatione liberavit.* Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmum 27*, CCSL 97: 242-243. 1-6. Translation from Henderson, 'Primus inter Pares,' p. 130. The *Expositio Psalmorum* was in Insular circulation by the time of Bede, see Appendix 1A.

¹⁷² *Laudate eum in clangore bucinæ laudate eum in psalterio et cithara, laudate eum in tympano et choro laudate eum in cordis et organo, laudate eum in cymbalis sonantibus laudate eum in cymbalis tinnientibus.*

¹⁷³ Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' p. 15; Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church,' pp. 342-343.

Despite the lack of an artistic model to support Mowbray's suggestion that the figure may be a representation of David himself, dancing before the Ark (2 Samuel 6: 21-22), the exegesis behind such an interpretation does make this identification tempting. For instance, Gregory the Great believed David's actions were a metaphor for the humility necessary to perform good works:

...when David despised the power of his kingship by dancing in front of the ark of the Lord, he said: I will make merry, and become more contemptible, and I will be humble in my own eyes. To break the mouths of lions, to destroy the strength of bears, to be chosen when his older brothers were rejected, to be anointed to govern the kingdom when the former king was repudiated, to bring down with one stone Goliath whom everyone feared....these things did not make him proud! He looked down on himself in every way, and confessed that he was humble in his own eyes.¹⁷⁴

This exegesis seems especially pertinent since it draws together at least two of the images upon the Nigg stone, the musician/dancer and David slaying the Lion. It quite possibly also explains the inclusion of a figure of David the warrior, who would have functioned as a symbol of David's secular duties, and his powers of kingship. At the same time, the emphasis upon humility in Gregory's homily would also fit in within a monastic context and reflect the 'contest of courtesy' about to be engaged in between Paul and Anthony portrayed on the front of the cross-slab.

The remaining figures situated underneath David and the lion comprise a horseman and dogs in pursuit of a deer. While it is unlikely that this group refers specifically to the activities of

¹⁷⁴ *Quo contra cum David regni sui potentiam coram arca faederis Domini sa tando despiceret, dixit: Ludam et vilior fiam plus quam factus sum, et ero humilis in oculis meis. Quem enim non extolleret ora leonum frangere, usorum brachia dissipare, despectis prioribus fratribus eligi, reprobato rege ad regni gubernacula ungi, timendum cunctis uno lapide Goliath sternere....Et tamen in cunctis se despicit, qui in suis oculis se esse humilem confitetur.* Gregory the Great, *Homiliarum in Evangelia* 2: 7.4, PL 76:1102. Translation from Hurst, *Gregory the Great*, p. 26. Bede was extremely familiar with this homily and used several paragraphs of it in his commentaries on the Gospels of Mark and Luke. See Hurst, *Gregory the Great*, p. 27, notes 2-6.

David, or that the horseman is a representation of 'David the Hunter,'¹⁷⁵ as an image of the activities of the secular elite,¹⁷⁶ this 'hunt-scene' can complement the array of interpretations assigned to the idea of kingship and just rule embodied by David (see below).

Taken as a whole, the figural composition on the back of the Nigg cross-slab can be read on several different levels, from the secular to the profoundly spiritual. Images of warriors and hunts were probably meant to articulate the prowess, power, and responsibilities of the local secular rulers, while the more specific images of David could refer simultaneously to the epitome of secular kingship as well as to the divinely-inspired prophet who not only foretold the coming of Christ, but was also a prefiguration of Christ. Since the concepts of the cosmological properties of Christ and the extensions of his love were found in the writings available to, and produced in the Insular world, as well as being manifested artistically by the lozenge-shape,¹⁷⁷ it is therefore possible that the counterpart images of David as both ruler and poet, surrounded by not only musicians, but by soldiers and the four virtues, were also either literary or artistic concepts known in the Insular world, and were being reproduced, albeit in a fragmented form, on the back of the Nigg slab. Likewise, the lion-slaying episode was a manifestation of the Salvation possible through faith in the Lord.

These aspects of both spiritual and secular rule were two reasons why David was frequently viewed by contemporary rulers as a prefiguration of their own divinely inspired rule.¹⁷⁸ It has been argued that the didactic function of this typology (wherein the contemporary ruler was believed to have the force and righteousness of the Old Testament ruler) applied not

¹⁷⁵ See Mowbray, 'Eastern Influences on Carvings,' p. 432.

¹⁷⁶ L. Alcock, 'Image and Icon in Pictish Sculpture,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (eds.), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 232-33.

¹⁷⁷ See Chapter 1, pp. 28-29.

only to artistic images of David enthroned, but also to abbreviated images of David, shown either as a boy with a sling, as a prophet with a harp, or as a lion-killer.¹⁷⁹ It may very well be, therefore, that the Davidic iconography on the reverse of the cross-slab refers to a local ruler, or even royal patronage, as has been claimed in regards to the St Andrews Sarcophagus. While St Andrew's (or Kinriond as it was then known) was a documented royal foundation from the second quarter of the 9th century (c. 829-831 AD) and the residence of a bishop and a community of *Céli Dé* monks by the 10th century (if not earlier) Henderson has argued that the Sarcophagus commemorates the first King Oengus (*obit* 761 AD), pointing to royal patronage of the monastery seventy years before the second King Oengus founded his new church there.¹⁸⁰ While it is just as likely that the Sarcophagus was commissioned for the use of a bishop or other high-ranking ecclesiastic, it may be that the Sarcophagus points to a particular association between the burial monuments of kings (or, at the very least, royal patronage) and David iconography in Pictland. Certainly the close artistic and thematic parallels with the Sarcophagus do allow for the possibility that both monuments might have had the same, or very similar patronage as well as artists.

CONCLUSIONS:

It is apparent that the iconology of the cross-slab at Nigg can be interpreted on several different, though complementary, levels ranging from the possible pre-Christian notions of the

¹⁷⁸ D. Bullough, 'Imagines Regum' and their Significance in the Early Medieval West,' in G. Robertson and G. Henderson (eds.), *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice* (Edinburgh, 1975), pp. 238-240; Alcock, 'Image and Icon,' pp. 232-33.

¹⁷⁹ Henderson, 'Primus inter Pares,' pp. 106-107.

¹⁸⁰ M. Anderson, *Kings and Kingship in Early Scotland*, rev. edn (Edinburgh, 1980), p. 266; Clancy, 'Iona, Scotland, and the *Céli Dé*,' p. 114; MacQuarrie, 'Early Christian Religious Houses in Scotland', pp. 119-121; Hudson, 'Kings and Church in Early Scotland', p. 152; Henderson, 'The Insular and Continental Context of the St Andrews

amuletic powers implicit in interlaced beasts or serpents, to secular notions of kingship.

Pervading these is the Christian notion of salvation conveyed by the interrelated sequence of images contained in the figural scene on the back of the slab, and by the serpents and the Paul and Anthony scene on the front pediment. In turn, the images on the back and the front of the slab can be interpreted as a representation of the continuity between the Old and New Testaments, in which David is a prefiguration of Christ, and the prophet of the Eucharistic sacrifice in which Paul and Anthony partake. Likewise, the serpents allude to the Old Testament prefiguration of Christ on the Cross, as well as to the necessity of shunting off the 'old man' of sin and temporal concerns in order to embrace a new life of spirituality. As such they complement the monastic lifestyle embraced by saints Paul and Anthony, who are, in turn especially appropriate figures with which to decorate a monument in a monastic community. Meanwhile, the theme of Christ recognised between two beasts is one that is constantly re-imagined in a variety of ways on each of the Tarbat peninsula cross-slabs, as well as on TR1 and TR20 (see Chapters 3-5).

The speculation that the highly ornamented bosses on Nigg might link the cross-slab with a local reliquary is especially intriguing in this context, and fits well with Kitzinger's theories about the apotropaic function of icons and interlace if placed on monuments that 'guard' a sacred place. Indeed this conception of the Nigg stone might be further backed by MacLean, whose study of stone sculptors and Old Irish law reveals that the location of Irish high crosses were dictated by Hiberno-Latin canon law. These laws required that the varying levels of sanctity within the precincts of a holy place such as a church or monastery be marked out by crosses to

Sarcophagus,' in B. Crawford (ed.), *Scotland in Dark Age Europe*, St John's House Papers 4 (1994),' pp. 76, 81, 92-93.

correspond to the varying levels of society.¹⁸¹ Although it is dangerous to automatically assume that the canon laws of Ireland would also apply in Pictland, since the Pictish church was Columban for at least the first 100 years of its existence, it has been argued that it was, at least initially, administered along Irish lines.¹⁸² Even if this Irish influence were negated by the expulsion of the Pictish clergy, it is possible that a reform movement like the *Céli Dé* might have resurrected the traditions. Therefore, it is not unlikely that the Nigg cross-slab functioned at one level as a marker for a very sacred area. Such a placement within the 'inner sanctum' of an ecclesiastic site would also presuppose that its viewers would be well-versed in the interpretative methods necessary to enjoy the multivalent references to scripture, saint's lives, exegesis and liturgical practices.

At the same time, it has been suggested that the David iconography on the back of the Nigg slab proves royal patronage of the site or the stone. Certainly, the numerous iconographic and stylistic parallels with the St Andrews Sarcophagus do suggest that particular motifs were popular with royal, or high-status ecclesiastical patrons. As will be seen in the succeeding chapters, many of the motifs present on the Tarbat collection of monuments also appear on the monuments in the Meikle and St Vigean collections, as well as on stones at Abernethy and Brechin. All of these sites have either documented royal patronage, were royal foundations, or were the seats of a bishopric.¹⁸³ It could very well be that these parallels point to royal or ecclesiastic patronage of a very high order on the Tarbat peninsula as well.

It has been argued that all but the smallest details of medieval Insular decoration were

¹⁸¹ D. MacLean, 'The Status of the Sculptor in Old-Irish Law and the Evidence of the Crosses,' *Peritia* 9 (1995): 145-6.

¹⁸² I. Henderson, 'The Meaning of the Pictish Symbol Stones,' in E. Meldrum, (ed.), *The Dark Ages in the Highlands: Ancient Peoples, Local History, Archaeology* (Inverness, 1971), p. 66.

¹⁸³ See Chapter 1, p. 18.

controlled by the patron and point to something greater than chance artistic influence or the availability of models.¹⁸⁴ Likewise, the choice of particular images or artistic styles could symbolise political identity and allegiance.¹⁸⁵ In consideration of these proposals, the problematic juxtaposition of artistic styles and themes on the Nigg slab must also be addressed. For instance, why did the Nigg and St Andrews artists use a frontal ('Gilgamesh') model for David rather than the one so popular with the Irish sculptors, in which David placed his knee on the lion's back? Was the Irish model not available to the Picts, or was it a conscious decision to negate the influence of the Irish/Scottish encroachment? If this is the case, then it might be that the slab was commissioned in the mid to late 8th century, sometime after the expulsion of the Columban clergy from Pictland. On the other hand, if the connection were with the Northumbrian church, which may be implied by the A2 form of the crosshead, why would snake-bosses, most closely akin to the products of the Columban federation of monasteries, be carved on the stone? Likewise, the chip out of the lower left-hand side of the loaf in the Paul and Anthony scene makes specific reference to the Irish liturgical practice of taking a corner out of the Eucharistic host. Both of these factors, along with the Paul and Anthony iconography, which celebrates the austere monastic life, suggest that the cross-slab may have had some kind of connection with the *Céli Dé* reform movement originating from Iona, thus pushing the erection of the slab back to the early to mid 9th-century.

In either case, it is extremely likely that the monument was contemporary with the expansion of the Portmahomack ecclesiastic estate. The most likely scenario is that the stone

¹⁸⁴ See P. Michelli, 'Migrating Ideas or Migrating Craftsmen? The Case of Bossed Penannular Brooches,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgett (eds.), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 182-187. It must be stressed that Michelli applies her theories of patronage in medieval Insular society to metalwork and it may be that they cannot be transferred across media to stone carving.

¹⁸⁵ See Chapter 1, p. 8.

was erected at the establishment of either a sister-site to the *monasterium* at Portmahomack, or the foundation of a satellite chapel dependent on the motherhouse. Either way, it is possible that the foundation also contained a reliquary of the *monasteria*'s founding saint. Such an extension would have been made possible through royal funding, thus explaining any references to secular royal rule that the David iconography might be making. Notwithstanding these secular allusions, everything on the Nigg cross-slab points to its placement within a religious, not secular setting. The exegesis and liturgical practices which informed the depiction of the iconography could only have been known within a functioning monastic environment, and while it could be argued that the stone was commissioned and carved at the mother-house site, and then placed in a secular setting, both its extreme iconological sophistication, which almost demands an audience made up of learned clergymen or monks, and its decorative references to a saint's shrine argue against this. For the same reasons, it may be more likely that the cross-slab originally stood within an inner level of sanctity, rather than out on a hill overlooking the sea, though this method of marking expanding monastic estates with carved monuments was being practised in Ireland.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ See T. Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' *passim*, but particularly pp. 137-142.

CH 3: THE CROSS-SLAB AT SHANDWICK (NH 856 747)

INTRODUCTION

The upright cross-slab at Shandwick is located on a hill above the village of Shandwick, on the eastern coast of the Tarbat peninsula (see fig 1.1). According to local tradition Shandwick is the oldest of the Seaboard villages, most likely because of the Norse origin of the name.¹ Evidence for pre-historic inhabitation of the area is slim, resting primarily upon a reported crouched inhumation found at 'Old Shandwick' (NH 858 745), at a location much closer to the shore than is the cross-slab.² Other than the cross-slab, there is no definitive evidence of an early Christian presence in the area, despite assertions that the stone stands near the site of a long vanished early medieval chapel.³ The levelled remains of a chapel are indeed located at 'Old Shandwick', but this chapel is associated with the adjacent castle ruins, which date to the mid-15th century.⁴ On the other hand, a well, named *Tobar Cormag*, also located at 'Old Shandwick,' might reflect a dedication to a 'Saint Cormac' or Saint Colman, the same dedication of Tarbat Old Church (see chapter 5), though the date of this well, and its dedication, have not been subject to investigation.⁵ Other burials have been found in Shandwick, but these also have not been dated, and although the cross-slab itself has traditionally been associated with a burial ground for unbaptized infants, suicides and cholera victims from the 1832 epidemic, limited excavation of

¹ G. Robins, 'Seaboard Villages 1996: Human Remains Assessment Part II,' in M. Carver, *Hilton of Cadboll: Archaeological Assessment and Project Design Report*, (York, 1998), p. 3.

² See *Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Easter Ross: Ross and Cromarty District Highland Region*, Archaeological Field Survey (Edinburgh, 1979), entries 111, 233 and 263, pp. 16, 27, 30, and map sheet 4; G. Robins 'Seaboard Villages 1996: Human Remains Assessment Part I: Catalogue of Burials,' in Carver, *Hilton of Cadboll*, pp. 3, 17, 21.

³ A. D. S. MacDonald and L. Laing, 'Early Ecclesiastical Sites in Scotland, a Field Survey,' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 102 (1969-1970): 137; A. Ritchie, *Picts: An Introduction to the Life of the Picts and the Carved Stones in the Care of the Secretary of State for Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 35.

⁴ See Robins, 'Seaboard Villages 1996, Part II,' pp. 3, 5-6.

the site in 1988 (involving a temporary removal of the slab, and an 8 x 8 meter area opened up) found no evidence of any burials.⁶

The cross-slab was first recorded by Cordiner in 1780, who wrote that 'about three miles east of Ferne, a very large splendid obelisk is erected, surrounded at the base with large, well cut flagstones.... The one side presents a sumptuous cross, with a figure of St Andrew on each hand, and some uncouth animals and flowerings underneath.'⁷ Some time between 1811 and 1812, Petley also took notice of the stone, and in addition to making an invaluable drawing of the cross-slab, which shows that most of the damage to the stone occurred before 1811, related several of the local traditions surrounding it.⁸ The most popular of these involves the other 'pillars' on the peninsula, in that all three (Shandwick, Nigg, and Hilton of Cadboll) were the monuments and burial places of three sons of the King of Denmark, shipwrecked on a rock about a mile from the shore, 'which is to this day called the Three King's Son's.' At the same time, another legend relates that the Shandwick monument was raised in commemoration of the nine sons of the King of Lochlin who, in an attempt to avenge an insult to their sister, were all slain by her husband, who, coincidentally, was said to be an ancestor of the local Balnagown family.⁹ Of other interest in Petley's account is his observation that the west (cross-side) of the slab is thought to have been of much more modern workmanship than the east side, believing as he did that the work was done by a different hand that was 'ruder in the execution.'¹⁰ Writing in the 1840s, Miller repeats many of these assertions, though he conflates the two legends by claiming

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁶ H. Miller, *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland, or the Traditional History of Cromarty*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh, 1889), pp. 39-40; Robins, 'Seaboard Villages 1996, part I,' pp. 3-4, 11-18.

⁷ C. Cordiner, *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland, in a Series of Letters to Thomas Pennant* (London, 1780), p. 65.

⁸ Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-Shire,' plates xviii, xix.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 346.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

that it was the three sons of the king of Denmark who were killed avenging their sister, and that the monuments were thus carved by the Scandinavians, since 'their design and workmanship display a degree of taste and mechanical ability which the Celtae of North Britain seem never to have possessed.'¹¹

The stone was next recorded and drawn by Stuart in 1856, who not only reports that the stone had recently been blown down and re-erected, also addressed the burial tradition associated with the slab, writing that 'the stone is called "clach a charridh," or "the stone of the burying ground," but the writer of the Old Statistical Account calls it "clach a charraig", "the stone of the rock," an instance of the value of Gaelic etymologies.'¹² This latter label would be appropriate for the cross-slab in its first recorded setting within flagstones that were formed like steps.¹³ In addition, Allen and Anderson (writing in 1903), record that after the stone blew down in 1846, it was re-erected into a circular stepped base,¹⁴ which also could reflect the designation "clach a charraig".

The cross-slab is presently presumed to be in, or extremely near, its original placement, although the breakage in 1846 and subsequent re-erectments (including the limited 1987-8 excavation, when it was re-erected into a cement block and enclosed in a Plexiglas box for conservation purposes) might have led to a slight change in position and location.¹⁵ Unlike the slab at Nigg, however, the breakage has not led to an appreciable loss of stone, though its incorporation into cement has obscured about 20cms of decoration near the base. Though the break is clearly visible (running across the top third of the stone on both faces) the sculptural

¹¹ Miller, *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, p. 40.

¹² Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, 1:10.

¹³ See above, note 7.

¹⁴ *ECMS* 2: 68.

details on either side of the break are still easy to discern. Carved from yellow micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs or 'Liesegang' rings, the Shandwick slab is part of the same geological group as the cross-slabs at Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll, as well as the Portmahomack fragments, TR1, 10 and 20.¹⁶ The slab is presently about 297 cm high, 100 cm wide, and 19 cm thick, but according to moulds taken of the lower half before it was covered by the current cement base; it was originally at least another 20 cm tall, making it easily the tallest cross-slab on the peninsula.

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION¹⁷

SIDE A (fig. 3.1)

Currently facing the sea, the somewhat worn decoration on Side A of the Shandwick monument is arranged into six fields of ornament comprising a centrally-placed cross in the top half of the slab, figural and decorative ornament on either side of the cross-shaft, and extremely large snake-bosses in the field underneath the cross (see fig. 3.2).

Field 1. The Cross:

The square-armed cross carved on Shandwick is slightly unusual in its shape in that it deviates from the standard 101A type by having oval, rather than circular, hollows in its

¹⁵ MacDonald and Laing, 'Early Ecclesiastical Sites,' p. 137; H. James, 'Pictish Cross-Slabs: An Examination of their Original Archaeological Context,' in S. Foster (ed.), *Able Minds and Practised Hands: Scotland's Early Medieval Sculpture in the 21st Century*, forthcoming, 2004.

¹⁶ See Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,'

<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000)

¹⁷ The following description focuses on the most salient details of the decoration. For a full description see Appendix 2B.

armpits.¹⁸ Both head and shaft are further decorated with fifty-eight raised bosses, which are carved with triple-band spirals connected by low relief C-shaped peltae; in places almost too worn to see.¹⁹ Allen and Anderson recorded that both the C-shaped peltae connecting the raised spirals on the cross, and the spaces between the spirals were further ornamented with almond-shaped spots, though due to the cross-slab's present wear, this detail is impossible to pick out.²⁰

Field 2 (A-B). Directly Above the Cross-Arms.

Fields 2A and 2B comprise the marred decorative ornament above the cross-arms, of which only the faint remains of a high-relief, D-shaped form, and patches of interlace, are visible in the left field (2A), and uneven, hollowed-out circles, are visible in the right field (2B).

Field 3 (A-B). Directly Below the Cross-Arms

Directly below the cross arms, two very similar compositions are located to the left and right of the cross-shaft (fields 3A and 3B). Both contain a humanoid figure with knee-length robes, four triangular points protruding from the robes, and inward facing heads and feet. Both figures are placed within a frame made up of two twisting strands of cable. Situated between each enframed figure and the cross-shaft are individual strands of interlace forming simple figure-of-eight designs. Besides the fact that the interlace design is slightly larger on the right (field 3B) than on the left (field 3A) the composition and details of each field mirror each other.

Field 4 (A-B). The Upper-Mid Panels

¹⁸ Cross type 101 A is the Scottish equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon type 12A. See *ECMS* 1:51; Cramp, 'Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament,' p. xvi.

¹⁹ Allen and Anderson only report fifty-four bosses. See *ECMS* 2: 69.

The left-facing quadruped to the left of cross-shaft (field 4A) has a thick, slightly humped body, thick neck, elongated, blunt muzzle, no visible ears and no visible tail. It lowers its head to touch an elongated prostrate form located under its legs. The left-facing quadruped to the right of the cross-shaft (field 4B) features a thick chest and tapering torso, extremely long tail curving high above its back, and leonine head. An amorphous form hangs from the creature's jaws.

Field 5 (A-B). The Lower-Mid Panels

Directly beneath the animal to the left of the cross-shaft, in field 5A, is a pair of serpentine quadrupeds whose bodies form complicated figures-of-eight. Though the animals are looped around themselves, with their torsos moving in and out of limbs and jaws, the two beasts are not actually interlaced with each, and instead form symmetrical, touching mirror images. Their elongated torsos thicken at both the shoulders and haunches and their legs seemingly bend backward at the joints in order to hook around their bodies, and then touch claws.

The ornament in field 5B is greatly damaged with almost half the carving missing. From what remains however, it is easy to surmise that the design must also have been symmetrical and that it probably involved four creatures, two of whose heads are still clearly visible. The two beasts that remain are serpentine, with flattened out, fish-like tails, and no other limbs. The interlace is much simpler than that contained in 4A, though a figure-of-eight format once again appears to be the main component of the design, as does the fact that the creatures' heads are located in the centre of the composition, while their bodies move outwards.

Field 6. The Lowest Panels

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Only two of the original four circles in this symmetrical design fully remain. Located on the left of the slab, these circles are composed of thickly carved serpentine beasts whose bodies narrow to form the interlace mesh within. This knotwork protrudes approximately 10 cm from the surface of the stone; in effect turning the circles into large, raised bosses. Each of the serpentine heads have extended ears that form interlace knots along the outside perimeter of the circles, while additional interlace is formed in the lozenge-shaped central interstice by much smaller serpents.

SIDE B (Fig. 3.3)

Side B is divided up into five different fields of decoration, each with a much lower relief style of carving than Side A (see fig. 3.4). These fields are all separated from each other by plain raised borders. As on Side A, the lowest sections are now partially hidden by the cement block into which the stone has been inserted. Besides this damage, however, the decoration on this side, which faces away from the sea, is far less disfigured.

Field 1. The Upper Symbol Panel:

This panel contains a double-disc symbol without the typical Z-rod accompaniment. Though extremely worn, the spiral work designs in the discs and connecting bar are still possible to see. Both designs feature triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae that are further ornamented by almond-shaped spots, and in the case of the peltae in the discs, by triple-leaf flourishes. These decorative details echo raised spiral and peltae designs on the bosses within the cross on Side A.

Field 2. The Lower Symbol Panel:

Field 2 contains the Pictish symbol known as the 'Pictish beast', characterised by a down-turned, elongated snout ending in a curled nose, and a foreleg, hind leg, tail and crest that also end in curls. In addition, two much smaller horned quadrupeds face each other between the 'Pictish beast's' legs, while a third quadruped with a tail curving above its back resides in the lower left-hand corner of the panel underneath the 'Pictish beast's' forehead.

Field 3 (A-F). The Figural Composition (fig. 3.5):

For descriptive purposes Field 3 has been further broken up into six discrete groups (see fig. 3.6). This complicated scene involves eight human figures: four on foot, three on horseback, and one astride a quadruped that resembles a goat (field 3E); three birds; eleven quadrupeds including cattle, deer, and a hound; and four creatures that are difficult to distinguish but which suggest identifications as a lion, a boar, and a fox, (all in field 3C), as well as a lynx (field 3E).²¹ The figures vary in size with no apparent pattern in terms of realistic scale or perspective, and with four exceptions bear no apparent relationship to each other. The exceptions are the two human figures bearing weapons in the lower left-hand corner who appear to be fighting over the kneeling deer carved between them (field 3A); the two bovine creatures who face each other to the right of the fighting figures (field 3C); the horseman and hound pursuing the stag in the upper right part of the composition (field 3D); and the archer with a bird on his back, who aims his arrow at a stag that turns around to face him in the lower right-hand corner (field 3F). One additional relationship and identification has also recently been suggested. The walking human figure in the upper middle part of the composition (field 3B) has most commonly been identified

²¹ See Appendix 2B for a detailed description of each figure and group.

as holding a hunting or drinking horn in its hands.²² However, close analysis of the stone has shown the possibility that this figure might actually be devouring another human figure, and what appears to be the horn is actually one, or both of the legs. Such a composition would also explain the behaviour of the mounted figure immediately to the right (field 3D) who, though apparently in pursuit of the stag, actually turns around to reach backwards, possibly in a rescue attempt (see fig. 3.7).²³

Field 4. The Lower Panel

This decorative panel takes up almost one third of the total space on Side B and comprises an elaborate design of fifty-two interlocking spirals and connecting C and S-shaped peltae. The C-shaped peltae are ornamented with almond-shaped spots, while the triangular embellishments on the S-shaped peltae contain triple-leaf flourishes. Furthermore, triangular dots are found along the perimeter of the panel and triple-leaf flourishes are also contained in the triangles in the four-corners of the design. Though differing subtly from the spiral designs used on the cross on the opposite side of the slab and the designs within the double disc symbol on this side of the slab, all three are variations on the same theme and provide a continuity of detail from one side to the other.

Field 5 (A-B). The Lowest Panels:

This field is truncated by the slab's insertion into the cement block. On the left (field 5A) are the remains of a symmetrical design made up of snake-circles filled with interlace. Though

²² *ECMS* 2:70-71; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 124.

²³ Thanks are due to Douglas Scott for pointing out this possibility and for sending me the excellent photo in which such a composition can possibly be deciphered.

closely related to the serpent circles on Side A, these circles are not raised into bosses. The interstice formed by the four circles is rhomboid-shaped and is also filled with interlace. On the right (field 5B) is a key pattern characterised by diagonal, interlocking T and Z-shapes.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material

SIDE A

Field 1. The Cross:

As regards the shape of the cross, the hollow armpit cross (type 101A) is the most common form carved on Pictish slabs, being found on fifty-eight other Pictish monuments; the closest geographically are located on two grave-slabs (TR 21 and TR31) and a recumbent monument (TR22) found at Portmahomack.²⁴ The oval, rather than semi-circular, armpits are extremely rare, appearing elsewhere only on a roughly incised cross at Criech, in Sutherland.²⁵

The raised knobs decorating the cross, as well as the flanking figures on either side of the cross-shaft (field 3 A-B) lead to the identification of the cross on Shandwick slab as a representation of a *crux gemmata*, or jewelled cross. Though quite different in detail, the *crux gemmata* motif is most likely also represented on the Meigle 2 cross-slab, in Perthshire. Here, decorated bosses stud the centre of the crosshead, the four corners of each of the square-armed terminals, and the wheel enclosing the cross (fig. 3.8).²⁶

Models for these types of cross, characterised by jewels and other decorative ornaments and often portrayed with flanking angels or evangelist symbols, sometimes set on a hill or steps

²⁴ ECMS 1: 51. See Chapter 5 for TR21, TR22, and TR31; *TR Sculpt Cat.* nos. 21, 22, 31.

²⁵ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 244.

²⁶ ECMS 2, fig. 311A.

representing Golgotha, were depicted throughout the early medieval world in a wide variety of media. For instance, a representation of the *crux gemmata* might have been available for viewing in the church on the hill of Golgotha. At sometime between 417 and 440 AD, the silver replica of the crucifixion cross placed on the site by Constantine was replaced by a large jewelled cross. In turn, this cross was replaced by another silver cross around 620 AD, and was presumably the one that bishop Arculf saw sometime between 679-682 AD, as reported in Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* ²⁷ However, there is tenuous evidence that suggests that a pictorial image of the *crux gemmata* (featuring an *imago clipeata* of Christ at its centre, flanking angels, an inscription reading *NICKA*, and placed upon the steps of Golgotha) existed on the vault above the silver Calvary cross in the 7th-century, and could be seen by pilgrims.²⁸ Likewise, a decorated cross, characterised by raised knobs, and flanked by two trees symbolising the Tree of Life, was depicted on the north wall of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, while a jewelled cross is placed on a step on a hill and flanked by the four apocalyptic symbols in the early 5th-century apse mosaic in the church of Sta. Pudenziana in Rome (see fig. 3.9).²⁹ The *crux gemmata* was particularly popular in Ravenna. For instance, a jewelled cross set in a heaven full of stars and flanked by apocalyptic beasts (or evangelist symbols) was depicted in the 5th-century cupola mosaic of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, and while this mausoleum may not have been accessible to pilgrims, another jewelled cross could be seen in the 6th-century apse mosaic in the church of S. Apollinare in Classe, where it floated in a mandorla of stars. In addition, a jewelled cross floats on top of the seat of a celestial, jewelled, throne in the early 6th-century dome mosaic

²⁷ Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 1:7, PL 88: 784; Appendix 1D.

²⁸ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp.181, 205, note 18.

²⁹ The outer two symbols have been almost completely obscured by later renovations.

in the Arian baptistery,³⁰ a configuration that emphasises the relationship between the Second Coming and the Last Judgement.³¹

Apart from such large-scale public representations, models for Insular artists could also have been found on reliquaries, liturgical instruments, *ampullae*, and coins that were copied and circulated throughout the Christian world. For instance, two of the *ampullae* discovered in the Church of St Columba at Bobbio, thought to be copies of early 7th-century *ampullae* from the treasury at Monza, portray angels venerating Christ on the Golgotha cross,³² while the late 6th-century Berenzoff paten, originating from Constantinople, depicts Gabriel and Michael on either side of a jewelled cross that is supported by a globe of the world, from which issue the four rivers of paradise (fig. 3.10).³³

Field 3 (A-B). The Winged Figures:

Winged figures most likely meant to represent angels appear on nineteen other Pictish cross-slabs, but only on four of these do they bear similarities that can be fruitfully compared with the figures on Shandwick. Eassie and Glamis 1, both in Angus, feature four-winged figures whose heads and feet are turned inwards to face the cross, though they are placed above the cross-arms rather than below (see fig. 3.11). The Glamis figure (on the left of the upper cross-arm) is also partly enclosed within a plaitwork frame similar to those on Shandwick. The four-winged figures on the slab at Dunfallandy, in Perthshire, also turn their heads and feet inwards towards the cross, although here they are located, one above the other, in two separate panels

³⁰ F. Bartle, *Ravenna: S. Appollinare Nuovo, Baptisterien des Domes und der Arianer, Mausoleum der Galla Placidia und Erzbischofliche Kapelle*, (Baden-Baden, 1959), plates 62, 67.

³¹ See Chapter 1, p. 27, note 104.

³² Werner, 'The Cross Carpet Page,' pp. 195-566, 205, note 159, fig. 12.

directly underneath the right cross-arm.³⁴ All of the aforementioned figures also display decorative scrolls at the shoulders. Since all of the other instances of four-winged angels display these shoulder scrolls, it is more than likely that the Shandwick figures were also carved with these scrolls, though the figures are too worn to state this with certainty. The Aberlemno 3 cross-slab also depicts winged figures, and here they are located beneath the cross-arms and on either side of the cross-shaft as they are at Shandwick. However, their placement is the only thing in common with the Shandwick pair, as the Aberlemno figures display only two wings, no shoulder scrolls, have long, willowy bodies, and are depicted in profile, bowing in adoration over books.³⁵

Winged figures also appear on a number of Irish high-crosses, though none of them, except for those on the crosses at Moone and Durrow, show any demonstrable connection to the figures on Shandwick. The two-winged angels on the cross at Durrow (within a Last Judgement scene in the centre of the east face), have little in common with the Shandwick figures apart from the ornamental shoulder scrolls that are similar to those found on the Pictish angels on Glamis 1 and Eassie, and which may originally have appeared on Shandwick. The relationship between the figures on Moone and Shandwick is even more tenuous, consisting only of the placement of the Moone angels (carved on the ends of the cross-arms) within frames, though here they are plain rather than plaited.³⁶ Though these parallels are very slight, it may be significant that the only Irish analogies are on crosses that appear to have been associated with monasteries that were part of the Columban *familia*.

³³ The 6th-century Berenzoff Paten was found in Berezovo, West Siberia, and is currently displayed in Leningrad, at the Hermitage State Museum. See Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' p. 50, no. 67, plate xxv1b.

³⁴ *ECMS* 2, fig. 305a.

³⁵ See *ECMS* 2, fig.228a.

³⁶ Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs. 514, 520.

It may also be significant that the *Book of Kells*, another Columban product, portrays the Mathew symbol with four wings on folio 290v.³⁷ In addition, all four symbols on the Evangelist page (folio 32v) of the very early 9th-century *Book of Armagh* have four wings,³⁸ as do the two angels to either side of the crucified Christ on folio 38v of the late 7th to early 8th-century *Durham Gospels*.³⁹ It has recently been suggested that the use of shoulder scrolls to modify the wings of the Pictish angels might have originated in Pictland and depended upon a now lost, pre-existing Gospel book. This convention then might have been adopted by the artist of the Lindisfarne Gospels, as it can be seen decorating the wing of the Mathew symbol on folio 25v of the Lindisfarne Gospels.⁴⁰

It can be seen therefore, that four-winged figures are a relatively rare Insular phenomenon, occurring only on three other Pictish slabs, and in three Insular manuscripts. Since the scrolls decorating the wings may have been a Pictish invention based on a now lost manuscript, the convention of four wings might also have depended on a now lost exemplar. At the same time it is likely that the choice to ornament the Shandwick cross-slab with four-winged angels was informed by literary sources rather than the widespread circulation of a well-known artistic motif.

Field 4(A-B). The Quadrupeds:

Both of the creatures situated beneath the Shandwick winged figures have been previously identified as lions by Allen and Anderson.⁴¹ While this identification is extremely

³⁷ See Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plate 92.

³⁸ Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 52, folio 32v. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, p. 76, plate 230.

³⁹ Durham, Cathedral Chapter Library, MS AII.17, fol. 38v. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, p. 40, plate 202.

⁴⁰ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 216. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plate 28.

⁴¹ See J. Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times: The Rhind Lectures in Archaeology for 1881* (Edinburgh, 1881), p. 169; *ECMS* 2: 69.

problematic for the creature on the left (field 4A) the beast on the right (field 4B) can easily be seen as a lion, albeit with something emerging from its open jaws (see fig. 3.12). This object can be identified in various ways: as a dangling human or animal figure; as a serpent, with which the lion is engaged in conflict; or as an extended tongue or spray of foliage emerging from the lion's mouth.

In determining the most likely identification, a consideration of contemporary artistic productions may be useful, provided that the identification of the parallel can be confirmed and that its context is comparable. For example, a figure carved to the right of the cross-shaft, and below the cross-arms on the front of Gask 1 looks very similar to the Shandwick configuration and may be meant to represent the same concept.⁴² Identifying a pendant human figure dangling from the jaws of the Gask animal, Trench-Jellicoe investigated the possibility that this image symbolised the mouth of hell enclosing sinners in its jaws, an identification proposed by Henderson for several related images depicted on the Aberlemno 3, Fowlis Wester, and Rossie Priory cross-slabs.⁴³ However, these latter representations all depict humans being violently mauled or eaten by a beast, and have little in common with the comparatively demure quadrupeds carved on Gask and Shandwick.⁴⁴

On the other hand, Henderson has identified a figuration of 'a predator swallowing a serpent' on the back face of the Gask cross-slab in the identical position as the Shandwick beast in field 4B, commenting that the replication of the motif and the position on the Shandwick cross-slab 'hints at some degree of standardisation in the handling of this kind of imagery, or at

⁴² The face of the Gask cross-slab is not reproduced in the *ECMS*. See Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish and Related Harps,' fig. 4, for an artist's interpretation of the figures carved on the slab.

⁴³ Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 46-47, figs. 5, 7; *ECMS 2*, figs. 22A, 228A, 322A; Ritchie, *Picts*, p. 26.

⁴⁴ After consideration, Trench-Jellicoe, 'Pictish and Related Harps,' pp. 166-167, rejects the possibility that the Gask configuration is a representation of the 'hell-mouth.'

the least a sharing of compositional pattern.⁴⁵ Indeed, lions with tongues that interlace with serpents are depicted on folio 124r (featuring the text *Tunc crucifixerant XPI*) and folio 290v (the Evangelist symbols page in John) of *The Book of Kells*.⁴⁶

Another possible explanation may be that of a lion with an extended, curling tongue or with an emerging spray of foliage. Lions with these characteristics can be found on folio 81v in the *Durham Cassiodorus*, and throughout the pages of the *Book of Kells*, such as on folio 285r, the *Una Autem* page (see fig).⁴⁷

The identification of the creature to the left of the cross-shaft (field 4A) is even more difficult to ascertain, though once again, there are a number of possible explanations (see fig. 3.14). One is that it is this beast, not the beast to the right, is meant to be a lion giving the breath of life to its cub. However, although this creature is certainly engaged in some sort of activity with the form beneath its paws, this explanation is not entirely convincing when the two creatures are compared. Indeed it is almost impossible to believe that both beasts were meant to represent lions when their appearance is so very different. Nevertheless, Allen and Anderson have assigned this identification to a similar configuration in the top-right hand corner of the cross-face of the Dunfallandy slab. This left-facing quadruped also lowers its head to meet a form under its legs. In this case, however, the form is easily identifiable as a prostrate animal with a clearly defined head and limbs.⁴⁸ In addition, upon inspection of the head and body types, it is obvious that the upper beast is a dog or wolf and the prostrate creature is a deer. Therefore, despite the similar arrangement of the forms, and the similar (incorrect) identification of the

⁴⁵ Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 31-32, fig. 4.

⁴⁶ Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 47 and 92.

⁴⁷ Lions with these characteristics can also be seen on folios 29r, 114r, 129v, 188r, and 292r in the *Book of Kells*. See Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 23, 45, 50, 62, and 95.

⁴⁸ *ECMS 2*: 288, fig. 305A

scenes, neither of the configurations on Dunfallandy and Shandwick represents lions breathing life into their cubs.

Another possibility is that this beast, with its slightly humped back and elongated, squared muzzle, is meant to represent a bear, and indeed, a very similar animal is carved on the reverse of TR20 within a panel that also depicts two lions (see Chapter 5). Animals with similar characteristics, some of which have been definitely identified as bears, can also be found on other Pictish monuments, including Murthly, St Vigean's 1, Dupplin, and Meigle nos. 10, 11, 22 and 26, as well as on the newly conserved fragments from the Scatness dig, Dunrossness, Shetland.⁴⁹

A third possibility is that the creature is a representation of an elephant. Folio 81r of the Anglo-Saxon *Marvels of the East*,⁵⁰ displays an elephant along with a written entry (on the previous folio) describing the land from which it came. The illustration of this so-called elephant (which is scarcely recognisable as such, having no trunk, and tiny ears) and the river that runs beneath its feet reveals a striking resemblance to the creature and amorphous shape carved on the Shandwick stone (see fig. 3.14). Although the manuscript dates to the mid 11th century, its illustrations are believed to have been based on a now lost exemplar from an earlier, perhaps late 8th-century date.⁵¹ It is quite possible that the artist carving the creature on the Shandwick slab, with no clear idea of what an elephant looked like, copied a confused portrait already in existence such as that lying behind the *Marvels of the East*. Therefore, even though the result looks nothing like an elephant, an elephant might well have been intended (see further below).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, figs. 250b, 321, 334a, 344, 345b, 350, 354; Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 229.

⁵⁰ London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius B5.

⁵¹ M.R. James (ed.), *Marvels of the East: A Full Reproduction of the Three Known Copies* (Oxford, 1929), p. 51.

Field 5(A-B). The Zoomorphic Interlace:

The closest parallel to the zoomorphic interlace contained in field 5A of the Shandwick cross-slab is that found on the cross-arms of Nigg (see Chapter 2). The same parallels with the ornament within the 'Deer-head' panel and the 'Lion's mane' panel on the St Andrew's sarcophagus, as well as with zoomorphic interlace ornament on the recently uncovered base of Hilton of Cadboll (see Chapter 4) obviously apply. What is unusual about the Shandwick ornament however, is the position of the quadrupeds' legs, which bend backwards at the joints and cause their ball-and-claw style feet to meet in the middle. This sort of composition is echoed by the hindquarters of the quadruped carved on the TR 20 fragment from Portmahomack (see Chapter 5) and is a characteristic that can be seen in the depiction of Insular metalwork animals and in manuscript. For instance, one of the animals depicted in the middle band of ornament on the early 8th-century Irish Steeple Bumpstead Boss demonstrates this configuration with its hindlegs (in addition to displaying a very similar snout and nose to the Shandwick creatures).⁵² Likewise, one of the filigree animals decorating the panels of the bowl girdle on the Derrynaflan chalice has backwards jointed legs whose ball-and-claw style feet meet in the middle.⁵³ Similar constructions in regards to the backwards joints on the animals also can be seen in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, as can the way the limbs hook around the bodies.⁵⁴

As noted in Chapter 2, several Pictish carved monuments display pairs of interlaced serpentine creatures like those carved to right of the Shandwick cross-shaft (field 5B). For instance, St Vigean's 1 exhibits two separate pairs of entwined serpentine beasts to either side of

⁵² See S. Youngs, 'The Steeple Bumpstead Boss,' in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt, *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 143-150, fig. 17.3e.

⁵³ M. Ryan, 'The Menagerie of the Derrynaflan Chalice,' in Spearman and Higgitt, *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, fig. 18.2.7.

⁵⁴ For examples see folios 17b, 95r, 138v, in Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, plates 22, 29, 31.

the cross shaft. Likewise, Inchbrayock, also in Angus, features a panel of interlaced serpents above the right cross-arms.⁵⁵ Although neither of these examples can sustain a stylistic relationship with the pair of serpents on the Shandwick slab, they do show that the motif does occur in more than one place. As regards the specific style of the serpentine beasts on Shandwick, Henderson has argued that serpents portrayed as if viewed from above, with protuberant eyes and fish tails are the most common shared type of animal decoration between the Picts and the artists of the *Book of Kells*.⁵⁶

Field 6. The Serpent Circles:

Although the Shandwick serpent circles may be unique in their extremely large size, the motif is far from unusual and is found on the serpent bosses located on the High Crosses of Ireland and Iona, as well as on the St Andrew's Sarcophagus and the Nigg slab.⁵⁷ A particularly close parallel, however, exists on a cross-slab fragment from Murroes, in Angus, which displays an almost identical configuration of serpents and tight mesh interlace within circles that are not raised into bosses.⁵⁸ These serpents on both Shandwick and the Murroes fragment have dog-like, or deer-like heads, which meet at the outer perimeters of the circles while the interlace within the circles most likely grows out of their bodies. Henderson has also pointed out that the extended ears of Shandwick serpents, which form interlace knots in the corners of the design, find an exact parallel on folio 130 in the *Book of Kells*.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ See *ECMS* 2, figs. 250a, 253a.

⁵⁶ Henderson, 'Pictish Art and the *Book of Kells*,' p. 93-94.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 2.

⁵⁸ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 51, fig. 58.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plate 51

SIDE B

Field 1. The Double-Disc without Z-rod:

The double-disc and Z-rod is one of the three most common of the Pictish symbols, appearing on twenty-two other Cross-Slabs, but without the z-rod, the double-discs appear on only nine.⁶⁰ Stylistically, parallels with the Shandwick design are even further lessened when it can be seen that six of these double disk symbols are exceedingly plain and have a straight, rather than curved connecting bar, and may be more properly classified as the so-called 'spectacle' symbol of Allen and Anderson.⁶¹ Only the examples on Monfieth 1 and Woodrae, both in Angus, and Meigle 6, in Perthshire, can really be compared stylistically to the symbol at Shandwick, and out of these Woodrae is almost bare of ornamentation.⁶²

Field 2. The 'Pictish Beast':

This symbol is most common animal symbol in Pictish art, though it is surprisingly rare in Inverness-shire and Ross-shire.⁶³ Its appearance at Shandwick and Nigg, and possibly on the TR1 fragment at Portmahomack (see Chapter 5), sites which are as little as five miles apart from each other, is therefore quite curious and may be significant.

Field 3. The Figural Composition:

Hunting scenes are a particularly popular motif on Pictish cross-slabs and also appear on the bases of several Irish Crosses. Although Allen and Anderson list thirty-four other Pictish and

⁶⁰*ECMS* 1:59, 60.

⁶¹*Ibid.* p. 57.

⁶²*ECMS* 2, figs. 241b, 258b 312a, 315b.

⁶³G. Murray, 'The Declining Pictish Symbol: A Reappraisal,' *PSAS* 116 (1986): 244.

Scottish monuments that contain hunt-scenes,⁶⁴ there are in fact only eighteen, if one disregards a single horseman, perhaps armed, perhaps with a hound, but no deer, as a 'scene.'⁶⁵ Of the remaining schemes, all except those carved on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, Aberlemno 3 and Meigle 1 and 2 are completely standard, involving armed, mounted huntsmen accompanied by hounds and sometimes birds, and chasing deer. The St Andrews Sarcophagus incorporates an unmounted warrior, a monkey, and David and the Lion (see fig. 2.12), while Aberlemno 3 features trumpeters much like those contained on the Hilton of Cadboll slab (see chapter 4, and figs 4.2, 4.11). The horsemen and hounds on Meigle 1 and 2 are standard, but the scenes are unusual as they lack any prey. Instead of any deer, each scene includes a single, curiously winged figure, possibly meant to represent angels.⁶⁶

The so-called 'hunt scenes' carved on the bases of Irish high crosses are usually anything but hunt-scenes, and in the variety of birds and beasts depicted are much closer to the scene depicted on Shandwick than any of the Pictish examples. For instance, the east face of the base of the 8th –9th century North Cross at Ahenny, Co. Tipperary, depicts one human, a palm tree and a variety of birds and quadrupeds and has been identified by Harbison as God creating the world and showing Adam, or Adam naming the creatures (fig. 3.14).⁶⁷ The badly worn north face of the base of the South Cross at Ahenny probably depicts a more standard hunt scene, but the west face of the base of the South Cross at Castledermot might picture Noah herding animals into the

⁶⁴ See *ECMS* 1: 407-408.

⁶⁵ Those monuments that display legitimate hunting scenes with more than 1 horseman are: Elgin and Burghead 7, in Moray; Aberlemno 3, Inchbrayock 1 and 3, Kirriemuir 1, and Monfieth 3, in Angus; Meigle 1, 2, 26, and Rossie Priory, in Perthshire; Largo, Scoonie, St Andrews Sarcophagus, Mugdrum, and Inverkiething (now lost) in Fife; Tullibole in Clackmannan, and Govan 1 in Lanarkshire. See *ECMS* figs. 137a, 138, 288b, 235b, 265, 240b, 243b, 310b, 311b, 318c, 322b, 359b, 360, 365, 386, 483b.

⁶⁶ *ECMS* 2, figs. 310b, 311b.

⁶⁷ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig 10. While Harbison dates the Ahenny crosses to the late 8th or early 9th centuries, they have more recently been dated from the mid to late 9th century. See Harbison, *The High Crosses*

Ark. In this scene, two humans with staffs or spears walk behind three registers of different animals and at least one bird. The Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells also displays a scene on the east face of its base that depicts a variety of birds and beasts but includes no human figure, while the Kells Market Cross has animal scenes on two sides of its base; on the east are birds, beasts, and Centaurs with bows and arrows, and on the north a variety of quadrupeds, a huge bird, and a human with a staff or spear, possibly intended as Noah herding animals onto the ship. More standardised hunting scenes, in which there is a clear hunter and prey (usually a stag) have been tentatively identified on the south face of the base on the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise, on the East face of the base of the cross at Killamery, Co. Kilkenny, and on the west side of the base of Muirdach's Cross, Monasterboice.⁶⁸

From this it can be seen that the Shandwick composition differs significantly from the vast majority of the Pictish 'hunt-scenes' and that it may have more in common with Irish compositions possibly depicting Creation or Noah herding animals into the Ark. However, there remain certain figures within the Shandwick scene that cannot be explained by any Insular or other parallels, such as goat-riding figure, or the pair of figures fighting over the deer or sheep lying between them.

On the other hand, several of the individual figures within the scene do have parallels. The archer with a peaked hood and a crossbow also appears on the cross-slab at Glenferness, Moray, where its prey has been defaced, and on St Vigean's 1, where it is shooting at a boar (fig. 3.15). An archer with the same characteristics was reputedly carved on Meigle 10 (now lost) and

of Ireland, 1:11; R. Ó Floinn, 'Patrons and Politics: Art, Artefact and Methodology,' in M. Redknap, N. Edwards, S. Youngs, A. Lane and J. Knight, (eds.), *Pattern and Purpose in Insular Art* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 11-12.

⁶⁸ See Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 39; *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs. 23, 107, 136, 333, 342, 347, 411, 482.

archers without hoods are found on the Ruthwell monument and Sueno's Stone, Morayshire.⁶⁹ Confronted cattle (with the addition of a calf) are carved on TR28/35 at Portmahomack (see Chapter 5), and on the recumbent monument, Meigle 12.⁷⁰ The large, striding human figure in field 3B, who is either holding a drinking horn or engaged in devouring another human, can be loosely paralleled with several monstrous solitary figures incised on rough-hewn Pictish stones at Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, and at Mail, Cunningsburgh, Shetland, as well as with the left-hand figure carved in relief on a panel from Murthly, Perthshire. Although none of these figures are devouring anything (those at Rhynie and Mail are the only figures on the stones), the men on Mail and Murthly have animal heads, and the man on Rhynie has a rather freakish demeanour.⁷¹

Field 4. The Spiral Ornament:

The specific spiral and peltae design on Shandwick is unique, but it does have much in common with the spiral designs found on Hilton of Cadboll and several of the Portmahomack fragments such as TR7, TR10 and TR20.⁷² These in turn may have been based on portable models. For instance, spiral designs were prolific on 'Celtic' metalwork from the 6th to the 9th centuries, appearing on both secular and religious objects.⁷³ As regards the particular almond-shaped floriate embellishments that appear within the Shandwick design, parallels can be seen on the 8th-century Irish Tara brooch and on the spiral panel of the Brunswick Casket. Here, although the spirals themselves are based on the triskele type, trefoil embellishments at the

⁶⁹ See *ECMS 2*, figs 120, 156a, 250b, 344, 467a.

⁷⁰ See Chapter 5 and *ECMS 2*, fig. 346C.

⁷¹ See Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, figs. 180, 181, 182; *ECMS 2*, fig. 321.

⁷² See Chapters 4 and 5; *ECMS 2*, fig 93.

⁷³ Spirals on secular objects such as buckles and pins can be seen in Youngs, *The Work of Angels*, nos. 1-6, 7-11, 9, 12, 17, 19-20, 24, 27, 31-33, 46-47, 59, and 64. Spirals on religious objects can be seen in nos. 49, 60-63, and 69. In general, none of these objects display elaborate peltae.

extremities of the panel do resemble the almond-shaped 'leaves' in the peltae on Shandwick.⁷⁴

The designs on Shandwick also bear a strong resemblance to the elaborate spiral designs throughout the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, *Book of Durrow*, and *Book of Kells*. In particular, almond-shaped 'leaves' that embellish the connecting peltae can be found on folios 3v and 193r in the *Book of Durrow*, and on folios 29r, 33r and 34r in the *Book of Kells* (see fig 3.16).⁷⁵

Summary:

In general, it can be seen that the majority of possible models for the decoration on the Shandwick cross-slab were in manuscript or metalwork form. For instance while the *crux gemmata* could take a variety of forms, and may be represented by any highly ornate stone cross, its manifestation as a cross covered in very elaborate bosses does not have a specific carved Irish or Pictish parallel. On the other hand, the spiral and peltae patterns carved onto the bosses and within the Pictish symbol of the double discs and on the lower decorative panel on side B, are all closely related to patterns found in the *Book of Kells* and other manuscripts. The winged figures may be related to similar figures on Glamis or Eassie, but are equally likely to have been influenced by representations of four-winged figures such as those found in the *Durham Gospels* or the *Book of Kells*. Likewise, although the animals carved on the front of the cross-slab may be related to animals carved on Gask, or Dunfallandy or on the monuments at Meigle, (especially in regards to the very high relief) the impetus behind their specific depictions possibly lies in manuscript representations of elephants and lions. The same might be said of the zoomorphic

⁷⁴ Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings*, plates 10, 11.

⁷⁵ See the triple-band spirals with elaborate peltae on folios 29r, 94v, 138v, 139r, 210v, and 211r in *The Lindisfarne Gospels*. Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, pp. 45, 48, 49, 52, 53, 56 and 57; Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 23, 27, 29; Meehan, *The Book of Durrow*, pp. 18, 65. In addition this type of ornament decorates many of the capitals on the text pages throughout the manuscript.

interlace in fields 5A and 5B; while somewhat similar configurations do exist on stone, the specific details such as hooked limbs or flattened fish tails are more often found in metalwork or manuscripts. The so-called 'hunt-scene' on side B of the Shandwick cross-slab is the only real exception to this general rule, because no very close parallels to the configuration as a whole exist in any media, though a few of the individual figures do have analogies on other Pictish stones.

B) Iconographic Significance

The Cross:

As previously discussed, from the early 4th century, the Cross functioned as a sign of Victory rather than a sign of Death, and was portrayed as shining, jewel-encrusted cross, originally placed on the hill of Golgotha and then artistically manifested in mosaics and portable media throughout Christendom. At the same time, this Victory Cross was conflated with the idea of the Throne of Judgement in Revelations and the Second Coming of Christ.⁷⁶ These themes were made even more explicit by the incorporation of flanking angels, in both early medieval art and literature (see below).

The roughly rhomboid-shaped centre of the cross at Shandwick must also be considered in light of the significance of the lozenge-shape and the fact that it represented the universal extensions of the cross and Christ.⁷⁷ From this, it can be seen that the cross on Shandwick referred simultaneously to three different, but related concepts: the *crux gemmata* placed in its base on the hill of Golgotha, (bearing in mind that according to the historiography, the Shandwick cross-slab was originally set into a stepped base, like many of the Irish high-crosses);

⁷⁶ See Chapter 1, pp. 27-30.

the glowing cross of Christ's Victory and the Second Coming, and the nature of Christ's salvation betokened by universal dimensions of the Cross. The cross takes on even further layers of meaning when it is considered in conjunction with the winged figures placed on either side of its shaft.

The Winged Figures:

The winged figures carved on either side of the cross-shaft at Shandwick are undoubtedly meant to represent either angels or cherubim. Both were a popular subject among early Christian exegetes, who devoted much thought to issues of their creation, function, duties, and their place among the hierarchies of heaven and between the Godhead and man. While it is outside the realm of this study to fully investigate all the various beliefs surrounding angels, a few themes may shed light upon the placement and appearance of the angels on the Shandwick stone.

For instance, several writers believed that the primary function of angels was to minister to Christ, a duty that began at birth, and continued through his death and Resurrection.⁷⁷ Likewise, at the Second Coming, a luminous cross would be attended by angel guards.⁷⁸

While the exegetes do not specify which particular angels attend the Cross, Michael and Gabriel are named as the angels who grieved at Christ's death within the Syrian liturgy, while the angels that appear above the arms of the Cross in Byzantine ivories are frequently labelled Michael and Gabriel.⁷⁹ This tradition was also known in the West, as a labelled Gabriel and Michael are portrayed to either side of a cross with Christ in the 6th-century apse in the Church of

⁷⁷ See Chapter 2, pp. 79-80; Chapter 1, pp. 26, 28-29.

⁷⁸ See for example, Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 56:10, *CCSL* 39: 700.1-10; Appendix 1D; *In Iohannis Evangelium: Tractatus* 121:1, *CCSL* 36: 664-665. 1-46; Ambrose, *De Fide IV*: 1.9-14, *PL* 16: 619-620; Hilary de Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 3:7, *CCSL* 62: 77-78, lines 1-23, and *De Trinitate* 10:40, *CCSL* 62A: 493-494, lines 1-22. All of the above works were in circulation in the Insular world (see Appendix 1A).

⁷⁹ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 15:22, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:11; Appendix 1D.

SS Cosmas and Damianus at Rome (fig. 3.17). It is therefore possible that the two Shandwick angels were meant to represent Michael and Gabriel.

On the other hand, it may be that more localised angels were intended by the sculptors. The Irish literature surrounding Patrick and Columba abounds with references to angels.⁸¹ Interestingly enough, neither of the two angels specifically named in conjunction with the saints were part of the archangelic order. Victor, the angel who appears to Patrick, was believed to be the angel of the Scotie (Irish) race, in contrast to Michael, the angel of the Hebrews.⁸² There is little to no information in regards to Axal, the angel associated with Columba; the *Martyrology of Oengus* simply reports that he came from Heaven to speak with Columcille.⁸³ Since it has been suggested that the scene on the top of the east face of the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise depicts Columba between two angels, it may detail two angels who were well known to the Irish monks, but unfortunately are anonymous to us.⁸⁴ Likewise, the angels on the Shandwick cross may be two who were specifically related to Columba or another saint associated with the area.

The four wings of the Shandwick angels lead to a further interpretative possibility: that cherubim, rather than angels are being depicted. According to *The Celestial Hierarchy*, an early 6th-century work attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite and considered to have almost apostolic authority, cherubim were on the second level of the highest order of angelic spirits, which also

⁸⁰ B. Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge, 1990), p.121.

⁸¹ See, for instance, W. Stokes (ed.), *The Tripartite Life of St Patrick*, (London, 1887), *passim*; *Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore* (Oxford, 1890), pp. 238, 520-521; *The Martyrology of Oengus* (London, 1905), *passim*; *Thesaurus Paleohibernicus: A Collection of Old Irish Glosses, Scholia, Prose and Verse*, (Cambridge, 1901-03), *passim*; J. Bernard and R. Atkinson (eds.), *The Altus Prosater in The Irish Liber Hymnorum* (Dublin, 1898), 1; 62-83.

⁸² Stokes, *Tripartite Life of St Patrick*, pp. 18, 300, 414, 510.

⁸³ Stokes, *Martyrology of Oengus*, p. 147.

⁸⁴ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 134.

included Seraphim and the Thrones.⁸⁵ In the Bible, cherubim guarded the gate of Eden (Genesis 3:24) and the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:18), which was also considered the footstool of the Lord's throne (see 1 Sam 4:4, 2 Sam. 6:2, and 2 Kings 19:5); they inhabited Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:23-25), and, according to Revelations 4:6-8, where they are conflated with the *zoa*, or 'living creatures' described in Ezekiel (1: 5-15, 10:14 and 10:21), they guarded the Tree of Life, were in the Lord's company during the Resurrection and Ascension and were attendants upon the throne at the Last Judgement. The description of the cherubim/*zoa* in Revelations and Ezekiel also explains how they became artistically and allegorically connected with the Evangelists: each is depicted with four wings and four faces which rotate through the aspects of a cherub, man, lion and eagle; only the aspect of a calf is missing. This conflation is seen artistically as early as the 5th century in the depictions of the Evangelist symbols/*zoa* flanking the jewelled crosses in the mosaics at Sta. Pudenziana, Rome, and S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna.

If, due to their four wings, the creatures on Shandwick are meant to be representations of cherubim, then several complementary layers of meaning are being expressed that may refer to specific exegetical traditions. For instance, Cassian, a writer well-known in the Hiberno-Latin tradition, writes that the Cherubim who guard over the various manifestations of the Old-Testament prefigurations of Christ, the Cross and the Universal Church (such as the Ark of the Covenant, and the rod of Aaron) are symbols of the fullness of historical and spiritual knowledge and function as meditation aids to protect the monk from evil.⁸⁶

At the same time, a cross between two cherubim can also be seen as another manifestation of the theme of the recognition of Christ expressed in Habakkuk 3:2. As discussed

⁸⁵ C. Luibheid and P. Rorem (eds.), *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works* (London, 1987), pp. 143-192.

⁸⁶ Cassian, *Collatione* 2:14.10 (*Quae est prima abbatibus Nestorotis: De Spirituali Scientia*), PL 49: 970-972; Appendix 1D. Cassian's works were well known in Ireland and Bede cites his *Conferences*. See Appendix 1A.

in Chapter 2, Jerome's commentary on the verse equated Christ *in medio duorum* to God speaking to Israel between the two cherubim over the Ark of the Covenant, to God revealed between the Old and New Testaments, and to God the Father made known in the Trinity between the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁸⁷ Bede investigates these ideas further in his own commentary on Habakkuk and in his commentary *On the Tabernacle*, where he discusses the meaning of the word 'cherubim,' interpreting the word as multitude of knowledge or understanding of knowledge' as well as suggesting that that the cherubim are figurations of the Old and New Testaments.⁸⁸ Likewise he states that:

The Lord speaks from the midst of the two cherubim because through the two testaments he instructs us in the true faith with one harmonious voice; or perhaps he speaks from the midst of the cherubim because God the Father deigned to manifest his will to the human race through his Only begotten son who appeared in the flesh between the two testaments.⁸⁹

It is quite likely that the Shandwick angels refer to more than one theme simultaneously.

However, almost all of these are complementary. Whether local angels, archangels, or Cherubim, their placement to either side of the cross-shaft enhances the meanings attached to the *crux gemmata*, as a victory beacon, the sign of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement. In and of themselves they can also represent the recognition of and adoration of Christ, as well as serving as reminders for the monastic community of the importance of spiritual and intellectual knowledge and meditation.

⁸⁷ Jerome, *In Abacuc* 2:3.2, CCSL 76A: 620-621.52-114; Appendix 1C. See Chapter 2, pp. 32-33.

⁸⁸ Bede, *De Tabernaculo: Liber 1*, CCSL 119A: 19-21.547-620. English translation from A. Holder, *Bede: On the Tabernacle* (Liverpool, 1994), p. 20. Cf. Jerome, *De Nominibus Hebraicis*, CCSL 72: 74.20-21.

⁸⁹ *De medio duorum cherubim loquitur dominus quia per verba utriusque testamenti consono no voce ad fidem ueritatis erudit uel certe de medio cherubim loquitur quia per unigenitum suum quia in medio duorum testamentorum in carne apparuit humano generi Deus pater uoluntatem suam manifestare dignatus est.* Bede, *De Tabernaculo*, Liber 1, CCSL 119A: 21. 604-609. Translation from A. Holder (ed.), *Bede: On the Tabernacle* (Liverpool, 1994), p. 20. See Appendix 1D for the whole passage.

The Quadrupeds:

A consideration of the literary sources available is absolutely necessary in order to determine the identity of the two quadrupeds on the Shandwick cross-slab, as well as their full range of attendant meanings. As regards to the right-hand beast (field 4B), identification as a lion is the most likely, and even without considering the amorphous form with which it is engaged, it can be assigned a number of different meanings.

Much like serpents and dragons, lions have a dual nature in both the Bible and exegesis. In the Old Testament, the lion is predominantly portrayed as a beast (along with bears) to be feared and subdued: David, Samson and Daniel were all able to overcome lions, or escape their harm through the power of the Lord, while Psalm 90:13 assures us that those who believe in the Lord will be able to tread on the lion and serpent. Proverbs 28:15 directly compares a wicked ruler to a roaring lion and a charging bear, while in the New Testament, 1 Peter 5:8 equates a roaring lion with the devil. These are just a few examples out of many that characterise the lion as a ravenous beast, or use the lion as a symbol for evil.

On the other hand, the noble nature of the lion was also recognised. Solomon decorated his throne and temple with lions (1 Kings 7:27-29, 36, and 10:19, 2 Chronicles 9:18) while Hosea proclaimed 'I will be like a lion to E'phraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah.'⁹⁰ Ezekiel 19:2 compares the mother of Judah to a lioness, while Revelations specifically refers to the Saviour as the Lion of Judah, stating 'weep not, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.'⁹¹

⁹⁰ *Quoniam ego quasi leaena Ephraim et quasi catulus leonis domui Iuda ego ego capiam et vadam tollam et non est qui eruat.* Hosea 5:14.

⁹¹ *Ne flevetis ecce vicit leo de tribu Iuda radix David aperire librum et septem signacula eius.* Revelations 5:5.

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of the beast on Shandwick, is the interpretation found in the apocryphal gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, where lions recognise the child Jesus and adore him.⁹² Indeed, Ó Carragáin has argued that it is likely that lions, like dragons, were in the minds of the Insular sculptors who conflated the themes of Psalm 90:13 and Habakkuk 3:2 in their depiction of the two beasts adoring Christ on the Ruthwell panel.⁹³ If this is so, then there is no reason why the Shandwick sculptors were not also referencing this tradition.

Both the good and evil natures of the lion were explored by the patristic fathers. Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechesis* comments that Christ is called a lion at the same time that he is called upon to fight the lion, our adversary, 'who roars and devours those who have been deceived.'⁹⁴ Augustine also discussed the dual nature of the lion as a symbol of both Christ and the Devil, in addition to exploring the relationship between the Lion of Judah, the lion's whelp and Christ.⁹⁵

In determining closely the symbolic significance of the lion at Shandwick, the object dangling from its mouth must also be considered. As pointed out above, the relatively docile pose of the lion argues against its identification as a visual figuration of the literary topos of the 'hell mouth.'⁹⁶ Likewise, despite the parallel with the creature figured on the reverse of the Gask

⁹² *Similiter leones et pardi adorabant eum et comitabantur cum eis in deserto: quocumque Ioseph et beata maria ibant, antecedebant eos, ostendentes viam et inclinantes capita sua; servitium caudis adulantibus exhibentes grandicum reverentia adorabant eum. Pseudo-Matthaei Evangelium* 18, C. Tischendorf (ed.). *Evangelia Apocrypha*, (Lipsiae, 1853) pp. 81-82; James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 75-76.

⁹³ Ó Carragáin, 'The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,' pp. 4-5. See also discussion in Chapter 2, p. 33.

⁹⁴ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 10:3, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:57-58; Appendix 1D. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of Cyril's works in the Insular world.

⁹⁵ For instance see, Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus* 10:1, *CCSL* 36:100-101.1-33; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 49.29, *CCSL* 38: 597.1-26; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 56.10, *CCSL* 39:700.10-35; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 103(*Sermo III*):22-23, *CCSL* 40: 1517-1519.1-73; *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 12:42, *PL* 42: 275-276.

⁹⁶ As Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 48-49, has argued, scenes such as those portrayed on Fowlis Wester, Aberlemno 3 and Rossie Priory are quite likely expressions of the popular 'Vision of Hell' literature available to the Insular world. In particular, specific accounts contained in Gregory's *Homilies* and *Dialogues* may lie behind the configuration on Fowlis Wester, in which a man's head is wrenched back and engulfed by the jaws of the beast. For example, see Gregory the Great, *Homilia* 19:7, *PL* 76:1158; *Dialogue* 4:38, *PL* 77:389-392; Hurst, *Gregory the Great*: pp. 83-84; O. J. Zimmerman, (ed.), *Saint Gregory the Great: Dialogues*, (New York: 1959) pp. 95, 245. See Appendix 1A for circulation of Gregory's work in Britain and Ireland. See also the discussion of the 'dragon' on TR20 in Chapter 5, and the texts in Appendix 1F for Gregory's use of monsters as warnings of eternal punishment.

slab, the identification of either of these configurations as a lion and serpent in conflict is problematic due to the lack of a specific literary tradition to account for it. However, it should not be entirely disregarded; the interpretations of Jesus as a lion and Satan, or evil, as a serpent (see Chapter 2) might well have allowed for a visual configuration symbolising the two in combat. Likewise, although there is no specific literary tradition to account for the depiction of a lion with an extended tongue or spray of foliage, this figuration is believed to symbolise the declamation or flourishing of the Word of God.⁹⁷ It is probable that this image resulted from the association of the evangelist Mark with the symbol of the lion, and it is particularly well-suited to illuminations of Gospel texts, though the motif would not be out of place on a public monument which, in and of itself, demonstrates the spread of the Christian message.

At the same time, a depiction of a lion with a dangling cub would also be appropriate, and would also be supported by a specific text. According to the *Physiologus*, the third nature of the lion is to breath life into its whelp on the third day after its birth, commenting, ‘thus did the almighty Father of all awaken from the dead on the third day the first born of every creature. Judah is a lion’s whelp; who has wakened him?’⁹⁸ While the parallel with Christ’s resurrection is not explicitly stated in the text it is easy to see how an image of a lion carrying its cub, or breathing life into it, came to be interpreted as a symbol of the Resurrection since Jesus was known as the Lion of Judah, and the lion’s whelp. A figuration of this image, therefore, would be entirely suitable to the cross-slab.

⁹⁷ Meehan, *The Book of Kells*, p. 64.

⁹⁸ Curley, *Physiologus*, p. 4. See Appendix 1A for the probable circulation of the *Physiologus* within early medieval Britain and Ireland. Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 2-13 has argued for a rather limited Pictish knowledge of the *Physiologus*, consisting primarily of four chapters, one of which, however, is the lion.

One other piece of information, however, might also be considered. The *Physiologus* also reports that the first nature of the lion is to cover its tracks so that the hunter may not follow him, commenting:

Thus also, our Saviour, the spiritual lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, having been sent down by his coeternal Father, hid his intelligible tracks (that is, his divine nature) from the unbelieving Jews: an angel with angels, an archangel with archangels, a throne with thrones, a power with powers, descending until he had descended into the womb of a virgin to save the human race which had perished.⁹⁹

It has been argued that the original Greek text of the *Physiologus* (written sometime before 140 AD) shows internal correspondences with elements of Gnosticism, 'especially the account of the Incarnation as a *katabasis* through the celestial hierarchies in *Leo*.'¹⁰⁰ These Gnostic elements would certainly account for this rather strange description of the first nature of the lion. Though the Insular audience for the *Physiologus* was undoubtedly working with a much later Latin recension of the text, the Gnostic elements remained, and while the preceding account does not shed a great deal of light upon the actual portrayal of the lion on the Shandwick cross-slab, it may help explain the general composition of elements on the cross-face, in which the cross/Christ might possibly be seen as descending through the hierarchies of angels to become incarnated within the womb of Mary, thus becoming the 'lion's whelp.'

Any further refining of our understanding of this beast actually depends upon the identification of the animal carved to the left of the cross-shaft (field 4A). As previously argued, it is unlikely that this creature is also meant to be a lion breathing life into its cub. It is, however, quite possible that the creature is an image of a bear. In addition to possibly being inspired by nature, like the stags, wolves, and bulls carved on so many Pictish stones, the bear also has a

⁹⁹Curley, *Physiologus*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁰R. Baxter, *Bestiaries and their Users in the Middle Ages* (Gloucestershire, 1998), p. 29, note 1.

literary tradition behind it, albeit a problematic one. The twelfth book of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, a source well known in both England and Ireland, relates how unborn bear cubs are licked into shape by the mother after thirty days.¹⁰¹ Later medieval bestiaries assigned a Christian meaning to this and other ursine activities. It is quite possible, therefore, to view the left-hand creature on Shandwick in this light and interpret it as a depiction of a bear licking the shapeless mass of an unformed cub into shape. Unfortunately, there is no entry within the *Physiologus* on the bear, and as Isidore's *Etymologies* contain no Christian allegorising, it is impossible to know if the 8th to 9th-century Picts would have interpreted an image of a bear licking its cub into shape in this manner.

On the other hand, bears did convey a biblical significance, which is especially intriguing if one considers the left-hand creature in conjunction with the lion on the right side. Both lions and bears are paired together in various Old Testament passages to symbolise evil or danger.¹⁰² Most significant is the account in 1 Samuel 17:32-34 that details David's rescue of his father's sheep from the jaws of the lions and bears, an episode taken to foreshadow the salvation of the soul by the victory of Christ over the Devil (see Chapter 2). Within this context then, it is quite possible to see the Shandwick animals as symbols of the sin and death that Christ, signified by the jewelled cross-of-victory, has triumphed over. The connection to the David scene on Nigg, as well as to the possible bear and lions on TR20, not only makes this interpretation extremely attractive but, if correct, also further demonstrates the thematic resonance among the Tarbat peninsula cross-slabs.

¹⁰¹ *Isidore de Séville: Étymologies Livre XII: De Animaux*, ed. J. André (Paris, 1986), p. 107. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of Isidore's writings in Britain and Ireland.

¹⁰² See Proverbs 28:15, Amos 5:19, 2 Kings 2:24, 2 Samuel 17:18, Hosea 13:8, and Isaiah 11:17, for just a few examples of lions and bears as symbols of death, danger, and/or evil.

The possibility that the creature might represent an elephant also needs to be considered. Admittedly, there are no biblical references to elephants and scarcely any exegetical references. In fact, only Basil of Caesaria and Origen make any references to the creature. In the *Hexaemeron*, Basil proclaims that the elephant has no joints in its feet or knees and that it is afraid of mice, but assigns no Christian interpretations to these characteristics.¹⁰³ However, in *Contra Celsum*, Origen makes reference to several 'Christian' beliefs about elephants; unfortunately he then denies that they are true. He writes:

I do not know moreover, how Celsus could hear of the elephant's fidelity to oaths, and of their great devotedness to our God, and of the knowledge which they possess of him. For I know many wonderful things which are related of the nature of this animal, and of its gentle disposition. But I am not aware that anyone has spoken of its observance of oaths....¹⁰⁴

The fact that he feels he must refute these beliefs, however, might well indicate that they were widely held.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, the *Physiologus* has a great deal to say about the elephant, relating its mating habits to the fall of Adam and Eve, and equating the mother's habit of giving birth in a pool of water, in order to protect its calf from the serpent, to the purifying power of God to protect the hearts of the faithful against the intrusion of evil thoughts.¹⁰⁶ In addition, the *Physiologus* recounts how the burnt bones of the elephant provide protection from the dragon (which signifies evil), and how, if an elephant should fall over, due to its lack of knee joints, neither another great elephant (which signifies the Law), nor twelve other elephants (signifying the Prophets) can rescue it; only a tiny elephant who can put his trunk under the great one is able

¹⁰³ Basil of Caesaria, *Hexaemeron* 9:5, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 8: 105. Rufinus's translation of Basil's nine homilies on the *Hexaemeron* was known to Bede. See Appendix 1A.

¹⁰⁴ See Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4:98, *ANCL* 23:265.

¹⁰⁵ There is no evidence that Origen's *Contra Celsum* was circulated in the Insular world.

to lift him. This tiny elephant is equated with Jesus Christ, for 'Although he is greater than all the rest, he was made small in comparison to them, "for he humbled himself and became obedient unto death."¹⁰⁷ It is clear that the elephant would be an entirely appropriate figure to include upon a cross-slab, albeit a rather unusual one. In particular, its placement across from another animal considered a type of Christ is especially suitable.

Regardless of the specific identity of the two beasts on Shandwick, consideration of their significance needs also to take account of their setting on either side of the central cross, a configuration that is quite likely intended as another variation of the motif of Christ recognised or worshipped *in medio duorum animalium*. If the cross and beasts on Shandwick can be identified as a visual rendition of this theme, then another link can be established with the Nigg cross-slab, where the two beasts placed under Saints Paul and Anthony in the pediment have been interpreted as facing the chalice and the host in recognition of Christ. In addition, a thematic link might also be established with the face of the TR20 fragment (see Chapter 5).

It may be argued that the outward-facing position of the creature to the left of the Shandwick cross-shaft precludes this interpretation of worship or recognition of Christ. However, while this stance complicates a straight-forward analysis, it does not necessarily invalidate this reading, since a complex array of potential meanings were often intended by medieval artists and were quite likely understood by an Insular audience.¹⁰⁸ In fact, not only the posture, but also the very nature of the animals depicted might have been irrelevant to the interpretation of the recognition of Christ. According to Ó Carragáin, what becomes clear after reading the commentaries of both Jerome and Bede on the Canticle of Habakkuk, is that for a

¹⁰⁶ Curley, *Physiologus*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 30-32.

¹⁰⁸ See Chapter 1, p. 7, note. 22.

monastic audience trained in the 'principle of multivalence,' the flanking *animalia* could take on a vast variety of human, animal, inanimate, abstract or angelic forms. 'The relevance of the phrase was determined, not by the nature (good or evil or neutral) of the flanking "animals" but by the fact that, in the midst of these figures or through these events, the divine and human natures of Christ could be recognised.'¹⁰⁹ This statement, made in regards to the Ruthwell panel, could also apply to both the animals and the angels depicted on the Shandwick cross-slab. Thus, while the outward facing position of the left-hand beast is awkward, it need not negate interpretation of the configuration as a depiction of Christ recognised between two beasts.¹¹⁰

The Zoomorphic Interlace and Serpent Decoration:

The various interpretations and functions of zoomorphic interlace and serpent iconography have been thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2 and the range of interpretations available can likewise be applied to the motifs as they appear at Shandwick. It may be likely that, since the interlaced serpents are actually located below the cross at Shandwick, the reference is most likely to the victory of the Cross over death, to Christ's power to save believers from sin, or perhaps even a reference to the dangers of heresy and the necessity of stamping it out, rather than to any of the more benign interpretations available. At the same time it may be significant that the interlaced serpents not only form conspicuous circles, the sign of eternity, but that lozenge-shapes are formed in the centre of both of the serpent-circle compositions (on both the front and back of the slab). These references to the universal dimensions of Christ and the Cross might lead the viewer to contemplate the necessity of ending one's life of sin to embrace

¹⁰⁹ Ó Carragáin, '*Traditio evangeliorum*,' p. 423.

¹¹⁰ The stance might also be explained by an overly close adherence to a model such as that depicted in the *Marvels of the East*, which also faces left.

the life of Christ, or they might simply reinforce the idea of Christ's defeat of sin and death.

SIDE B

The Pictish Symbols

As previously noted, the occurrence of the 'Pictish Beast' on Pictish monuments in Inverness-shire and Ross-shire is rather rare, and it may be significant that two (or possibly three) of them appear on the monuments of the Tarbat peninsula. The depiction of the beast on the Shandwick slab is also singular, due to the confronted rams placed between its legs and the lion-like creature below its forehead. It is impossible to gauge the intention of this configuration with any certainty, however, an application of Cummins' theories does allow for some interesting possibilities. The location of the Pictish beast on Shandwick below the top symbol is the same as at Nigg. According to Cummins, this conveys the meaning that the monument was commissioned or erected by the person symbolised by the Pictish beast (Edern) in honour of the person represented by the top symbol. While Cummins is unable to assign a definite name for this symbol, he does believe that it represents an unnamed son of Edern, turning the slab into a memorial to 'double-disc,' son of Edern.¹¹¹ Cummins does not specify if this is meant to be the same Edern as that conveyed by the beast on the Nigg stone, but if so, than it can be surmised that Edern had at least three sons: 'Dunodnat' (conveyed by the eagle symbol on Nigg), 'Drust' (conveyed by the double-disc with Z-rod symbol located above the Pictish beast on the reverse of the cross-slab at Glenferness, Moray), and the unnamed 'double-disc' portrayed on the Shandwick stone (see fig. 2.13). While highly speculative, it may also be possible to conjecture that the three animals within the Pictish beast panel on Shandwick represent these three sons.

¹¹¹ Cummins, *The Picts and their Symbols*, pp. 64-66.

The Figural Panel:

The figural composition on the reverse of the Shandwick slab contains domestic and wild birds and animals, a goat riding figure, armed warriors fighting over a deer or sheep, and a humanoid figure which may or may not be 'monstrous,' depending on whether it is holding a horn, or engaged in devouring another figure. This is not a typical hunt scene in that it involves far more than huntsmen and hounds in pursuit of deer or any other creatures, and its significance most likely transcends the interpretations usually assigned to this popular Pictish subject.

Commonly believed to be realistic images of the activities of the local secular elite, it has also been argued that Pictish hunt scenes convey religious meanings. For example the deer might represent Christ or the Christian soul, persecuted by devils and sin, which in turn are represented by the hounds and huntsmen, or the deer may represent Christ (and salvation) pursued by Christian souls.¹¹² Unfortunately, there is little exegesis to confirm these interpretations, with the possible exception of Psalm 41, in which David's longing for God is compared to a deer panting after the water-brooks: 'Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.'¹¹³ Augustine's commentary on this psalm furthers the metaphor by comparing the deer's longing to the catechumen's longing for baptism and salvation.¹¹⁴ While it is therefore possible to surmise that the deer in the Pictish compositions represent the Christian soul's longing for salvation, elsewhere, such symbolism was usually expressed by a fountain placed between two deer, such as in the 5th-century mosaic in the Mausaleo di Galla Placidia.

On the other hand, other biblical commentary might lie behind Shandwick's depiction of

¹¹² See Alcock, 'Image and Icon, pp. 232-33.

¹¹³ *Sicut areola praeparata ad inrigationes aquarum sic anima mea praeparata est ad te Deus.* Psalm 41:2

¹¹⁴ Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 41:1,3, PL 36: 464-466: Appendix 1D.

such a wide variety of birds, beasts, and humans. For instance, Augustine's commentary on other Psalms addresses the differences between the 'beasts of the plain,' the 'beasts of the field,' the 'beasts of the wood,' the 'birds of the air,' the 'fowls of the water,' and the 'fish in the sea,' considering them all metaphors for those who will be judged by Christ at the Second Coming.¹¹⁵

Likewise, the Old Irish *Saltair na Rann* describes the many types of birds and beasts, as well as 'hosts of Adam,' that God has created. Although there is no specific reference to the Day of Judgement within the cantos these verses appear in, the poet does state that the righteous and pure will be taken into the 'great stronghold.' In addition, the poem as a whole covers the full sweep of sacred Christian history and ends with the calamities that will occur at the end of the world.¹¹⁶

It would be short sighted to only consider Christian interpretations for the Shandwick scene. In addition to a probable secular frame of reference, it is also quite likely that the unusual configurations such as the goat-riding figure, the pair of warriors, and the single horn-carrying (or man-eating) figure, as well as the archer (who is paralleled on other Pictish monuments) refer to Pictish myths or legends of which we, unfortunately, have no knowledge. It may be therefore, that the only meaning we have access to are the possible references to the Christian notions of Creation and the Day of Judgement.

CONCLUSIONS:

Considered as a whole, several interrelated themes are expressed by the iconography of the Shandwick cross-slab. The first is the recognition, or worship of Christ *in medio duorum*

¹¹⁵ Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 8:13, PL 36, 115-116; *Enarrationes on Psalmos* 49:16-18, PL 36: 576-577; Appendix 1D.

¹¹⁶ *Saltair na Rann*, Cantos 1.8, 1.77-78, 2.25-26, in Carey, *King of Mysteries*, pp. 98-119; Appendix 1D.

animalia, embodied by the placement of the Cross, not only between two angels or cherubim, but also between two animals which may in turn also be symbols of Christ. Another is Christ's victory over death and sin, signified not only by the *crux gemmata*, but also, perhaps, by the serpent circles located beneath the Cross, or by the cross's placement between a lion and a possible bear. The *crux gemmata* was also a sign of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement, a symbol made even more blatant by the placement of angels, or cherubim to either side of the cross-shaft. If the winged figures are indeed cherubim then a further layer of meaning may be intended, in that cherubim represented historical and spiritual knowledge and served as a reminder to monks of the necessity of meditation and prayer to protect themselves from evil. The lozenge shapes that appear in the centre of the Cross and within the serpent-circles express another related theme of the boundless extensions of Christ's love and charity, and the universal dimensions of the Church and the Word. The flourishing of the Word of God might be reinforced by the depiction of the lion on the right of the cross-shaft, if it is determined that it exhibits a curling tongue or spray of foliage. The theme of Judgement might also lie behind the depiction of the very atypical 'hunt-scene' depicted on the reverse of the slab

The many stylistic parallels to manuscript and metalwork in the Shandwick slab's depiction of animals, zoomorphic interlace, and spiral designs, argues for its production within a monastic environment that would have had access to such sources. Likewise, the iconographic themes and the sophistication of its multivalent references, many of which are paralleled by the other monuments on the Tarbat peninsula, strongly suggest that the Shandwick slab was produced at the Portmahomack monastery. However, the secular themes, possible secular patronage of the slab, and probable local myths and legends referenced on the reverse of the slab should not be discounted; and it is likely that while the slab was produced and erected within a

monastic environment its function was not specifically tied to an ecclesiastical building.

Like the Nigg cross-slab, the Shandwick slab was quite possibly erected around the time of the expansion of the monastic estate at Portmahomack. While it may be unlikely that the Shandwick slab 'guarded' the sacred space of a chapel or a reliquary (especially since its rumoured association with an early medieval chapel has yet to be proven by archaeological investigation), it is possible that it functioned as a boundary marker. In particular, its placement on a hill with its cross-face overlooking the sea may have served as a signal to anyone approaching by ship that the peninsula was holy ground.¹¹⁷ At the same time it has also been argued that cross-slabs are most frequently found along the boundaries of secular estates.¹¹⁸ It may be that two theories coincide. The Shandwick slab might have been located on the boundary of a secular community that was incorporated by the monastic estate; its dual function reflecting its dual messages: multivalent references to the recognition of Christ and Judgement Day as well as prominent secular symbols, and possible references to local myths and legends. While such theories are speculative, a semi-secular context would help explain the very prominent Pictish symbols and the peculiarities contained within the figural composition.

¹¹⁷ See Carver, 'An Iona of the East', and 'Sculpture in Action,' (forthcoming 2004); Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' pp. 137-142.

¹¹⁸ Carver, 'Conversion and Politics on the Eastern Seaboard of Britain: Some Archaeological Indicators,' in B. Crawford, (ed.), *Conversion and Christianity in the North Sea World* (St Andrews, 1998), p. 34; Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots*, p. 93.

CH 4: THE HILTON OF CADBOLL CROSS-SLAB (NH 873 769)¹

INTRODUCTION

The Hilton of Cadboll slab is currently displayed in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Severely damaged, with the original decoration remaining only on the reverse, the slab is 236 cm high, 24 cm thick, and wider at the base (140 cm) than it is at the top (135 cm). It is the only cross-slab on the peninsula to narrow considerably at the top, and even in its damaged state, it is the thickest. It is carved from the same yellow, fine-grained, micaceous sandstone with iron bleb inclusions, as are the cross-slabs at Nigg and Shandwick, and the Portmahomack fragments TR 1, 10 and 20.²

The monument has a history of constant movement and reuse. Known to have stood for a time near the ruins of a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary on the outskirts of the modern village of Hilton of Cadboll, Easter-Ross (see below), the cross-bearing side of the stone was defaced in the 17th century when it was converted into a memorial stone commemorating Alexander Duff and his three wives. The remaining decoration on the reverse of the stone, along with the inscription on the front, is presently on display in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, while the recently excavated bottom of the stone, which bears the remains of decoration on both faces, is currently undergoing conservation within the town of Hilton of Cadboll.

The Hilton of Cadboll stone was first called to attention in 1780 by Cordiner, who turned the stone over and exclaimed that 'the obelisk is one of the most beautiful pieces of

¹ The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is no longer *in situ*; the grid reference is to its probable original position. See discussion below.

² Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving' <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000).

antient (sic) sculpture that has ever been discovered in Scotland.’ Cordiner also determined that the stone had originally stood next to the ruins of a chapel.³ When Petley recorded his observations around 1811, the stone was again lying decorated-side down, though it had now been moved to the small enclosure close to the ‘remains of the chapel Mhuor.’⁴ Noting the inscription (dated to 1676) on the defaced back of the stone; ‘He that lives weil dyes weil, Says Solomon the wise, Heir lyes Alexander Duff, And his three wives,’ Petley conjectured that since Duff was actually buried at the Abbey of Fearn, the stone should have been carried there after being inscribed, but must have been too heavy to move.⁵ The stone was again recorded in 1856 by Stuart, who also reported its use as a gravestone for Alexander Duff and its position in a shed adjacent to the walls of the ancient chapel.⁶ In the mid-19th century the stone was moved to the ‘American Gardens’ at Invergordon by the local lords, the McLeods of Cadboll, where Miller saw it in 1889, remarking that its border decoration ‘would hardly disgrace the frieze of an Athenian portico,’ and condemning the ‘barbarous mason,’ who defaced the front of the slab.⁷ Shortly thereafter, the lord of the castle tried to donate it to the British Museum in London, but due to a general outcry it was returned to Scotland within the year to its current resting-place in the National Museum at Edinburgh.

The name assigned to the stone, ‘Hilton of Cadboll,’ has also contributed to the confusion surrounding its origin and subsequent placement and movements. As Carver reports, the seashore site of the chapel where the stone might once have stood could not have been in the original site of Hilton, which means ‘Hilltown.’ In 1561-6 this seashore site was actually known as the Fishertown of Cadboll, or Cadboll Fisher, and by 1610 was known as

³ Cordiner, *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, p. 66.

⁴ Petley, ‘Carved Stones in Ross-shire,’ p. 347.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 348.

⁶ Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, 1:10.

⁷ *ECMS 2:73*; Miller, *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, p. 41;

Bail' a chnuic, or “Cliff town.” The actual ‘Hilltown’ of Cadboll was located behind the cliff line and to the south of Fishertown/Clifftown. The original settlement of Cadboll (probably located at the present site of Cadboll castle, north of the modern-day village of Hilton of Cadboll) is likely to have been a farmstead or estate that spawned the later settlements of Hilltown and Fishertown/Clifftown.

The 2001 archaeological investigation of the chapel site carried out by Historic Scotland and GUARD shows that the original location of the stone may very well have been in the immediate vicinity of the chapel. Though post-excavation analysis is not yet complete, the discovery of two parts of the collar stone (one of which may be in its original location), the lowest portion of the cross-slab, and numerous fragments from the face of the slab, has led to the hypothesis that the stone was first erected at, or near, the later chapel site some time from the 8th to 9th centuries. At some point subsequent to this the slab was broken at its junction with the collar stone and then re-erected, using sandstone slabs, a short distance away at the west-end of the chapel. It is unknown when this happened, though the archaeological evidence suggests that the re-erection took place when the chapel was founded, perhaps from the 11th to 12th centuries. The stone then presumably stood in this location until 1676 when it was broken and recreated as a memorial to Duff.⁸

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION⁹

Both the slab currently residing in the National Museum of Scotland and the recently excavated bottom of the slab will be described as one monument, as per the reconstruction

⁸M. Carver, (Pers. Comm), October 2001, based on reports from Sally Foster and Heather James of GUARD. Slightly more recent accounts can be found on <http://www.guard.arts.gla.ac.uk/1078/GUARDPostEx/GUARD1.html>, and a monograph detailing the results of the excavation is forthcoming.

drawing by Ian Scott (fig. 4.4). Therefore, while the description of Side B will incorporate both the bottom fragment and the main part of the Cross-slab, only the bottom of side A will be described.

SIDE A (fig 4.1)

Field 1. The Decorative Panel:

Field 1 comprises a central stepped panel filled with a key-pattern characterised by diagonal lines and interlocking Z and L-shaped bars. Ten of the resulting rhomboid-shapes feature raised double-band spirals, while the remainders are formed by a variety of interlocking straight and curved lines.

Field 2 (A-B). The Empty Panels:

Adjacent to the tenons, two side panels are enclosed by wide, moulded borders. The interiors of these panels have been worked smooth but are empty of any other ornament.

Field 3 (A-B). Zoomorphic Interlace:

Above the blank panels are two panels with zoomorphic interlace carved in deep relief located on either side of the central stepped panel. Though fragmented, the remains of the animals in these panels are very sharp. The bodies of the two quadrupeds in the left-hand panel (3A) are clearly differentiated by individual body features. For example the beast which retains its head (featuring an elongated ear, open jaws, clearly visible fangs, and a serpent-headed tongue) is also carved with markings that convey the impression of hair along

⁹ The following description focuses on the most salient details of the decoration. For a full description see Appendix 2C.

its neck, while the other beast is carved with scales. A third element in the configuration may be either plant or animal; a median incised line bisects the extremely long strand that interlaces with the tongue of the fanged beast. In general, the configuration of these beasts is loose and unstructured, which may be the result of the awkward space they inhabit. On the other hand, the remains of the interlaced beasts on the right side of the stepped base (field 3B) do form a balanced composition. Although both of their heads are missing, it is obvious that they were placed at opposite sides while their torsos cross and then loop around in a pretzel-shape, leaving their hindquarters at the bottom of the design. The hind limbs and tails of these creatures also interact to form the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.' In contrast to the creatures on the left, neither of these creatures displays distinguishing body markings.

SIDE B (figs. 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)

Field 1. The Vine-Scroll Ornament:

Field 1, incorporating the left and right sides of the border decoration as well as bottom of the design found on the recently excavated fragment, comprises an inhabited vine-scroll of great complexity and variation. At the bottom of the design, a stepped base is the source of a multitude of vine-shoots, two of which spring to both sides forming scrolls that encircle birds and beasts within (fig. 4.3). This vine-source is further flanked by two, addorsed, winged quadrupeds, one of which turns its head back around to grasp at the single berry placed in front of its mouth. The left-hand beast, which faces completely away from the source, does not quite reach the bunch of berries dangling in front of its jaws. As the scrolls move up the left and right sides of the slab, further fundamental differences become apparent (see fig 4.2). On the right, an undulating stem forms scrolls that pass around each elongated creature once or twice and stems terminate in fruit bunches that hang in front of

their open mouths. While the winged bipeds and quadrupeds inhabiting this side are not perched very steadily on the vines, and tails and occasional limbs extend out of the scrolls, interlacing with tendrils and sometimes forming the 'Anglo-Saxon lock,' the creatures are not contorted, or trapped within the scrolls. The vine-stem on the left, however, is more complex; while one stem encircles the elongated beasts, another forms a rigid zigzag design that gives the impression that the beasts are trapped, even while their hind limbs fall out and become entwined in tendrils. The vine-stem on the left side also sprouts far fewer clusters of fruit and leaves than does the stem on the right, and the creatures are more greatly contorted in their attempts to reach sustenance. In one case, a berry-less stem appears to choke the creature. In general, all of the inhabiting creatures are elongated and elegant and bear little resemblance to any natural birds or beasts.¹⁰

Field 2. The Top Border (Pictish Symbol):

Field 2 forms the upper part of the decorative border of the stone, contains a Pictish symbol identified as the double disc and Z-rod. The Z-rod is reversed and is characterised by trident-like terminations. Both discs are further ornamented by triple-band spirals; those in the left-hand disc rotate in a counter-clockwise motion while those in the right disc move in a clockwise motion.

Field 3. Pictish Symbols

The top central panel contains two more symbols, the Crescent and V-rod and the Double Discs. The V-rod trisects the crescent and forms three different fields of decoration. The central panel contains a diagonal key pattern characterised by curved-line spirals, while

¹⁰ See Appendix 2 C for a detailed description of each creature and vine scroll.

the two outer panels of the crescent each contain triple-band spirals in a configuration very like that in the discs above, but modified to fit the triangular spaces. Like the spiral configurations in the discs above, the spirals on the left move in a counter-clockwise motion while those on the right move in a clockwise motion.

The Double Discs directly below the crescent and V-Rod symbol are both filled with a dense, mesh interlace characterised by curved bends and concentric rows of symmetrical loops.

Field 4. The Figural Composition:

The figural scene on the Hilton of Cadboll slab comprises four humans on horseback, two on foot, four quadrupeds and a mirror and comb symbol. At the top of the scene a female with long hair and long robes sits 'enthroned' on a horse that trots to the left. This horse-and-rider pair is superimposed upon a second male rider and horse, discernible only by the outline of a human nose and beard, and the outline of a second horse. The mirror and comb are situated directly to the left of the horses' heads. To the right of the riders, a leaping quadruped, presumably a hound, is positioned above the haunches of the horses. Further right, two human figures stand in a receding plane. These figures are dressed in long, flowing, robes and hold long cylindrical objects, most likely musical horns, up to their mouths. A third left-facing horserider, armed with a spear and shield, is positioned directly between the legs of the two upper horses, while a deer leaps to the left beneath the horse's feet. The deer is pursued by two hounds, one bites the deer on its chest from below, while the other attacks its hindquarters. Another left-facing horse and rider, also armed with shield and spear, completes the scene.

Field 5. The Decorative Panel:

The central panel of the bottom of the large slab and the upper central part of the excavated base feature a significant portion of the remains of a large spiral design. This pattern is characterised by both double and triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae and ornamented with triangular pellets in the interstices and triple-leaf floral designs in the corners.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material:

SIDE A:

Field 1: The Decorative Panel

The decorative panel which forms a stepped base in the centre of the Hilton of Cadboll fragment is quite likely the base of a *crux gemmata* (see Chapter 3). A stepped cross-base can be seen carved at the bottom of the shaft on an incised slab found at Rosemarkie,¹¹ while physical stepped bases are a common feature among the Irish high-crosses. The mixed key and spiral pattern is rare on stone, though similar configurations with raised bosses do occur on the Cross-slab at Dunfallandy, and on the Dupplin cross (in a very abbreviated form with only one boss), both of which are located in Perthshire, as well as on the south side of the West (Broken) Cross at Kells (fig. 4.5).¹²

Field 2 (A-B)

¹¹ Not listed in *ECMS*. Henderson provides a sketch in 'Art-Historical Analysis of Sculpture found during the excavations of summer 2001,' fig. 5c.

¹² See *ECMS* 2, figs. 305a, 334d; Roe, *The High Crosses at Kells*, pl. XVIII.

As there is no decoration contained within these panels, there is no comparative material.

Field 3 (A-B). The Zoomorphic Interlace:

The closest parallels to the zoomorphic interlace contained in the panels on either side of the stepped base are found within the cross-arms at Nigg, and the 'lion's mane' and 'deer's head' panels at St Andrews.¹³ In particular, the markings on the left-most beast in the left-hand panel on the Hilton fragment bear a marked resemblance to those carved on the beasts in the 'lion's mane' panel, hence their name. The blunt muzzle, fangs and extended tongue of the Hilton 'lion's mane' beast also have much in common with the same features on the head of the quadruped on Side A of TR20 (see Chapter 5), as well as with the heads of the creatures inhabiting the top arm (field 2D) of the cross on the Nigg slab.¹⁴

SIDE B:

Field 1. The Vine-Scroll Ornament:

Vine-scroll ornament was an extremely popular motif in the Insular world, appearing on metalwork, manuscripts and ivories as well as on numerous stone monuments. Though not common in Pictland, there are at least fourteen other instances of the motif on Pictish stones, however, only four display a vine which is both inhabited and similar in structure to that

¹³ See Chapter 2, pp. 45-49 for a full discussion of the sources that may lie behind the sculptural representations of the interlaced beasts on Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll.

¹⁴ An additional, as yet unpublished, fragment recovered from the Hilton of Cadboll site features this same type of beast head.

displayed on the Hilton of Cadboll slab: the cross-slab at Mugdrum in Fife, 'Sueno's Stone,' in Moray, St Vigean 1 in Angus, and TR1 at Portmahomack.¹⁵

The details of the vine-scroll on Mugdrum are exceedingly hard to decipher, but according to Allen and Anderson, the two panels located on the right-hand side of the stone display a simple vine-scroll inhabited by 'dragons.'¹⁶ Interestingly enough, the stone at Mugdrum also displays a hunt scene, the only other Pictish slab besides Hilton of Cadboll and the TR1 fragment to depict both vine-scrolls and hunt scenes. The details of the vine-scroll ornament on 'Sueno's Stone' are equally hard to discern, but Henderson has described panels of wiry vine-scrolls that are inhabited by heavy-tailed birds on both the upper left and right sides of the slab.¹⁷ The articulation of the motif on both of these stones is very simple, placed on the sides of the monuments rather than on the front or back faces. Likewise, the modest, single strand, vine-scroll ornament on the St Vigean 1 appears only on the left side of the monument, and for the most part is uninhabited with only one of the upper scrolls (second from the top) occupied by a small creature with no discernible characteristics.¹⁸ The vine-scroll ornamentation on all three of these monuments plays a very small part in the overall layout of the decoration. In each instance the motif is relegated to one (or both) sides of the monuments rather than appearing on one of the main faces, and in the case of 'Sueno's Stone' and the monument at Mugdrum, it only appears only in one or two individual panels.

Of all the Pictish examples of vine-scroll ornament the design on the fragment TR1 from Tarbat (see Chapter 5, fig. 5.1) provides the closest points of comparison with Hilton of Cadboll. Although damaged, it is easy to see that the inhabited vine-scroll forms a decorative

¹⁵ For further reference to those Pictish stones not discussed in this chapter, Henderson's study, 'Pictish Vine-Scroll Ornament' in A. O. Connor and D.V. Clarke, *From the Stone Age to the Forty-Five* (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 243-268, is exemplary.

¹⁶ *ECMS* 2, p. 367.

¹⁷ Henderson, 'Pictish Vine-Scroll Ornament,' p. 258; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 64.

border on the face of the stone, rather than being relegated to the sides of the monument. This border, as at Hilton of Cadboll, encloses a figural composition containing at least one human and several quadrupeds that may be evidence of a hunt scene. Likewise, the winged quadrupeds and bipeds that inhabit the scrolls are nearly identical in nature to those on Hilton of Cadboll: the elongated bodies or tails extend beyond the scrolls, and the forelegs of several of the creatures form the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.' Furthermore, the carving has been executed in a light, shallow relief exactly like that at Hilton of Cadboll. The designs are not identical, however, as the rigid zigzag vine on the left side of Hilton of Cadboll is not present anywhere on TR1. Likewise, the confronted posture of the two central beasts on TR1 is not duplicated on Hilton of Cadboll, where the two central beasts face away from the vine source. In addition, the vine in the TR1 composition springs from a vase-shaped container, whereas that at Hilton of Cadboll grows out of a stepped base. Despite these differences, which primarily affect an iconological reading (see below), the main characteristics of the two designs, such as the style of carving, the nature of the beasts, and the manner in which the scrolls enclose each beast within at least two passes of the vine, points to a relationship so close between the two stones as to suggest that both were carved by the same craftsman, or, at the very least, by the same school of carvers.

Some Irish parallels in stone also exist, most notably on the 8th to 9th-century Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells (fig. 4.6), and the 9th-century South Cross at Clonmacnoise. The Kells Cross features denuded vine-stems that trap a variety of quadrupeds within the scrolls in much the same manner as the Hilton beasts, although they are not nearly as thin, or attenuated, as the Tarbat creatures, and they are not in the least contorted. Although the ornament on the South cross at Clonmacnoise is extremely worn, it is possible to discern pairs

¹⁸ Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, fig. 65.

of inhabited scrolls springing from a single source confronted by a pair of quadrupeds.¹⁹ The middle pair of confronted beasts turn their heads away from the central stem, but display no contortion of their bodies to do so. Vine-stems interlace in the interstices, and in general, the carving is very light and shallow and the creatures and the vine are thin and wiry.²⁰

Within Northumbria, the vine-scroll ornament appears on a number of monuments, dated from the early to the late 8th century, which are associated with the Jarrow school of sculpture, including the monuments at Ruthwell (in Dumfriesshire) and Bewcastle (in Cumbria), the panel at Jedburgh (in Roxburghshire, Scottish Borders), the cross-shaft fragments at Rothbury (Northumberland), and frieze fragments (Jarrow 19 and 20) from Jarrow itself (see fig. 4.7).²¹ These examples, however, have little in common with the depiction of the inhabited vine-scroll on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, as they generally feature single-stem vines that enclose plump, well-modelled birds or beasts that are perched securely within a single scroll. There is no contortion of the bodies and the great variety of beasts is quite naturalistically portrayed. In addition, the execution of the carving on each of these stones is deep, detailed, and well rounded. While the ornament on the Jedburgh panel does show some characteristics akin to the Tarbat examples, such as diagonal vine-scrolls and instances of scrolls that pass twice around the creatures, these characteristics might be due to the influence of the York school (see below).²²

¹⁹ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 132

²⁰ Muiredach's cross at Monasterboice also displays a panel of vine-scroll ornament, but as this cross is dated to the mid-10th century, it could have no bearing on the ornament at Hilton of Cadboll. In any case, both the vine and the animals are thicker than those on Hilton of Cadboll, and though the animals' legs are extended outside of the scrolls, they are not unnaturally elongated or contorted in any way. However, the appearance of the motif on Muiredach's Cross does show a continuing popularity of the motif in Ireland.

²¹ For the dating of these monuments and fragments see W. Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (London, 1922), pp. 76-78; R. Cramp, 'The Anglian Sculptures from Jedburgh', in A.O Connor and D.V Clarke (eds.), *From the Stone Age to the Forty-Five* (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 267-268; *CASS* 1: 114-115, 221; *CASS* 2:71; 'Early Northumbrian Sculpture,' in M. Lapidge, *Bede and His World: The Jarrow Lectures* (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 148-150; Hawkes, 'The Rothbury Cross: Iconographic Bricolage,' *Gesta* 5 (1996): 77-94.

²² See also Cramp, 'The Anglian Sculptures from Jedburgh', *passim*.

Within the group of carvings that can be identified with the late 8th to early 9th-century school of carving associated with York, the Minster 1A fragment and the St. Leonard's cross-shaft, both found in the city of York, and the cross-shaft fragment from Croft on Tees, Yorkshire, demonstrate the greatest points of comparison with the Tarbat examples of vine-scroll (fig. 4.8)²³ All three of these stones display a light, shallow style of low relief carving, and compared with Jarrow school, the depiction of the vine is much thinner and the animals far less realistic. Much like the beasts inhabiting the vine-scroll at Hilton of Cadboll, the animals are elongated and, with the exception of Minster 1A, tend to slip out of their scrolls. In all three stones the creatures are entangled by the passing of the vine or by tendrils of the vine within the scrolls, and in St Leonard's, the vine passes around the beasts twice in exactly the same manner as does the Hilton of Cadboll vine. Though not to the same scale as the contortions displayed by the creatures on the left-hand of the vine-scroll ornament at Hilton of Cadboll, all three of the York sculptures display at least one creature who must turn its head around or stretch to pluck at the fruit or leaf, and the beast on the middle right-hand side of the Croft stone appears to be choking on a leaf. In addition, beasts on both St Leonard's and Croft display the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.'

There are, of course, some differences between the York school depictions and that at Hilton of Cadboll. For instance, the hindquarters of the creatures in the Minster 1A fragment do not slip out of the scrolls, nor are there any winged quadrupeds though they might originally have existed before the stone was damaged. The Croft-on-Tees fragment does contain two winged quadrupeds in its uppermost scrolls, but here, as in the Minster 1A

²³ As regards dating, the sculpture associated with a 'York school,' and probable influences upon its style, see Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses*, pp. 72-73; Cramp, 'Early Northumbrian Sculpture,' p. 150; Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church,' pp. 337-341; J. Lang, *CASS 3: York and Eastern Yorkshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 22-23, 109-110.

fragment, the vine-stem only passes once around the creatures, and in none of the York group do the hind legs or tails form interlace with tendrils between the scrolls. In fact, there are no significant organic growths in the interstices on either the St. Leonard's fragment or the Croft cross-shaft, where the scrolls are placed much closer together than they are on the Hilton of Cadboll stone.

Three additional monuments dated from the early to the mid-9th century are usually associated with a later generation of the York school and also display inhabited vine-scrolls.²⁴ Out of these designs, located at Otley in West Yorkshire, Easby in North Yorkshire, and Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire,²⁵ only the Closeburn vine-scroll displays any clear points of similarity with the Hilton of Cadboll design. The alternate facing birds with long, heavy tails and heads that are stretched above the scrolls to grasp at the berries are very similar to the winged bipeds on Hilton of Cadboll, while the behaviour of the vine, which encircles each bird at least twice entangling its wings and limbs, is also analogous. However, both the design of the vine and the depiction of the birds on the Closeburn monument are very regularised without any of the innovations or constant variation of detail present in the Hilton of Cadboll treatment. Likewise, the style of carving is more highly modelled and thicker than that on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, perhaps due to geographical proximity of the Closeburn shaft to products of the Jarrow school.

In any case, it seems clear that the York tradition of vine-scroll ornament, especially that represented by Minster 1A, St. Leonard's 2A and Croft, bears a much greater relationship to the Tarbat peninsula vine-scroll depictions than does the Jarrow school group. The significance of this relationship is as yet unknown, but it may be safe to say, at the very least,

²⁴ Cramp, 'Early Northumbrian Sculpture', pp.148-150; Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses*, pp. 42, 54-55.

²⁵ Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses*, figs. 52, 53; *ECMS 2*, fig. 458C.

that if any of the Tarbat craftsmen were trained by Northumbrian carvers then it was by carvers from the Deiran kingdom rather than the Bernician.

A relationship with the inhabited vine-scrolls and certain creatures carved on the early 9th-century Mercian friezes at Breedon-on-Hill, Leicestershire, has also been proposed.²⁶ These friezes feature several examples of scrolls inhabited by quadrupeds and bipeds with the vine-stems in certain panels of the 'broad' frieze being notably thin and wiry, and usually passing at least twice around the creatures and almost always forcing their legs into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock'. These vines are almost always denuded and often terminate in berry clusters, leaves or flowers underneath the legs or above the backs of the creatures. Despite this there is little to no contortion by the animals or birds to reach the sustenance, nor do they slip out of their scrolls. Although the quadrupeds are generally depicted in a lithe and lean manner that is thinner than the Jarrow style beasts, they are not elongated and stylised in the manner of the Tarbat beasts, and remain quite natural in comparison.²⁷ Therefore, although there are comparisons able to be made between the behaviour of the vine within the Mercian friezes and within the Tarbat examples, the Breedon animals have little in common with the super-elongated, stylised, or contorted Tarbat birds or beasts.

As regards sculpture, the closest stylistic links with the Tarbat vine-scroll ornament appear on the York pieces, but numerous parallels are also found in portable media. It may be that the motif produced on ivories, metalwork, or in manuscripts influenced the stone carvers' execution of the vine-scroll on Hilton of Cadboll (and TR1).

For instance, although the delicacy of carving allowed by the ivory medium permits an extravagance of fine detail not possible in stone, it can certainly be suggested that both the

²⁶ Henderson, 'Hilton of Cadboll Chapel Site,' p. 6.

York group and the Tarbat examples of vine-scroll are more 'ivory-like' in their light, shallow execution than are the Jarrow group, and might, therefore, have been influenced by such models. Likewise, ivory models could explain the placement of the Hilton of Cadboll vine ornament within a border on the face of the stone rather than on a side.²⁸ Inhabited vine-scrolls used as decorative borders enclosing central panels of decoration appear on both the late 8th-century Anglo-Saxon ivory in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the so-called 'Ascension ivory'.²⁹ However, besides the decision to treat the inhabited vine-scroll as a decorative border, there is little to directly compare between the depiction of the beasts or the vine designs contained on the aforementioned ivories and the Hilton of Cadboll stone.

The closest parallel to the Hilton of Cadboll design may be found on the late 8th century ivory Brunswick casket, even though this ivory does not feature either vine-scrolls or border decoration.³⁰ Instead, a variety of creatures are featured in adjoining panels of decoration, generally in entwined pairs. However, not only do these winged creatures have elongated necks and tails similar to the long-tailed birds on both the Hilton of Cadboll stone and the TR1 fragment, but the legs of the birds in both the top left and right panels form the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' with the knotwork created by their interweaving tails. Likewise, the winged bipeds found in the lower left corner bear a vague resemblance to the winged bipeds (not necessarily birds) found in some of the scrolls in the Hilton of Cadboll design. In addition, one of the top panels on the casket contains a tree-scroll with diagonal shoots that

²⁷R. Jewell, 'The Anglo-Saxon Friezes at Breedon-on-the Hill, Leicestershire,' *Archaeologia* 108 (1986), plates XLVa,b,c,d,e, XLVIIIa.

²⁸ Vine-scroll ornament functions as a border on the face of no other cross-slabs in Pictland, with the exception of TR1. Obviously, the freestanding crosses of Northumbria did not allow for such a layout of decoration, though it did function as a border on the 9th-century Hovingham monument where it runs beneath the portraits of eight human figures. See Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses*, fig. 54; Hawkes, 'Mary and the Cycle of Resurrection: The Iconography of the Hovingham Panel', in M. Spearman and J. Higgitt, *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 254-260, for an interpretation of the iconography on this monument.

²⁹ Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings*, plates 23, 24.

trap the beasts within the scrolls. Nevertheless, unlike the TR1 or the Hilton of Cadboll designs, the Brunswick casket does not feature any winged quadrupeds and none of the creatures are contorted in their attempts to reach berries or any other kind of fruit.

Parallels in metalwork have also been cited as possible influences upon the Hilton of Cadboll design.³¹ Certainly the creatures that inhabit the plant scrolls on the mid to late 8th-century silver Ormside bowl, with their elongated necks and tails, can be compared to the beasts inhabiting the Hilton of Cadboll vine-scroll, though the tree-scrolls have nothing in common with the vine-scroll design on the cross-slab.³²

As regards the portable media, the most numerous parallels to the Hilton of Cadboll design are found in Insular manuscript illuminations. Certainly many of the creatures found in various illuminated pages of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, the *St Petersburg Gospels*,³³ the *Barberini Rome Gospels*,³⁴ the *Vespasian Psalter*,³⁵ the *Book of Cerne*,³⁶ and the *Book of Kells*,³⁷ display stylised, elongated bodies, and a lack of naturalistic details. Likewise, the left-hand vine design on Hilton of Cadboll, with its diagonal shoots that form a zigzag can also be seen on the *Chi-Rho* page (fol. 11) the *Stockholm Codex Aureus*,³⁸ as well as in folios 8r and 19v of the *Book of Kells*.³⁹

³⁰ *Ibid.* plates 10-13.

³¹ Henderson, 'Pictish Vine-Scroll Ornament', p. 266.

³² The Ormside Bowl is currently in the Yorkshire Museum, York. See Garrison, Nelson, and Tweddle, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, p. 30; G. Henderson, *Vision and Image in Early Christian England* (Cambridge, 1999), plate 28.

³³ St. Petersburg, Public Library, Cod. F.v.1.8, fol. 16. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plate 190.

³⁴ Vatican, Vatican Biblioteca, MS. Apostolica Barberini Lat. 570, fol. 18. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plate 170.

³⁵ London, British Library, Cotton MS. Vespasian A.1, fols. 93v, 30v, 53r. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plates 46-49.

³⁶ Cambridge, University Library MS. L1. I. 10, fols. 3r, 32r. See M. Brown, *The Book of Cerne* (London, 1996), plate Iib; Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plate 311.

³⁷ Dublin, Trinity College MS 58 A1.6, fols. 7v, 33r, 130r in Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 10, 27, 151.

³⁸ Stockholm, Royal Library MS. A. 135. See Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, plate 152.

³⁹ Henry, *The Book of Kells*, plates 11, 14.

With the exception of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, which has been dated to the late 7th-century, all of these manuscripts have been generally dated to the late 8th and early 9th-centuries, and, except for the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and the *Book of Kells*, are believed to be of Mercian provenance.⁴⁰ On the other hand, it has also been argued that the *Tiberius* group of manuscripts, which contains all of the aforementioned Mercian manuscripts, were highly influenced by Irish decorative trends.⁴¹ Therefore, any influence on the Hilton of Cadboll design that might be traced to these Mercian manuscripts is far more likely to have resulted from an Irish exemplar, rather than from viewing Mercian works.

The closest manuscript parallel with the vine-scroll design depicted on the Hilton of Cadboll is featured in the border decoration of the *Una Autem* page (folio 285r) in the *Book of Kells* (fig. 4.9). Here, central chalices grow vines that spring to both the left and the right and interlace in the four corners. Two elongated quadrupeds face each chalice while the remaining scrolls contain alternate facing elongated quadrupeds. Not only do the scrolls encircle the beasts twice, but escaping tendrils also entwine with the limbs of the creatures. This basic design is almost identical to that featured on the TR1 fragment, and very similar to that on the bottom of the recently uncovered Hilton of Cadboll slab, though the Hilton animals are addorsed, not confronted.

Field 2. The Top Border (Pictish symbol):

While the Double-Disc and Z-rod symbol is a very common symbol, appearing on twenty two other Pictish cross-slabs, only one other stone within Easter-Ross carries this

⁴⁰ For discussions about dating and the provenance of the manuscripts, see Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, pp. 35-40, 55, 56, 61, 64, 84.

⁴¹ M. Brown, 'Echoes: the Book of Kells and Southern English Manuscript Production,' in Felicity O'Mahony (ed.), *The Book of Kells: Proceedings of a Conference at Trinity College, Dublin* (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 333-343.

symbol: the cross-slab at Rosemarkie.⁴² However, a comparison between the symbols on Rosemarkie and Hilton of Cadboll shows that the decoration within the discs and the connecting bar are quite different as are the terminations of the Z-rod.⁴³ In fact, the particular depiction of the Hilton of Cadboll double-disc and Z-rod symbol is completely unique, with the exception of the spiral pattern within its discs, which is duplicated throughout the Insular world in other contexts in a wide variety of media.⁴⁴

Field 3. The Pictish Symbols:

The Crescent and V-Rod appears on sixteen other Pictish cross-slabs, two of which are in Easter Ross: on Rosemarkie 1, and TR1. Again, however, the Hilton of Cadboll representation is unique, most particularly in the way that the V-rod breaks the bottom line of the Crescent into two distinct arches. The closest parallels to the key and spiral patterns decorating the Hilton crescent appear on the other Tarbat monuments, but it may be significant that Aberlemno 3, which bears many parallels with the Hilton of Cadboll 'hunt-scene' (see below) also displays a Crescent and V-rod symbol decorated with a related key pattern.⁴⁵

The Double-Discs without any connecting bridge or Z-rod is unique to the Hilton of Cadboll stone, as is the specific pattern of interlace within them. However, similar dense, mesh, interlace can be seen on the snake-bosses at Nigg and the snake-circles on Shandwick.

⁴² *ECMS* 1: 60.

⁴³ *ECMS* 2, fig. 62. On the other hand, both Rosemarkie and Hilton of Cadboll both display combinations of four symbols, three of which are common to both: the Double-disc and Z rod, the Crescent and V-rod, and the mirror and comb. No other Pictish cross-slabs share these three symbols, though one symbol stone, at Bourtie, Aberdeenshire, does. See *ECMS* 1:110-127; *ECMS* 2: 64-65, 157, figs. 60a, 62, 163.

⁴⁴ *ECMS* 1:398.

⁴⁵ *ECMS* 2, fig. 228b.

Field 4. The Figural Composition:

Although depictions of the hunt are one of the most popular secular subjects found on Pictish monuments, the Hilton of Cadboll scene displays several important variations in both subject matter and carving techniques. The first is the presence of the mirror and comb in the upper left-hand corner, argued to be a 'determinative' symbol of the feminine gender.⁴⁶

Although this symbol appears on ten other Pictish cross-slabs, it is only placed in conjunction with another hunt scene once (see below). The inclusion of both the female figure and the trumpeters also make the Hilton of Cadboll hunt scene somewhat unusual, though they are not completely without parallels, as the hunt scene on Aberlemno 3 features a central rider near the top, flanked on the right by two trumpeters, along with three other huntsmen and two other hound-and-deer pairs (see fig 4.10). Stylistically, the trumpeters on the Hilton of Cadboll slab also bear a close resemblance to the figure of David on the St Andrews Sarcophagus in regards to the movement of the drapery, and it has been argued that the trumpeters from both Aberlemno 3 and Hilton of Cadboll are 'cuts' from a missing panel of the Sarcophagus that featured a scene of David and his musicians.⁴⁷ In turn, this scene is believed to have been inspired by a miniature of the same subject contained on folio 30v of the *Vespasian Psalter* (fig. 2.11). Indeed, the trumpeters on Aberlemno 3, in which one is placed behind the other on the same ground line (while the pair on Hilton of Cadboll is carved in depth), are very similar stylistically to the trumpeters in the manuscript miniature.

The rudimentary use of perspective in the portrayal of both the trumpeters and the central pair of riders on the Hilton of Cadboll is also somewhat unusual, though again not without parallel, and though the Aberlemno 3 trumpeters might be considered artistically

⁴⁶ E. Alcock, 'Pictish Stones Class I: Where and How?' *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 15 (1988-89): pp. 13-14.

inferior to the Hilton of Cadboll pair,⁴⁸ several other stones display a skill equal to the Hilton of Cadboll carver in their portrayal of multiple figures. Examples can be seen on Meigle 2 (fig. 4.11) and Meigle 26, both of which feature multiple horseriders on a receding plane. Hicks has argued that the origin of this device, which appears to be unique to the Picts in the Insular world, lies in the stylised formulas of Egyptian art, which were then adopted into Greek, Roman, Gallo-Roman and early Christian art, and possible models for the Picts probably came from imported Mediterranean ivories or Sassanian metalwork.⁴⁹

Female figures appear on several other monuments in Scotland, but in only one other instance does one occur within the secular context of a hunt. Three Scottish and one Pictish monument contain figures most likely intended for the Virgin and Child,⁵⁰ while four cross-slabs feature figures that might possibly be identified as female. Kingoldrum 1 and Kirriemuir 1, both in Angus, display both the feminine 'determinative' mirror and comb symbol and the remains of figures that may be women, though damage and wear make positive identification impossible.⁵¹ The reverse of Monfieth 2 (fig 4.12), also in Angus, features a figure wearing a brooch similar to the one worn by the horsewoman on the Hilton of Cadboll stone as well as an elaborate headdress similar to the one worn by the Virgin depicted on the Brechin relief. Both these items lead to the possible identification of the Monfieth figure as female, though it is not certain whether she is meant to portray the Virgin or another saintly or secular woman. The most intriguing portrayal of a possible feminine figure is on Meigle 1 (fig. 4.13), which not only contains a hunt scene and the mirror and comb symbol, but also features a mounted

⁴⁷ Henderson, 'The David Cycle,' pp. 91-92, 103-105, 107.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 107.

⁴⁹ C. Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, (Edinburgh, 1993) pp. 153-154.

⁵⁰ See the Brechin panel (below), in Angus, as well as a cross-shaft fragment (Iona 10) and St Martins Cross at Iona, and the cross at Kildalton, Islay. *ECMS 2*, figs. 261, 397a, 404, 410a.

⁵¹ *ECMS 2*: figs. 238b, 239b.

figure in the lower left-hand corner who is 'enthroned' on the horse and has an unusual head shape resembling the headdresses worn by the figures on Monfieth 2 and Brechin.

Field 5. The Decorative Panel:

The particular design that fills the lower bottom panel of the Hilton of Cadboll stone is unique to that stone, though it is very close in nature to the spiral work in the bottom panel of Side B of the Shandwick stone. Coincidentally, that decorative panel also lies directly beneath a hunting scene. These spiral patterns also find parallels in 'Celtic' religious and secular metalwork, Anglo-Saxon ivories, and Insular manuscripts, most especially in the *Book of Durrow*, and the *Book of Kells*.⁵²

Summary of Parallels

It is clear from the discussion of identifiable parallels that the motifs and decorative designs used on the Hilton of Cadboll stone were part of the greater artistic repertoire of the Insular world from the 7th to the 9th-centuries. Ultimately of Mediterranean origin,⁵³ vine-scroll ornament carved on stone was extremely popular in Northumbria, while its appearance in manuscript, ivory and metalwork ranged throughout the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and Ireland as well as on the Continent. The zoomorphic interlace and spiral patterns found on the Hilton of Cadboll stone are found throughout Insular manuscripts and ivories, while 'hunting scenes' were also popular on Irish monuments (see Chapter 3), with their origins lying in late-Antique imperial images on mosaics and engraved silver platters as well as in Sassanian art.⁵⁴

⁵² See Ch. 3, pp. 113-114.

⁵³ Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, p. 119; Jewell, 'The Anglo-Saxon Friezes' pp. 102-104; Cramp, 'Schools of Mercian Sculpture' in Ann Dornier (ed.), *Mercian Studies* (Leicester, 1977), pp. 195-207; *CASS* 1: xxiv; 'Early Northumbrian Sculpture,' pp. 136-137.

⁵⁴ A. Carrington, 'David Imagery and the Chase Motif in Pictish Sculpture,' *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996):147-158.

Specific models for the ornament contained on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, therefore, could have come from any number of sources current in the Insular world from the 7th-9th centuries. However, it must be stressed that the style of carving, the particular treatment of the vine-scroll, and the elongation and stylisation of the inhabiting animals in the Hilton of Cadboll design point most strongly to two different sources: the York group of carvings and the *Book of Kells*.

B) Iconographic Significance

SIDE A

As suggested above, it is quite likely that the stepped base carved on the bottom fragment of the Hilton of Cadboll slab was meant to represent the stepped base of a *crux gemmata*. The significance of the *crux gemmata* has been thoroughly discussed in Chapter 3; suffice it to say that it was a sign of Christ's victory over death and a symbol of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement.

The significance of zoomorphic interlace has been thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2; it is quite possible that the interlaced beasts, here placed on either side of the stepped cross base, functioned apotropaically.

SIDE B:

The Inhabited Vine-Scroll:

The interpretation of the vine-scroll motif as a reference to John 15:1-10, in which Jesus proclaims "I am the vine, you are the branches" is universally accepted by art historians. However, this is not the only biblical passage to which the ornament on the Hilton of Cadboll stone might allude. Messianic passages throughout the Old Testament refer to

fruitful vines or trees.⁵⁵ The royal lineage of the vine is often emphasised in many of these passages, which may explain why the vine-scroll was considered appropriate decoration for the royal *Spagenhelme* war helmets in early medieval times.⁵⁶ It is possible, therefore, that the vine-scroll ornament on Hilton of Cadboll had secular, political implications, as well as religious significance.

Early Christian exegetes also assigned multiple layers of meaning to the vine, which was conflated with the Cross, the blood of Christ and the New Covenant, and with the Church as a whole. For instance, both Clement of Alexandria and Cyril of Jerusalem equated the vine with the blood of Christ and the New Covenant.⁵⁷ Ambrose conflated the vine with the 'Tree of the Cross', its grape-clusters and wine with Christ, and the chalice with the New Covenant.⁵⁸ Augustine and Gregory the Great conflated the vine with the Church.⁵⁹ While there is no definitive proof that all of those specific texts were known in the Insular world,⁶⁰ writers such as Bede did show a familiarity with many of the traditions, such as equating the grapevine to the Cross, and the Chalice to the New Covenant.⁶¹

The most prevalent component in this matrix of ideas was the conception of the inhabited vine as the Tree of Life and, subsequently, the Tree of Virtue. This amalgamation grew out of the conflation of the Cross with the Tree of Life; a common literary idea in the

⁵⁵See Ezekiel 17:22-24, Daniel 4:7-14, Habakkuk 3:17-18, Isaiah 11:1 and 27:2-6, and Psalms 1:3 and 80:8 for some particularly relevant passages.

⁵⁶L. De Paor, 'Some Vine Scrolls and Other Patterns in Embossed Metal from Dumfriesshire,' *PSAS* 94 (1961), p. 188.

⁵⁷Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.2.19, *ANCL* 2: 200; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechises* 17.18, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:128; Appendix 1E. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of these authors works.

⁵⁸Ambrose, *De Fide* 2:20.135, *PL* 16: 559; *De Fide* 4: 12.167, *PL* 16: 648-649; *NPNF*, 2nd series, 10:22, 284. Cf. Ephraim Syrus, *Hymns on the Nativity 1*, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 13: 224; Appendix 1E.

⁵⁹Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 13.16, *CCSL* 36:139.19-23; *In Iohannis Evangelium* 80:1-2, *PL* 35: 1839; *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 24.44, *CCSL* 46: 168.1-11; *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 25.48, *CCSL* 46:171.8-11; Gregorii the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* 11:1, *PL* 76: 1154 (listed as *Homily*19: 1); Appendix 1E for all four texts.

⁶⁰See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of these authors and texts.

early middle ages that was most fully expressed by the 4th century in *De Pasha*, repeated by authors such as Gregory and Bede, and found in the liturgy.⁶² This correlation between the Tree of Life and the Vine of John 15 was also artistically accepted as early as the 8th century, where it was depicted on a Lombardic relief in the cathedral at Cividale. Here, a cross covered with interlace displays a flower at the crossing of its arms, thus referring to the blooming of the Tree of Life. In addition, a plant located below the cross is flanked by two winged quadrupeds, while 'the sacramental nature of its fruits is indicated by the bunches of grapes on which the birds in its branches feed. . . .'⁶³ This relief therefore succinctly conflates images of the Cross, the Vine and the Tree of Life.

As an inhabited vine-scroll/Tree of Life, both the vine-source and the inhabitants of the scrolls on Hilton of Cadboll can be further analysed. The new fragment from the slab shows the vine scroll springing from a stepped base, rather than a chalice; a particularly interesting configuration as these steps may be another reference to the steps usually included in depictions of the *Crux Gemmata* of Golgotha, and echoed by the cross-base depicted on Side A. The stepped base within the vine-scroll decoration could, therefore, lead to another association, this time between the Tree of Life and the Cross of Victory, with its inevitable reference to the Second Coming.⁶⁴

As regards the creatures confronting the vine-source, the configuration suggests a *type* of Christ between two beasts, a visual reference to the Canticle of Habakkuk 3:2 and the

⁶¹ Bede, *Homiliae Liber Secundus, Homilia 15* (Homily on the Ascension), CCSL 122: 280-81.21-24; Appendix 4A.

⁶² See Chapter 1 for a full discussion of the apocrypha, exegesis and liturgical sources that contributed to the early medieval literary and liturgical conceptions of the Tree of Life.

⁶³ O'Reilly, 'The Tree of Eden in Medieval Iconography', p. 176, plate 5.

⁶⁴ See Ch. 1, pp. 26-27 for a discussion of the Victory Cross and the Cross of the Second Coming, and Ch. 3, pp. 100-102, for early medieval representations of the *Crux Gemmata*.

recognition of Christ *in medio duorum animalium*.⁶⁵ Likewise, the other creatures inhabiting the scrolls can first of all be seen as the living souls (portrayed figuratively as birds) that inhabit the Tree of Life in such works as *De pascha* and Gregory's *Moralia*.⁶⁶

At the same time, however, all of these birds and beasts may have more specific identities. For instance, the winged quadrupeds confronting the vine-source might be intended as griffins, creatures with a long history of ornamenting Christian funeral art despite their classical mythological origin. A common royal and funerary symbol in Late Antique friezes, such as that on the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina (c. 161 AD) in Rome, which feature pairs of griffins flanking narrow vases on foliate pedestals, they were regarded as one of the animals that came to carry off the souls of the dead, and were readily adopted by Early Christian artists and imbued with an apotropaic character.⁶⁷ Griffins particularly came to be associated with the Tree of Life and with font-of life scenes in Byzantine art, motifs that were subsequently imported into the West through textiles.⁶⁸ In addition, Ryan has argued that the use of the griffin, part-lion and part-eagle, could have suggested the dual nature of Christ, who was symbolised by both the eagle and the lion in the early Christian tradition, as well as the nature of the Eucharist itself, in two forms, bread and wine, but transposed by the words of institution to the body and blood of Christ.⁶⁹ While there is no early medieval exegesis to confirm this,⁷⁰ such an interpretation would certainly explain the prolific use of the griffin and

⁶⁵ See Ch. 2, pp. 67-68; Ch. 3, pp 118, 121,126.

⁶⁶ See *De pascha* (Ps-Tertullian, *De ligno vitae*), PL 2: cols. 1113-1115, and Gregory the Great, *Moralia sive Expositio in Iob* 18:1.3, PL 76: 097: See Appendix 1B for these texts and others concerning the Tree of Life.

⁶⁷ Jewel, 'The Anglo-Saxon Friezes at Breedon-on-the-Hill', p 99.

⁶⁸ Henderson, 'The St Andrews Sarcophagus,' p. 85.

⁶⁹ Ryan, 'The Menagerie of the Derrynaflan Chalice,' p. 160.

⁷⁰ There does not appear to be any literature before Dante's *Divine Comedy* that suggests that griffins symbolised the dual nature of Christ. Although they are mentioned in Isidore's *Etymologiae* 12:2, only their name and habits are described. Griffins do not appear in the *Physiologus*.

chalice motif in early medieval art.⁷¹ Certainly by the 8th-century, they are seen confronting the Tree of Life in Western art, such as in the Cividale relief, which depicts winged quadrupeds that must be intended as griffins, since they are portrayed with the bodies of lions but the wings, feathered necks, and beaks of eagles.

The creatures inhabiting the scrolls on the left and right sides of the Hilton slab might also have particular identities. For instance, the winged bipeds might be intended as to represent peacocks. Established as symbols of immortality in early Christian art and exegesis,⁷² it has been argued that in the *Book of Kells* they function visually to link the Eucharist to the Resurrection.⁷³ Within the context of the Hilton vine-scroll, peacocks would convey the same associations. On the other hand, the winged bipeds in the Hilton of Cadboll design might represent pigeons and turtle doves, symbolising not only chastity and simplicity but also repentance and purification of sins, which would certainly fit the theme of redemption conveyed by the vine.⁷⁴

The vine-scroll ornament featured on the right side of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab could readily express any or all of these various meanings assigned to inhabited vine-scrolls in the early medieval period. However, that depicted on the left side, in which the majority of the creatures are trapped by denuded vines, choked by berries, or contorted into extremely awkward positions, is very different and calls for further analysis. It has been suggested that this unique representation symbolises a famine that is to be contrasted with the

⁷¹ See C. Karkov, 'The Chalice and Cross in Insular Art,' in Spearman and Higget, *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 237-238.

⁷² See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 21:4.1, PL 41: 712; Appendix 1E.

⁷³ Meehan, *The Book of Kells*, p. 62; O' Reilly, 'Exegesis and the *Book of Kells*: The Lucan Genealogy,' in F. Mahony (ed.), *The Book of Kells: Proceedings of a Conference at Trinity College Dublin* (Aldershot, 1994), p. 363.

⁷⁴ Bede, *Homilia* 18: *In Purificatione Beatae Mariae*, CCSL 122: 129-130.42-61; Appendix 1E.

feast depicted on the right,⁷⁵ and both biblical and exegetical traditions support this interpretation. Fruitful and barren vines are contrasted throughout the Old Testament in order to contrast good and evil, while the New Testament and the early Church Fathers made it clear that those who did not abide in Christ were like the withered vine that is cast away and burnt.⁷⁶ While Augustine compared the Church to a sprouting vine that must be pruned of heretics and the schismatics who practised the sacraments improperly,⁷⁷ Gregory condemned all those who did not bear the fruits of spiritual virtue to the fire.⁷⁸

Although there are no known early medieval artistic parallels for portraying the contrasting fruitful and barren vines, opposing the Tree of Virtue to the Tree of Vice was a very popular theme in twelfth-century manuscripts, and these pictures do have much in common with the Hilton vine-scroll design. Often growing from a common source, the Tree of Vice is always pictured on the left, while the Tree of Virtue was placed on the right. The *arbor bona* typically bears the 'fruits of the spirit' listed in Gal. 5: 22-24 and alludes to the Tree of Life in Rev. 22:2, while the *arbor mala* is barren of leaves or portrays withered fruits identified as the fruits of the flesh. A further association of the *arbor mala* with *Synagoga* (and the Old Covenant) and the *arbor bona* with *Ecclesia* (and the New Covenant) is also made explicit in many of the later manuscripts.⁷⁹ While these 12th-century illustrations obviously could not have influenced the design on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, the ideas

⁷⁵ Thanks are due to Barry Grove (Pers. Comm 2000) for pointing out the idea of feast and famine to me.

⁷⁶ See Deuteronomy 32:32-33; Jeremiah 2:21; Hosea 10:1; Joel 1:7; John 15:6; Basil, *Hexaemeron: Homily 5:6*, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 8:79; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis 1:4*, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:7; Chrysostom, *Concerning the Statues, Homily 19:9*, *NPNF*, 9: 468-469; Appendix 1E. While there is no evidence the text by Chrysostom was in circulation in the Insular world, other texts of his were, as were other texts by Cyril and Basil. See Appendix 1A.

⁷⁷ Augustine, *De Catechizandis Rudibus 24.44-45*, *CCSL* 46:168.1-11, *De Catechizandis Rudibus 25.38*, *CCSL* 46:171.49-55; *NPNF* 3: 309, 310-311; *In Iohannis Evangelium 13: 16*, *CCSL* 36:139.19-23; *NPNF* 7: 92-93; Appendix 1E. These texts were circulated in the Insular world, see Appendix 1A.

⁷⁸ Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia, Homilia 6:10* (listed as *Homilia 20:10*) *PL* 76: 1164; Appendix 1E. This text was in Insular circulation and well known to Bede. See Appendix 1A.

that informed them were of long-standing tradition based on the 6th and 9th-century exegesis of Isidore of Seville and Rabanus Maurus.⁸⁰

While the circulation of Rabanus Maurus's writings began too late in the Insular world to have affected the design of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, Isidore's were well known in both Ireland and England by the 7th century, and Bede demonstrates an awareness of the ideas in his commentary on Habakkuk. Here, Bede compares the fig-tree, olive tree, and the vine to the Synagogue of the Jews, observing that while the Jews lived spiritual lives, the fields of the divine scriptures were producing spiritual food for them, but that when they failed to accept the grace of Jesus, the produce on the Lord's vines failed, and the fig-tree failed to bear the fruits of virtue. This is why,

when Jesus was thirsty they offered him vinegar rather than wine, when he desired the sweetness of virtues to be shown him they proffered him bitterness; when he longed for their virtues they proffered him vices.⁸¹

This interpretation demonstrates that Bede was very familiar with the conventions of comparing the barren vine (or fig tree) of vice to the fruitful vine of virtues, and this familiarity points to the possibility that those in other monastic environments were also conversant with these traditions. It is thus quite possible that such ideas also lie behind the Hilton of Cadboll depiction, and that the contrasting sides of the Hilton of Cadboll vine-scroll are a very early Insular representation of the Trees of Virtue and Vice and all their attendant meanings.

⁷⁹ O'Reilly, *Iconography of the Virtues and Vices*, *passim*, but particularly pp. 334-36, 340-41; 'The Tree of Eden,' p.188.

⁸⁰ See for instance Isidore of Seville, *Allegoriae Quaedam Scripturae Sacrae*, PL 83: 125; Rabanus Maurus *Allegoriae in Sacrum Scripturam*, PL 112: 979. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of Isidore's work in the Insular world.

⁸¹ *propter quod sitiienti illi acetum pro uino obtulerunt, id est uirtutum suauitatem in se quaerentil uitiorum acridinem, uirtutes eorum desideranti uita praeferebant.* Bede, *In Canticorum Abacuc* 3.17-18, CCSL 119B: 406.698-699; Appendix 1E (for full passage). Translation from Connolly, *Bede: On Tobit and Habakkuk*, p. 92.

Thus the 'typical' inhabited vine-scroll, such as that portrayed on the right-hand side of the Hilton of Cadboll border, could convey a variety of related meanings. It was a metaphor for Christ, the Eucharist and the New Covenant, the Tree of Life, the Tree of Virtue, the Cross (and its concurrent themes of sacrifice, salvation and Resurrection) as well as the orthodox Church as a whole. Meanwhile the inhabitants of the scrolls could represent the righteous souls who were saved by the blood of Christ and the members of the Church. Meanwhile, the 'atypical,' barren vine-scroll ornament on the left side of the Hilton of Cadboll design might represent the Tree of Vice, the Synagogue and the Old Covenant, while the contorted inhabitants might symbolise the enemies of the Church and God, or more simply, schismatics, or heretics.

If this is the case then the question of which sect of Christianity the Tarbat Picts were most closely aligned might be important. If the Tarbat *monasteria* were affected by the rulings of Nechtan in the early 8th century, then it could be that the image of the unfruitful vine and starving beasts could be a reference to the expelled Columban *familias* and the schismatic practice of Irish-style tonsure and calculation of the date of Easter. This would fit in with an early to mid 8th -century date for the erection of the Hilton of Cadboll stone. If, on the other hand, as seems more likely from the artistic parallels with the York group of carvings and the *Book of Kells*, the Hilton of Cadboll slab was carved in the late 8th or early 9th century, then it could very well be that the stone was erected at the instigation of the *Céli Dé* reformers who, as Wormald argues 'portrayed themselves as the irate messengers of Columba's return.'⁸² Thus the image might be a criticism of those that had followed Nechtan's rulings and expelled the Columban clergy. In any case, no matter who was the intended recipient of the message (and it simply may have been 'sinners' in general) the

warning conveyed by the left side of the vine seems clear and is reinforced by the iconology of the figural composition (see below).

The Pictish Symbols:

Much like the symbols on the other Tarbat cross-slabs, it may be that the Hilton of Cadboll symbols signify tribal alliances, tribal names, or even the proper names of the patron and the person being commemorated on the stone. Here, it has been suggested that the Double-Disc and Z-rod symbolises the name 'Drust,' (a son of Edern). Where elsewhere the Crescent and V-Rod signifies 'Brude,' due to the female determinative symbol of the mirror and comb on the Hilton of Cadboll slab, Cummings translates the symbol as 'Bridget,' and takes the combination of the Crescent and V-rod and Double-Disc and Z-rod on the stone as a sign of the marriage between the two. Finally, he argues that the Double Disc without connecting bar (which he does not assign a specific name to) represents the father of Bridget.⁸³ As noted in previous chapters, these conjectures are impossible to prove, but the methodology does allow for a pedigree to be drawn for the peninsula that shows an interconnected family who might have been influential in the affairs of the Tarbat *monasteria* (see fig. 2.13).

The Figural Composition:

Like the inhabited vine-scroll, the so-called hunt scene on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab also displays characteristics that make it unique, even though parallels for the individual components can be found elsewhere. The focus upon the female, as well as the presence of

⁸² Wormald, 'The Emergence of the *Regnum Scotorum*,' p. 143.

⁸³ See Cummins, *The Picts and Their Symbols*, pp. 104-116, 149-50.

the trumpeters, are integral to the interpretation of the Hilton of Cadboll composition, and it will be seen that these modifications to a standard hunt scene convey a multi-layered message that complements the unique depiction of the vine-scroll.

Identification of the woman on the Hilton of Cadboll stone has ranged from the Virgin Mary in her Flight into Egypt, to a portrait of a Pictish queen, which 'proves' the matrilineal descent of the Pictish royalty, to Epona the horse goddess.⁸⁴ Problems with these interpretations include the fact that the Hilton of Cadboll lady is not carrying a child, and it has been successfully argued that the Pictish royal line was not, in fact, determined solely through the female line.⁸⁵ Furthermore, there are no convincing parallels to substantiate either the worship of, or the artistic portrayal of Epona in Pictland. However, the presence of a large penannular brooch on her chest may provide a vital clue to identifying the lady's status, if not her specific identity. Nieke points out that the use of brooches as royal insignia dates back to the late Roman times, and by the production and display of such ornaments the Insular rulers were attempting to draw upon the Roman traditions of social organisation and power. Although these ornaments were originally secular and pagan, and most likely carried an apotropaic function in their decoration, the Christian church was quick to adopt and co-opt the meaning.⁸⁶ Early medieval Insular brooches held a parallel function to coronets, and both Neike and Foster assert that they point to the gift-giving economy whereby kings or others could demonstrate their largess to their dependants. The brooches can therefore be seen as

⁸⁴ E. Sutherland, *In Search of the Picts*, p.187. Most recently it has been suggested that the Picts were familiar with Classical epics and that the depiction of the Hilton of Cadboll 'hunt scene' may have been influenced by the description of Dido and the great hunt in the *Aeneid*, Book IV. See Henderson and Henderson, *the Art of the Picts*, p. 136.

⁸⁵ See M. Miller, 'Matriliney by Treaty: The Pictish Foundation-Legend', in D. Dumville and D. Whitelock (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1992) pp. 133-161; and Alfred Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men*, (London, 1984), pp. 62-73.

⁸⁶M. Nieke, 'Penannular and Related Brooches: Secular Ornament or Symbol in Action?' in Spearman and Higgitt, *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, pp. 128-133.

statements about social position and religious affiliation, and both the Church and secular authorities might have controlled the production, distribution and meaning of these high status objects.⁸⁷

The presence of the brooch on Hilton of Cadboll's female figure must be considered along with other information, such as the parallels with Meigle 1. It has been argued that Meigle was a powerful centre of lay, or even royal patronage,⁸⁸ and the iconographic similarities between the cross-slabs at Meigle and Hilton of Cadboll may suggest similarities between the patrons of the stones. As it is quite possible that the ecclesiastical centre at Portmahomack also enjoyed royal patronage, it may be that a royal estate was located at Hilton of Cadboll. Within this context, the portrait of the woman on the Hilton of Cadboll stone could very well be that of a royal female who had donated generously to the ecclesiastical centre.

However, the relationship between this royal lady and the monastic estate might be even closer than mere patronage; it may have extended to directorship of the estate at Portmahomack, or to a sister-house for nuns at Hilton of Cadboll. Monastic double houses were a particularly popular institution in Northumbria, and, though not prolific, also existed in Ireland. The majority of these houses were founded and governed by rich and noble ladies who, for various reasons, had abandoned the world and sometimes even a previous marriage to become a 'Bride of Christ.'⁸⁹ These women were much admired along with the more

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* pp.129-30; Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots*, pp. 64-66.

⁸⁸ Ritchie, 'Meigle and Lay Patronage,' *passim*; *Meigle Museum*, p. 6.

⁸⁹ J. Godfrey, 'The Place of the Double-Monastery in the Anglo-Saxon Minster System,' in G. Bonner (ed.), *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, (London, 1976), pp. 344-50; J. Hillgarth, 'Visigothic Spain and Early Christian Ireland', *Proceedings of Royal Irish Academy* 63 C (1962): p. 192.

traditional virgins who became nuns, though to divorce one's spouse, even for a higher calling, was against the orthodox teachings of the church.⁹⁰

This situation may have some bearing on the iconography on the Hilton of Cadboll stone. It may be that the chapel at Hilton of Cadboll was part of a nunnery that functioned as a sister-house to the monastery at Portmahomack and that the female figure portrayed a high status, possibly even royal, woman who had become a 'Bride of Christ.' Considering the high investment of the monument, it is even possible that the lady is a portrait of the abbess herself. This abbess may even have been considered a living saint; suggested by the recessed panel carved behind her head that may be intended as a square halo. In the early Medieval period, square halos signified a very holy person who was still alive, but had been 'sainted' by popular acclaim.⁹¹ Such halos can be seen in several Roman mosaics such as on head of Theodora Episcopa, the mother of Pope Paschal, in the 9th-century mosaic in the San Zeno chapel in the Church of Saint Prassede, Rome, (fig. 4.14) and on the head of Pope John VII (705-707AD) in an early 8th-century mosaic presently in the Vatican Crypts. Combined with the lady's 'enthroned' position on the horse, a feature usually reserved for depictions of the Virgin and Child, such as on the Ruthwell cross, it is very likely that this portrait was expressing the local reverence felt for this woman.

The presence of the trumpeters and the shadowy male figure located behind the lady contribute further to our understanding of this portrait. Both elements suggest a celebratory

⁹⁰ Orthodox doctrine was based on 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, and 28-36, which proclaimed that marriages were not to be dissolved by either partner, even for the highly desirable state of virginity. Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, turned to Greek Father to justify the situation in Anglo-Saxon England, proclaiming in one of his church councils that 'It is not allowable for a woman to reject her husband, even if he is an adulterer—unless perchance she leaves him to enter a monastery. Basil made this decree.' See A. Haddan and W. Stubbs (eds.), *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1869), 3: 199. Aldhelm also played his part in endorsing the actions of married women who joined the holy life in *De Virginitate*, when he praised the state of chastity within marriage. See Aldhelm, *De Virginitate* 19, CCSL 124A: 222-223. 22-24; Appendix 1E.

procession like a marriage ceremony rather than a simple hunt scene, and as such indicate that several different, though complementary, interpretations are relevant. While the procession may commemorate an actual historical wedding between two noble secular persons, the prominence of the female, her 'enthroned' position, and the possible square halo make it more likely that the wedding being celebrated is a spiritual one, such as the 'marriage' between an abbess and the church when she becomes the 'Bride of Christ.' In either case, an image of a wedding ceremony could also refer to the biblical and exegetical associations revolving around the concept of marriage.

Marriage symbolism proliferates throughout the Bible; Old Testament verses stress the sacred duty of the Bride and Bridegroom, and the New Testament parables of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, and the Wedding banquet lay the groundwork for the eschatological interpretation of weddings as a symbol of the Last Judgement and the Second Coming.⁹² Likewise, Revelations equated the Bridegroom with Christ and the Bride with the Church.⁹³ The Early Church fathers thoroughly investigated these relationships, drawing together earthly unions, the sacred covenant between Christ and the community of believers, and the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven.

For instance, Cyprian equates the preparation necessary to enter the state of matrimony with the constant vigilance needed to prepare for the Second Coming, while Augustine proclaims that the only way to prepare for the 'coming of the Bridegroom' and to take part in the Wedding Ceremony (to enter the kingdom of Heaven) is through imitation of

⁹¹ S. Fisher, *The Square Halo and Other Mysteries of Western Art: Images and the Stories That Inspired Them* (New York, 1995), p. 93.

⁹² See for instance, Joel 2:15-15; Jeremiah 16:9; Psalm 18: 5; Luke 12:35-37, 14:16-24; Matthew 22:2-14; 25:1-13

⁹³ See Revelations 19: 6-9 and 21:9-11. Cf. John 3:28-29, and Ephesians 5:23-33.

Christ and the practice of true charity and love.⁹⁴ Both Augustine and Gregory compare the Wedding Banquet to the Church at the present time: both wicked and good are co-mingled, much like the wise and foolish virgins, with the wicked and foolish and unprepared for the coming of the Bridegroom (the Day of Judgement).⁹⁵ At the same time Augustine equates the Bride of Revelations to an ideal church stripped clean of its heresies and schismatic practices, and ready for the Holy Union with the Christ, a notion Bede echoes in his *Explanatio Apocalypsos*.⁹⁶

The eschatological symbolism of the wedding is made most explicit in Revelations, wherein the marriage of the Lamb is cause for great rejoicing. Revelations 19:6-9 proclaims:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying 'Alleluia: For the Lord our God the Almighty hath reigned. Let us be glad and rejoice, give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Bride hath prepared herself. And it is granted to her that she should clothe herself with fine linen, glittering and white....Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'⁹⁷

Bede's transcription of this passage is particularly interesting as regards the possible wedding scene on Hilton of Cadboll and the presence of the trumpeters. In *Expositio Apocalypseos*, he provides a redaction of Revelations 19:6, substituting *tubae* (trumpets) for the Vulgate's *turbae* (multitude). Thus his version reads 'Then I heard what seemed to be the

⁹⁴ Cyprian, *Testimoniorum contra Judaeos* 3: 2.19, PL 4: 713-714; ANCL 8; 119; Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturis Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, *Sermo* 90:6, PL 38: 563; *Sermo* 95:6-7, PL 38: 583-584; NPNF 6: 393-394, 407-408 (listed as Sermons 40 and 45); Appendix 1E. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of the texts of Cyprian and Augustine.

⁹⁵ Augustine, *Sermo* 90:6 and 95:6-7, as above; Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* 12:1-7, PL 76: 1119-1122; Appendix 1E. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of Gregory's homilies.

⁹⁶ Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 1:16.15, CCSL 32:15.1-8; NPNF 2: 526; Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* 19.7, CCSL 121A: 491.76-77; *Expositio Apocalypseos* 21.9-11, CCSL 121A: 523, 525.5-8, 16-18; Appendix 1E.

⁹⁷ *Et audivi quasi vocem turbae magnae, et sicut vocem aquarum multarum, et sicut vocem tonitruorum magnorum dicentium: alleluia: quoniam regnavit Dominus Deus noster omnipotens Gaudeamus, et exultemus: et demus gloriam ei: quia venerunt nuptiae agni et uxor eius praeparavit se. Et datum est illi ut cooperiat se byssinum splendenti et candido.... Beati qui ad cenam nuptiarum agni vocati sunt....*

voice of many trumpets....'⁹⁸ Bede's decision to use trumpets, rather than a multitude of voices raised in praise, may have been intended to refer back to Revelations 8:2, which states 'I saw seven Angels standing in the presence of God; and there were given to them seven trumpets.'⁹⁹ Commenting on this passage, Bede wrote:

The first trumpet denotes the common destruction of the ungodly in the fire and hail, the second, the expulsion of the devil from the Church...; the third, the falling away of heretics from the Church and their corruption of the streams of Holy Scripture; the fourth, the defection of false brethren; the fifth, the greater hostility of heretics, the precursors of the time of the Antichrist; the sixth, the open war of the Antichrist and his own against the church...; the seventh, the day of judgement, in which the Lord is to render to His own their reward, and to exterminate those who have corrupted the earth.¹⁰⁰

Bede does not make the connection between the two passages explicit, but scenes of Christ with trumpet-blowing angels (evoked by Matthew 24-31, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, and Isaiah 27:13) are a standard iconographic representation of the Second Coming dating back to the earliest Church.¹⁰¹ Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that Bede's decision to include trumpeters at the celebration of the marriage of the Lamb was a conscious evocation of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement.

As a final consideration of the visual allusions suggested by the figural composition carved on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, Bede's commentary *In Canticorum Abacuc* also

⁹⁸ *Et audivi quasi vocem tubae magnos et quasi vocem aquarum multarum....* Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* 19.6, CCSL 121A: 491.67-72. For a discussion of the traditions Bede may have been following when he chose to use the word *tubae* rather than *turbae*, see E. Marshall (ed.), *The Explanation of the Apocalypse by Venerable Bede*, (Oxford and London, 1878), pp. 129, 145.

⁹⁹ *Et uidi septem Angelos stantes in conspectu Dei: et datae sunt illi septem tubae....*

¹⁰⁰ *cuius prima tuba communem impiorum in igne et grandine designat interitum, secunda propulsum de ecclesia diabolum...tertia hereticos ecclesia decedentes sanctae scripturae flumina corrumpentes, quarta falsorum fratrum in sidertum obscuracione defectum, quinta maiorem hereticorum infestationem tempus antichristi praecurrentium, sexta apertum et suorum contra ecclesiam bellum...septima diem iudicii quo mercedem dominus suis redditurus et exterminaturus est eos qui corrupterunt terram.* Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* 8:2, CCSL 121A: 333.1-14. English translation from Marshall, *Explanation of the Apocalypse*, p.56.

¹⁰¹ Cf. K. Veelenturf, *Dia Brátha: Eschatological Theophanies and Irish High Crosses*, (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 73-74.

drew together the metaphor of the barren vine and the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins to further warn his readers of the coming Day of Judgement. Immediately after explaining why the fruits of the vine had withered for the Jews and how Jesus had been given vinegar, rather than the wine that he had requested (see above), Bede writes that: 'This is why at the hour of final retribution it [the general mass of the wicked] is going to bring extinguished lamps and together with its darkness, is to be precluded from entry into its heavenly homeland.'¹⁰²

It can be seen, therefore, that if one is to interpret the 'hunt scene' on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab as the depiction of a wedding ceremony, then a whole range of biblical and exegetical references are called to mind. As the most prominent figure in the composition, the lady can be seen as a Bride, either in terms of dedicating her life to Christ as a religious, or on a more esoteric level as the Bride of Revelations, signifying the Holy Church purged of its heresies and evil influences and prepared for union with the Bridegroom, Christ. In and of itself, the wedding ceremony evokes the idea of the marriage of the Lamb as well as the Second Coming and the Last Judgement, an allegory made even clearer by the presence of the trumpeters and by the left side of the vine-scroll ornament which features starving, choking beasts and barren vine. This in turn reminds the viewer of the necessity of preparation for this day and the need for constant vigilance in rejecting the devil and practising Christian charity and love, lest they be one of the many called who is subsequently rejected or turned away from the wedding banquet, or the kingdom of heaven.

¹⁰²*Propter quod tempore ultimae retributionis extinctas ad latura lampades, et cum suis tenebris ab ingressu est patriae caelestis excludenda. Bede, In Canticorum Abacuc 3. 17-18, CCSL 119B: 406.704-706. English translation from Connolly, *Bede: On Tobit and Habakkuk*, p. 92.*

These messages warning of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgement may very well have been echoed by the stepped base to a *Crux Gemmata* that is probably represented on Side A (the fragment) of the Cross-slab.

CONCLUSIONS:

The appearance of a Northumbrian carved motif as popular as the inhabited vine-scroll on Pictish cross-slabs has often been regarded as proof of a Northumbrian presence on the Tarbat peninsula, or, at the very least proof of an enduring artistic and religious relationship between the Northumbrian and Pictish church. However, while this may explain vine-scroll ornament or other features on any number of other Pictish cross-slabs, this theory does not sufficiently explain the characteristics of the vine-scroll ornament on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. For while the Jarrow group of sculptures might be credited with inspiring the Picts by their representations of inhabited vine-scrolls on stone, there is little likelihood that any Bernician craftsmen imported by Nechtan were responsible for either carving the Tarbat peninsula vine-scroll ornament or training the Tarbat school carvers in their techniques, since the two groups have little in common stylistically.

On the other hand, an artistic relationship between the Tarbat peninsula and the York school of carving is a much more plausible proposition. Such a relationship would have taken place at least sixty years after Nechtan's request and at least twenty years after the Jarrow group of monuments were carved, since the York group of carvings are generally dated from the late 8th to the early 9th centuries. Most scholars date the Hilton of Cadboll slab to the end of the 8th century,¹⁰³ but if it is stylistically related to the York rather than the Jarrow school then the date might be even later considering the time needed for training and

the transference of technique. Cramp has argued that certain characteristics in inhabited vine-scrolls such as strained and contorted beasts, diminished importance and lack of variation of the foliage elements, and elongation of animals so that they are no longer securely contained within scrolls, are symptomatic of later representations of vine-scroll ornament.¹⁰⁴ Since these trends can certainly be seen in the Hilton of Cadboll design, then they might be additional evidence for a later date for that stone. On the other hand, Cramp also points out that the fashion for inhabited scrolls could have been differently explored at the same time in various centres, and despite stylistic differences, the various renditions might have been contemporary.¹⁰⁵

In general, the vine-scroll ornament, hunt scene and zoomorphic interlace can all be explained in terms of popular motifs circulating in Pictland from the 8th to the 10th centuries, though specific parallels that appear on stone do suggest closer connections. In particular, the parallels with the St Andrew's Sarcophagus and the slabs at Meigle may point to a relationship between powerful, royally patronised ecclesiastical centres in Pictland, while the numerous inhabited vine-scroll parallels suggest relations with the diocese of York, the Columban federation of monasteries, and most likely with Iona itself.

As regards the iconology, several issues are particularly significant. One is the repetition on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab of the theme of Christ recognised *in medio duorum*. Although this motif is expressed much more clearly by the vine-scroll design on TR1, which features beasts that actually confront the symbol of Christ, and by the entire cross-face of Shandwick as well as by the Paul and Anthony scene in the Nigg pediment, its

¹⁰³Henderson, 'Pictish Vine-Scroll Ornament', p.249.

¹⁰⁴Cramp, *CASS* 1, p. 67.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*

appearance on the Hilton of Cadboll slab suggests that every single one of the Tarbat cross-slabs was illustrating this theme of the recognition of Christ in one way or another.

Without negating the multivalent interpretations available to a reading of the separate iconographic elements on this slab, it is possible that the primary message being conveyed is that of a covenant being made. Whether through the contrast of the left 'barren' vine and the right 'fruitful' vine, through the possible references to the Tree of Death/Vice and the Tree of Life/Virtue (with all of their attendant connotations of meaning), or through the Eucharistic symbolism of the vine-scroll in general, or even the recognition of Christ between two beasts motif, the reference is to the New Covenant made through Christ.

The hunt scene, with its prominent display of the female figure, complements this reading. Whether she is a portrait of a secular, possibly royal patroness or a new religious leader, or whether the scene is a depiction of a literal or figural wedding celebration, the message is also one of a new covenant, or a new direction taken, along with a warning to those who persist in the old way. The question remains as to what the old and new ways might be and with whom the new covenant has been made.

Considering the expulsion of the Columban *familias* in the early 8th century, the most logical answer might be that the covenant signifies an alignment with the new Northumbrian-influenced, Pictish church that was begun by Nechtan. If the stone was carved in the mid to late 8th century, such an interpretation would make sense. However, if the stylistic affinities with the York group of stones can be used to push the date forward to the early 9th-century or later, then the picture becomes confused.

If Wormald and Clancy are to be believed, and the influence of the *Céli Dé* reform movement began as early as the beginning of the 9th century,¹⁰⁶ then the covenant might refer to a renewal of the Columban 'rule' at the ecclesiastical centre in Tarbat. If the Hilton of Cadboll stone can be dated as late as the second quarter of the 9th century then it is even possible that the royal patronage of King Oengus himself influenced its design, and there is some evidence to suggest that Oengus was associated with the *Céli Dé* movement, or, at the very least, with the Columban church.¹⁰⁷ Continued association, or a re-association with the Columban church would also explain the stylistic affinities with the *Book of Kells*, a primary product of Columban Christianity. In any case, the message declared by the stone seems clear: a new covenant has been made, and the old, represented by the vine-scroll ornament on the left and, perhaps, by the references to the Last Judgement conveyed by the wedding scene and by the remnants of the *crux gemmata* must be abandoned. Such a message would be an entirely appropriate to a slab being erected at the boundaries of a newly expanded ecclesiastical estate.

¹⁰⁶See Clancy, 'Iona, Scotland, and the *Céli Dé*', pp. 111-124; and Wormald, 'The Emergence of the *Regnum Scottorum*', pp. 143-145.

¹⁰⁷Clancy, 'Iona, Scotland, and the *Céli Dé*', pp. 115, 117-118.

CH 5: THE MONUMENTAL AND OTHER CARVED SCULPTURE AT PORTMAHOMACK (NH 915 840)

INTRODUCTION

Over 150 fragments of early Christian carved sculpture have been found at Portmahomack, the fourth site to be considered on the Tarbat peninsula. Sixteen of these were found in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and the remainder during the research programme focused on Tarbat Old Church (St Colman's) that began in 1991.¹ Comprising both architectural and free-standing examples, the fragments have been found in the churchyard, within the fabric of the Old Church, and scattered over an adjacent area of the Glebe field that was uncovered during excavations from 1995-2000.² While many of these fragments are quite small and feature purely decorative designs, such as spiral and peltae or key patterns, several larger pieces are carved with human and animal figures, and it is these that here in terms of artistic parallels and iconographic significance. In addition, a series of small upright slabs, carved with incised and relief crosses in styles that are indicative of the cultural links enjoyed by the ecclesiastic centre, will be considered.

Although there is little historical record of Portmahomack until the 18th century, its name traditionally has been linked with St Columba or St Colman (see below).

Archaeological investigation has shown that the settlement was most likely to have been

¹ See J. Harden, 'A Potential Archaeological Context for the Early Christian Sculptured Stones from Tarbat, Easter Ross,' in C. Bourke (ed.), *From the Isles of the North: Early Medieval Art in Ireland and Britain* (Belfast, 1995), *passim*; 'Evaluation to 1993: Discovery and Preliminary Investigation of the Early Historic Site,' in *Bull* 1, <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin1/evaluation.html#stage1>

² The archaeological context (as suggested so far) of each of the stones treated in this chapter will be discussed in full below, but for the myriad other fragments found in the Glebe field and within the fabric of the church, see *Bulls* 1-7. *ECMS* 2: 73-75, 88-95, provides the best overview of the discovery of the Portmahomack sculpture found in the churchyard prior to 1900, though the antiquarian reports are often contradictory. A new, all-inclusive, catalogue of the Portmahomack collection of sculpture, by Martin Carver, with contributions by the present author, is forthcoming.

established in the late 6th century, and that this settlement was quite likely monastic in nature.³ This date coincides with that assigned by Bede to Columba's journey to Northern Pictland, and it is possible that both the religious community and its surrounding settlement were a result of this missionary activity, although there is no direct evidence that Columba himself was successful in converting any of the Picts.⁴

The belief that the site is connected in some way to Columba, or Colman, was popularised by antiquarian scholars. The *Origines Parochiales Scotiae*, a 19th-century compilation of 'antiquities' relating to the parishes of Scotland, states that Tarbat Old Church originally contained a thirty-foot long vault, built as the initial church by Saint Columba.⁵ The *Origines* also points out that Portmahomack was named *Portus Columbi* in charters predating the 17th century, though the author of the entry speculates that this probably meant Saint Colmac or Calmaig.⁶

Miller, writing at the end of the 19th century, pursues this issue and states that the Gaelic for Portmahomack is *Port-ma-Chalmac*, or the harbour of St Chalmac. Citing earlier scholarship, he argues that,

Ma, whether we suppose it to be a contraction of the Gaelic *Maol*, 'bald,' or of *Mæil*, 'servant,' is found in many names derived from Culdee saints in other parts of Scotland. Calmac, then, we presume to have been a Culdee saint, who landed at Portmahomack, in order to evangelise Easter Ross. It quite accords with this, that the parish church of Tarbat, which is close to Portmahomack, is in old documents

³ Carver, 'Columba's Port,' 'Sculpture in Action,' (forthcoming 2004); *Bulls.* 1-7.

⁴ *EH* III:4, pp; 220-225; Cf. Sharpe, *Life of St Columba*, pp. 109-110, 136-137, 141, 179, 181-184, 196-198.

⁵ C. Innes, W. Anderson, J. Robertson, J. Brichan, and J. McNab (eds.), *Origines Parochiales Scotiae: The Antiquities Ecclesiastical and Territorial of the Parishes of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1851-55), 2.2:434.

⁶ *Ibid.* The place-name of the Tarbat peninsula/diocese also comes under scrutiny in the *Origines*, which cites a variety of different forms of the name; the most interesting, perhaps, in an early 13th- century document (*Regist. Moraviense*, AD 1227), which identifies the area as 'Arterbert.' It may be that a search through the annals and other records for this place-name rather than any of the other more common variations of 'Tarbat', such as Tarbart, Tarbert, etc., may yield some written evidence of monastic activity in this area.

called the church of St. Colman; for in not a few Gaelic words, final *n* or rather *nn*, is dialectically interchangeable with *c* or *g*.⁷ On the other hand, as Miller points out, the suffix *ag* (*ac*) might refer to the small stream beside the churchyard, such as in the Gaelic place names *Arkaig*, meaning 'barren water;' and *Kirkaig* or *Carraigaig*, 'rocky water.' If this suffix were omitted, the derivation of *Port-ma-homack*, is from *Port-maol-cholum*, or 'the port of the servant of Columba.'⁸

Cordiner also connected the Tarbat area with the *Céli Dé* (whom he believed to be a 6th-century order) and with Columba. Referring to the occasion of the erection of the great 'obelisks' from which the Portmahomack sculptural fragments originate, he wrote: That they have been raised on interesting occasions, there can be little doubt; perhaps in memory of the most renowned chieftains, and their exploits, who first embraced Christianity. They are the most antient (sic) memorials of its establishment; and if among the first expressions of public veneration for the cross, their antiquity may be considerable; for the *Keledei*, emissaries of the sacred colleges, Columba from Iona, and others, had opened a dawn of Christianity upon these northern countries in the sixth century.⁹

Beyond these antiquarian musings, however, there is little proof of a specific Columban connection to the settlement of Portmahomack, or to the Tarbat peninsula as a whole. After the commencement of the Tarbat Discovery Programme, however, Martin Carver received suggestions from Irish and Scottish linguists and historians that the place name might indeed translate into the Port of Columba, most especially as the names Colman and Columba were used interchangeably in the early middle ages.¹⁰ Most recently Forsyth has suggested that the elements of the place name contain both a possessive and a diminutive

⁷ Hugh Miller, 'Note on Fragments of Two Sculptured Stones of Celtic Workmanship found in the Churchyard of Tarbat, Easter Ross,' *PSAS* 23 (1889): 443.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 444.

⁹ Cordiner, *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, pp. 66-67.

¹⁰ The reading of *Cholmag* as Colm and thus Columba was owed to Brian Lacey and then to Tom Clancy in 1999 and 2002 respectively. Martin Carver, (Pers. Comm, 2002).

with the resulting translation meaning something like 'Port of my little Colm/Columba.' Furthermore, this place name could not have been assigned later than the 10th century, as the use of the Gaelic *ac* diminutive was not used after that time.¹¹ As Forsyth has also pointed out, this place name cannot prove that Columba was the founder. However, it does point to a conscious decision by those within the community to associate themselves with Columba/Colman at some point before the 10th century.

It may be that the sculpture of Portmahomack also reflects this deliberate association with Columba. In order to examine these and other associations, the following examples from the Portmahomack corpus will be examined: TR1, TR2, TR10, TR20, TR22 and TR28/35, which bear figural sculpture or decorative ornament of a kind that lends itself to iconological analysis, and several grave markers, or fragments from grave-markers, that are carved with crosses (specifically TR33 and TR 225) that point to specific artistic links or particular liturgical practices.¹²

TR1:

TR1, a sub-rectangular cross-slab fragment presently exhibited in the National Museum of Scotland, is approximately 65 cm high, 110 cm wide, and 15cms thick. It is carved from the same yellow, micaceous sandstone as the cross-slabs at Nigg, Shandwick, and Hilton of Cadboll, as well as two other Portmahomack fragments, TR 10 and TR20.¹³

TR1 was probably recorded first in 1776 by Cordiner, who writes of 'several fragments of

¹¹ The Gaelic *ma* is the possessive 'my', while the *ac* at the end of the name is an affectionate diminutive. Katherine Forsyth, (Pers. Comm, April 2003). Apologies for any misrepresentation of this information.

¹² In the following discussion, the fragments discovered before 1903 will be examined according to the numbers found in *ECMS 2*, pp. 73, 88-94. For those fragments found during excavation of the Tarbat site (post 1995), the numbers used will be those in the *TR. Sculpt Cat.*

¹³ Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,' <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000).

other obelisks lying on Tarbetness, which in all appearance had not been originally inferior to either of these [Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll] that have been specified; but they are so shattered to pieces that their connection is lost'.¹⁴ Cordiner does not describe the ornament in such a way as to make clear that what he saw was TR1; it is just as likely that he saw the fragments of TR2 (see below). However, approximately 75 years later, Stuart quoted Cordiner's phrase whilst describing TR1, though it is apparent from Stuart's description that he believed that the TR2 fragments and TR1 were both part of the same cross-slab. Further confusing the matter, Stuart reported that this cross-slab 'which stood in the centre of the [Tarbat] churchyard,' was broken up for grave stones around 1800,¹⁵ a statement contradicted by Cordiner's report of the fragments in 1776. In addition, while the original position of this 'half of an ancient sculptured stone' is marked on the 1907 Ordnance Survey as being east of the church, it is difficult to determine the source of this information as Allen and Anderson report that the stone was removed in the mid-19th century by Mr McLeod of Cadboll to the grounds of Invergordon Castle, where it was displayed next to the Hilton of Cadboll stone.¹⁶ It was presented to the National Museum of Scotland by Captain R. W. McLeod in 1922.¹⁷

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION:¹⁸

¹⁴ Cordiner, *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, p. 66.

¹⁵ Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, 1:11-12.

¹⁶ *ECMS* 2:73-75, no.1. In the summer of 2002 Carver formulated a graveyard map that postulated the most probable find spot of TR1 (and TR2) by comparing antiquarian reports and surveying the existing graves (Tarbat Field Report 2003) The results of this report will be published in *The Pictish Monastery at Portmahomack, Easter Ross, Volume 1: St Colman's Church, Its Burial Ground, and Memorials* (forthcoming 2008).

¹⁷ *PSAS* 56 (1922); 63.

¹⁸ The following description focuses on the most salient details of the decoration. For a full description see Appendix 2D.

TR1 retains carved decoration on three faces: the broad face (Side A) and the narrow sides (Side B on the left, and Side C on the right). The back of the fragment has been entirely defaced and smoothed in some areas.

SIDE A (Figs. 5.1, 5.2):

Side A is divided into two fields of decoration: a decorative border comprising an inhabited vine-scroll (field 1), and a central figurative panel (field 2). Though greatly damaged, the following characteristics can be deciphered.

Field 1. The Inhabited Vine-Scroll:

Carved in light shallow relief, the inhabited vine-scroll features thin, wiry stems with very few escaping tendrils, and slender, elongated creatures. At the bottom of the design, two single-stem vines spring to either side of a chalice-shaped vessel, enclosing the confronted winged quadrupeds in scrolls that pass at least twice around their bodies. The stems continue into the corners and up both sides of the slab, forming scrolls that entangle winged quadrupeds or bipeds in two or more passes of stems that move over and under their wings, torsos and tails, often forcing their legs into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock'. Despite the elongation and entanglement, there is little actual contortion of the animals' bodies and the vine-scroll is denuded; there are very few berry clusters or escaping tendrils or leaves.¹⁹

Field 2. The Figural Composition

The figural composition is carved in a slightly deeper relief and displays several animals and the remains of two possible humans. In the top left-hand corner are the lower

¹⁹ See Appendix 2D for a detailed description of each animal and the scrolls they inhabit.

remains of a left-facing quadruped with a broad chest, long, slender legs, and elongated torso with a peculiar downward pointing bulge. Likewise, only the lower half of the figure to the right of the panel remains. Characterised by a long robe and identifiable legs, the figure is clearly human, though shallowly carved lines jutting out from the waist may represent wings. At the same time these lines may depict a stylised swathe of drapery, or possibly even a trumpet. An interrelated group is carved in the lower left side of the panel. This group consists of two left-facing quadrupeds and a profile humanoid figure facing right that is perched, legs outstretched, upon the back of the leftmost animal. Both the animals are characterised by broad chests and torsos that taper up to the haunches, and long tails that hang heavily against their haunches. The left-most creature's head is not visible due to damage but the second beast has a blunt snout and the suggestion of short rounded ears. Its open mouth with visible fangs engulfs (but does not enclose) the outstretched hand of the humanoid figure.

SIDE B (fig. 5.2)

The narrow left side of the fragment bears the remains of a shallowly incised interlace design comprising a two-strand, complete pattern characterised by diagonal and curved lines with angular bends.

SIDE C (fig. 5.2)

The narrow right side of the fragment displays the remains of three Pictish symbols in a vertical line: a Crescent and V-rod, a tuning fork, and a Serpent and Z-rod. A fourth fragmented object, characterised by a curved lines possibly representing a back and hindquarters, is most likely the remains of an animal, but might also be a Pictish symbol.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material

SIDE A:

Field 1: The inhabited vine-scroll border:

The numerous occurrences of Insular inhabited vine-scroll, and their possible models, have been fully discussed in full in Chapter 4. As shown, the closest parallel to the inhabited vine-scroll on TR1 is that featured on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, and although there are some differences in the arrangement that may affect an interpretation of their iconographic significance, primarily centred around the left side of the vine on the Hilton of Cadboll design, both examples share the same light, shallow, carving technique, and inclination for elongated, wiry creatures with tails or hindquarters that extend beyond the scrolls and interact with the vine tendrils, as well as scrolls that pass at least twice around the creature's bodies. These stylistic and technical affinities strongly suggest that they share a common source of production and perhaps even the same carver.

Thus, like the Hilton of Cadboll design, the TR1 vine-scroll has its closest stylistic affinities with the Northumbrian vine-scrolls attributed to the first generation of the York school of sculpture, dated from the late 8th to the early 9th centuries. These York school inhabited vine scrolls, depicted on cross-shaft fragments from Croft on Tees, York Minster and St Leonards (fig. 4.8) display a very light, shallow style of low relief carving, which features thin vines that entangle elongated, stylised animals with extended hindquarters in scrolls that sometimes, as on the St Leonards stone, pass twice around the animals' bodies.

Certain other examples, such as the vine-scroll depicted on the shaft at Closeburn, Dumfriesshire, or on the Mercian friezes at Breedon-on-Hill, Leicestershire, also show certain

individual stylistic affinities with the Tarbat vine-scrolls, such as long-tailed birds, or vine-stems that pass twice around the inhabiting creatures, but do not have enough in common with the Tarbat examples to be significant. Likewise, Irish inhabited vine-scrolls on the 9th-century South Cross at Clonmacnoise, and the Kells Cross of Patrick and Columba feature denuded vine-stems that trap a variety of quadrupeds within the scrolls in much the same manner as the Tarbat beasts. However, despite a similarity with the wiry, darting creatures of the Mercian work, they are not nearly as thin, or attenuated, as the Tarbat creatures, and they are not the least bit contorted. However, it is interesting to note that there are strong stylistic affinities between the Mercian, Irish and York examples, which might be explained by ongoing contacts between the three kingdoms (see below). It is equally possible that the Tarbat *monasteria* had contact with all three areas as well, and simply reacted differently to the same impetus that inspired their more similar responses.

This impetus may have come from any number of portable objects such as the Insular ivories, metalwork or manuscripts that display inhabited vine-scrolls and stylised animals. While Cramp and Jewell have pointed to Eastern and Mediterranean influences upon the depiction of certain animals and the style of vine-scroll depicted on the Breedon friezes,²⁰ and the possibility exists that pilgrims from Tarbat might have seen the same architectural examples, such as the frieze on the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina (c. 161AD) in the Roman forum or brought back the same types of models, it is more probable that the Tarbat carvers had access to models in circulation in the Insular world.

Many such possible exemplars, in ivory, metalwork or manuscript, can be cited (see Ch. 4), but it is folio 285r, (the *Una Autem* page) in the *Book of Kells* that displays an especially close parallel to both the vine-scroll and the inhabiting creatures that are carved on

²⁰ Jewell, 'The Anglo-Saxon Friezes,' pp. 102-104; Cramp, 'Schools of Mercian Sculpture,' pp. 195-207.

TR1. Here, not only does the vine-scroll form a border around the central panel of decoration, but it is inhabited by extremely elongated quadrupeds whose limbs are intertwined with vine tendrils as their bodies are encircled twice by the scrolls. In particular, the central chalice with its facing quadrupeds can be almost directly paralleled to the design on TR1 (see fig. 4.9).

Field 2: The Figural Panel

The fragmentary nature of the figural panel makes positive identification quite difficult, but a number of explanations can be postulated. It has been suggested that the curious bulge on the underside of the truncated animal on the upper left of the panel is an udder and the creature, therefore is a cow. However, if this is the case it would be the only such bovine thus differentiated in the surviving corpus of Pictish sculpture. On the other hand, it is conceivable that the bulge might be the remnants of a pair of downward pointed feet, suggesting the presence of an 'enthroned' horse rider such as the lady on the Hilton of Cadboll stone (figs. 4.2, 4.4).

The group of figures in the lower left side of the panel is complete, but still somewhat difficult to identify. However, the body type of the quadrupeds, characterised by thick chests, tapering torsos, long heavy tails, and rounded ears, does suggest that the beasts were intended as lions. If this is the case then it is conceivable that the figure seated on the back of one beast, with a hand thrust without harm into the open jaws of the second, might represent Daniel in the Lion's den. This would mean that the remains of the forward-facing figure to the right of the composition, though impossible to identify with any certainty, could be explained within a Daniel context as the Angel of the Lord, sent by God to shut the lion's mouths (Daniel 6:22), or as Habakkuk, brought by the angel to bring Daniel sustenance in his time of peril (Daniel 14:32-8). The shallowly carved lines jutting out from the waist could

support either of these identifications as they may be intended as wings, or could simply represent a stylised swathe of drapery as is seen on the David figures carved at Nigg and on St Andrew's Sarcophagus.

While the identification of the fragmented scene on TR1 as a Daniel scene is quite tentative, it is significant that the theme was a very popular one on early Christian monuments in Pictland, Scotland and Ireland.²¹ In general, however, these Insular representations of Daniel do not resemble the scheme on TR1. Instead they feature the figure of Daniel, or, more ambiguously, just his head, in a central position flanked by lions ranging in number from two to seven. St Vigean's 14 however, does feature a composition that is very similar to that on TR1 (see fig 5.3). Tentatively identified as Daniel in the Lions' Den by Allen and Anderson,²² the damaged recumbent monument bears the remains of a seated humanoid figure with outstretched legs, whose arms are placed within the open mouths of the flanking beasts. The search for possible models for this type of Daniel figuration, has, unfortunately, been fruitless. While the Daniel in the Lion's den motif can be found on a variety of media throughout the Early Christian world, appearing as early as the 3rd century on paintings in the Roman Catacombs, carved on sarcophagi and funerary monuments from the 3rd through the 6th century, and circulated on portable media such as ivory pyxes, reliquaries, and glass cups, Daniel is almost always pictured standing in the *orans* position and flanked by two or more lions.²³ Any variations to this arrangement involve additional characters rather than

²¹ For Pictish and Scottish Daniel scenes, see Meigle 2 and Dunkeld 2, both in Perthshire; St Martin's Cross at Iona and the cross at Keills, both in Argyll; and Inchinnan 3 and Newton Woods 2, both in Renfrewshire. *ECMS* 2, figs 311a, 332a, 397a. For Irish scenes see the South Cross at Ahenny, the cross at Arboe, Co. Tyrone; the North and South crosses at Castledermot, the cross at Clones, Co. Monaghan, the Cross of Patrick and Columba and the Market crosses at Kells; and the cross at Moone. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, figs. 22, 31, 103, 107, 126, 335, 346, 348, 509.

²² *ECMS* 1:li; *ECMS* 2: 273-274.

²³ See Di Berardino, *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church*, 1: 219-220; J. Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland before the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1887), pp. 55-56.

significant differences of posture. For instance, a 6th-century ivory pyx from Moggio, Italy, currently in Washington, also features two angels holding the lions' jaws shut, while other modifications to the standard scene include a portrayal of Habakkuk helping Daniel, or Habakkuk being carried by the angel to Daniel.²⁴ This latter scene can be seen on several 4th-century sarcophagi in the Vatican Museo Pio Cristiano, and on the late 5th-century doors of Sta. Sabina in Rome.

Habakkuk and Daniel are also depicted, along with identifying inscriptions, on a bucket with embossed gilt copper mounting found in connection with a Merovingian burial in Miannay, near Abbeville in France, and on a Merovingian belt clasp found in a grave at Mâcon, also in France.²⁵ A 7th-century tin-plated Burgundian bronze buckle, now in the Musée d' Archéologie d' Histoire in Lausanne, has been also been identified as Daniel in the lions' den. Unfortunately, with no inscription this identification is difficult to uphold. Here, a frontally faced figure crouched with his hands around his knees is flanked by two inward-facing, rearing quadrupeds (see fig. 5.4). While the quadruped on the left may be identified as a lion due to its feline head, whiskers and ears, the quadruped to the right has no such characteristics, featuring instead a very blunt, heavy muzzle, no apparent ears and no whiskers. In addition, both beasts grasp a ridged object in their front paws that they hold above the head of the seated human. It is likely that this scene is a representation of the pagan 'hero-between-beasts' motif, which was so popular in pre-Christian Northern Europe,²⁶ rather than a figuration of Daniel in the Lions' den.

²⁴ Di Berardino, *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church*, 1: 219.

²⁵ The inscription on the bucket reads *(Ange)lvs Miss(vs) Daniel Profeta Abacv Fert (panem) in Lacv Leonum*, while that on the belt buckle reads *Daniel Profeta Abacv Profeta*. See Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, pp. 55-56.

²⁶ See F. Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought to the End of the Middle Ages*, (London, 1971), pp. 134-136.

Unfortunately, while many of the aforementioned compositions feature scenes of Daniel and Habakkuk, or the Angel of the Lord bringing Habakkuk to Daniel, both of which would be very satisfying identifications for the fragmented scene on TR1, none of the models feature a composition in which Daniel is actually sat on top of a lion, as does the figure on TR1. It may be, therefore, that like the figuration on the 7th-century Burgundian buckle, the scene on TR1 has nothing to do with the Daniel motif, and scholars have been too ready to read any figure placed in conjunction with lion-like beasts as Daniel in the Lion's Den. On the other hand, since the conjunction of the inhabited vine-scroll and the Daniel motif reveals several complementary levels of meaning (see further below), this identification should not be entirely dismissed, despite the apparent lack of models.

SIDE B:

The interlace design on TR1 is unique to that stone, but pattern no 658, for which it is mistakenly identified is very close in nature and occurs in several instances throughout the Insular world in stone, manuscripts and liturgical metalwork.²⁷

SIDE C:

TR1 contains the only instance of the Serpent and Z-rod, along with the tuning fork, to be found on the Tarbat peninsula. Elsewhere, these symbols are also quite rare, the Serpent and Z-rod appearing on only 5 other cross-slabs (all within Angus and Perthshire) and the tuning fork on none.²⁸ Carved on Hilton of Cadboll, the Crescent and V-Rod also appears on fifteen other Cross-slabs outside of the peninsula, the majority of these in Angus and

²⁷ See *ECMS* 2:74; *ECMS* 1: 257.

²⁸ See *ECMS* 1: 67, 78. The Tuning Fork does appear on seven 'Class 1' monuments that display no Christian iconography.

Perthshire.²⁹ The unidentified object at the bottom of the row of symbols might be the remains of a 'Pictish beast,' and if so, then it is one of three carved on the Peninsula, the other two appearing at Nigg and Shandwick. As noted in Chapter 3, while this symbol is the most common animal symbol on Pictish stones, it is rare in Inverness-shire and Ross and Cromarty. Three appearances within five miles of each other, therefore, might be quite significant.

Summary:

It is clear that through the use of the inhabited vine-scroll motif, the (possible) depiction of Daniel in the Lion's den, and the interlace design on face B, that the sculptor of TR1 was drawing upon an accepted artistic repertoire available during the 8th to 9th centuries in the Insular world, though the specific portrayal of the vine-scroll and the figural scene differ significantly from most other Insular examples. While certain details of the Tarbat inhabited vine-scrolls see parallels with other Insular manifestations, most particularly with the York school of carvings and folio 285r of *The Book of Kells*, for the most part, the depictions on TR1 and Hilton of Cadboll are quite distinct. It may be that the Tarbat sculptors, conversant with the Insular style, and particularly inspired by the elegance of the York carvings and the layout of a design such as that depicted in the *Book of Kells*, constructed their own singular versions, and that these versions may have had more to do with literary sources than artistic.

B) Iconographic Significance

The Inhabited Vine-Scroll:

²⁹ ECMS 1: 62.

The iconographic significance of vine-scrolls has been discussed in full in Chapter 4. As noted, the use of the vine scroll to decorate the 5th to 7th-century *Spagenhelme*, worn exclusively by those of princely rank on the Continent,³⁰ suggests that the decorative motif had secular and political connotations within Germanic society, a correlation that can be found in certain Old Testament passages which used the vine as a metaphor for royal lineage.³¹ Within a more spiritual context, vine-scrolls have a clear reference to John 15:1-10, wherein Jesus proclaimed, 'I am the vine, you are the branches.' The exegetes furthered this association, equating the vine to the Cross, the blood of Christ, the New Covenant made by Christ's sacrifice, the Church, and the Trees of Life and Virtue. Much of this exegesis was in circulation in the Insular world, and most of the ideas were repeated by Insular writers such as Bede or the Irish pseudo-Jerome.³²

Artistic representations of vine-scrolls could, therefore, refer to any of these meanings. At the same time, the inhabited vine-scroll was most particularly associated with the Tree of Life, a literary conflation that was also iconographically standard in art by the 8th century.³³ The Eucharistic message conveyed by the TR1 vine-scroll is furthered by the shape of the vine-source, which most closely resembles a chalice. In addition to having a long association with the Eucharist, and the New Covenant,³⁴ the chalice was also equated with the universal church in the Stowe Missal's early 9th-century Old Irish treatise on the Mass.³⁵

The beasts inhabiting the vine-scrolls can be interpreted in a variety of ways that complement the multivalent readings of the vine-scroll. Though positive identification of

³⁰ See De Paor, 'Some Vine Scrolls and other Patterns,' p. 188.

³¹ See Ezekiel 17:22-24, Daniel 4:7-14, Habakkuk 3:17-18, Isaiah 11:1 and 27:2-6, and Psalms 1:3 and 80:8 for biblical passages using the vine as a metaphor for royal lineage.

³² See Ch. 1 pp. 25, 27-29.

³³ O'Reilly, 'The Tree of Eden in Medieval Iconography,' p. 176, pl. 5.

³⁴ See Ch. 4, p. 156.

³⁵ See Warner, *The Stowe Missal* 2:40; Appendix 1F. Thanks are due to MacLean, 'Northumbrian Vine-Scroll Ornament, p. 183, for pointing this out.

species is impossible, and indeed, the creatures might simply represent generic living creatures that signified the community of the church, it is also quite likely that the winged quadrupeds were meant to represent griffins, which had a long artistic pedigree of association with the Tree of Life and the Eucharist.³⁶ Identification of the birds as pigeons or doves, which represented repentance and the purification of sins, would also broaden the theme of redemption that is conveyed by the vine.³⁷

The fact that the winged quadrupeds confront the chalice on TR1 suggests another reference to the Habakkuk 3:2, which proclaims the Messiah will be recognised *in medio duorum animalium*. If this is the case, then even more layers of meaning can be attached to the configuration since Jerome's commentary on the verse argues that it could be interpreted in several different ways including God speaking to Israel between the two cherubim over the Ark of the Covenant, God revealed between the Old and New Testaments, and God the Father made known in the Trinity between the Son and the Holy Spirit.³⁸

The inhabited vine-scroll at TR1 thus has the potential to convey a variety of related meanings. It was a symbol of royalty as well as a metaphor for Christ, the Eucharist and the New Covenant, the Tree of Life, the Tree of Virtue, the Cross (with its concurrent themes of sacrifice, salvation and Resurrection) and the 'orthodox' Church as a whole. The birds and beasts inhabiting the scrolls symbolise the repentant souls who are saved by the recognition of Christ's sacrifice, namely, the community of the Church.

It is unclear at present what the significance may be of the vine on the left side of the composition, which passes two and a half times around each creature, in contrast with the right-hand vine that encircles each creature only twice. It is a disparity that might point to an

³⁶ See Ch: 4, p. 158.

³⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 159.

³⁸ See Ch. 2, pp. 32-33; Chapter 3, pp. 118-119.

interpretation analogous to the contrasting sides of the inhabited vine-scroll on Hilton of Cadboll, where the left-hand vine may well symbolise the Tree of Vice, and the Old Covenant, and its contorted and choking inhabitants might signify the enemies of God and the Church, namely heretics and schismatics.³⁹ However, in contrast to the Hilton of Cadboll design, it is the creatures on the left of TR1 that are more readily able to reach the nourishing fruit of the vine, despite their greater entanglement. It is therefore probable that while the vine-scroll on TR1 might have contained a warning for sinners, it was not the same warning as that conveyed by the Hilton of Cadboll design, and its primary message was most likely the redemption possible through the power of Christ's sacrifice and participation in the mystery of the Eucharist.

The Figural Composition:

If the figures in the central panel of TR1 could be identified as Daniel and possibly Habakkuk, then the Eucharistic and redemptive message of the vine would be further reinforced. Daniel functioned as a *type* of Christ, a champion who had proved his steadfastness in a time of peril, and through his faith in God was saved. In addition, the food brought to Daniel by Habakkuk (Daniel 14: 32-8) has been interpreted as an anticipation of the Eucharist.⁴⁰

While there is comparatively little exegesis concerning this specific episode, in general, the Christian fathers saw Daniel as an example of the just man tested by God and

³⁹ See Chapter 4, 159-162.

⁴⁰ Ryan, 'The Menagerie of the Derrynaflan Chalice,' p. 452.

saved by the power of faith and prayer.⁴¹ Clement of Rome comments that all those like Daniel who have endured persecution are now heirs of glory and honour, while Cyril states that 'Faith stoppeth the mouths of lions.'⁴² Cyprian comments on Daniel in a number of works, arguing that no one was more glorious than Daniel because he survived his martyrdom through his firmness of faith.⁴³ In addition, in his treatise on the Lord's Prayer Cyprian writes that the righteous man should never want for his daily bread, for 'thus a meal was divinely provided for Daniel: when he was shut up by the king's command in the den of lions, and in the midst of wild beasts who were hungry, and yet spared him, the man of God was fed.'⁴⁴

While the Eucharistic significance of the food brought by Habakkuk is never directly addressed, the second dialogue of Gregory, which recounts the various miracles of St Benedict, does allude to Habakkuk's journey to demonstrate how God's power is given to those whose mission is righteous.⁴⁵ While it is impossible to identify the truncated forward-facing figure as Habakkuk, or the Angel of the Lord, this Eucharistic association would probably have arisen in the mind of the educated viewer when confronted with a Daniel scene, whether Habakkuk was actually depicted.

Augustine chose to focus on the fate of the wicked who condemned Daniel to the Lion's pit; the fact that they were justly thrown to their own deaths in the pit served as an apt

⁴¹ See for example, Origen, *Contra Celsum* 7:57, *ANCL* 23: 478-479; Gregorius, Bishop of Elvira, *Tractatus Origensis* 18:1-25, *CCSL* 69:131-136.1-195. There is no evidence that either of these texts were known in the Insular world.

⁴² Clement of Rome, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, *ANCL*, add. vol. 9:242-243; Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechises* 5:4, *NPNF* 2nd series, 7: 30; Appendix 1F. There is no evidence that Clement of Rome's works were known in the Insular world. See Appendix 1A for Cyril of Jerusalem.

⁴³ Cyprian *Epistola* 61.2.1, *CCSL* 3C: 380-381.14-20; *De Lapsis* 19, *CCSL* 3: 232.387-390; Appendix 1F. See Appendix 1A for the circulation of Cyprian's works in Britain, and the extremely high regard in which they were held.

⁴⁴ *Sic Danieli, in leonum lacu jussu regis incluso, prandium divinitus procuratur, et inter feras esurientes et parcentes homo Dei pascitur.* Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 21, *CCSL* 3A: 103.386-398; Appendix 1F for full passage. Translation from *ANCL* 8: 413.

⁴⁵ Gregory the Great, *Dialogue* 2:22, *PL* 66:176; Appendix 1F.

warning of the coming judgement for those who spread calumny.⁴⁶ In fact, as Aldhelm points out, Daniel's very name means 'Judgement.'⁴⁷ At the same time, Augustine also wrote that because Daniel acknowledged God above him, the lions acknowledged that Daniel was above them, and didn't harm him.⁴⁸ It may be that a connection was drawn by Insular artists between the lion's recognition of Daniel, Daniel's recognition of God, and the recognition of Christ between two beasts; thus explaining the prevalence of the Daniel in the Lion's den motif in early medieval Ireland and Scotland.

On the other hand, Klingender has argued that the popularity of Old Testament heroes in early medieval art was a reflection of the church's program of assimilation in providing acceptable biblical figures to a pagan population weaned on tales of dragon slayers and other magnificent feats of animal management. Scenes of Daniel in the lion's den were therefore particularly popular in the Insular world because they also embodied the Northern 'hero-between-beasts' motif.⁴⁹ Indeed, Gregory's instructions to Abbot Mellitus demonstrate that the outward trappings of the pagan religions were retained as much as possible in order to convert more to the 'true God'.⁵⁰ This fondness for the old tales apparently persisted well into the Christian age, as evidenced by the fact that Alcuin had to rebuke the monks of Lindisfarne for listening to heroic lays in the refectory rather than to patristic sermons. 'Let the words of God be read at the priest's dinner. It is proper for a reader to be heard there, not a harpist, the words of the Fathers, not the songs of the heathen. What has Ingeld to do with

⁴⁶ Augustine, *Epistola* 93.5.19, *PL* 33: 331; *NPNF* 1:389; Augustine, *De Correctione Donatistarum*, *Epistola* 185:2.7, 5.19, *PL* 33: 795, 801; *NPNF* 4, pp. 635, 640; Appendix 1F.

⁴⁷ Aldhelm, *De Virginitate* 21, *CCSL* 124A:21.22-23.

⁴⁸ Augustine, *In Epistolam Joannis ad Parthos Tractatus Decem* 8.7, *PL* 35: 2039; *NPNF* 7:509; Appendix 1F.

⁴⁹ Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, pp. 134-136, 137.

⁵⁰ *EH* I:30, pp. 106-109.

Christ?'⁵¹ Within this context it is quite possible that a viewer seeing a composition figuring a human between, or among, several beasts would automatically call to mind both the pagan tales that glorified the hero's power over the animals as well as the Christian associations that could be attached to them.

It may also be significant that scenes of Daniel in the Lion's den were especially prolific on Irish high crosses, as it has been suggested that such scenes were especially associated with the *Céli Dé* reform movement. MacQuarrie has argued that biblical scenes illustrating the theme of divine aid (such as the Fall of Man, the Sacrifice of Isaac, Daniel in the Lion's Den, David and lion, the Flight into Egypt, the Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes, the Crucifixion, the Twelve Apostles, St Paul and St Anthony in the Desert, and the Temptation of St Anthony) might be indicative of the presence of *Céli Dé* patrons.⁵² While these themes might seem appropriate to any Christian patron, they do seem to appear on a number of Irish high crosses located at sites associated with the Irish reform movement, and, at least in terms of the Old Testament representations, are missing from the Anglo-Saxon material.⁵³ Indeed, the number of such scenes on Pictish Cross-slabs might point in some way to the progress of the movement across Scotland, and if the scene on TR1 can indeed be identified as a Daniel scene then it may point to the movement's influence on Tarbat.

While the figural scene on TR1 cannot really be identified due to its damaged nature, it is not unlikely that its composition expressed layers of meaning that complemented those suggested by the vine-scroll, as is the case with the figural panel at Hilton of Cadboll. By

⁵¹ *Verba dei legantur in sacerdotali convivio; ibi decet lectorum audiri, non citharistam sermons partum, non carmina gentilibus. Quid Hinieldus cum Christo?* Alcuin, *Epistola* 81, in P. Jaffé (ed.), *Monumenta Alcuiniana: Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicum* 6 (1873), p. 357. Translation from S. Allot, *Alcuin of York: His Life and Letters*, (York, 1987 reprint), pp. 155-156.

⁵² MacQuarrie, 'Early Christian Religious Houses in Scotland,' pp. 121-123.

⁵³ See J. Hawkes, 'Old Testament Heroes,' *passim*, for other reasons behind the paucity of Old Testament iconography on Anglo-Saxon monuments.

investigating the levels of interpretation possible for Daniel scenes, it is possible to see how the figurative and decorative motifs could work together on this stone. The various readings that therefore could be assigned to the imagery on TR1 range from notions of secular rule (inferred by the connotations of royal lineage implicit in the vine-scroll as well as by the hint of the 'enthroned' horse rider), through participation in the Eucharist (conveyed by the vine-scroll, its inhabitants and the possible Daniel scene) to themes of Salvation and Divine Aid (implicit in the inhabited vine-scroll and the possible Daniel scene).

TR2:

TR2 (fig. 5.5) comprises three broken and worn cross-slab fragments carved in a mixture of high and low relief. Two central bosses (TR5 and TR6) also carved in very fine-grained, grey-green micaceous sandstone, which display related decoration, were probably also part of this cross-slab (see fig. 5.6).⁵⁴ These fragments are presently displayed in the National Museum of Scotland.

In 1845 George Dunoon reported carved fragments scattered among the grass in the Tarbat churchyard, surmising that they came from the so-called 'Danish Cross, which had originally stood on a low, green mound adjoining the east gable of the church.'⁵⁵ In 1856, Stuart reported that this 'cross' had been broken up some fifty years earlier, but Cordiner claims to have seen fragments in 1776, implying that it had been broken up even before this.⁵⁶ The original position of the cross is also contested: Miller argued that the original site of the

⁵⁴ Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,' <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000), for the geology of TR2, TR 5 and TR6 (listed as TR4, TR3 and TR7 in the report).

⁵⁵ *The New Statistical Account of Scotland, v. 14: Inverness, Ross and Cromarty* (Edinburgh, 1845), p. 461. Thanks to Martin Carver for alerting me to this reference in his Tarbat Field Report, 2003 (see note 16).

⁵⁶ Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, 1:11; Cordiner, *Antiquities & Scenery of the North of Scotland*, p. 75. Stuart believed that the TR1 fragment and the TR2 fragments and associated pieces all originated from the same cross.

'Danish Cross' was some twenty paces from the eastern gable, in an area set aside for plague burials, while the 1907 Ordinance Survey places the 'Danish Cross' in the centre of the churchyard.⁵⁷ The fragments were removed to Invergordon Castle sometime around 1850, and presented to the NMS in 1956 by Lt. Col. R. B. MacLeod of Hilton of Cadboll.⁵⁸

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION:⁵⁹

The TR2 fragments bear the remains of a central shaft carved with interlaced knots and two decorative panels on either side of the shaft. Both the upper panels display the remnants of interlaced serpents. Two of the three serpents in the right side panel bite, while the three in the left-hand panel do not. This left-hand panel also retains evidence of boss and spiral ornament with one small boss clearly visible.

Only the flat-band moulding of a lower panel of decoration remains to the left side of the central shaft, though the very faint remains of a spiral and peltae design with C-shaped connections and raised bosses can still be seen in the right-hand lower panel.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material:

In general, there are several striking parallels the TR2 fragments and Face A of Nigg. Both display a central panel filled with geometric designs. As at Nigg, this panel on TR2 is quite likely part of the cross-shaft. Interlace pattern no 709, which decorates the central panel of TR2, is unique, but is extremely similar to no 708, which is decorates the central panel of

⁵⁷Miller, 'A Note on Fragments of Two Sculptured Stones,' p. 442. Carver's Tarbat Field Report 2003 positions the 'Danish Cross' in accordance with Miller's findings.

⁵⁸*ECMS* 2: 88, 90; *PSAS* 87 (1956): 239.

⁵⁹The following description focuses on the most salient details of the decoration. For a full description see Appendix 2D.

the crosshead on the Nigg slab (fig. 2.1).⁶⁰ Both monuments display two separate panels of ornament to either side of the cross-shaft, the upper two inhabited by interlaced serpents. On Nigg, these serpents originate from large interlaced bosses and move around much smaller, plain spiral bosses that are connected by C-shaped peltae. While the TR2 fragments do not display any serpent bosses, the left panel does retain one small spiral boss and peltae connection, leading to the high probability that the TR2 snakes also curled around interlaced bosses like the Nigg serpents. In addition, the fragment of the lower right-hand panel visible on TR2 features raised spiral bosses and peltae that are extremely close in appearance to the spiral and peltae design carved on the lower right panel at Nigg. Together, the stylistic and thematic affinities are so close as to suggest the same place of production, if not the very same carver.

While the sources and parallels to snake boss decoration have been fully discussed in Chapter 2, it is necessary to repeat here that the most significant of these parallels are those contained on the St Andrews Sarcophagus (fig. 2.5), the high crosses at Iona, and upon Insular liturgical metalwork and saints reliquaries. Concerning its occurrence on the Nigg cross-slab, St Andrews Sarcophagus and the crosses at Iona, various scholars have debated the origin of the motif and its subsequent movement across Pictland and into Ireland.⁶¹ The most important conclusion one can draw from the parallels is that serpentine ornament had a particular relevance to the Irish, Picts and Scots, perhaps related to its occurrence on metalwork shrines and an association with St Columba (see below).

⁶⁰ See *ECMS* 1: 281 for a comparison between the two patterns.

⁶¹ Henderson, 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-Boss Motif,' pp. 56-65; Ritchie, *Picts*, p. 34; Stevenson, 'Some Irish and Scottish crosses,' pp. 84-96; 'Sculpture in Scotland,' pp. 65-74; MacLean, 'Snake-Bosses and Redemption,' pp. 245-253. See also Chapter 6: Conclusion, for a full discussion of dating issues.

For instance, in addition to decorating the 8th-century Derrynaflan paten and the Ardagh chalice, serpents and/or snake bosses are found ornamenting a variety of Irish shrine fragments such as the snake bosses on the bronze finials at St-Germain-en-Laye, France (fig. 2.7) and Gausel, Norway, or the biting serpents on a mount fragment found in Sunndal, Norway.⁶² Besides pointing to possible models for the intertwined, biting serpents and snake bosses depicted on TR2 and Nigg, the presence of serpents on saint's reliquaries may have conveyed a specific apotropaic significance which was meant to be duplicated by carving them on stone (see below).

B) Iconographic Significance:

The myriad interpretations that can be assigned to serpents within a religious context have been fully discussed in Chapter 2. As noted, the serpent has always had a dual or even triple nature in the Christian tradition. Associated with the fall of man in Genesis, its wise and cunning nature was simultaneously deplored and admired throughout the Bible, Apocryphal writings (wherein the power of Christ was able to vanquish the evil inherent in the serpent), and in the exegesis of the Early Church Fathers. Augustine, in particular, devoted several tracts to the nature of the serpent, identifying it with the sins of iniquity at one moment, and praising it as a model of behaviour that good Christians should seek to imitate the next. The serpent's ability to throw off its old skin, which Augustine equated with the temporal good of this life, and to be reborn into the new life of truth, was likewise repeated in the *Physiologus*. In addition, Augustine, among others, focused on the figurative role of the serpent as a type of Christ and a symbol of God's power as it was manifested by the brazen rod of Moses. There

⁶² See Ryan, *Early Irish Communion Vessels*, plates 10, 13, 14, Youngs, *Work of Angels*, pp. 145-6, no. 139; O'Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries*, photo 12.

is also no doubt that the tradition of seeing the brazen serpent as a type of Christ was well known and established in the Insular world. This typology might also explain the 'Irish' Insular liturgical rite reported by Warren, wherein a procession bearing a serpent-headed staff travelled to the doors of the church on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.⁶³

Since the serpents are placed to either side of the cross-shaft on TR2, the reference is most likely to any of the more benign symbolic meanings attached to serpents, such as their wisdom, and ability to shed their skin and begin a new life. At the same time they may reflect the typology investigated by the early Church fathers or the liturgical ritual involving the brazen serpent. In addition, the serpents on TR2 and on the cross-face of the Nigg cross-slab may also have expressed an apotropaic force, harnessing the power of the snake to keep further evil away. As discussed in Chapter 2, the apotropaic properties of the serpents on metalwork, such as those decorating the St Germain finials, were quite possibly consciously evoked on the cross-slab at Nigg. The connection with these finials is particularly appropriate, given their probable origin at Iona on Adomnán's reliquary.⁶⁴ In addition, the stone bosses (TR5 and TR6) most likely originating from the same monument that produced the TR2 fragments, have their closest parallels with the metalwork studs on Insular house shrines, like the Monymusk Shrine (see fig. 5.7).⁶⁵ Considered along with the evidence of the serpent ornamentation on other shrines, it is quite likely that the decorative programme of TR2, like that of the cross-face at Nigg, was influenced by a local saint's shrine, and that this shrine was ornamented with serpents and snake-bosses.

⁶³ See Ch. 2, p. 77.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 78-79.

⁶⁵ See for example the shrine from Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh, the Abbazia San Salvatore Shrine, and the Monymusk Shrine. Metalwork bosses with decorative wreaths also appear on several detached mounts most likely coming from house-shrines. See O' Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries*, plate 7; Youngs, *The Work of Angels*, nos. 128, 129, 141, 142.

TR10

TR10 is a damaged and worn sub-rectangular carved fragment of yellow micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain, most likely the same stone as that which produced TR20.⁶⁶ It was first noticed by the Revd. J M Joass, of Golspie, having been used as masonry in the construction of the 18th-century Manse garden wall. It was subsequently relocated to the castle at Invergordon and displayed with various geological specimens.⁶⁷ Lt Col R B McLeod presented it to the NMS in 1956, where it is presently displayed.⁶⁸

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION⁶⁹

The fragment retains on two faces, one broad and one narrow. Side A (broad side) bears the remains of a heavily damaged decorative panel, filled with triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae (see fig. 5.8). The peltae are further distinguished by bisected hollow triangles at their widest points. Side B (narrow) features the vestige of an interlace design and a relief inscription along eight horizontal lines (fig 5.9). Although it has suffered significant damage, the letters have been transcribed and the inscription reconstructed as: [I]N NOM[IN]E IHU X[PI IN] COM[MEM]ORA[TIO]NE REO[...]LII [...D]IE HA[C...], which can be roughly translated as 'In the name of Jesus Christ, the/a Cross of Christ in memory of Reo[....]lius ...on this day...'

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material:

⁶⁶Despite the lack of visible iron blebs, it has been confirmed through geological testing that this fragment comes from the same stone as the TR20 fragment. See Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,'

<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000)

⁶⁷ECMS 2: 82, 94.

⁶⁸PSAS 87 (1956): 239

⁶⁹See Appendix 2D for a detailed account of the decoration.

SIDE A

Two other fragments from the Portmahomack site, TR20, and TR40 (fig. 5.10) bear an almost identical layout of spirals and embellished peltae to that on TR10. One of the panels of spiral ornament on TR20 (side A, field 3) is set within a rhomboid-shaped frame (see fig. 5.11), and it is easy to see that the fragmented panel on TR10 could also have been rhomboid-shaped in its original state. Elsewhere on the site, a close variation of the TR10 spiral ornament appears on TR9, TR18 and TR32, all of which have spirals connected by C-shaped peltae distinguished by bisected triangles. TR9, in particular, also feature triangular pellets in the interstices.⁷⁰

SIDE B

While decorative motifs such as spirals and interlace are well evidenced throughout the Insular world, carved relief inscriptions are extremely rare. In fact, only one other inscription exists on a Pictish monument, that which is incised on the narrow side of St Vigean's 1, the so-called 'Drosten Stone.'⁷¹ Remarkably, only three other Insular monuments have relief inscriptions: two 8th to 9th-century cross-decorated slabs at Wensley, Northern Yorkshire, and the early 9th-century high-cross at Bealin, Co. Westmeath, in Ireland.⁷² Higgit has suggested that while the impetus for such rare relief carving may have been inspired by the relief inscriptions of early 8th-century Rome, which in turn had antecedents in

⁷⁰ *ECMS* 2, fig. 95; *TR Sculpt Cat.* nos. 18, 32.

⁷¹ According to the latest findings, this monument dates anywhere from 839 AD to 950AD, and the inscription is either a Latin/Gaelic mixture, or demonstrates the use of a non-Indo-European language. See the *Celtic Inscribed Stones Project* <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/cisp/database> (12 January 2004).

⁷² See Wensley 8 and 9 in Lang, *CASS* 6, illus. 883-886; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 45.

Constantinople, it may also reflect an attempt to recreate the effect of repoussé lettering on Insular metalwork.⁷³

In addition, Higgit has proposed that the specific type of lettering on TR10 was inspired by a variety of sources such as Roman capitals and their angular variants, and Insular half-uncial forms adapted from manuscript text scripts. The closest parallels to this 'display script' are seen in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, the *Book of Kells*, and punched on the 8th-century Ardagh Chalice.⁷⁴ At the same time, the general impression conveyed by the overall pattern, which relies upon the proportions of the letters and the spacing between them, is paralleled by the display script on the initial pages of the late 8th to early 9th-century Irish *Gospel Book of St Gall*.⁷⁵ The basic structure of the epigraphic formula used in the inscription, which combines an invocation of the name of God with a reference to the representation of the cross of Christ that has been made to commemorate an individual, finds its closest parallels on crosses in South Wales and the Isle of Man, though it is likely to be more generally Insular in origin.⁷⁶

B) Interpretation

The repetition of the spiral ornament between TR10, TR 20 and TR40, as well as the same geology of the stones, make it extremely likely that all three fragments originate from the same monument: a cross-slab that was different from the so-called 'Danish-Cross,' and that which produced the TR1 fragment. The inscription demonstrates that this monument was extremely high status, and that it functioned as a memorial stone as well as a cross-slab.

⁷³ J. Higitt, 'The Inscriptions and Epigraphy', in Lang, *CASS* 6, p. 53.

⁷⁴ Higitt, 'The Pictish Latin Inscription at Tarbat in Ross-Shire, *PSAS* 112 (1982):310-315.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* p. 314.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 307-310.

The name transcribed in the inscription as Reo[...]lius is not commonly known in either Latin or Irish and may be an example of a Latinised native Pictish name. On the other hand, following Allen and Anderson, who transliterate REO...LIUS as REOTETTI, Fraser and Munro argue that the name commemorated on the stone is Reothaide/Reodaide/Reodatius, a canon of Candida Casa. They report that this canon was appointed abbot of a church founded by St. Ninian at Fearn, (now Mid Fearn in the parish of Edderton about 15 miles away from the Tarbat peninsula on the Dornoch Firth, see fig1.1) sometime before his death in 762. This church was raised in status to an abbey in the 13th century, but the monks subsequently moved to New Fearn (present-day Fearn, located on the peninsula) within the old parish boundaries of Tarbat until 1628. It is unclear why fragments of a memorial stone commemorating an abbot from an ecclesiastical centre fifteen to twenty miles away would end up in the monastery at Portmahomack; Fraser and Munro imply that the greater eminence of the Tarbat church lie behind the move.⁷⁷

In any case, since the lettering style of the inscription seems to point to the early 9th century, it may be unlikely that this abbot, who died in 762, was he who was being commemorated on the stone. It is far more likely that, as on the Drosten stone, local nobility or royalty was being commemorated. Such commemoration, along with burial in the sacred churchyard, close to the founder saint, would be made in exchange for gifts of land or wealth according to the monastic model proposed by Morris.⁷⁸ This fragmented inscription must also be considered in conjunction with the decoration carved on TR20, since it is extremely likely that both fragments originated from the same monument.

⁷⁷ A. Fraser and F. Munro, *Tarbat Easter Ross: A Historical Sketch* (Evanton, 1988), pp. 10-11.

⁷⁸ See Chapter 1, p.15, note 44.

TR20

TR20 is a sub-rectangular slab of yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain, and multiple inclusions of iron blebs; the same geology as that of TR1, TR10 and the cross-slabs located at Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll.⁷⁹ Most likely from a cross-slab, TR20 was discovered in 1995 in the south wall of the Old Church crypt by Niall Robertson.⁸⁰ The stone was removed from the fabric of the crypt in 1997 and put on display in the Tarbat Discovery Museum, where relief decoration can be seen on both of the broad faces.

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION⁸¹

SIDE A (fig. 5.11):

Side A is divided into three discreet areas of decoration (fields 1-3).

Field 1: Top Decorative Panel.

The rectangular panel at the top of the fragment is filled with triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae. The larger spirals form two horizontal rows and move in a clockwise motion, while the smaller spirals, found primarily along the border of the design, move counter clockwise. The C-shaped peltae are further embellished by bisected triangles.

Field 2. The Quadruped:

Directly beneath the spiral panel is a right-facing quadruped crouching in an awkward position characterised by hindlegs bent in the opposite directions, causing its feet, each with a

⁷⁹ Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,' <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000).

⁸⁰ For the context of the wall and evidence that the fragment had also been used in previous construction from the 10th century, see *Bull* 3, <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin3/church.html> (22 April 2002)

⁸¹ A detailed description is contained in Appendix 2D.

long, single claw, to meet in the centre. This beast is further stylised with incised scrolls at the joints, a forward-pointing ear, elaborately curled nose, a tail that curls around itself as it arches over the beast's back and terminates in a serpent's head, and a wide open mouth with two large fangs, and an extended tongue.

Field 3. Lower Decorative Panel:

The lower decorative panel is filled with a design featuring two different sizes of triple-band spirals that are grouped in pairs and connected by C-shaped peltae. The peltae are distinguished by bisected triangles, almond-shaped floriate embellishments, and small triangular pellets in the interstices of the spirals.

SIDE B (fig. 5.12):

Side B contains the remains of three panels of relief carving, two figurative and one decorative (fields 1-3). The decoration in all three panels is fragmented due to the damage to the stone.

Field 1: The Animal Panel

The top panel contains the undamaged forms of three animals and the head, chest and foreleg of a fourth. In the top right-hand corner a round-eared quadruped with a long, blunt snout, thick torso, slightly humped back, stiff legs, and no tail paces to the left. Directly below this beast is a much larger left-facing quadruped with an erect head characterised by a short, squared snout and visible fangs, a thick neck and chest, a tapering torso, and a long tail hanging down to its feet. Light scoring in the neck area suggests a mane. The head, chest and foreleg of a mirror-image beast confronting this beast are all that remain of the creature on the

left. Situated between these two are the downward pointed haunches and hind legs of a further animal. This deliberately truncated animal displays slender legs that end in upward pointed hooves and a short, tufted tail held tightly against the body.

Field 2. The Human Composition:

The middle panel bears the remains of four frontally faced human figures. Only the vague outline of a head, or perhaps a nimbus, remains of the left-most figure, due to the angle of the broken stone and subsequent wear. The diagonal breakage shears off the next figure at the waist, and the third figure at the bottom of his robes. Only the right-most figure is fully preserved to his feet, though his left side has flaked away and his right toes are missing. Despite this damage, the following characteristics are discernible. The waist-length figure displays well-groomed hair with two side-locks at the left, the faint remains of a moustache and close-shaven beard, round eye sockets and incised circles for cheeks. He wears a robe draped over both shoulders over a separate tunic. Moving to the right, the head of the next figure is characterised by unkempt bushy hair with three locks on the left and one on the right, as well as a short, pointed beard and moustache. Almond-shaped eyes, round cheeks and a nose are also clearly visible. The lines of drapery suggest a separate tunic and robe, though the robe only appears to be draped over his right shoulder. In addition, folds of cloth follow the curvilineature of his left arm, which is held across his chest. His right arm is held against his body and appears to be grasping a staff. The full-length figure has short, well-groomed hair with no side curls, almond-shaped eyes, round cheeks, a prominent nose and a forked beard rounded at the tips. A separate drape of cloth crosses his chest and he holds a book in his right cloth-draped hand, which he points to with his left hand. Standing on tiptoe,

his feet point to the left, and are shod in sandals characterised by a strap and circular buckle around the ankle.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material

SIDE A

Field 1. The Decorative Panel:

The bisected triangle within the peltae of the spiral ornament in this panel might be specific to the Tarbat collection. Similar spiral and peltae with bisected triangles are found on Portmahomack fragments nos. 9, 18, 32, while that which is contained on TR10 and TR40 is almost identical to that of TR20.⁸² Similar designs with peltae forming C-shaped connections between differently sized spirals can also be found on Nigg and Shandwick. In general, spirals with C-shaped peltae connections are found on carved stones throughout Pictland, the Dal Riada and Ireland, but not on Anglo-Saxon stones. A notable exception appears on a fragment from a late 8th- to early 9th-century carved panel from South Kyme, Lincolnshire.⁸³

Field 2. The Quadruped:

Determining the nature of the composite beast depicted in this panel has been problematic. Initially identified as a dragon by the excavators, this creature neither breathes fire nor has wings for flying, two of the characteristics commonly assigned to dragons. On the other hand, an excursus into the biblical descriptions of dragons reveals a great deal of confusion about their physical attributes, with none of them, not even the flying dragon of

⁸² See *TR Sculpt Cat* nos. 9, 18, and 32. See also *ECMS 2*, fig. 95, for TR9.

⁸³ P. Everton and D. Stocker (eds.), *CASS 5: Lincolnshire*, pp. 248-251, illus. 339, 343.

Revelations, actually described with wings. At the same time there is also a linguistic muddle between the accounts of dragons, sea-monsters and leviathans, especially once the Hebrew and Vulgate versions of the Old Testament are compared.⁸⁴ In the Old Testament, several related words (*tannoth* or *tannin*) are today translated as dragon, following the Latin Vulgate. While *tannoth* can also be translated as jackals or simply ‘howlers’ and refers to wild beasts in the desert,⁸⁵ *tannin* can also be translated as serpent or sea serpent.⁸⁶ At the same time, what we now know as the whale was also listed as *tannin* in Matthew 12:40, wherein Jesus refers to the Jonah episode. In the actual book of Jonah itself, the ‘whale’ is listed as either *dag* or *dagah*; both translated as ‘great fish.’ Further confusing matters is the *livyathan* or leviathan in Job 41:1, Psalms 74:14 and 104.26, and Isaiah 27: 1, wherein it is alternately translated as dragon or crooked serpent. Indeed, only the beast with seven heads and ten horns in Revelations (12:3-4, 13:1) is named *drakón* in the Hebrew Bible, and although it can fly, it is not described with wings.

This linguistic confusion carried over into the visual realm, as can be seen by representations of whales painted on early Christian catacomb walls (fig. 5.13) and carved on early Christian sarcophagi.⁸⁷ Identifiable only by their pairing with Jonah figures, these creatures, with their pointed snouts, serpentine necks, heavy torsos, and long curling tails look far more like the TR20 beast than our modern conception of whales. Indeed, a creature depicted on the face of the Woodrae cross-slab in Angus, which bears several characteristics

⁸⁴ For the problems inherent in translation from Hebrew to Greek to Latin and the various redactions of the Vulgate, see B. Fischer and I. Gribomont, H. Sparks, and W. Thiele (eds.), *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 3rd edn (Stuttgart, 1983), 1: xx-xxi.

⁸⁵ For examples, see Malachi 1:3; Job 30:29; Psalm 44:19; Isaiah 13:22, 34:13, 35:7, 43:20; Jeremiah 9:11, 10:22; Ezekiel 29:3; and Micah 1:8.

⁸⁶ See Deuteronomy 32:33; Psalms 74:13, 90:13, 148:7; Isaiah 27:1, 51:9; and Jeremiah 51:34.

⁸⁷ See the Jonah and the whale fresco in the *cubicolo della Velata* in the Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome. See Jonah and very serpentine whales on early medieval sarcophagi in Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London, 1964), figs. 162, 163; J. Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London, 1997), fig. 13.

in common with the TR20 beast, such as a forward-facing ear, long torso, long, single claws on each of its feet, as well as a serpent-headed tail; is quite likely intended as the biblical sea creature since it is in the act of swallowing or disgorging a human figure (fig. 5.14).⁸⁸ On the other hand, it is equally likely that the Woodrae figuration is an artistic representation of the literary topos of the 'hell mouth,' in which the mouth of hell encloses sinners in its jaws.⁸⁹

Unfortunately, neither of these identifications can be assigned to the TR20 beast because it is neither engulfing nor disgorging a human figure or limbs. What becomes clear, however, after an investigation of the Insular literary and artistic sources is that while fire-breathing, winged dragons figured in Anglo-Saxon literary sources, they were not visually depicted with such attributes until the late Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Scandinavian period.⁹⁰ Therefore, while it is quite possible that the TR20 beast may represent a generalised sea-monster or other dangerous beast, it is equally likely that it does indeed represent a dragon, despite its wingless, fire-less, state.

Considering only the appearance and not the identity of the TR20 creature, there are several other Pictish parallels, besides the Woodrae beast. Once such is the rampant beast with long torso, contorted legs, fangs and extended tongue in the top right-hand corner above the cross-arms on Meigle 7. Likewise, although it has a rather thick torso and haunches, the right-facing quadruped on Monfieth 2 has serpentine head and a long tail terminating in a

⁸⁸ *ECMS 2*, fig. 258A.

⁸⁹ Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 48-49, points out that scenes in which human figures are engulfed by monsters (such as those portrayed on Fowlis Wester, Aberlemno 3 and Rossie Priory) are quite likely expressions of the popular 'Vision of Hell' literature available to the Insular world.

⁹⁰ See for instance, *Beowulf*, lines 2270-2333, 2516-2600. See S. Heaney, (trans.), *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* (New York and London, 2000) pp. 155-157, 171-175. See also *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS Laud 793, in C. Plummer (ed.), *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel with Supplementary Extracts from Others*, rev. edn (Oxford, 1965), p. 55; V. Thompson, *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England*, (Woodbridge, forthcoming 2004).

snake-head much like the TR20 creature.⁹¹ However, the closest parallel lies with the depiction of the interlaced beast entwined with its neighbour in Field 5A on Side A of the Shandwick Cross-slab (fig. 3.1) Like the beast on TR20, the interlaced creatures on Shandwick have backwards-bending joints and feet that meet in the middle.

This is a characteristic that can also be seen in the depiction of Insular metalwork animals. For instance, one of the animals depicted on the early 8th-century Irish Steeple-Bumpstead Boss demonstrates this configuration with its hindlegs, as does one of the filigree animals on the Irish, 8th-century Derrynaflan chalice (fig. 5.18).⁹² In addition, the TR20 creature is not entirely unlike the 'Trehiddle-style' animals that are contorted to fit certain awkwardly shaped, 9th-century Anglo-Saxon silver strips and strap-ends.⁹³

Field 3. Decorative Panel:

The fragmented rhomboid-shaped frame on TR 20 is mirrored by the remnants of the spiral-filled panel on TR10, as is the spiral and peltae design itself. Close variations of the TR10/20 spiral ornament appear on TR9, TR18 and TR32, all of which feature spirals connected by C-shaped peltae distinguished by bisected triangles.⁹⁴ In addition, almond-shaped flourishes appended to some of the peltae may also be seen (with some variation) on TR7, as well as on panels of spiral work on Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll.⁹⁵ Likewise, the panel spiral work from South Kyme, Lincolnshire not only displays one of the

⁹¹ See *ECMS 2*, figs. 242b, 316a.

⁹² See Youngs, 'The Steeple Bumpstead Boss,' pp. 143-150, fig. 17.3e; Ryan, 'The Menagerie of the Derrynaflan Chalice,' fig. 18.2.7.

⁹³ D. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700-1100 in the British Museum* (London, 1964), nos. 94, 95, 96, 97, 98.

⁹⁴ *TR Sculpt Cat*, nos. 18, 32; *ECMS 2*, fig. 95.

⁹⁵ See *ECMS 2*, fig 93, for TR7.

rare examples of carved spiral stonework from the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, but also displays a floriate flourish in one of the peltae that is not unlike those on TR20.⁹⁶

As discussed in previous chapters, spiral designs are prolific on 'Celtic' metalwork from the 6th to the 9th centuries, appearing on both secular and ecclesiastical objects, and also within the pages of Insular manuscripts such as the *Book of Durrow*, *Lindisfarne Gospels*, and the *Book of Kells*, all of which feature triple-band spirals and elaborately decorated peltae. In particular, the *Book of Durrow* and the *Book of Kells* (fig. 3.11) display peltae with the same sort of almond-shaped leaves that appear in the peltae of the lower panel of spiral ornament on TR20.⁹⁷

FACE B

Field 1: The Animal Panel:

The overall impression created by the depiction of the topmost beast in the upper right corner of the top panel is that of a lumbering bear, while the animal group depicted below it is most likely a representation of two lions confronting each other over the remains of a deer or sheep. Quadrupeds that may be bears are carved on several other Pictish monuments, such as opposite the lion on the cross-face of the Shandwick cross-slab (see Chapter 3), and on Murthly, St Vigean's 1, Dupplin, and Meigle nos. 10, 11, 22 and 26, as well as on the Old Scatness fragment, in Shetland.⁹⁸ In addition, a truncated deer (with the top, rather than lower half depicted) appears on Monfieth 2.⁹⁹ However, the specific configuration of the animals as they appear on the TR20 seems to be unparalleled on stone.

⁹⁶ See above, note 83.

⁹⁷ See Ch. 3, pp. 113-114.

⁹⁸ *ECMS* 2, figs. 250b, 321, 334a, 344, 345b, 350, 354; Henderson and Henderson, *The Art of the Picts*, p. 229.

⁹⁹ *ECMS* 2, fig 242b.

At the same time, one of the 7th-century Byzantine silver plates previously discussed in regards to the David iconography on the Nigg cross-slab (see Chapter 2) depicts a scene that may be significant here. On the plate, the smooth-skinned carcass of a sheep lies abandoned underneath the feet of the lion being slain by David. The fact that this sheep is both headless and hairless could suggest that the carcass situated between the two lions on TR20 might also be ovine, despite its lack of a curly wool coat.¹⁰⁰ Possible identification of this beast as a sheep rather than a deer could have implications for the interpretation of the iconography (see below).

Field 2. The Human Composition:

Since robes can be seen on three out of the four humans depicted in this panel, and that on the right holds a book in his right hand, the four figures were originally identified as monks, thus giving rise to TR20's appellation as the 'monk' stone.¹⁰¹ However, the elaborate drapery and designs on the robes which may be indications of *pallia* over tunics, the lack of hoods, and the individual characteristics of each figure may point to the identification of these figures as either specific apostles, or very high-ranking ecclesiastics, rather than anonymous monks.¹⁰²

While several Pictish and Scottish monuments feature frontally-faced ecclesiastics, only a handful depict figures with distinguishing characteristics such as elaborate vestments or differing facial details. For instance the fragmented figure on Rosemarkie 4 wears a robe with a key-pattern hem, while the three figures on Invergowrie, Perthshire wear very

¹⁰⁰ Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' no. 68, plate XXVIc.

¹⁰¹ See *TR Sculpt. Cat.*, no. 20.

¹⁰² A number of Pictish cross-slabs featuring cloaked figures with peaked hoods, sometimes with croziers and book satchels, appear to be much more likely candidates for monks than the elaborately draped figures on TR20. For instance see Bressay, Papil, Monifieth 2, and St Vigean 7. *ECMS* 2, figs 4, 6, 242b and 278.

elaborately draped robes and brooches.¹⁰³ Kirriemuir 1 and St Vigean's 11, both in Angus, depict frontally-faced figures on either side of a cross-shaft that are differentiated by their beards and hair styles; it is quite likely that they are representations of Peter and Paul (see below).¹⁰⁴ Unfortunately, there are no other Pictish examples of more than three ecclesiastics together.

On the other hand, all twelve apostles are featured in Irish contexts, though they were frequently divided into separate groups of three or four, as on the cross-head of the early 9th-century North Cross at Castledermot.¹⁰⁵ Each of the frontally-faced apostles on this cross wears long robes that may involve a separate cloak over a long tunic (difficult to determine due to wear to the stone), has almond-shaped eyes, a short, pointed beard, and short hair, but no individually distinguishing marks. Likewise, the groups of figures on the east face of the 9th to 10th-century broken cross-shaft at Old Kilkullen, Co. Kildare, and the west face of the 10th-century West/Tall Cross at Monasterboise, might be identified as apostles, but wear to the stones make it difficult to determine if any of them featured distinguishing characteristics.¹⁰⁶

The same might be said about the figures depicted on the west face of the base of the North Cross at Ahenny.¹⁰⁷ While individual details are difficult to decipher this scene provides a possible parallel to the remains of the configuration on TR20 in terms of composition.¹⁰⁸ Here, a central figure with a slightly wider and bigger head is flanked by three others on either side. The flanking figures are frontally faced, but their feet point

¹⁰³ *ECMS* 2, figs 85, 266.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* figs. 239a, 282a.

¹⁰⁵ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 101.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* figs. 495, 532.

¹⁰⁷ While Harbison dates the Ahenny crosses to the late 8th or early 9th centuries, they have more recently been dated from the mid to late 9th century. See Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 11; R. Ó Floinn, 'Patrons and Politics,' pp. 11-12.

¹⁰⁸ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2, fig. 16.

inwards to the centre. Wear to the scene makes it difficult to determine if any of them displayed any individual characteristics of hair or beard, but it does appear that they all wear robes over long tunics. This scene has been identified as Christ flanked by his apostles or Christ's mission to his apostles.¹⁰⁹ The specific parallel to the truncated scene on TR20 lies within the larger size of the central figure, Christ. It is easy to imagine that the TR20 configuration, when whole, might have depicted a very similar scheme, with the remains of the larger head seen on the left edge of the fragment representing a Christ figure that was once flanked by three figures on either side, whose feet all pointed inwards.

Within an Anglo-Saxon context, twelve elaborately robed apostles on the 7th-century wooden coffin of St Cuthbert have each been identified by inscription. Unfortunately, besides the differentiation of Peter and Paul, none display any distinguishing characteristics of hair or face. Peter is clean-shaven (as are the other ten figures) with short hair and a tonsure, and he also carries a key in his right hand, while Paul is bald and displays a scraggly beard.¹¹⁰

Figures identified as apostles have also been carved on several late 8th and early 9th-century Deiran and Mercian monuments. In general, the Deiran monuments feature descending registers of either individual apostles or groups of apostles located below an enthroned Christ.¹¹¹ These apostles are almost always haloed and are set within arcading. One significant exception is the top register of the Masham column, which features an enthroned Christ, flanked by twelve apostles, who are on a horizontal, rather than vertical

¹⁰⁹ See Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:11-12. Cf. Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church', p. 345, who states that this identification is unlikely due to the formulaic nature of such scenes, which always feature Christ flanked by six apostles on each side.

¹¹⁰ C. Battiscombe, ed., *The Relics of St Cuthbert: Studies by Various Authors* (Oxford, 1956), plate 5, figs 3,4.

¹¹¹ For examples see the cross shafts (or fragments) from Otley, Easby, Collingham, and Dewsbury. See Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses*, figs. 52, 53, 87, 90-91.

field, though they are grouped in pairs under the arcading.¹¹² The Mercian carvings at Breedon on Hill, Castor, and Peterborough, also feature horizontal groupings of apostles, with those at Peterborough, on the late 8th-century 'Hedda Stone', also being situated within arcading.¹¹³

The figures on the 'Hedda stone' are unique in Anglo-Saxon England in that they display distinct individual characteristics. Bailey has argued that the specific features of each figure point to the identification of each apostle, and discusses in particular the portrayal of Andrew, set third from the left, who is identifiable by his 'flamelike hair.'¹¹⁴ Since the figure set second from the right in the TR20 composition also features rather wild, wavy hair, it is possible that he too is meant to represent Andrew. Possible models for this iconographic identification exist in the 6th-century apse mosaic in the church of St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai, where a wild-haired Andrew is identified by inscription (see fig. 5.15), as well as in several early 6th-century mosaics from ecclesiastic buildings in Ravenna,¹¹⁵ fresco paintings in Chapel VI at Bawit, Egypt, and a 6th-century tapestry panel from Egypt.¹¹⁶

As a final note oval shaped eyes, round cheeks, and sandals characterised by circular buckles at the ankles, all features of the TR20 figures, can be seen on many of the human figures depicted throughout the *Book of Kells*.

Summary:

¹¹² See Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church, p. 345.

¹¹³ See J. Lang, 'The Apostles in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture in the Age of Alcuin,' *Early Medieval Europe* 8:2 (1999): 271-282.

¹¹⁴ R. Bailey, *England's Earliest Sculptors* (Toronto, 1996), pp. 58-59, plate 5, fig 5; *The Meaning of Mercian Sculpture*, Vaughn Paper No. 34, (1990), p. 8, fig. 4.

¹¹⁵ Manafis, *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of St. Catherine*, plate 16. Depictions of Andrew with identifiable hair also appear in S. Apollinare Nuovo, and the archiepiscopal chapel in the Episcopal Palace. See Bartle, *Ravenna*, plates 26, 27, 29, 56.

¹¹⁶ See Bailey, *England's Earliest Sculptors*, p. 58; *Meaning of Mercian Sculpture*, p. 8.

Stylistic parallels, such as the differentiated robes, facial hair and hairstyles that are seen elsewhere suggest that the TR20 figures can be identified as apostles. In this context, the remains of the fourth figure situated on the left edge of the fragment, with the larger head and the indication of a halo, suggests an enthroned Christ, a configuration, when complete, which would have featured another three apostles to the left. This exact scheme has been identified on the Ahenny cross base, where a central, larger figure is flanked on both sides by three other frontally faced figures with inward pointing feet. Individualised portraits of each of the apostles (not just Peter and Paul) might have existed on the Mercian 'Hedda stone,' while the Apostle Andrew was depicted with wild, bushy hair on various 6th-century Eastern Mediterranean and Egyptian portrayals. The general details of the facial features and ankle straps suggest further that manuscript representations of figures such as those in the *Book of Kells* might have provided models for the TR20 sculptor.

B) Iconographic Significance

Side A:

The 'Dragon':

As discussed above, a certain amount of confusion surrounds both the etymology and the physical description of 'dragons,' at least within the Bible. However, what is clear, is that throughout Scripture the beast variously known as *drakon*, *tannoth*, *tannin*, or even *livyathan* was a dangerous entity to be feared, and its subjugation something to be celebrated. In addition, due to its characterisation in Revelations, the dragon was commonly interpreted as the enemy of mankind. Revelations 12: 1-17 describes the conflict between Christ and Satan, the great battle between the Michael and the dragon, and the dragon's attempt to destroy the woman, who represents God's people, first as Israel, from whom Jesus the Messiah was born,

then as the Christian Church whom Satan persecutes.¹¹⁷ In Revelations 12:9 the dragon/serpent (*drakón*) is definitively called ‘the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole earth.’¹¹⁸

It is this interpretation of the dragon that was conveyed by the painting on a tablet displayed in front of Constantine’s palace portico. The description of this tablet, contained in *The Life of Constantine* 3:3, clearly names the dragon as the ‘hateful and savage adversary of mankind’ who was banished to the ‘gulf of perdition’ by the power of the ‘salutary sign’ that was placed above its head.¹¹⁹ At no time in the English translation of Eusebius’s Greek text is the ‘salutary sign’ definitely identified with the Cross of Christ, and may instead have referred to the *Chi-Rho* symbol described in *The Life of Constantine* 1:31.¹²⁰ However, later Greek versions of both the vision and the standard by which Constantine conquered clearly associated this ‘salutary sign’ with the cross of Christ.¹²¹ The 6th-century Latin *Historica Tripartita*, the account most likely known in the Insular world, also clearly associates the sign with the Cross.¹²² In any case, early Christian artistic representations of a dragon placed below a cross clearly referred to the defeat of the enemy of mankind by Christ and his

¹³³ Biblical exegesis goes far beyond this simple explanation of these verses, but at its most basic level, this interpretation is standard. See H. May and B. Metzger (eds.), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 1503-1504, nt.12.1-17.

¹¹⁸ *Et proiectus est draco ille magnus serpens antiquus qui vocatur Diabolus et Satanas qui seducit universum orbem proiectus est in terram et angeli eius cum illo missi sunt.*

¹¹⁹ Eusebius, *The Life of Constantine* 3:3, *NPNF*, 2nd series, vol. 1, p. 520; Appendix 1F.

¹²⁰ Though a Latin version of the *Vita* is contained in *PL* 8, it is not an edition of an early medieval Latin text. It does not appear as if the *Vita* were translated in its entirety into Latin until 1549. See ‘Special Prolegomena to the *Life of Constantine*’, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 1: 466-469; Appendix 1A.

¹²¹ See Socrates Scholasticus *Ecclesiastical History* 1:2, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2:2; Sozamen, *Ecclesiastical History* 1:3, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2: 241-242;

¹²² See Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita* 1:4-5, *PL* 69:888-889; Appendix 1B. See Appendix 1A for the Insular circulation of the Tripartite History.

followers. Apocryphal legends, which related stories of the apostles who banished ‘great serpents’ or dragons through the power of the cross only added to this type of imagery.¹²³

Revelations 9:17-19 might also provide a clue as to the significance of the serpent-headed tail on the TR20 beast. It describes the poet’s vision of the four horses, whose power resided in their mouths and tails, ‘for their tails are like to serpents and have heads: and with them they hurt.’¹²⁴ Commentary by both Gregory the Great and Bede addressed the significance of these serpent-headed tails, likening them to the power of evil speech by ‘men of the world’ or false prophets.¹²⁵ In other words, a serpent-headed tail could be interpreted as a mark of blasphemy, or heresy and it probably made little difference what sort of creature it was attached to. Its appearance on the TR20 beast would simply reinforce one of the other various meanings attached to dragons and serpents, that of heresy.¹²⁶

Gregory the Great also portrayed the dragon as a physical manifestation of the torments of hell awaiting the unreformed sinner. Both Homily 19:7 and Dialogue 4:38 relate the story of a sinful man near death who tells the praying monks grouped around him that he has been cast out to be devoured by the dragon, and only their presence has prevented it from doing more than engulfing the monk’s head in its jaws. Likewise, Dialogue 2:25 describes a dragon with gaping jaws who prevents a monk from leaving the monastery.¹²⁷ It is possible

¹²³ See *The Acts of Philip* 9:102-105, in James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 447. No extant Latin text of this account is available, though a Latin version of Philip’s deeds does exist in the *Apostolic History of Abdias* 10:2. See James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 438-439, 469; Appendix 1A for the probable circulation of the various *Actae* in Britain and Ireland.

¹²⁴ *potestas enim equorum in ore eorum est et in caudis eorum nam caudae illorum similes serpentibus habentes capita et in his nocent.*

¹²⁵ Gregory the Great, *Moralia Expositio in Iob* 33.48, CCSL 143B: 1715.1-58; Appendix 1F; J. Bliss (ed.), *Gregory the Great: Morals on the Book of Job* (Oxford: Parker, 1850), 3.2: 601; Cf. Bede: *Explanatio Apocalypsis* 9: 17-19, PL 93: 158-160; Appendix 1F.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 2, p. 72, note 127. See also Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 90.13, CCSL 39, 1275-1276.1-30.

¹²⁷ Gregory the Great, *Homilia* 19:7, PL 76:1158; *Dialogi* 2:25, PL 66:182; *Dialogi* 4:38, PL 77: 389-392; Appendix 1F. For the Insular circulation of these texts see Appendix 1A.

therefore to view the dragon on TR20 as a warning against heresy and of the torments of hell that await sinners, especially sinning monks.

On the other hand, a different picture of the dragon emerges in certain Old Testament passages and Apocryphal legends, and it is this other interpretation that may best explain the specific depiction and placement of the dragon on the TR20 fragment.

For instance Isaiah 43:20 predicts that ‘the wild beasts will honour me, the dragons (*tannoth*) and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.’¹²⁸ Likewise Psalm 148:7 instructs ‘Praise the Lord from the earth, you dragons and all deeps.’¹²⁹ Once again, the prophecy in Habakkuk 3:2, *In medio duorum animalium innotesceris; dum appropriaverint anni cognosceris*, must also be considered. While the species of the *animalia* in the verse is not specified, Ó Carragáin has argued that they were associated with the lion, dragon, asp and basilisk of Psalm 90:13, at least by the sculptors of the relevant panel of the Ruthwell Cross,¹³⁰ and it may be that Portmahomack sculptors also had this verse in mind when they carved the beast on TR20. In addition, dragons worship Jesus in apocryphal material that was available to the Insular world. For instance, in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, the child Jesus is worshiped by the dragons that inhabit the cave in which the Holy Family attempts to rest during their flight out of Egypt:

Suddenly a number of dragons came out of the cave, and all cried out in fear. Jesus got down from his mother’s lap and stood before the dragons, which worshiped him. Thus was fulfilled the words, “Praise the Lord out of the earth, ye dragons and all deeps.”¹³¹

¹²⁸ *glorificabit me bestia agri dracones et strutiones quia dedi in deserto aquas flumina in invio ut darem potum populo meo electo meo.*

¹²⁹ *Laudate Dominum de Terra, dracones et omnes abyssi.*

¹³⁰ Ó Carragáin, ‘The Meeting of Saint Paul and Saint Anthony,’ pp. 4-5.

¹³¹ *Et ecce subito de spelunca egressi sunt multi dracones, quos videntes pueri prae nimio timore exclamaverunt. Tunc descendens Iesus de gremio matris suae, pedibus suis stetit ante dracones: illi vero adoraverunt Iesum; deinde recesserunt ab eis. Tunc adimpletum est quod dictum est per David prophetam dicentem: Laudate dominum de terra dracones, dracones et omnes abyssi. Pseudo-Matthaei Evangelium 18, in Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha*, p. 81. English translation from James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 74-75. This*

While this function of the dragon has received less attention than its portrayal as the enemy of mankind and the beast of Revelations, it might be worth examining the beast on TR20 in the light of its role as a creature that recognises and worships Christ. Although the composition is fragmented, it is clear that the dragon must have been located to the left of the cross (which was possibly saltire-shaped - see below) and above the cross arm, rather than below the cross. Furthermore, its bent legs, if deliberately intended, are characteristic of an attitude of submission, or kneeling in worship (though this might have been a means of filling the awkward space). Unfortunately, the right side of this composition has yet to be found, so the possibility that it might have contained another dragon or beast cannot be confirmed, but as it survives, the beast, its attitude and relationship to the cross, certainly invoke a reference to Christ recognised and worshipped between two *animalia*.

The Decorative Panel:

The remains of the decorative panel beneath the dragon suggest two possibilities for reconstructing the form of the cross that once might have existed on the cross-slab that produced this fragment. The first is a type of stylised 'wheel-cross', the most popular form of the cross in Ireland. Rather than a continuous circle around the cross, however, the TR20 cross would have had four individual diamond-shaped panels connected by a circular, flat-band moulding.

The second type of cross that is suggested by the remains of the diamond-shaped panel on the TR20 fragment is a saltire, or X-shaped cross. This cross is most commonly associated with St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. The legend of his martyrdom

episode is also quoted directly in *Vercelli Homily 6*. See M. Förster (ed.), *Die Vercelli Homilien: 1-8 Homilie* (Darmstadt, 1964), pp. 134-135, lines 66-77; D. Scragg, *The Vercelli Homilies* (Oxford, 1992), lines 63-68.

relates that he was bound with ropes, rather than nailed, to a cross, and it is popularly held that these ropes, which took the form of a saltire, are the origin of the cross shape which became his symbol.¹³² The appearance of such a cross at Portmahomack, along with the possible portrait of Andrew on the other side of the fragment, could, therefore, be taken as extremely early evidence of the cult of St Andrew in Scotland. Unfortunately, the saltire was not used as an emblem of St Andrew until the 10th-century and did not become a popular representation of his martyrdom until the 14th-century.¹³³

It is thus more likely that the design on TR20, if it does indeed represent the corner of a saltire-style cross, simply represents the *Chi* or *X*, the most ancient Christian cross form, which was a short-hand symbol for the name and person of Christ, especially when combined with the *Rho* symbol.¹³⁴ Until further reconstruction of the cross-slab is undertaken it is impossible to determine what cross-design existed; however, it seems entirely possible that a conflation of the saltire and either a patriarchal or Latin cross was depicted on this stone. In view of the cosmic proportions of the Cross that are symbolised by the *Chi*, such a representation would not be out of place on a cross-slab.¹³⁵

Viewed as a whole, the decoration on the face of the TR20 fragment might also be intended to invoke recollections of Constantine's victorious standard that he caused to be made after his miraculous vision of the glowing 'sign' in the air. Eusebius describes the standard in the following manner:

A long spear, overlaid with gold, formed the figure of the cross by means of a transverse bar laid over it. On the top of the whole was fixed a wreath of gold and precious stones; and within this, the symbol of the Saviour's name, two letters indicating the name of Christ by

¹³² K. Jones, *The Saints of the Anglican Calendar* (London, 2000), p. 331.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Smith and Cheetham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* 1: 494-495.

¹³⁵ See Ch. 1, pp. 26, 28-29, for the exegesis that lies behind the symbolism of the *Chi*.

means of its initial characters, the letter P being intersected by X in its centre: and these letters the emperor was in the habit of wearing on his helmet at a later period. From the cross-bar of the spear was suspended a cloth, a royal piece, covered with a profuse embroidery of most brilliant precious stones; and which, being also richly interlaced with gold, presented an indescribable degree of beauty to the beholder. This banner was of a square form, and the upright staff, whose lower section was of great length, bore a golden half-length portrait of the pious emperor and his children on its upper part, beneath the trophy of the cross, and immediately above the embroidered banner. The emperor constantly made use of this sign of salvation as a safeguard against every adverse and hostile power, and commanded that others similar to it should be carried at the head of all his armies.¹³⁶

While the TR20 fragment certainly does not feature a half-length portrait of Constantine and his children, the description of the jewelled embroidery and the *Chi Rho* symbol is reminiscent of the remains of the ornament that do exist on the stone, and it is not too far-fetched to imagine that the monument might have been conceived as a stone rendition of an embroidered standard expressing the victory of the new faith. At the same time, it is interesting to note that typical Roman standards featured a hanging cloth embroidered with a serpent or dragon, the most common ensign of the Roman cohorts.¹³⁷ The depiction of the dragon under the cross on the stone tablet outside Constantine's palace also shows how Constantine was able to amalgamate the two forms: placing the common symbol of military might that existed on most Roman standards under the new symbol embroidered on his. In this way he co-opted and negated the pagan power of the dragon. It is impossible to know if the Portmahomack patrons or sculptors knew of Eusebius's accounts of Constantine's standard, or the tablet outside his palace, or what typical Roman standards looked like. However, since Constantinian references are made elsewhere on Insular sculpture, such as on

¹³⁶ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 1:31, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 1: 490-491. Cf. Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* 1:3, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2: 242, and Ps-Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Triparta* 1:5, *PL* 69: 888.

¹³⁷ See W. Smith and S. Cheetham, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 2nd edn (London, 1878), pp. 1044-1045.

the Jarrow cross-slab (Jarrow 16),¹³⁸ which invokes Constantine's vision in the inscription flanking the central cross, it may be possible to see in the design of TR20 an amalgamation of these forms rendered in stone: the embroidery and precious stones of the hanging cloth, the 'salutary sign' depicted as the *Chi Rho*, and the dragon.

SIDE B:

The Animal Panel:

While the scene in the top panel might possibly present a variation of a 'typical' Pictish hunt scene in which two lions prepare to eat, or perhaps fight over, the lower half of an animal carcass while a bear lurks in the background, it is also possible that the scene carries a Christian significance. As discussed in Chapter 3, both lions and bears were depicted in the Old Testament as beasts that were to be feared and subdued: David, Samson and Daniel were all able to overcome lions, or escape their harm through the power of the Lord, while Psalm 90:13 assures those who believe in the Lord will be able to tread on the lion and serpent. Proverbs 28:15 directly compares a wicked ruler to a roaring lion and a charging bear, while 1 Peter 5:8 goes even further, equating a roaring lion with the devil. These are just a few examples out of many that characterise the lion as a ravenous beast, or use the lion as a symbol for evil. At the same time, the ferocity and dangerous nature of bears is cause for comment in many Old Testament verses such as 2 Kings 2:24, Proverbs 17:2 and 28:15, 2 Samuel 17:18, Hosea 13:8, Isaiah 11:7, and Amos 5:19.

The association between lions and bears in 1 Samuel 17: 34-37 is particularly relevant to a consideration of the scheme on TR20. As discussed in chapter 2, this passage lies behind

¹³⁸ Cramp, *CASS 2*, plate 96:520

the many depictions of David rending the lions' jaws on Insular monuments, including that at Nigg.

It is possible that the scene on TR20 portrays the prequel to David rending the lion's jaws, in effect depicting the damage already done by the marauding lions and bears. While the truncated carcass between the lions does resemble that of a deer more than that of a sheep since it lacks a woolly fleece, there is precedence for the depiction of a hairless sheep's carcass on the 7th-century Byzantine silver plate cited above.¹³⁹ As the series of silver plates to which this plate belongs have also been cited as possible models for the depiction of David rending the lion's jaws on the Nigg cross-slab (see Chapter 2) it might also be possible that the Portmahomack sculptor was following an eastern convention in his portrayal of a woolless sheep carcass. In any case, if the scene can be read in this way, the meaning conveyed would be similar to that intended by the more typical rendition of David scenes: the deliverance from evil through the power of the Lord. As David took the sheep from the lions and bears, so Christ, through his sacrifice on the Cross, saves all the faithful.

A passage in Amos might also contribute to the possible interpretation of this scene. Amos 3:12 reads 'Thus saith the Lord: As if a shepherd should get out of the lion's mouth two legs, or the tip of the ear: so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria, in a piece of a bed, and in the couch of Damascus.'¹⁴⁰ Though the gist of Amos's message (when the passage is placed within the context of the whole book) is that the majority will perish and only the remnants (a leg, or an ear) of the Israelites will be saved from the coming catastrophe, Basil of Caesaria puts the prophecy to a different use. In a letter to a lapsed monk, he writes,

¹³⁹ Toynbee and Painter, 'Silver Picture Plates of Late Antiquity,' no. 68, plate XXVIc.

¹⁴⁰ *Haec dicit Dominus quomodo si eruat pastor de ore leonis duo crura aut extremum auriculae sic eruentur filii Israhel qui habitant in Samaria in plaga lectuli et in Damasco grabatti.*

Remember the good shepherd who will follow and rescue you.
Though it be but two legs or a lobe of an ear, spring back from the
beast that has wounded you... Recall your recollection of how it is
written in the Scriptures that he who is falling rises and he who turns
away returns, the wounded is healed, the prey escapes....¹⁴¹

In essence, Basil sees hope in the rescue of even the smallest portions of the animal devoured by lions. Whether reading Samuel or Amos, the message seems clear: through the power of the Lord and the salvation available through the acceptance of Christ, one can be rescued from evil. The specific message to monks may also be pertinent when considered alongside the metaphor of the torments in hell that await a sinning monk, which may be embodied by the dragon on the other side of the cross-slab fragment.

Additional possible readings of this scene rely on the interpretation of the significance of the row of figures in human composition, below.

The Human Composition:

As discussed above, it is most likely that row of figures in this panel represent a group of apostles, and possibly Christ. Definitive identification of the apostles is more difficult. Although the parallels with eastern models that depict Andrew with long wavy hair are compelling, the question of the availability of this iconographic code within the Insular world is an issue. With the exception of the 'Hedda Stone', which is assigned an 8th-century date and is therefore most likely contemporary with the Tarbat material, there are no Insular models for this type of representation. It could be argued that the artists were following written descriptions such as those found in '*De Tonsura Apostolorum*' contained in the late 8th-century Irish collection known as the Reference Bible, but the description of Andrew

¹⁴¹ Basil of Caesaria: *Letter XLIV*, *NPNF 2nd series*, 8:147. Although there is no evidence that this particular letter was known in the Insular world, many of his other works were. See Appendix 1A.

within this list states that in addition to his grey beard he bore an image of the cross on his hair.¹⁴² Likewise the list entitled '*De Figuris Apostolorum*', an 11th-century text that is most likely based on a now lost 7th-century exemplar written by Cummianus Longus, describes Andrew only as having a long beard and long white hair, while Matthew, Thomas and John the Baptist are all described as having curly hair.¹⁴³ It is only in one of the later Irish variations of the list that Andrew is described as having dark, wavy hair and a long beard. Unfortunately, so are John, Bartholomew, Matthew and John the Baptist.¹⁴⁴ While it is therefore difficult to sustain the argument from the literary evidence that it is Andrew depicted second from the right on TR20, his distinctive characteristics were clearly established by the 6th century in the east, so it is possible to see that individual apostles with recognisable traits might have been intended by the sculptor.

The truncated nature of the group makes it impossible to state with surety what the scene may have represented in its original state, but a few different scenarios can be considered. One is that the scene depicted Christ's mission to the apostles. This mission is recorded in Matthew 10:9-11, and Mark 6:8-9, wherein he instructs the apostles to preach his message to the world. The presence of the sandal on the right-most apostle, and the possible staff in the hands of the bushy-haired apostle might further indicate that the sculptor was following Mark's account rather than Matthew's, since Matthew's account specifically forbade both sandals and staffs: 'Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff; for the labourer deserves his food.'¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² See D. Ó Cróinín, 'Cummianus Longus and the Iconography of Christ and the Apostles in Early Irish Literature,' in Donnchadh Ó Corráin *et al* (eds.), *Sages, Saints and Storytellers* (Maynooth, 1989), pp. 269, 277, for '*De Tonsura Apostolorum*.'

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* pp. 270-271, 277.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 271-272, 277-278.

¹⁴⁵ *nolite possidere aurum neque argentum neque pecuniam in zonis vestris non peram in via neque duas tunicas neque calciamenta neque virgam dignus enim est operarius cibo suo.*

Mark's account, on the other hand, states that 'He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff, no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.'¹⁴⁶ A depiction of the Christ's mission to his apostles would also complement one of the messages possibly conveyed by the animal panel carved above it; read as the Old Testament and New Testament ways of salvation possible through faith and the power of the Lord.

At the same time, the presence of apostles on a Portmahomack monument might have conveyed a generalised knowledge of contemporary trends in Rome and been used to proclaim the orthodoxy of the Tarbat church. According to Hawkes, images of Christ flanked by twelve apostles were popular in western Christian art from the 4th- 6th century, and were then revived in the late 8th century under Leo III (798-9) 'with the intention of displaying the contemporary papal policy of spreading the faith and strengthening the position of the Church of Rome in Western Europe.'¹⁴⁷ Such representations in the Insular world therefore not only demonstrated a knowledge of events in Rome but also conveyed much the same message of Christ's divine authority, the spread of the sacred faith, and the establishment of the Church. Likewise, it has been argued that the so-called 'Apostle-shafts' in Deiran Northumbria or Mercia were propaganda art reaffirming the Roman roots of a church aspiring to metropolitan status, and that apostles represent orthodoxy.¹⁴⁸ It is certainly reasonable to assume that these ideas may lie behind the decision to carve apostles on the cross-slab that produced the TR20 fragment. Regardless of their number, apostles represent the spread of faith, the

¹⁴⁶ *et praecepit eis ne quid tollerent in via nisi virgam tantum non peram non panem neque in zona aes sed calciatos sandaliis et ne induerentur duabus tunicis.*

¹⁴⁷ Hawkes, 'The Art of the Church, p. 345.

¹⁴⁸ Lang, 'The Apostles in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture,' p. 272.

establishment of the Church, and orthodoxy. At the same time they could also reflect knowledge of contemporary Roman papal policy.

According to Lang, the apostles on the Deiran monuments also conveyed a meaning that was related to their placement in the landscape. He argues that the second aspect of the apostolic mission was Baptism, and it is no coincidence that all of the 'apostle pillars' are located near the river valleys of the Pennines, where they easily could have marked out baptismal sites.¹⁴⁹ The same might hold true for a Portmahomack cross-slab depicting the apostles. Certainly there is a stream that runs along the bottom of the hill upon which the Old Church is situated, and it is quite possible that baptisms were performed there.

If this is true, and the Portmahomack apostles conveyed a specific baptismal significance, then it is also possible to draw some connections between the iconography of the front and the back of the TR20 fragment. For instance, Cyril's *Catechises* instructs how the sacrament of baptism breaks the power of the dragon/serpent.

...He went down and bound the strong one in the waters, that we might receive power to tread upon serpents and scorpions. The beast was great and terrible ...destruction ran before him ravaging all that met him. Then Life encountered him, that the mouth of Death might henceforth be stopped, and all that are saved might say, O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is drawn by Baptism.¹⁵⁰

Likewise, Cyril's *Procatechesis* 16, which instructed the catechumens to be 'shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace' so that one may pass the enemy serpent and enter into the presence of the Lord,¹⁵¹ might also contribute to the symbolism of the sandal worn by the full-length figure on TR20.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 280-81.

¹⁵⁰ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechises* 3:11, *NPNF*, 2nd series v. 7:17.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* *Procatechesis* 16, *NPNF*, 2nd series, v. 7:5; Appendix 1F.

One additional reading of the human panel may also be suggested, which would complement a slightly different reading of the animal panel depicted above it. It may be that the row of figures does not represent apostles, or Christ and the apostles, but rather a priest flanked by attendants as they celebrate mass. Indeed, the book held in the hands of the rightmost figure might be meant to recall the Lenten liturgical ceremony of *Apertio Aurium*, wherein the four gospel books were brought in procession to the altar and presented to a congregation of catechumens.¹⁵² Ó Carragáin, arguing that the ceremony was known in the Insular world, writes that

The overwhelming visual effect of the *Apertio aurium* ceremony must have been to associate the four gospel books with the altar, and so to drive home the words of the opening homily, that all four gospels announce the same truth: Christ, known through his incarnation and actions.... This visual progression is analogous to the structure of the mass, which began with readings from scripture and the gospels, and ended with the Eucharistic sacrifice, celebrated on the altar.¹⁵³

On the TR20 fragment, the altar of sacrifice might be alluded to by the animal composition above, wherein lions eat either a sacrificial lamb (Christ) or a deer (Christ) conveniently divided, perhaps in reference to the 'broken bread' of the Last Supper.¹⁵⁴ The fact that the divided beast is flanked by two lions could also be yet another reference to the phrase *in medio duorum animalium* from the Canticle of Habakkuk, echoing the message of the *Apertio aurium* ceremony and the four gospels; that Christ is known through his incarnation and actions.

Summary:

¹⁵² Ó Carragáin, 'Traditio evangeliorum,' pp. 400-407.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 402.

¹⁵⁴ ...*et accepto pane gratias egit et fregit et dedit eis dicens hoc est corpus meum quod pro vobis datur hoc facite in meam commemorationem* (Luke 22:19). Cf. Mark 14:22, Matt 26:26.

Whether this is the case, it can be seen that the iconography of TR20 suggests a range of possible interpretations, despite its fragmented state. The dragon may be read as a symbol of evil, heresy, the temptations that lie in wait to capture sinners, the torments of hell that await sinners, or even pagan military might. As such, its power has been defeated by the power of Christ, symbolised on the front by the fragment of the Cross, and on the back by the Apostolic mission of preaching and baptism and the establishment of the Church. At the same time, if the dragon is read more benignly as one of two beasts recognising and worshipping Christ, then the message could also be complemented by the possible depiction of the *Apertio aurium* liturgical ceremony and the animal panel above. Likewise, the back of the fragment may represent an Old and New Testament typology of the salvation possible through Christ, a reading which would again complement any of the interpretations available for the dragon.

As discussed above, there is a very strong likelihood that TR20 and TR10 came from the same monument.¹⁵⁵ The combination of a relief inscription with multivalent messages of the salvation possible through the recognition of the Lord, the establishment of the universal church, and the practice of his works, strongly suggests that the cross-slab was a memorial to a high-ranking ecclesiastic within the Tarbat *monasterium*, perhaps one who was responsible for the conversion and baptism of many of the local populace. However, the vast majority of this slab is unrecovered, and it may be that like the other cross-slabs on the peninsula it featured scenes that could also be read on a secular level. If this is the case, then the slab may have been erected as a memorial to a local ruler who greatly contributed to the well-being of the monastic estate.

¹⁵⁵ It is also likely that the TR40 fragment (unpublished), which features an almost identical layout of spirals and peltae to that carved on TR10 and TR20, also came from the same monument.

TR22¹⁵⁶

TR22 is a damaged recumbent monument made from yellow, fine-grained micaceous sandstone, which retains relief carving along two horizontal faces. Found upside down in 1996 during excavation of the north aisle and nave of Tarbat Old Church, TR22 was bonded into the lowest course of rubble of the 10th-12th-century wall of the church.¹⁵⁷ The slab is currently displayed in the Tarbat Discovery Centre.

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION

SIDE A (figs. 5.16, 5.17)

The long narrow face on Side A features the remains of three recessed panels (fields 1-3) carved with relief animals.

Field 1:

Broken at the bottom, this left-most panel contains a naturalistically portrayed right-facing quadruped with an erect, though downward-pointing head featuring a forward pointing ear, a blunt muzzle and fang, and an extended tongue. Both the chest and torso are thick, with the torso tapering slightly at the haunches. While the creature paces to the right, its long tail is pressed close to the body and curves up between its hind legs.

Field 2:

The intact middle panel contains a naturalistically portrayed quadruped that moves to the right with its downward hanging head touching its raised right foreleg. The animal is

¹⁵⁶ See Appendix 2D for a detailed description of measurements, condition and carved decoration.

¹⁵⁷ See *Bull 3*, <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin3/church.html>

characterised by a curved back, cloven feet, and a short, strait tail, and its head features an erect, pointed ear, an oval shaped eye, and a long snout with a visible tusk and slightly curved mouth.

Field 3:

Only a fraction of the third panel at the right edge remains, and the head of the left-facing quadruped is still visible. This head is characterised by a squared snout with a pointed nose, an erect pointed ear that is wide at the base, a clearly visible fang, and an open mouth with an extended tongue.

SIDE B (fig. 5.17)

The shorter end of the recumbent monument features a cross with equal length, square-ended arms and hollow, rounded armpits, which is carved in relief within a recessed panel.

DISCUSSION

Comparative Material

SIDE A

Field 1:

Although it lacks an amorphous form extending from its jaws, this beast and the beast identified as a lion in field 4B on Side A of the Shandwick cross-slab both display thick chests, torsos that narrow at the hindquarters, long tails, and leonine heads with small erect ears, open jaws, one visible fang. Therefore it is quite likely that the TR22 creature in this field is also meant to represent a lion. Creatures identified as lions appear on numerous

Insular monuments, most often in conjunction with David scenes (such as on the side B of the Nigg cross-slab), but also on an individual basis. For instance, leonine beasts with slightly thicker bodies and chests are carved on the back of TR20, while the leonine creatures carved within the figural scene on TR1 display much narrower bodies, as do the possible lions carved within the Nigg pediment.

Field 2:

The curved back, cloven feet, elongated, and the pointed muzzle with a tusk, all point to identification of the creature in this panel as a pig or a boar. Creatures identified as boars are carved on three Pictish symbol stones, one at Dunadd in Argyll, another at Dores (Clune Farms) Inverness-shire, and a third at Knocknagael, Sutherland.¹⁵⁸ Those portrayed on the stones at Knocknagael and Dores are almost identical with stiff legs, stylised shoulder-scrolls, and erect dorsal ridges. The shallow incising and worn state of the stone at Dunadd make the details difficult to discern, but from what can be seen the basic style is the same with shoulder scrolls and stiff legs pacing to the right. Less stylised boars are figured on the cross-slab fragment Abercromby 4, (Fifeshire), where it appears underneath a left-facing quadruped and above a human figure and is also characterised by an erect dorsal ridge, and within the figural composition on St Vigean's 1, where it walks directly into the path of a kneeling archer (fig. 3.10).¹⁵⁹ Like the TR22 boar, the St Vigean's boar does not have an erect dorsal ridge.

Field 3:

¹⁵⁸ See *ECMS 2*, figs 100, 108, and STAMS Pictish Stones, <http://www.stams.strath.ac.uk/research/Yies/pictish/database/index.php> images 71, 37, and 146 (05 September 2002).

¹⁵⁹ *ECMS 2*, figs 364 and 250b.

The animal head in this damaged panel displays a wider, blunter muzzle, a more prominent, sharper nose, and a thicker, more erect ear than the animal in field 1. Therefore, despite the overall impression of a leonine beast, it is quite possible that the sculptor originally depicted a canine type of beast, such as a wolf or dog. Due to the fragmented state of this creature, no parallels have been sought.

In terms of the overall arrangement of the creatures on TR22, the presentation of a horizontal group of individual animals can be seen on three recumbent monuments at Meigle. While the animals are not separated into individual panels on Meigle 12 and 22, Meigle 9 (fig. 5.18) displays individual animals, fantastical beasts, and humans in separate panels, though damage makes it difficult to positively identify any of the creatures portrayed.¹⁶⁰ An even closer parallel to the arrangement on TR22 lies in a series of late 7th to early 8th-century sculptural fragments from a string-course or frieze at Hexham. Hexham 34 depicts the remains of a right-facing creature that has been identified as a boar (though it doesn't display any of the characteristics, such as tusks, or erect dorsal ridge, which would support this identification), while Hexham 33 contains the remains of a left-facing cow and Hexham 35 displays the remains of a lion.¹⁶¹ The boar and cow appear to belong together in terms of size and technique while the lion may come from a separate group. Cramp believes that these animals are the remains of an animal frieze such as those found in Iranian art and in early Christian churches of the Middle East.¹⁶²

SIDE B:

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* figs. 343, 346c, 350.

¹⁶¹ Cramp, *CASS* 1:189-190, plates 184: 1007-11, 185:1012-15.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 190.

The hollow-armed, equal armed cross with squared terminals is the most popular shape of the cross in Pictland, Scotland, and Anglo-Saxon England. It is carved on three other Portmahomack fragments, all from small grave-slabs,¹⁶³ and also on the Shandwick cross-slab, though the shape of the armpits on the Shandwick cross is somewhat irregular.

B) Iconographic Significance

Since TR22 was initially identified as the lid to a sarcophagus,¹⁶⁴ both the Christian and the funerary meanings conveyed by lions and boars will be considered first. As horizontal rows of animals can also suggest other functions for this fragment, other possibilities will also be examined.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the lion was a symbol of both Christ and the Devil and could also function as a symbol of the resurrection due to its ability breath life into its cubs on the third day. As such, it would be a perfectly appropriate subject to decorate a sarcophagus lid. At the same time, it may also be significant that depictions of lions, often pinning down a stag, were common on Roman funerary monuments because they signified the destructive force of death, and served as guardians of the tomb.¹⁶⁵ As many of these monuments could be seen in Roman Britain, it is quite possible that this belief was co-opted by the Picts and lions considered especially relevant creatures with which to decorate tombs.

The boar, on the other hand, had very little Christian significance attached to it. However, it was a very important pagan symbol to Celtic and Germanic peoples as well as to the Romans, and its appearance on the symbol stones in Pictland suggest that it was an

¹⁶³ *Tarbat Sculpt. Cat.* nos. 21, 31, 33.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* no. 22.

¹⁶⁵ E. Phillips, *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani: Corbridge, Hadrian's Wall East of the North Tyne*, (Oxford, 1977), 1.1: 31-32, plates 23-25, 69, 71, figs. 79-83, 253, fig. 262; R. Brewer, *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani: Wales*, (Oxford, 1986), 1.5: 23, plate 12, fig. 29.

important symbol for the pre-Christian Picts as well. For instance, Romans in Britain favoured the boar as a symbol of war and aggression, evidenced by the fact that the boar was the emblem of the 20th Legion, located around Hadrian's wall in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.¹⁶⁶ In addition, boars were carved on Roman altars and used for sacrifices.¹⁶⁷ In Celtic and Germanic cultures, boars were also adopted as battle emblems and used to decorate high status weapons and armour.¹⁶⁸ The depiction of boars on armour functioned apotropaically in that the characteristics of the boar were meant to be transferred to the warriors wearing the armour.¹⁶⁹ As a battle emblem, these representations of the animal nearly all share the feature of an exaggerated dorsal ridge meant to express the ferocity of the boar, and by implication the warrior himself.

Because the boar on TR22 does not display an erect dorsal ridge, and its posture is quite submissive, it is unlikely that it functioned apotropaically or was meant to convey the characteristics of the person interred within. Equally unlikely is the idea that the boar on TR22 might have functioned as a symbol of the 'divine-hunt.' While it has been argued that boars were venerated by the Celts as symbols of the divine hunt which could lead men into the underworld, thus functioning as a medium between the gods and men, the lack of any human hunters on the TR22 makes such an interpretation impossible to sustain.¹⁷⁰

On the other hand, boars may have conveyed a royal, secular meaning to the Picts. It has been argued that the Dunnad 'boar stone' had royal connotations relating to a specific

¹⁶⁶ Phillips, *Corpus Signorum*, 1.1, plates 38-39, figs. 158-163.

¹⁶⁷ Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, p. 53.

¹⁶⁸ For instance, see depictions of armour on the Gundestrup Cauldron, numerous coins, and the 7th-century boar-crested helmet from Benty Grange, Derbyshire, in M. Green, *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth*, (London, 1992), pp. 46, 87, 90-91, 158, 218-219, fig. 4.5; *Symbol and Image in Celtic Religious Art* (London, 1989), pp. 105-106; Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, pp. 25, 64.

¹⁶⁹ Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, pp. 25, 64; Kitzinger, 'Interlace and Icons,' *passim*.

¹⁷⁰ Green, *Symbol and Image*, pp. 105-106, 111, 134-135; *Animals in Celtic Life*, pp. 46-47.

tradition of investing a new lord with authority.¹⁷¹ Although this tradition, involving standing in a pair of footprints carved on the stone is only documented among the Scottish, it is possible that it dates back to the time when it was erected. Indeed it has been argued that the Dunnad boar was carved during one of the periods of Pictish occupation of the Scottish site, either after 559 AD or 736 AD.¹⁷² It may be, therefore, that as a Pictish, secular symbol, the boar was associated with a certain royal line or Pictish tribe, one that was primarily found around Inverness-shire where the majority of the 'Boar Stones' are found. As a symbol of royalty or nobility, the boar would certainly be an appropriate decoration for a sarcophagus, which, in and of itself, was a very high status burial container.

Evidence of any Christian significance that may have been attached to boars is very slim. Besides appearing in the role of proscribed meat in Leviticus, the boar (or swine in general) is only mentioned once in the Bible, where it is described as a destructive beast.¹⁷³ On the other hand, within a dream vision of Israel's history and future in the Apocryphal *Book of Enoch*, the boar is used as a symbol of the enemies of Israel.¹⁷⁴ Unfortunately, this metaphor is not expanded upon by any Christian exegesis, which instead concentrates solely on the Jewish sanctions against eating unclean animals.¹⁷⁵ Even the *Physiologus* contains no information about the boar, and while later medieval bestiaries do include the boar, there is no Christian significance assigned to it.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, pp. 121-22.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ See Psalm 80:13 (Vulgate 79:14).

¹⁷⁴ 1 Enoch 89:12, in R. Charles (ed.), *The Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch* (Oxford, 1912). *The Book of Enoch* was in circulation in the Insular world. See Appendix 1A.

¹⁷⁵ For example see Clement of Alexandria, *Pedaegogus* 3:3, *ANCL* 4: 326. There is no evidence this work was known in the Insular world, see Appendix 1A.

¹⁷⁶ Baxter, *Bestiaries and their Users*, pp. 128-132; J. Benton, *The Medieval Menagerie: Animals in the Art of the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1992), pp. 67-68.

It is therefore unlikely that the boar on TR22 conveys any specific Christian meaning. Neither is it likely that it conveys any apotropaic meaning associated with war or the hunt, due to its lack of erect dorsal ridges and its curious crouching posture. While it may be conceivable that such a creature would decorate the tomb of a warrior, it may be significant that there appears to be no artistic precedent for this. The boar does not appear on any Romano-British funerary monuments, nor on any Celtic or Germanic burial monuments. Its presence on the two Pictish cross-slabs is equally unhelpful in determining its possible significance on TR22. While the fragmentary nature of the Abercromby stone makes it impossible to determine the context of the scene within which the possible boar appears, the St Vigean's boar is clearly in a hunt scene. Here, it is possible to interpret the boar as a symbol of one of the enemies of Israel, as it is described in the *Apocalypse of Enoch*, or simply as a destructive force as it is presented in Psalm 80:13. Within these contexts, the boar is an appropriate creature to be hunted down with the arrows of faith. Unfortunately, as the boar on TR22 is not paired with a hunter, and interpretation as an enemy of Christianity, or simply as a desired prey, cannot explain its presence on the stone. The most plausible explanation for its presence on TR22 may therefore lie with the parallel to the animal frieze at Hexham.

While individual animals could be open to the interpretations of the local people, perhaps functioning as symbols of their collective pagan past, rows of animals were considered appropriate to decorate walls and church furniture because any individual, perhaps pagan, value of the individual beasts was subsumed by the comprehensive significance of the variety of God's creation.¹⁷⁷ Because of the similarities to the Hexham fragments, which, in

¹⁷⁷ Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art*, p. 81. For example, the 5th- century pulpits from the Cathedral in Ravenna are carved with panels inhabited by individual birds and quadrupeds.

addition to a string of animals within recessed panels, also features additional Christian decoration in the form of a lozenge on the perpendicular end, it is possible that TR22 is not, in fact, a sarcophagus lid, but architectural sculpture that decorated the early church. While the heaviness and size of TR22 most likely precludes its function as an architectural string-course, it may have functioned as an impost, or even an altar.

It is unlikely that the true function of TR22 will ever be determined without doubt, but a survey of both the literary and artistic evidence points more strongly to its use as architectural sculpture or a piece of church furniture than it does to its use as a sarcophagus lid. While there is no compelling iconographic significance that can be attached to either boars or lions to explain their appearance on a high-status Christian burial container, the parallel with the string-course at Hexham suggests that carved animals were considered appropriate ornamentation for churches. The size of TR22 precludes its function as a string-course, but it could have been a decorated impost.

TR28/35:¹⁷⁸

TR28 and 35 are two separate fragments of red, micaceous sandstone that were found over the period of two seasons (1997 and 1998) whilst excavating a stone-lined culvert located in a post-medieval deposit (16th to 17th century) in the Glebe field. Post-excavation, it was discovered that the two pieces fit together and clearly belonged to a larger panel that had been broken up to revet the drain.¹⁷⁹ The left, right, and bottom edges, as well as the back face have all been broken, leaving only the top side smooth and the front face carved. The

¹⁷⁸ See Appendix 2D for a detailed description of measurements, condition and carved decoration.

¹⁷⁹ The drain was not fully excavated in 1998, so additional pieces of the same or contemporary sculpture are anticipated in future seasons. See *Bull* 2-4.

conjoined fragments, which may represent the only stone from Tarbat peninsula originating from a local geological source, are presently displayed in the Tarbat Discovery Centre.¹⁸⁰

DESCRIPTION OF DECORATION

TR28/35 (fig. 5.19) is decorated in a mixture of incised and very shallow relief carving featuring a series of animals, real and fantastic. This figural composition is bordered top and bottom by parallel, incised lines, underneath which is a large area of unworked, but slightly smoothed stone.

In the top right is a left-facing quadruped characterised by a round head and beak, thick chest and torso with a slightly humped back and protuberance hanging from its belly, a long tail high above its back, and stiff legs that terminate in cloven hooves. In addition, scrolls decorate the joints and faint marks on the head and chest suggest feathers. To the left of this creature is a left-facing quadruped with incised shoulder-scrolls. This creature's abnormally elongated forelegs are bent under the torso in an anatomically impossible manner, while the smaller hindlegs are in a posture that gives the impression the animal is about to rear upwards, thus combining characteristics of both rest and motion in one awkwardly portrayed stance. The head of this beast is characterised by a pointed ear, round eye, and a narrow, blunt-muzzled snout.

Below this pair is a large, left-facing quadruped, also carved with incised joint scrolls. The stone is broken along its snout, but the open mouth suggests a protruding tongue. The thick body tapers slightly to the haunches and the long, heavy tail hangs straight down along its hindquarters. The legs vary in length and terminate differently; three end in blunt, block-

¹⁸⁰ See Ruckley, 'Stone for Carving,'

<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html> (15 March 2000).

like paws while the fourth terminates in claws. Only the chest, unnaturally short forelegs, and back hooves of the creature immediately to the left of this animal are visible.

Four beasts occupy the lowest register of the composition, but only the rather unnaturally large forelegs, and comparatively small head, of the left-most creature are visible. The other three beasts, despite their stylised scroll joints are naturalistic and make up an interactive group. That on the left has a thick, heavy body, cloven feet, a long, straight tail, and a head with tapering, blunt muzzled snout, and a curved horn. This creature lowers its head to touch the hindquarters of a smaller, but almost identical animal, which is partially obscured by the head of the third, larger but similar quadruped that is actively engaged in steadying and licking it.

DISCUSSION

A) Comparative Material

The animal pair in top right of TR28/35 has been identified as a manticore attacking a lamb.¹⁸¹ This identification is problematic for several reasons, not the least because it does not conform to Pliny's description of a manticore, which was subsequently repeated in medieval bestiaries.¹⁸² According to the accounts in Pliny and the bestiaries, the manticore has a triple row of teeth, the face of a man, the body of a lion, and a tail like a scorpion; furthermore, it was said to be fond of human flesh, making its interest in the beast to its left difficult to explain.

Creatures that do vaguely accord to the Bestiary descriptions of manticores (at least to the extent that they have semi-human faces with locks of hair) are carved on several Pictish

¹⁸¹ *Tarbat Sculpt Cat.* no. 35.

¹⁸² Baxter, *Bestiaries and their Users*, pp. 29-35.

cross-slabs, such as the reverse of the Gask cross-slab, on the recumbent monument Meikle 26 (where it is pursuing a man as it should be), and on the front of the Rossie Priory cross-slab.¹⁸³ However, these beasts have very little in common with the creature on TR28/35. The so-called manticore at Dunfallandy, like the TR22 creature, displays a beak rather than a human face, but it also features what may be human hair and a scorpion 'sting' at the end of its tail, neither of which are attributes of the TR28/35 creature.¹⁸⁴ Confusing matters further, it may be unlikely that any of these Pictish monsters were intended to represent manticores, if for no other reason than the manticore was not included in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologia* or the *Physiologus* texts that were available to the Insular world.¹⁸⁵ Its incorporation into the later bestiaries, therefore, would have post-dated any Pictish knowledge of the significance of the beast. Therefore, while it is not impossible that the Tarbat beast is meant to represent a manticore, it seems doubtful, and the identity of the composite beast remains unclear. It is also possible that the cross-species characteristics of this creature result from a lack of space or skill rather than a deliberate attempt to convey a mythological beast.

The identity of the large beast located below this composite beast is also unclear. Certain body indicators such as the thick, tapering torso and the long, heavy tail suggests it was meant to represent a lion, but the lack of an ear and the different types of feet confuse the issue.

Thankfully, the identification of the trio of quadrupeds in the lowest register as cattle is less controversial. Cattle were a popular subject for Pictish carvers, with individual bulls, all displaying stylised joint scrolls, incised on eight symbol stones; two at Inverness and six in

¹⁸³ *ECMS* 2, figs. 307, 322a.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* fig. 305a.

¹⁸⁵ See Appendix 1A.

Burghead, in Moray.¹⁸⁶ Cattle are also depicted on eight Pictish cross-slabs, the closest geographically being the pair located within the figural composition on the reverse of Shandwick (fig. 3.3). With the exception of these, however, and the pair of confronted bulls carved on Meigle 12 (fig. 5.20), none show any close stylistic or contextual parallels with the bovine trio on TR28/35, and the only similarity between these latter two depictions and the Portmahomack cattle is that they are the only instances of multiple bovines.¹⁸⁷ Stylistically, neither the Meigle nor the Shandwick cattle have much in common with the naturalism, detail and personality conveyed by the TR28/35 group, which despite a lack of diagnostic sexual characteristics, do suggest a bovine family comprised of a bull, a cow and a calf.

B) Iconographic Significance

Cattle were a major Celtic food source and were vitally important to the success and survival of the tribe.¹⁸⁸ The bull, like the boar, was also respected for its aggressive nature and strength, and has been interpreted as a symbol of fertility, while as the leader of the herd, the bull was understood to have been symbolic of a king, the leader of his clan.¹⁸⁹ Royal connotations, therefore, might have been attached to such artistic representations as the Burghead bulls.

However, the very different nature of cattle on TR28/35, this group of cattle almost certainly expresses a different meaning than those potentially articulated by representations of a single bull, and it is quite possible that this meaning carried a potential Christian

¹⁸⁶ *ECMS* 2, figs. 106, 107, 123-128.

¹⁸⁷ See Ulbster, in Caithness; Cossins, Eassie, Woodrae and St Vigeans 7, all in Angus; Fowlis Wester, in Perthshire, Mortlock, in Moray, and Meigle 12, Perthshire. *ECMS* 2, figs. 31, 162a, 230b, 231, 244, 278, 306b, 346c.

¹⁸⁸ H. Davidson, *Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe: Early Scandinavian and Celtic Religions* (Syracuse, 1988), p. 54.

¹⁸⁹ T. Powell, *The Celts*, new ed.n (New York, 1980), pp. 28, 52.

significance. Cattle appear in a number of Old Testament narratives relating to the injunctions against eating unclean meat, or to the sacrifice of the first-born. According to Leviticus 11:1-3, they were considered 'clean' and suitable for consumption as they chewed their cud, were cloven-footed, and had parted hooves, and it is interesting to note that TR 28/35 portrays the cloven, parted hooves of the cattle very distinctly. Perhaps more pertinent to the interpretation of the cattle group, however, are the various passages in Exodus, Numbers and Leviticus which detail the covenant made between God and the Israelites concerning the first born. Exodus 12: 23-31 relates how Jehovah smote the first-born in Egypt, both man and cattle, but passed over those Israelites who painted blood on their lintels. In recompense, all firstborn sons and all firstborn cattle of the Israelites were dedicated to God.¹⁹⁰ This covenant gave rise to the Levites, the priestly class of the Israelites:

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, 'I take the Levites for myself out of all the Israelites as a substitute for the eldest male child of every woman; the Levites shall be mine. For every eldest child, if a boy, became mine when I destroyed all the eldest sons of Egypt. So I have consecrated to myself all of the first born in Israel, both man and beast.'¹⁹¹

In practical terms, the consecration of the Levites and their first-born cattle meant that the Levites served the Lord spiritually while the cattle were given to the Temple as material wealth. While all of the first-born sons of Israel were still presented ritualistically at the Temple, they did not automatically become priests, as did the Levites. However, it soon became apparent that the Levites were not sufficiently numerous to substitute for the first-born sons, thus giving rise to a payment in silver, known as the *didrachma*. Both traditions

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Exodus 34:19; Numbers 3: 41, 3: 46-51, 18:15-17; Leviticus 27:26.

¹⁹¹ Numbers 3:11-13. *Locutusque est Dominus ad Mosen dicens: ego tuli Levitas a filiis Israhel pro omni primogenito qui aperit vulvam in filiis Israhel eruntque Levitae mei meum est enim omne primogenitum ex quo percussi primogenitos in terra Aegypti sanctificavi mihi quicquid primum nascitur in Israhel ab homine usque ad pecus mei sunt ego Dominus.*

are referred to in the New Testament and discussed by the exegetes. For instance, Jerome relates how Jesus, as the firstborn of Mary, was presented at the Temple in fulfilment of the law given to Aaron, while Ambrose compared the Levites to the Christian clergy of his day in order to demonstrate the relationship between the Old and New Covenants.¹⁹² Thus a relationship could be drawn between first-born sons, first-born cattle, the priestly caste of the Israelites and the priests of the Christian church. At the same time, as a first-born son, Jesus could also be associated with the first-born sacrificial cattle, though additional Old Testament passages and exegesis are necessary to see the connection. For instance, Numbers 19:2-9 relates how God instructed Moses and Aaron to command the Israelites to sacrifice a red heifer by immolation. The blood of the cow was to be sprinkled by a priest against the door of the tabernacle seven times while the ashes of the cow were to be gathered up and mixed with water and used for the expiation of sins, 'because the cow was burnt for sin.'¹⁹³

In the Apocryphal *Epistle of Barnabus*, the author clearly sees the heifer as a metaphor for Jesus:

Now what do you suppose this to be a type of, that a command was given to Israel, that men of the greatest wickedness should offer a heifer, and slay and burn it, ...and that thus the boys should sprinkle the [ashes on] the people, one by one, in order that they might be purified from their sins? The calf is Jesus: the sinful men offering it are those who led him to the slaughter....¹⁹⁴

According to Jerome, this sacrifice of a red cow became a yearly tradition in Jerusalem:

¹⁹² Jerome, *De Perpetua Virginitate B. Mariae, adversus Helvidium, Liber Unus* 10, PL 23: 192-193; NPNF, 2nd series, 6: 339; Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum* 1:50.249-250, PL 16: 99-100; NPNF, 2nd series, 10:42; Appendix 1F. See Appendix 1A for the probable Insular circulation of these works.

¹⁹³ *colliget autem vir mundus cineres vaccae et effundet eos extra castra in loco purissimo ut sint multitudini filiorum Israhel in custodiam et in aquam aspersionis quia pro peccato vacca combusta est.*

¹⁹⁴ *Epistle of Barnabus* 8, ANCL 1: 114-115. Written sometime between the fall of Jerusalem and the mid-2nd century, this apocryphal text was circulated in both Latin and Greek, but there is no specific evidence that it was known in the Insular World. See ANCL 1:99-100.

I will look upon the glistening cross of Mt. Olivet from which the Saviour made his Ascension to the Father. Here year by year a red heifer was burnt as a holocaust to the Lord and its ashes were used to purify the children of Israel. Here also, according to Ezekiel, the Cherubim after leaving the temple founded the church of the Lord.¹⁹⁵

Although Jerome does not specifically relate the sacrificial cow to Jesus, an association between Christ's sacrifice on the cross, the sacrificial heifer, and the foundation of the Temple with their attendant priestly class, is certainly suggested.

Thus, although this relationship between the first-born son, the first-born cattle, the Levites, and Jesus is never made explicit in any specific exegetical work, it is possible that a depiction of a bovine family may have called to mind several interrelated Christian ideas. The first is that of the sacrifice of the first-born demanded by God in recompense for passing over the Israelites in Egypt. At the same time the first-born calf may have served to remind the viewer of the Levites, and perhaps of the duties of the Christian clergy who are also bound to God. The second idea is that of the first-born calf as a *type* of Jesus, who was ritualistically presented at the Temple in fulfilment of the law given to Aaron, while the third is the realisation that Jesus did in fact become a sacrifice, expiating the sins of all and thus forming a New Covenant. Regarded in this way, the cattle family can be seen as a Type of Holy family that simultaneously refers to both the Old and New Covenants that were fulfilled by Christ's death and resurrection. In addition, the stylistic parallels with the Burghead bulls may also have called to mind royal nuances, an association that could apply to either the royalty of Jesus or to a local secular lord. Understood in this manner, the scheme is not

¹⁹⁵ Jerome, *Epistola* 108: *Ad Eustochium Virginem* 12, PL 22: col. 887. *Revertar Jerosolyman, et per Thecuam atque Amos, rutilantem montis Oliveti Crucem aspiciam, de quo Salvator ascendit ad Patrem. In quo per annos singulos Vacca rufa in holocaustum Domino cremabatur, et cujus cinis expiabat populum Israel: in quo, juxta Ezechielem, Cherubim de Templo transmigrantes, Ecclesiam Domini fundaverunt.* Translation from NPNF, 2nd series, 6: 200 This text was most likely known to Adomnán, see Appendix 1A.

inappropriate in the context of a Christian monument, to which TR28/35 might have belonged.

While the fragments' smoothed top edge, and incised borders all suggest that this stone was at some point intended as a finished monument, the poor quality of the majority of the animal depictions suggests that this stone was at some time used as a practice piece. While the interactive trio of creatures in the lowest register is expertly portrayed, the depictions of all the other animals are problematic in terms of proportion or detail. It is difficult to determine whether these unnatural details are the result of incompetence or deliberate mannerisms. For instance, the abnormal crouched pose of the upper beast on the left can also be seen on the TR20 dragon and seems to be a typical Pictish representation, no matter how unnatural it may be in nature. At the same time, the uneven proportions between the forelegs and hindlegs of the same beast may also have resulted from the necessity of accommodating a gravel inclusion, or even by a general lack of space, suggesting that it might have been carved later than the larger beast below.

A possible sequence of events might be that the stone was begun as a sarcophagus panel, a piece of architectural sculpture, or indeed an altar frieze. After carving a top and bottom border, (below which the unfinished stone quite possibly functioned as a tenon), the bovine group was carved. It is possible the left-most creatures were also carved at this time; though their remains seem ill-proportioned now, in their original entirety, such ungainliness might disappear. Faults in the stone, such as the rough grain and gravel inclusions might then have led to the abandonment of the original purpose of the stone, and to its re-use as a practice piece.

In particular, it could be argued that it was used as a practice piece for the top panel of the reverse of TR20. A comparison of the two indicates that the basic compositions echo

each other very closely: in both, a large lion-like creature paces to the left under a smaller humped-back creature. It is entirely possible that the carver was practising the spatial layout before carving the cross-slab, which would explain why the 'lion's' feet on TR28/35 are dissimilar and out of proportion, but are correctly articulated on TR20. It is also possible that the stone went through another period of reuse, with students or apprentices filling in every space available, thus explaining the extremely inept lamb and a possible bear apparently transformed into a 'manticore.' The piece probably broke into fragments before its final reuse as part of a post-medieval drain since TR28 is much less weathered than is TR35, suggesting that the two were separated before the sixteenth-century.

Whether the broken slab ever functioned as a trial piece (and it is quite possible that all of the perceived 'mistakes' were, in fact, intended by the sculptor) the theological significance which can be attached to the cattle group argues for the proposed purpose of display within an ecclesiastical environment at least sometime in its life.

THE CROSS-SHAPES ON THE PORTMAHOMACK GRAVE MARKERS:

In addition to the monumental and architectural carvings, a broad range of smaller slabs (or fragments from such) that feature crosses, but no other decoration, have been found at the Portmahomack ecclesiastical centre.¹⁹⁶ Most likely grave markers from the 8th to 9th-century burial ground, these feature carvings ranging from roughly incised crosses to finely produced relief crosses.¹⁹⁷ The range of cross-shapes represented is noteworthy because, as Carver first recognised, several demonstrate close parallels with grave markers found at

¹⁹⁶ See *Tarbat Sculpt. Cat.*, nos. 19, 21, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34.

¹⁹⁷ See *Bull 2, 3* for a discussion of the archaeological context and dating.

Iona.¹⁹⁸ For instance while the cross shape carved on TR21 (type 12A) is the most common shape found throughout Anglo-Saxon England, Pictland and Scotland, the incised line around the edges of the relief cross is somewhat rarer, and is echoed by the form of the cross on Iona 30.¹⁹⁹ Likewise, the roughly shaped rectangular stone carved with a simple relief cross on TR19 finds parallels with five fragments from similar grave markers there.²⁰⁰ TR 33, which will be discussed in full, below, also finds an important parallel at Iona.

At the same time, some of the Portmahomack grave markers demonstrate similarities to small, carved slabs found at Lindisfarne, and areas of what used to be the Dal Riadan kingdom of Scotland. For instance, Lindisfarne 38, carved with a cross with hollow armpits and squared terminals (type 12A), also features an incised line around the edges of the cross just like TR21, though the interior of the Lindisfarne cross is filled with interlace.²⁰¹ Likewise, plain, incised crosses with double-outlining (such as that found on TR21) are found among the re-used memorials at Govan, while the 'chisel-ended' style of cross incised on the reverse of TR21 is also seen on a small cross-slab from Eilean Naoimh.²⁰² These parallels suggest that this particular style of decorating grave-slabs might have originated at Iona and spread throughout its foundations, though the fact that the 12A style of cross-head was the most popular choice throughout the Insular world must be kept in mind.

TR33

One of the graveslabs at Portmahomack is of particular interest as its cross-shape might reflect the changing liturgical practices at the Tarbat monastery as well as pointing to

¹⁹⁸ Bull 3, fig.9. <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin3/people.html>

¹⁹⁹ RCAHMS, *Argyle*, vol. 4: *Iona*, p. 184, fig. 30.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 191, figs. 72-76.

²⁰¹ See Cramp, *CASS* 1, 201:1135.

²⁰² *ECMS* 2, figs 7, 13, 34, 35, 420.

more widespread connections with Iona and the Continent. TR33 (fig. 5.21) features a cross head with right-angled armpits and wedge-shaped terminals,²⁰³ while a very low relief circular disc is carved in the centre and four additional detached discs are located between the cross arms. An additional set of cross arms appears towards the bottom of the shaft, though these are rather inexpertly carved with the lower line of the arms unevenly sloping downwards from the left to the right. The cross-shaft rests on a horizontal platform characterised by two incised parallel lines.

This represents an amalgamation of two distinctive cross types, the *majestis crucis* and a patriarchal cross. The *majestis crucis* was frequently portrayed with an *imago clipeata* of Christ in the centre of the cross and flanking evangelists or heavenly *zoas*. In extremely simplified form these could appear as five discs, such as that depicted on Iona 16 and TR33.²⁰⁴ In addition, the *majestis crucis* (often depicted covered with gems and thus known as the *crux gemmata*) was often portrayed on a hill signifying Golgotha, and represented the victory of Christ over death and sin, as well as the Second Coming. The cross on TR33, however, is not a simple *majestis crucis*, as it displays an additional set of cross arms towards the base. This configuration might represent a patriarchal cross, characterised by extra arms representing the *titulus* (the plaque over Christ's head) *and/or* the *suppendum* (the board upon which Christ's feet were nailed). These alluded to Christ's suffering and death, and signified his humanity. In essence, patriarchal crosses represented the cross of Christ's Passion, or the 'True Cross' rather than the *crucis majestis*, the triumphal cross of Christ's Second Coming.

²⁰³ Type 1B in Cramp, *CASS* 1: xvi.

²⁰⁴ RCAHMS, *Argyll: vol. 4: Iona*, p. 182, fig. 16.

Discussion

Though not common, patriarchal crosses do appear on several other Early Christian stone monuments of uncertain date in Britain and Ireland, the most significant, in terms of probable contact, being located at Iona (18a), though unlike TR33, none display the *suspendia* rather than the *tituli*.²⁰⁵ While patriarchal crosses could take on several different forms those with an additional set of upper bars were the most popular, while those with an additional set of lower bars were rarely depicted. Very occasionally, crosses with both *titulus* and *suspendium* occurred.²⁰⁶

As discussed in Chapter 3, images of the *crux gemmata* were available to pilgrims visiting the Holy Land, Constantinople, and Italy from as early as the 5th century. While images of patriarchal crosses were not quite so prolific they were also available: an example survives on a relief plaque at the monastery of St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, while the primary relic of the true cross, itself shaped like a patriarchal cross was kept in the church of Golgotha in Jerusalem until the beginning of the 7th century, and then in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.²⁰⁷

A conflation of the jewelled *crux gemmata* with a double-barred cross is depicted on a pectoral-cross reliquary, now in the Monza treasury. Here the patriarchal cross is placed on a

²⁰⁵ See the Welsh pillar stones, one from Egremont Church, Carmathenshire, the other of uncertain provenance; slabs from Duneran, Co. Londerry, and Glendalough, Co. Wicklow in Northern Ireland; and monuments at Torphichen and Cranston, in Midlothian, Craigmailing in West Lothian, and Lowick, on Lowsteads farm in present day Northumberland. See N. Williams, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (Cardiff, 1950), nos. 14: 22, and 414: 113, plate xxv; D. Chart, *A Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland* (Belfast, 1940), p. 140; G. R. Buick, 'On a Double-Cross at Duneran, County Derry,' *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries* 33 (1903): 41-45; RCAHMS, *Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Midlothian and West Lothian* (Edinburgh, 1929), pp. 43, 230-241, nos. 51, 393, fig. 290; J. Crow, 'Donation to the Museum,' *PSAS* 59 (1924-1925): 73, fig 2; RCAHMS, *Argyll: vol. 4: Iona*, pp. 180, 182, fig 18a.

²⁰⁶ In this context it is possible that the designs on some of the cross-carpet pages in Insular manuscripts, such as folio 33r in the *Book of Kells*, and the folio 1v in the *Book of Durrow*, were meant to represent Patriarchal crosses.

²⁰⁷ No longer in existence, this reliquary was nonetheless described by several pilgrims, who reported that the inscribed casket was in the shape of a double-barred cross, and covered with foliate patterns and metal or jewels. See Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 185, 206-207, fig. 9.

stepped base and decorated with foliate forms in a design that combines images of the True Cross, the Tree of Life and the monumental cross on Golgotha.²⁰⁸ In addition to appearing on numerous other reliquaries, such as the Fieschi-Morgan Reliquary, and the Reliquary of St. Croix the patriarchal cross figured on coinage and medals that could be carried easily throughout the Christian west.²⁰⁹ Indeed, the earliest known example found in Britain is depicted on a 6th-century medalet that probably belonged to Bertha, the Merovingian princess married to Ethelbert. Likewise, various forms of patriarchal crosses are also figured on Merovingian and Frisian coins that were found in Anglo-Saxon contexts, as well as upon Anglo-Saxon coins themselves.²¹⁰

The patriarchal cross also appears on a series of late 6th to early 7th-century Merovingian coins that were not found in Anglo-Saxon England, but that may shed light upon the particular configuration of the TR33 cross. Like the Portmahomack grave-marker, these coins feature patriarchal crosses displaying the rarer *suspendia*, rather than the *tituli*.²¹¹ While not demonstrable, it is possible that a coin such as this found its way to the Portmahomack monastery and inspired the figuration of the cross on TR33. Certainly the Frisian sceatta

²⁰⁸ J. Pijoan, *History of Art* (New York, 1927), 2, fig. 233.

²⁰⁹ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 179, 184, figs. 6,7.

²¹⁰ See the 'Bishop Liudhard Medalet' from the Church of St. Martin, Canterbury, currently in the Liverpool, Mayer Collection; the Merovingian gold coin presently in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; several Frisian coins found in the mid 7th-century Crondall hoard; the Anglo-Saxon coin from the same hoard; the Anglo-Saxon coin found at Faversham, Kent, believed to be contemporary with the Sutton Hoo burial; and the 9th-century Byzantine coins of Michael III. See Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' p. 190, figs. 4, 10; C. Sutherland, *Anglo-Saxon Coinage in the Light of the Crondall Hoard* (London, 1984), nos.7, 10, plates 1,5; S. Ringold, 'The Sutton Hoo Coins in the Light of the Contemporary Background of Coinage in England,' in Bruce Mitford (ed.), *The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial I* (London, 1975), p. 659, no. 107, fig. 430; A. Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme Byzantine* (Paris, 1957), plate 45.

²¹¹ F. Cabrol and H. LeClercq (eds.), *Dictionnaire d'Archeologie Chretienne et de Liturgie*, (Paris, 1929), 8.2: 3095-3096, fig 3391: 6-9. These crosses are placed above a globe and several smaller spheres; representing the earth, sun, moon and stars, perhaps demonstrating Christ's dominion over the earth and heavens.

found in an 8th-century context on the Tarbat site attests to the trade between the peninsula and the Continent, and points to the likelihood of such a phenomenon occurring at the site.²¹²

The advent of the patriarchal cross at the monastery at Portmahomack is therefore significant as it not only points to possible links with Merovingian France as well as to the possibility of contact between the monastery, the Continent, and the Holy Land, but also because it suggests the monastery's participation in, or at least knowledge of, the contemporary religious observances and theological debates existing on the Continent and in Rome, most especially those centred around the Cult of the Cross.²¹³ In particular, TR33 might be visual evidence that the *Adoratio Crucis* rite was known at the Portmahomack ecclesiastical centre. In its original form, as it was practised in Jerusalem in the late 4th and early 5th century, this Good Friday rite involved the veneration of the sacred wood of the True Cross. As the pilgrim Etheria reported:

Then a chair is placed for the Bishop in Golgotha behind the Cross... a table covered with a linen cloth is placed before him; the Deacons stand around the table, and a silver-gilt casket is brought in which is the wood of the Holy Cross. The casket is opened and (the wood) is taken out, and both the wood of the Cross and the Title are placed upon the table.... The custom is that the people, both faithful and catechumens, come one by one and, bowing down at the table, kiss the sacred wood and pass on.²¹⁴

Although Etheria only describes a 'silver casket' here, it is possible that the reliquary used during this ceremony depicted the patriarchal cross noted by other pilgrims, thus leading to

²¹² See Mark Blackburn's report on the Frisian 'porcupine' sceatta found at the Portmahomack site Tarbat in *Bull* 4, fig. 8. <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/coin.html>. Though it is possible that the coin circulated in England before moving upwards to Tarbat, Blackburn believes that since this type of Continental coin was quite rare in England in the early 8th century, it is more likely to be evidence of direct shipment between the Continent and Tarbat.

²¹³ See Chapter 1, pp. 31-34, for a discussion of the Cult of the Cross, and its attendant liturgical practices and theological ramifications.

²¹⁴ McClure and Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, pp. 74-75.

the particular association between that cross shape and the Good Friday ritual.²¹⁵ It has been suggested that churches which procured a relic of the True Cross might imitate this ceremony to the letter, but churches without had to make do with an image that represented the reliquary used in the Jerusalem ceremony.²¹⁶ It is only logical to assume that this image would be in the shape of a patriarchal cross, and it may be that the cross on TR33 reflects the possession by the Tarbat monastery of a patriarchal cross-shaped object that was used in an *Adoratio* ceremony.

A final piece of evidence may also be considered. Early Latin *Adoratio crucis* hymns often referred to the eschatological cross of the Second Coming and the Last Judgement. Exegesis bore out this relationship by arguing that the material, yet imperishable, wood of the cross was proof of the Incarnation, and that those parts of the Cross that touched Christ's body miraculously ascended to Heaven to become the cross of the Second Coming.²¹⁷ As previously noted, the design on TR33 contains elements of the *majestis crucis*, exemplified by the five discs, as well as the *suspendium* of the Patriarchal cross. It might therefore be seen as an artistic rendition of the relationship between the two crosses elucidated in the *Adoratio* hymns, and in addition, may represent a conflation that took place over a period of time. The uneven nature of the *suspendium* on TR33, as well as the fact that only the areas adjacent to the base of the cross-shaft have been roughly carved out in order to create the relief, suggests the possibility that the original design might have depicted only a *majestis crucis*, with the slightly curved upper line of the lower cross-bars intended to represent the hill of Golgotha. The transformation of the hill into a *suspendium* could have been achieved

²¹⁵ See Ch. 1, pp. 31-33.

²¹⁶ T.P Gilmartin, 'Good Friday' *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Online Edition, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06643a.htm> (02 May 2002)

²¹⁷ See Chapter 1, p. 27.

quite simply by adding a second parallel line and extending the shaft down to the border.

Such an addition, made by an inexpert sculptor (as reflected by the uneven lines and poor attempt at relief) might very well have been a response to the emerging Cult of the Cross and new liturgical practices introduced into the monastery.

TR225

TR225 (fig. 5.22), a small sandstone fragment possibly originating from a gravemarker, might also point to contemporary religious beliefs and liturgical practices at the *monasterium*.²¹⁸ This worn piece bears the remains of a shallowly incised design consisting of two irregular, unevenly carved circular scrolls springing to either side of a central line. An almost identical design can be seen on Iona 19 (see fig. 5.23), an early Christian gravemarker featuring a simple incised cross with double volutes that spring from the cross arms and upper shaft. Although this slab was subsequently carved with a simple sunken cross, largely obliterating the earlier design, the volutes can still be seen.²¹⁹

Outside the Insular world, a parallel can once again be found in a Merovingian context. A small grave-marker, now at Cologne, also displays double volutes at the ends of the shaft and cross-arms (fig. 5.23).²²⁰

This particular cross design with the arm volutes is unusual and although its significance is not definitively understood, it is probable that it represents an artistic conflation of the Cross with the Tree of Life. A common literary amalgamation in the exegesis and poetry of the early middle ages, it was also expressed in medieval liturgical texts

²¹⁸ This fragment will be published in the forthcoming Tarbat sculpture catalogue.

²¹⁹ RCAHMS, *Argyll: vol. 4: Iona*, fig 19.

²²⁰ Bailey, *England's Earliest Sculptors*, p. 41, fig. 22a.

(such as the antiphons in the *Liber Responsalis*) and used during the *Exaltatio crucis* ceremony, reinforcing the mystical identity of the Cross and Tree of Life.

As discussed in Chapter 1, it is quite possible that the *Exaltatio crucis* ceremony was known in the Insular world. If Iona 19 and TR225 can be seen as early representations of the Cross as the Tree of life, then it is possible that they were carved in response to the celebration of the *Exaltatio* feast. As previously noted, O' Carragáin argues that this rite inspired the erection of the Ruthwell cross, which features a prominent display of the Tree of Life, represented by the inhabited vine-scroll, carved on two of its faces. It may be that this rite had a particular importance to the Tarbat community, since, in addition to the conflation of the Tree of Life and the Cross possibly represented by the carving on TR225, the peninsula also displays two extremely fine examples of inhabited vine-scroll at Portmahomack and Hilton of Cadboll that express this amalgamation.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be seen that not only did exegesis and biblical accounts play a role in the depiction of the themes and decorative motifs displayed on the Portmahomack fragments, but changing liturgical practices might also have influenced the choice of design. A number of interrelated themes are expressed by the carving on the Portmahomack corpus, ranging from the secular to the spiritual. For instance, the boar and cattle on TR 22 and 28/35 might have reflected secular preoccupations with hunting and cattle herding; they might also have conveyed royal concerns to an audience familiar with the symbolism on the Pictish 'boar stones' and the stones carved with the 'Burghead bulls.' The vine-scroll on TR1 could also convey a royal message of both secular and divine lineage, while the hint of an 'enthroned' horserider in the figural scene points to the possibility that a noble personage was portrayed.

As regards the spiritual, Eucharistic implications are clearly conveyed by the inhabited vine-scroll on TR1, and perhaps by the animal and figural panels on the reverse of TR20. At the same time, if the figural scene on TR1 can be identified as Daniel in the Lion's Den, then further Eucharistic references are implied. Both TR1 and TR20 also allude to Christ recognised and worshipped between two beasts, symbolised by the chalice confronted by two quadrupeds within the vine-scroll on TR1 and, most likely, by the dragon and decorative panel on TR20. The concept might also be suggested by the lions confronting the deer or sheep carcass on the back of TR20.

The theme of Salvation, or Divine Aid may be represented by a number of figures carved on the Portmahomack corpus if the lions and bears depicted on the reverse of TR20 can be seen as referring to 1 Samuel 17: 34-37, the row of figures can be identified as Apostles, and the figural scene on TR1 can be seen as Daniel in the Lion's Den. Meanwhile the patriarchal cross carved on TR33, and the conflation of the Tree of Life and Cross represented by the TR1 vine-scroll, and possibly by the fragmented design on TR225, demonstrate a knowledge of the exegesis surrounding the Cult of the Cross and perhaps a practice of its ceremonies.

The possible artistic models behind the depictions of these themes and the other motifs on the Portmahomack corpus show a wide range of probable contacts between the Tarbat estate, the rest of the Insular world, the Continent, and possibly even the eastern Mediterranean. Within the Insular milieu the closest artistic parallels are with the late 8th to early 9th-century York school depiction of inhabited vine-scrolls, the numerous motifs and decorative details in the *Book of Kells*, the serpent imagery and cross-shapes found on carvings from Iona, and the configuration of animals and decorative details found on

metalwork probably originating from Iona and Ireland. These parallels suggest that there may have been ongoing relations between York, Iona and Tarbat.

Certain details of the Portmahomack carvings also point to possible contacts outside the Insular world. For instance, the representation of the patriarchal cross on TR33, depicted with a *suspendium* rather than a *titulus*, much like the crosses on Merovingian coins, strongly suggests trade with Gaul. Likewise, the similarity between Iona 19 and the Merovingian gravemarker at Cologne points to a relationship between those two areas that might also have been shared by Portmahomack. Contacts between Gaul, and Ireland, Iona, and England have been well documented, and there is no reason to suppose that the Picts did not also enjoy this relationship.²²¹

Contact with Rome and further East is also a possibility, considering the number of English and Irish individuals who travelled there either as official delegates or as pilgrims.²²² It may be that the Mediterranean models ultimately behind the depiction of the vine-scroll motif are indicative of this relationship. The particular depiction of the apostle Andrew, with wild, long hair, which is, with the exception of the representation on the 'Hedda Stone,' found almost exclusively on Eastern models such as the mosaics at Sinai and, Ravenna, also suggest contact with the Continent and the East. The question as to whether portable models inspired by these representations might have been directly available to the sculptors at Portmahomack, or whether these artistic influences were filtered through Northumbria or Iona will probably never be adequately answered, but it is not impossible that monks from Portmahomack travelled on the Continent or enjoyed wide-ranging contacts as did the Irish and the Anglo-Saxons.

²²¹ Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, *passim*.

²²² This issue is fully discussed in Chapter 6: Conclusion.

The extremely high-quality of the carving on the cross-slab fragments, as well as the artistic evidence that point to contacts with the Continent indicates that the Portmahomack community was wealthy and able to engage in international trade. The themes and motifs carved on the sculpture suggest that the inhabitants were very well versed in exegetical sources and liturgical practices. While this community was probably patronised by a noble ruler (or rulers) who contributed greatly to the estate's expansion and general wealth (and who may have been commemorated by the various allusions to secular rule contained on the monuments), it was most likely primarily occupied by monks and clergy. This marginalization of secular symbols on the Portmahomack corpus, (existing only on the narrow side of TR1) also argues for the Portmahomack community's status as a monastery rather than secular estate. This is likewise indicated by the presence of at least three separate cross-slabs at the site.

The evidence for this number of cross-slabs lies in the different geology of the stones and the decoration of the fragments. While TR1, TR10 and TR20 share the same geology; there is little likelihood that they come from the same cross slab because the decorative schemes would not fit together. It is almost certain that the vine-scroll motif would continue up the sides of the hypothetical cross-slab, exactly as it does at Hilton of Cadboll. If this is the case, then it is easy to see that TR20 could not have been part of the same monument, as its row of human figures on the reverse carries on to the very edge of the fragment. Since the spiral decoration on TR10 (as well as that on TR40) ties them almost certainly to TR20, there is little likelihood that they either came from the same monument that produced TR1 or that they are fragments from an additional cross-slab. The TR2 fragments, however, along with the related bosses (TR 5 and TR6) are almost certainly from a third monument, the so-called 'Danish Cross.' Not only is the decorative scheme completely unrelated to any of the

aforementioned fragments, but the sandstone is a completely different type. There is, therefore, evidence for at least three cross-slabs at the Portmahomack centre: the first represented by TR1, the second by TR2 and the related TR 5 and TR6 fragments, and the third represented by TR20 and the related TR10 and TR40 fragments. While numerous other small fragments from the Portmahomack corpus may belong to any of these three hypothetical cross-slabs, or to architectural sculpture or church furniture, there is also the possibility that a fourth slab existed.

The presence of at least three cross-slabs at one site argues for two, possibly related functions. Ó Carragáin has suggested that Irish high crosses might have been erected in *imitatio Romae*, and 'pilgrimage' to each cross-site was meant to take the place of actual pilgrimage to Rome. At the same time, high-crosses might have played a liturgical role in ceremonial clerical processions about the monastic enclosure.²²³ It is possible to see the Cross-slabs at Portmahomack fulfilling both of these roles. Likewise, as argued by MacLean, high-crosses marked out the various levels of sanctity within Irish religious communities,²²⁴ and it may be argued that the Cross slabs at Portmahomack also functioned in this manner.

As shown, the Portmahomack collection of fragments addressed expresses a wide range of biblical, exegetical and secular themes, and as such, displayed appropriate decoration for a community which not only included monks and other ecclesiastics, but also was also quite likely to be seen by lay members of the community and possibly even visiting nobility. With the exception of certain animals depicted on the possible 'practice piece' known as the 'Calf stone', the carving is highly skilled and when damage does not interfere, exhibits an astonishing wealth of detail and innovation of design, on a variety of monuments. Both the

²²³ Ó Carragáin, '*Traditio evangeliorum*,' pp. 411-413, 434-435.

²²⁴ MacLean, 'The Status of the Sculptor in Old-Irish Law,' pp. 145-6.

decoration and the iconographic themes speak of a range of possible models and suggest that, rather than an isolated monastery located in a little known corner of the world, Portmahomack was a full participant in the cultural currents flowing across the Insular world, and indeed, on the Continent. At the same time, many of the themes and decorative details appear to reflect an intentional association with Columba or the artistic or literary products of the Ionan confederacy, much as the place-name Portmahomack might have been a deliberate evocation of the monastic estate's loyalties.

CH. 6: CONCLUSION: PUTTING THE STONES INTO CONTEXT

This study of the meaning and function of the Tarbat group of cross-slabs and the related group of fragments from Portmahomack has depended on a number of interrelated investigations, among them a consideration of the evidence garnered from the archaeological excavations, geological analysis of the stones, the placement of the monuments in the surrounding environment, as well as an exploration of the antiquarian reports of the area. Combined with the exploration of the artistic and literary sources that may lie behind the figurative images and decorative details carved on the stones, as well as the consideration of the meaning that these images reveal, a number of conclusions can now be drawn about the relationship between the cross-slabs and fragments, their function within the settlements on the peninsula, the nature of those settlements, and the relationships those settlements had with the rest of the Insular world and the Continent.

As discussed in Chapter 1, any iconological investigation must begin with a consideration of the art historical sources that may lie behind the particular representation of the image on the media in question. Not only does such an investigation assist in the identification of ambiguous images, but also once the images are identified, it helps to place them in their appropriate cultural context. At the same time, similar, contemporary, artistic productions can suggest points of contact between two or three different areas, while shared carving techniques, decorative details, motifs, and related iconographic themes can also point to a common production area.

Concerning the latter, the evidence strongly suggests that the cross-slabs at Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll, as well as the cross-slab fragments from Portmahomack were all carved

around the same time and at the same place.¹ Some differences in carving style present on the Shandwick cross-slab may suggest that while it is firmly situated within the tradition of this production centre, it may have been carved by a later generation of sculptors.

For instance, the serpents carved on the face of Nigg and the TR2 fragments are almost identical, while the decorative details of the inhabited vine-scrolls on TR1 and Hilton of Cadboll are so close they may even have shared the same sculptor. Likewise, elements of design layout recur from monument to monument. Both Nigg and TR2 feature panels of serpents and bosses and decorative spirals to either side of a cross-shaft carved with geometric designs, while TR1, Hilton of Cadboll, and Nigg all feature figural compositions in central panels while decorative panels form borders along the perimeters. In addition, many of the key-patterns, interlace and spiral designs featured on the individual pieces are unique to the peninsula, though repeated from stone to stone.

While some scholars have regarded the carving on Shandwick as 'clumsy' or 'less successful' than that on the other Tarbat cross-slabs,² a rudimentary consideration of the depiction of the various birds and beasts within the 'hunt-scene' should serve to demonstrate that the sculptor had the same level of expertise as the other Tarbat carvers, but chose to represent his subject matter in a different manner. While the differences in design, layout, and carving style may point to a different sculptor or a different generation of sculptors than those who worked on the other Tarbat monuments, and a later date of production, it remains the case that the Shandwick slab is still closely related to the rest of the collection in regards to its shared decorative details and iconographic motifs. For instance, spiral-bosses like those on the cross-

¹ This centre was most likely located at the site at Portmahomack, which has revealed the remains of metal, glass, leather, and even parchment-making workshops. See *Bull* 1-7. See also Carver, 'An Iona of the East,' and 'Sculpture in Action,' (forthcoming 2004), for discussion of the identification and character of the excavated workshops.

face of the Nigg slab (though not so finely preserved) stud the cross shaft and arms of the Shandwick slab, while the panel of spiral ornament on the reverse of Shandwick is almost exactly replicated on the Hilton of Cadboll slab, where it is also placed directly below a 'hunt-scene.' In addition, although the size, shape and number of the serpents carved to either side of the Shandwick cross-shaft differs from those carved on TR2 or Nigg, all three share the same compositional theme.

Furthermore, an investigation of the iconographic subjects present on the Tarbat collection of monuments shows that the Shandwick slab is clearly situated within the matrix of themes presented on the various stones. For instance, Eucharistic themes are clearly conveyed by the vine-scrolls on Hilton and TR1, as well as by the Anthony and Paul Pediment on the Nigg cross-slab, while the plethora of snake imagery on Nigg, Shandwick, and TR2 can be interpreted, according to the writings of St Paul, Augustine, and the *Physiologus*, as a metaphor for baptism, in which the shedding of the old skin (the 'old man') for the new is a description of the renewal possible through an espousal of Christ. Reference to baptism also might be intended by the various 'hunt-scenes' depicted on the cross-slabs, if one is to read such scenes as an allegory of the deer panting after the waters of salvation. More probable, perhaps, is the argument that depictions of apostles, such as those figured on the reverse of the TR20 fragment, were specifically related to baptismal sites. The apostles on TR20 might also suggest the flourishing of the Word, as it is spread through their mission; a theme that is also expressed by a lion with a spray of foliage emerging from its mouth, as might be depicted on the face of Shandwick.

Meanwhile, one of the many meanings that can be attached to the cherubim on the face of Shandwick is that they are manifestations of historical and spiritual knowledge, and function as

² See Ritchie, *Picts*, p. 34, and Stevenson, 'Sculpture in Scotland in the 6th - 9th Centuries,' pp. 73-74.

meditation aids to protect monks from evil. The importance of meditation within the monastic environment is also suggested by the Paul and Anthony pediment on Nigg, insofar as both of these saints practiced the solitary, hermetic type of monasticism, while the evil that awaits sinning monks might be signified by the dragon carved on TR20.

The universal, all-encompassing dimensions of Christ and the Cross are expressed on the majority of the monuments on the Tarbat peninsula. While this theme is only hinted at by the decorative panel to the right of the dragon on the TR20 fragment, which suggests that a *Chi*-shaped cross might have been carved on the original slab, myriad lozenge-shapes that embody this concept are found all over Nigg and Shandwick, the most intriguing, perhaps, when they are 'hidden' amongst the serpent decoration.

The Tree of Life is clearly being alluded to by the depiction of the inhabited vine-scrolls on Hilton of Cadboll and the TR1 fragment. It is also possible that TR225 might be a piece from a grave slab depicting the conflation of the Cross with the Tree of Life. Likewise, the cross on Nigg, which is almost entirely inhabited by entwined beasts, might also have represented a conflation of the Cross and the Tree of Life.

The theme of Christ, recognized and worshipped between two *animalia* is presented in a variety of ways on each of the cross-slabs and on two of the cross-slab fragments. On Nigg, it is explored by the presence of the chalice placed between Paul and Anthony and the two beasts situated under their feet. The theme is repeated on the face of Shandwick with particular associations with the commentary on the Cantic of Habakkuk. On TR20, the composite beast on the face of the fragment can possibly be identified as one of a pair of beasts situated on either side of a cross, suggested by the panel of spiral ornament located to the right of the animal. This theme may also be suggested by the truncated deer located between the two lions on the reverse

of the slab. On TR1, the theme is signified by the winged quadrupeds (most likely griffins) inhabiting the vine-scroll, which confront a chalice-shaped vessel. Likewise, while the vine-source is not a chalice in the Hilton of Cadboll composition, the same theme is depicted nevertheless, since the vine-scroll itself functions as a symbol of Christ. Here, although the flanking creatures are addorsed, the right-hand beast does look back to face the source, and on closer inspection, the vine-scrolls on Hilton can be seen to spring from a stepped base, a detail which is echoed by the remains of the stepped cross-base carved on the other side. Stepped bases suggest an association with the Cross of Victory set up on the hill of Golgotha and depicted as glowing in various early Christian representations.

While the theme of the Second Coming is perhaps most clearly figured on Shandwick, with its rendition in stone of the jewel-encrusted Cross of Victory, attended by angels or cherubim, it may also be signified by the depiction of the various beasts and birds within the 'hunt-scene' on the reverse of the slab. Likewise, the attendant theme of the Last Judgment is found on almost every cross-slab and cross-slab fragment on the peninsula. For instance, both the wedding imagery and the depiction of the left-hand side of the vine-scroll on Hilton of Cadboll warn the viewer of the coming day of judgment, while, if the remains of the figural scene on TR1 can be identified as a Daniel scene, then a Judgment Day theme is also one of the meanings that might be expressed. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the Cross and serpents (or dragons), such as on Nigg, Shandwick, TR2 and TR20, can express Christ's victory over sin and death and therefore refer implicitly to the Second Coming and Judgment Day. In addition, this juxtaposition might also refer to the 'orthodox' church's victory over heresy. The Tarbat Church might also be declaring its orthodoxy by the figuration of the apostles on the reverse of TR20.

The related themes of Salvation and Divine Aid, as articulated through the covenants of the Old and New Testament, are perhaps most fully expressed by the typological David imagery and the Paul and Anthony pediment on the Nigg slab. However, while perhaps not as obvious, these themes are also expressed by numerous other carvings within the Tarbat corpus. For instance, the plethora of serpents on Nigg and TR2, might refer to the Old Testament brazen serpent, while the cherubim on either side of the Shandwick cross refer to the various Old Testament prefigurations of the Cross, such as the Ark of the Covenant and the 'mercy-seat' of God. The contrast between old and new covenants is clearly implied by the marriage imagery and the left and right side of the vine-scroll ornament on Hilton of Cadboll. Likewise, the inhabited vine-scroll on TR1 clearly points to salvation through Christ, while a Daniel scene would provide an Old Testament prefiguration of the Christian salvation possible through faith. The contrast between the Old and New Testament salvation might also be implied by the figural carving on the reverse of the TR20 fragment, if it is possible to read the top panel as a depiction of the lions and bears who menaced David's flock, and the panel directly below as a representation of some of Christ's apostles. And finally, the cattle group carved on TR28/35 might simultaneously refer to Exodus and Leviticus as well as to the Holy Family.

The allusions to the Old and New Covenants could also function to remind the Pictish viewer of contemporary political or religious alignments, and as such, exemplify some of the secular concerns that can be found carved on the Tarbat corpus of stones. Other references to secular, perhaps royal, rule are made by the David imagery on Nigg, as well as by the depiction of the 'enthroned' rider with her very prominent brooch on the Hilton of Cadboll slab. An 'enthroned' rider might also have been figured on TR1, and hunt scenes in general have been regarded as expressions of the activities of the elite classes.

It can be seen therefore, that despite some stylistic variations, all of the Tarbat cross-slabs and the Portmahomack fragments reflect the same artistic and intellectual milieu, and while they were not necessarily carved by the same person or at the same time, were most likely the products of the same 'school.' The matrix of ideas visually expressed by this school of sculpture comprise a number of interrelated themes both secular and theological, and while it is limiting to argue that the Portmahomack group conveys a dominant message, since such a reading denies the complexity and multiple layers of meaning that are expressed by each image on each monument and fragment, as a whole, the collection of sculpture does seem to demonstrate a preoccupation with the recognition of Christ in all of his various guises, and with the best secular rule possible through a life lived in Christ.

The Parallels

The Insular Context

While many specific elements of the Tarbat collection of sculpture are unique in Insular art to the peninsula, such as the distinctive depiction of the left-hand side of the vine-scroll and the portrayal of the female horse rider on Hilton of Cadboll, the picture of the bovine family on TR28, the *crux gemmata* on the Shandwick slab, the 'dragon' and the possible saltire cross suggested by the diamond shaped panel of interlace on TR20, most of the images are reflected elsewhere in the art of the Insular world, in some cases on stone, but more usually on portable media like metalwork, ivories and manuscripts. Considered as possible sources for the images on the Tarbat collection of monuments, most of these parallels can be divided into two categories: objects containing images that may have inspired the decision to incorporate certain iconography on the Tarbat monuments (reflecting the circulation and popularity of certain

themes within the Early medieval world) but which have little stylistic affinity with the Tarbat examples, or objects displaying images that may have affected the depiction of specific details on the Tarbat carvings (possibly reflecting the trade and other contacts between different kingdoms) but which have no real thematic relationship to the Tarbat examples.

For example, while it can be said that representations of Paul and Anthony existed on a number of Irish high crosses (and one Northumbrian monument), which may have affected the decision to incorporate this scheme on the cross-slab at Nigg, there is no template that can be shown to have inspired that particular representation. Likewise, although the vine-scroll was an extremely popular motif throughout Northumbria, and elongated, elegant animals are depicted in myriad Insular contexts, there are no sources that combine all the various elements in a way that satisfactorily explains the distinctive depiction of the left-hand side of the inhabited vine-scroll on Hilton of Cadboll. Similarly, no other 'hunt scenes' in Pictland, Ireland, or on the Continent can account for the unique Tarbat configurations, although the portrayal of certain figures, such as David on Nigg, or the trumpeters on Hilton of Cadboll, and particular animal configurations, such as superimposed horses, or hounds biting at the stomachs of the deer are found elsewhere.

The trumpeters on the Hilton of Cadboll slab also demonstrate a clear example of the second category of parallel, in which certain stylistic details within a larger scene might have been imitated, but a whole-scale transfer of the iconography did not take place. While the trumpeters on folio 30v of the early 8th-century Mercian *Vespasian Psalter* are similar, and both sets were probably based on a model available to both the Picts and the Southern Anglo-Saxons, the contexts within which the trumpeters are entirely different; those in the Psalter being part of a 'David and his Musicians' scene. More locally, however, a pair of similarly portrayed trumpeters on the Aberlemno 3 slab are figured within a 'hunt scene.' While it is unlikely that the Hilton of

Cadboll sculptors used the Aberlemno stone as a model, it is possible that the decision to place trumpeters within 'hunt scenes' on both of these monuments, rather than into the likely Court scene featured on the hypothetical model, was due to contact between the two areas.

Only a very limited number of parallels cited in the preceding chapters might be considered as sources for both stylistic detail and iconographic context. For instance, the 'Hedda Stone' at Peterborough depicts an apostle with wild, wavy hair, an attribute which can also be assigned to the figure carved second from the right on the reverse of TR20. It is quite likely that both monuments intended to portray individualized apostles, and distinctive wavy hair is a feature of apostles identified as Andrew in several 6th-century mosaics in the eastern Mediterranean world. For both the Eastern and Insular representations, the details and contexts are the same, insofar as the depiction of an apostle with wild, bushy, or wavy hair is placed within the context of other apostles. It is quite likely that a portable model carved with individualized apostles based on the Eastern Mediterranean tradition was available in both Mercia and Pictland. This model may have been similar to that which may lie behind the representation of the Pictish Davids; Italo-byzantine plaques produced in Imperial courts which were circulated throughout the early medieval world and emulated by local craftsmen.³

The remains of the figures of David and the lion on the cross-slab at Nigg also demonstrate a transfer of both stylistic detail and thematic context. For instance, the flowing drapery adorning the figure of David on Nigg (as well as the trumpeters on the Hilton of Cadboll slab, and the truncated figure in the TR1 composition) is closely related to the style of drapery seen on the figure of David carved on the St Andrews Sarcophagus. Likewise, the stance of the Nigg David is closely paralleled by the St Andrews David (as well as the Davids on Kinnedar,

³ See Chapter 2, and Henderson, '*Primus Inter Pares*,' pp. 126-130.

Aberlemno 3 and Kincardine) though the position of the lions on the monuments are different. Such close parallels suggest access to similar, portable models of David killing the lion, such as the previously mentioned ivory plaques, or the renditions of lion killers on several 7th-century silver Byzantine plates.⁴

By considering the parallels a number of early medieval kingdoms in the Insular World and on the Continent may be reasonably argued to have had contact with the Picts of the Tarbat peninsula. Movement between ecclesiastical institutions by monks, pilgrims, or artisans who could carry portable models could explain many of the similarities that exist between monuments in different areas, as well as explaining the differences as individual responses to the same model.

Within the Insular world, the closest and most numerous sculptural parallels to the Tarbat material exist in four areas: Angus and Perthshire, both in Southern Pictland; Iona, in Dalriada, and Yorkshire, in the Deiran kingdom of Northumbria. To review, twelve monuments or fragments in Angus demonstrate stylistic details or motifs that can be compared fruitfully with carvings on the Tarbat corpus, with several monuments displaying characteristics that are especially close: St Vigean's 1 possesses an archer with a peaked hat and a boar, in addition to the only other carved inscription found in Pictland; St Vigean's 14 bears the only figural composition that can be compared to the fragmented scene on TR1; angels with four wings each appear on monuments at Glamis and Eassie; Woodrae displays a composite beast extremely close in style to the TR20 'dragon'; Aberlemno 3 features a hunt scene with a pair of trumpeters carved on a receding plane as well as a David the lion slayer in the Pictish 'Gilgamesh' pose; the Murroes fragment is carved with a serpent circle almost identical to those that appear on the face of the

⁴ See Chapter 2.

Shandwick slab, and Monfieth 2 is carved with a truncated deer, a female figure with a large brooch, and a composite creature with a serpent-headed tail.

Perthshire contains even more monuments (fifteen) with parallels to the Tarbat material, and while the majority of these are on monuments from the Meigle collection, significant examples can also be found on Gask 1A, which features two different beasts that demonstrate similarities to the lion-like quadruped located to the left of the cross-shaft on the Shandwick slab, and on Dunfallandy, which displays two four-winged angels that are carved within individual panels. Many of the monuments from the Meigle collection are characterized by very deep-relief like that on the face of Shandwick; more particularly, several of the cross-slabs and recumbent monuments display very similar thematic compositions or decorative motifs to those that appear on the Tarbat collection. For instance, Meigle 1 features a (possible) female figure enthroned on a horse, who is placed within a 'hunt-scene.' Meigle 9, a recumbent monument, is carved with a row of animals, while Meigle 7 is carved with a composite beast, characterized by an extended tongue and contorted legs, which is not entirely unlike the TR20 'dragon'. Superimposed horse riders can be found on both Meigle 2 and 26; bears can be found on Meigle 10, 11, 22, and 26; and confronted cattle are carved on Meigle 12.

Outside of Angus and Perthshire, only one monument demonstrates significant parallels to any of the Tarbat monuments, the St. Andrew's Sarcophagus, located in Fife. Similar figural configurations such as the David slaying the Lion composition, and decorative details such as the zoomorphic interlace and mesh-covered snake bosses suggest that, at the very least, the Nigg slab and the Sarcophagus were dependent on some of the same models. The similarities are so close, however, that it has also been argued that both monuments were produced by the same

carver, or by carvers from the same school.⁵ Considering the dearth of any other parallels to the Tarbat material located at St Andrews or in Fife, it may even be possible to argue that the Sarcophagus was a 'one-off' production by a sculptor from the Tarbat school.⁶

Also numerous, though perhaps not quite as stylistically close, are the parallels with several high-crosses and grave markers from Iona. The high-crosses of St Oran, St Martin and St John all display serpent-bosses akin to those on Nigg, while roughly rectangular-shaped stones carved with simple relief crosses (or fragments from such stones) which most likely functioned as grave markers have been found at both Iona (nos. 72-76) and Portmahomack (TR19). Other Iona grave markers carved with specific styles of incised and relief crosses (nos. 16 and 30) are paralleled by Portmahomack grave-slabs (see TR21 and TR33). Two additional Iona grave slabs (nos. 18 and 19) may be particularly significant since they suggest knowledge, or perhaps even practice, of the cult of the cross and the liturgical ceremonies attached to it. Likewise, TR 33, carved with a patriarchal cross similar to that found on Iona 18, and TR225, which bears the remains of a design that may parallel the type of cross incised on Iona 19, might reflect a similar knowledge or practice at the Tarbat ecclesiastical estate.

The parallels with the Deiran monuments lie almost entirely with the specific style of elongated, stylised animals and thin, complicated plant-scrolls carved in shallow relief on the York-school examples of inhabited vine-scrolls. However, the fact that 'apostle columns' are scattered throughout the Deiran kingdom might also be significant and point to a cultural exchange between the two areas, though with the possible exception of the Masham column, which features 12 full-length apostles flanking Christ, none of the Deiran depictions show any

⁵ Henderson, 'Variations on an Old Theme,' p. 154; 'The Insular and Continental Context,' p. 73.

stylistic affinities with what remains on TR20.

While there are certainly some similarities between the Tarbat and Mercian examples of inhabited plant-scrolls, the resemblances are not as close as those between the York school and the Tarbat examples. Likewise, although the Mercian 'Hedda stone' is the only other carved Insular monument to arguably depict its apostles with individualized characteristics,⁷ the specific style of doing so is not particularly close to the carving of the human figures on TR20. The fact that individuals with wavy, 'flame-like' hair appear on both stones could be accounted for by access to similar models based on the Eastern Mediterranean representations of Andrew, and there is little evidence for direct contact between the Mercian kingdom and Tarbat.

In general it is difficult to state if the Insular parallels only suggest the use of similar models, or whether they point to actual contact between two or more different areas. Indeed, determining the degree of contact is also problematic as it could have ranged from the simple exchange of the same models (perhaps passed on as gifts from one ecclesiastical estate to another, or traded amongst sculptors), to sustained economic trade between two areas, to a profoundly close relationship that involved frequent travel between sites, and a cultural exchange that may have involved artistic cross-training. Unfortunately, while recent style-analysis of metal-work objects has been able to successfully argue for a relationship between the degrees of contact (ranging from chance influence resulting from travel, to actual foreign training) and the execution of identifiable decorative details,⁸ such analysis in regards to early medieval sculpture has yet to be done. It is therefore impossible to conclusively argue, for example, that the

⁶ Such a position will be impossible to prove until the collection of early medieval fragments at St Andrews is properly catalogued and studied. See Henderson, 'Primus inter Pares,' pp. 165-167 who argues that there is plenty of evidence for 'copious and elite production of sculpture' at St. Andrews.

⁷ Other monuments, such as the Masham column in Deira, might also have done so, but damage to the stone makes this impossible to determine.

similarities between the Tarbat and York-school depictions of inhabited plant-scrolls point to a prolonged and personal contact between the two locations. However, such parallels do suggest a greater degree of contact between the two areas than do the lesser similarities with the Mercian material. Likewise, the sheer number of parallels between the Tarbat sculpture and the sculpture at Meigle and St Vigean might reasonably suggest a high degree of contact between these regions.

Furthermore, the parallels might also point to specific patronage. Since it has been argued that both Meigle and St Vigean were royally-patronized ecclesiastical centres (as has also been argued in regards to St Andrew's) the use of similar iconographic themes and decorative details on the Tarbat peninsula might also argue for royal patronage of the Tarbat ecclesiastic estate.

A consideration of the portable sources that may have served as models for the ornament on the Tarbat monuments also point to some areas more than others. In general, the products are Irish or Northumbrian, but it may be particularly significant that the greatest number of parallels, mostly involving specific decorative motifs, lie within the pages of the *Book of Kells*. Examples include (but are not limited to) the depiction of elongated quadrupeds flanking a chalice in a vine-scroll design that acts as border decoration; a zig-zag vine-scroll; interlaced serpents, and serpents with protruding eyes and fish-tails that are seen from above, a key pattern with cruciform-shapes; and lions with extended tongues or foliage emerging from their mouths, as well as lions whose tongues are interlaced with serpents. Likewise, it is probably significant that the *Book of Kells* was the product of a Columban scriptorium, quite possibly located at Iona. Iona was also most likely the source of the bronze reliquary finials decorated with the raised serpent

⁸ See Michelli, 'Migrating Ideas or Migrating Craftsmen?' The Case of Bossed Penannular Brooches, ' in M.

bosses that might have inspired Nigg's appropriation of the motif.

The Continental Context

Sources outside the Insular world also provide several intriguing analogies with the Tarbat material and suggest contact with the Continent. In addition to the previously mentioned correspondences between David figurations and the specific depiction of the apostle Andrew that are found in Eastern and Byzantine sources, images of griffons flanking vases rely ultimately on Italo-Byzantine sources and, along with inhabited vine-scrolls were also carved in churches in Visigothic Spain and on Merovingian sarcophagi. Roman depictions of individuals with square-halos might have informed the depiction of the horsewoman on Hilton of Cadboll.

The greatest number of Continental parallels with the Tarbat material are those related to the different artistic representations of the cross, perhaps signifying the spread of the Cult of the Cross from the Eastern Mediterranean, across Western Europe, and into the Insular world. Images of the *crux gemmata* flanked by angles or apocalyptic beasts were figured on mosaics throughout the late antique, eastern Mediterranean world, while metalwork depictions were circulated on reliquaries, silver plates, coins, and *ampullae*. Likewise, depictions of patriarchal crosses, such as that carved on TR33, could be seen throughout the Holy Land, Rome and Constantinople, and were also figured on Merovingian and Frisian coins as well as on reliquaries. The Cross as the Tree of Life, perhaps represented by a cross whose arms sprout volutes in a manner very similar to Iona 18 and TR225, from Portmahomack, is also found on a Merovingian grave-slab. Winged quadrupeds confront a central plant underneath a visual

conflation of the Cross and the Tree of Life on an 8th-century Lombardic baptismal font in the cathedral at Cividale, Italy. In addition, each type of cross found in the Tarbat collection is depicted on a unique pectoral cross-reliquary from the Monza treasury, which displays a patriarchal cross on a stepped base with foliate forms; a combination of the True Cross, the Tree of Life and the monumental cross on Golgotha.

Contacts between Gaul, and Ireland, Iona, and England have been well documented, as have reports of pilgrims to Rome from the Insular world,⁹ so the possibility that the Picts were also engaged in travel to the Continent and Rome, and subsequently saw and were influenced by some of these sources, is not impossible. While it is more likely that the Tarbat craftsmen had access to portable models like the reliquaries and *ampullae*, which might have travelled to Britain via contacts between monasteries such as Iona and Bobbio, the presence of the Frisian *sceatta* on the Portmahomack site does suggest that there was direct contact between the Continent and the Tarbat estate, thus negating the argument that models must have been mediated through Iona, St Andrews or Anglo-Saxon England.

Dating:

The Evidence of the Artistic Sources

As mentioned in Chapter 1, many scholars place all Pictish Cross-slabs, particularly those with high-relief, after the carving of the Ruthwell and Bewcastle crosses, generally believed to have been carved in the early to mid-8th century.¹⁰ As far as specific slabs arguments have generally involved discussions of particular decorative elements. For instance, as regards the

⁹ See McNaught, *The Celtic Church and the See of Peter*, p. 63; Ó Carragáin, 'Traditio evangeliorum' and 'sustentatio,' p. 407-409; Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 193-195.

¹⁰ See Chapter 1.

snake-boss ornament on Nigg, Henderson has argued that it was inspired by the incised snakes seen on Pictish symbol stones, such as Aberlemno 1, and by the circular interlace patterns carved in low relief on early Pictish cross-slabs such as Aberlemno 2. The evolution from simple to complex took place entirely within a Pictish sculptural context, while perhaps reflecting the influence of metalwork studs. Furthermore, the appearance of the motif in Iona, and then in Ireland was due to either Pictish sculptors working in Iona, or Ionan sculptors trained in Pictland who then began to reproduce the art at home.¹¹ With slight variations, Ritchie and Stevenson concur; Ritchie believing the Pictish style influenced the Ionan products, while Stevenson argues for the transforming power of the *Book of Kells* upon the migrating Pictish style.¹² MacLean, on the other hand argues that the snake-boss ornament was developed at Iona by native Ionan craftsmen who may have been trained by a later generation of Northumbrian masters than those who had arrived in Pictland in the early 8th century.¹³ This preceding arguments demonstrate the difficulty in assigning a date to any of the Pictish monuments, and indeed Laing has argued, through an analysis of the weapons portrayed on certain stones, that most of the relief sculptures of Pictland belong to the 9th and 10th centuries rather than to the 8th century, regardless of their status as Class 2 or Class 3 stones.¹⁴ What must be stressed is that unless there is a documented source or the stone is inscribed with a date, there are no definitive answers to the dating questions, and stylistic analysis can only tell us that the objects are roughly contemporary with each other, not specifically when they were made. Bearing that in mind, the close stylistic analogies between the York school examples of inhabited vine-scrolls and the myriad parallels with the ornament in the *Book of Kells*, believed to have been produced in the early 9th-century,

¹¹ Henderson, 'The *Book of Kells* and the Snake-Boss Motif,' *passim*.

¹² Ritchie, *Picts*, p. 34; Stevenson, 'The Chronology and Relationships of Some Irish and Scottish Crosses,' p. 91.

¹³ MacLean, 'Snake-Bosses and Redemption,' pp. 247-51.

do suggest an early to mid 9th-century dating scheme for the Tarbat monuments.

The Evidence of the Textual and Liturgical Sources

As has been argued, since there are no examples of a whole-scale transfer of images from any one particular artistic source onto the monuments at Tarbat, it can be assumed that sources beyond the artistic informed the particular combination of elements, or the depiction of specific details that are carved on the stones. For example, there is no one artistic template that can be credited with the portrayal of the Paul and Anthony scene on the Nigg Pediment. Instead, as with many of the unique elements on the Tarbat collection, inspiration seems to have been dependent upon details related to saints lives, biblical exegesis and liturgical practices (see below).

Likewise, although entwined serpents can be found ornamenting a number of Insular objects, their prevalence and position on the Tarbat cross-slabs can only really be explained by exegesis and possibly by a local liturgical rite. In addition, although secular interpretation can certainly account for the portrayal of hunting activities on the Hilton of Cadboll slab, it has been shown that exegetical ideas revolving around the sacred marriage of the Bridegroom and the Last Judgement probably influenced that particular portrayal of secular activity.

A survey of the literary sources available to the Insular world suggests that the writings of Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Leo the Great and Bede provided the primary impetus for the portrayal of much of the iconography on the Tarbat monuments. At the same time, less well-known works (at least in the Insular world) by authors such as Cyprian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cassian, and Clement of Alexandria, as well as the *Physiologus*, Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, various saints lives (such as Adomnán's *Life of Columba* and Athanasius's *Life of Saint Anthony* and Jerome's *Life of Saint Paul*) and biblical Apocrypha, also contributed to the

¹⁴ L. Laing, 'The Chronology and Context of Pictish Relief Sculpture', *Medieval Archaeology* 44 (2000): p. 114.

depiction of the Tarbat iconography. Most intriguing are the liturgical practices hinted at by some of the configurations on the stones. For example, the triangle cut from the host carried in the raven's mouth in the Paul and Anthony scene on Nigg quite possibly refers to the Irish rite of *co-fractio*, while the plethora of serpents inhabiting the Tarbat cross-slabs, might refer to the Paschal rite involving a serpent-headed staff used to light the candles in the church. The book held in the hands of the rightmost figure on the reverse of TR20, might be intended to recall the Lenten liturgical ceremony of *Apertio Aurium*, wherein the four gospel books were brought in procession to the altar and presented to a congregation of catechumens. This ceremony also included the reading of specific texts that have shed light upon the iconography of other Tarbat peninsula cross-slabs: Colossians 3:9-10 (in which Paul instructs his listeners to 'put off the old man and put on the new,'¹⁵ and Romans 10:18 which preaches that the truth of the gospels has reached to the ends of the earth.¹⁶ The first passage further resonates when considering one of the readings available for an interpretation of the plethora of serpents on Nigg, Shandwick and TR2: that one of the natures of the serpent to be emulated by good Christians is their ability to put off the 'old man' of 'temporal good' and put on the new life of Christ (see Chapter 2). The second passage prefigures the universal dimensions of the Cross, Christ and the Church that the early church fathers preached through so many of their writings and which may be exemplified by the various crosses and lozenge-shapes carved also carved on the Tarbat cross-slabs.

In addition, the various depictions of the cross as the Tree of Life (implied by the inhabited vine-scrolls on Hilton of Cadboll and TR1, as well as by the fragment featuring two simple volutes springing from a central line that may have originated from a cross featuring

¹⁵ *nolite mentiri invicem expoliantes vos veterem hominem cum actibus eius et induentes novum eum qui renovatur in agnitionem secundum imaginem eius qui creavit eum.*

scrolls growing from its arms and shaft) the Patriarchal Cross, and the Cross of Victory, all suggest that the liturgical rites surrounding the Cult of the Cross were known and possibly even practiced on the peninsula. Unfortunately, the iconographic and liturgical sources cannot tell us when the monuments on Tarbat were carved, beyond suggesting that they must post-date the late 7th century; the earliest any of the Cross-cult liturgical rites were known in the Insular World. Evidence for Insular knowledge of the other rites points to the mid 8th-century, so the Tarbat monuments could have been erected at anytime after this.

The Evidence of the *Monasteria*

The picture that therefore emerges from this study of the images carved on the Tarbat cross-slabs and fragments is that they were produced in a community conversant with a wide range of early Christian exegesis and other literary sources, as well as familiar with contemporary liturgical rites as they were practiced on the Continent, and in other areas of the Insular World. In addition, it is likely that they were involved in, or at least knew of the Christological debates taking place in Rome and the East, and that their decision to portray crosses without the figure of Christ and isolated iconographic scenes was influenced by the Monophysite ideal, while their depictions of the inhabited vine-scrolls and the patriarchal cross may have reflected the orthodox viewpoint promulgated by Cyril of Jerusalem, Leo the Great, and the Trullan Synod held in 692.

Within this context it is only logical to assume that such a community was ecclesiastical in nature, and considered along with the archaeological evidence, that it was a monastic estate. A survey of the paradigms available for Irish and Anglo-Saxon monasteries (see Chapter 1)

¹⁶ *sed dico numquid non audierunt et quidem in omnem terram exiit sonus eorum et in fines orbis terrae verba*

provided several possible models for the foundation and expansion of the Tarbat monastery as well as situating it within the politics of the 8th and 9th centuries.

It is likely that the story of the community at Tarbat probably lay somewhere in between the two models. Most likely founded by a saint (possibly Columba or one of his followers) by virtue of a land grant from a local ruler sometime in the 6th-century, the initially eremitic settlement probably grew into a larger cenobitic community, thus accounting for the first expansion of the monastery suggested by the construction of the outer enclosure ditch. Successive land grants led to even closer relations with the local rulers, who, in turn, were commemorated in a variety of ways, possibly including stone memorials, or burial in the main churchyard at Portmahomack, or close to the relics of the founder saint. In addition, a private chapel and lay clergy for the use of the noble patrons might have been made available. The initial monastery quite likely grew into a large estate sometime in the late 8th to the mid 9th-century. Eventually housing both monks and clergy and supporting various labourers, this *monasterium* was possibly responsible for the pastoral care of the entire Tarbat peninsula, and set up proprietary churches or chapels at Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll to assist in this task. The loyalty of these satellite sites may have been strengthened by the distribution of relics, possibly of a local saint, which may be especially reflected by the decoration on the cross slab at Nigg.¹⁷ It is also likely that at some point members of the local ruler's family became leaders of the estate, further cementing the relationship between the two entities, and possibly reflected in the iconography on Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll. Most likely part of the Columban *familia*, personal and trading contacts between the peninsula and Iona would have been frequent, but by

eorum.

¹⁷ See T. Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' pp. 143, for the Irish model of strengthening loyalty through the distribution of relics.

no means exclusive.

While there is, as of yet, no archaeological evidence to substantiate dates, if one accepts the suggestion that the cross-slabs were erected, in part, to commemorate these foundations and to mark the expanding borders of the estate (see below) then it is possible to propose some dates according to the artistic parallels to the images contained on the stones. Since a great number of these parallels are provided by the late 8th- to early 9th-century *Book of Kells*, and the early 9th-century Deiran monuments, then it is quite likely that the same range of dates can be applied to the Tarbat material.

Since the estate's greatest period of prosperity seems to post date the possible expulsion of founding-saint's heirs, it may be that the heads of the Tarbat *monasteria* were never ejected at all. Despite the number of artistic parallels with the products of the Columban federation, there is no absolute proof that Tarbat estate was a member of the *familia*, or even if they were, that they had not converted to 'Roman' practice before Nechtan's decree, and were thus immune from attack.

The only real evidence that any sort of conflict may have existed lies primarily in the interpretation of the iconography on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, which makes references to schismatic practices, the Day of Judgement, and new covenants. It is difficult to know what this conflict may be, though particular images associated with Iona or Columba, such as the Paul and Anthony scene depicting the Irish liturgical rite, the serpent bosses perhaps related to the shrine of Adomnan or Columba, and the parallels with the *Book of Kells* might mark the advent of the *Céli Dé* reform movement on the peninsula in the early to mid 9th century.

Unfortunately, though many scenarios can be explored, the lack of written evidence makes it impossible to state with surety with whom the ecclesiastical estate at Tarbat was

aligned, and whether or not this alliance changed throughout the years. Perhaps the most logical model would be one that, despite close contact with both Iona and the diocese of York, relied upon the internal Pictish connections with such places as St Andrews, Meigle, and Aberlemno. The artistic similarities between the monuments in these areas might even speak of an independent Pictish *familia*.

Conclusion

In any case, what becomes abundantly clear, no matter who the Tarbat community was allied with, was that the estate was a powerful entity whose borders, for a time, extended to cover the entire peninsula, who enjoyed contacts throughout the Insular World and with the Continent, and who were well-acquainted in the literature, customs, and religious currents practiced on the Continent.

The functions of the cross-slabs within this context are myriad. As suggested earlier, the most likely scenario is that they were erected to mark the expanding borders of the monastic estate.¹⁸ At the same time, the cross-slabs could have simultaneously commemorated the secular rulers whose land grants made the expansion possible. Ó Carragáin also suggests that inscribed crosses may have specified ecclesiastical ownership,¹⁹ and indeed such a proposal would confirm that the church at Portmahomack was the principle church. A lack of archaeological evidence makes it impossible to determine if they were erected in conjunction with local chapels, but the possibility is strong that they were, though it has been suggested that they were erected as

¹⁸ See Carver, Martin, 'Sculpture in Action,' forthcoming 2004; Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' passim, but particularly pp. 137-143.

¹⁹ Ó Carragáin, 'A Landscape Converted,' p. 138.

precursors to churches in areas where itinerant priests celebrated mass.²⁰ Current theories also suggest that the monuments were erected in areas that were clearly visible from the sea, as is the *in situ* monument at Shandwick.²¹ When two or more cross-slabs existed in one area, such as at the probable 'mother-house' at Portmahomack, which likely housed secular labourers as well as clergy and monks, then it is likely that they were used to mark out the varying levels of sanctity that were restricted to corresponding levels of society.

Various levels of society can be presumed to have existed throughout the peninsula, and it is only logical to assume that their understanding of the images carved on the stones would have differed according to their immersion within the spiritual and intellectual life of the monastery. On a purely secular level, the stones could be seen as territorial markers and memorial stones, and if the arguments of Samson and Cummins can be accepted, the Pictish symbols were the signifiers of the secular lords who commissioned them. While a more likely scenario is that the head of the *monasteria* commissioned the slabs, and chose to commemorate the secular rulers with whom they were most likely related, the basic assertion that the symbols stood for actual individuals can be maintained. Indeed, if one is to use the 'translation' provided by Cummins, a local lineage for the Tarbat peninsula can be drawn up (see fig. 2.13). In addition, the 'hunt-scenes' contained on each of the stones might have been realistic portrayals of the activities of the ruling family, with the depiction of the lady on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab an actual portrait of one of its members. The deeper connotations conveyed by the images and iconography on the cross-slabs might not have been understood by the lay people on the peninsula, but were surely appreciated by the members of the monastic community who were steeped in exegetical learning and experienced in the levels of scriptural interpretation.

²⁰ See Samson, 'Reinterpretation of the Pictish Symbols,' p. 63, note 31

This picture of the Tarbat peninsula, the ecclesiastic estate, and the function and meaning of the cross-slabs is far from complete. The ongoing archaeological investigations at Portmahomack are sure to continue contributing to our knowledge of the area, but may never answer all of our questions. Likewise, little is known about the early medieval settlements at Nigg, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll, though Martin Carver is currently involved in the inception of a number of investigatory projects. While the most logical assumption is that they were satellite communities dependent upon the Portmahomack 'mother-house,' it is also possible that they were secular estates with no particular relationship to the monastery. However, when one considers the iconography contained on the monuments associated with those communities, the evidence is overwhelmingly against an entirely secular, or isolated interpretation. Not only does every supposed 'secular' element on the cross-slabs (with the exception of the purely Pictish symbols) reveal a scriptural, exegetical or liturgical expression underneath, but the decorative details and repetition of spiritual themes from slab to slab demonstrate the close ties between the cross-slabs and the fragments found at the Portmahomack site. Until further archaeological evidence can be obtained, therefore, the conclusions drawn will continue to be based on an iconographical analysis of the sculpture.

As has been demonstrated, the iconological methodology has its limitations, primarily resulting from the vast amount of historical, literary, religious, and art-historical knowledge required to correctly interpret a single image, let alone an entire program of decoration. However, it has also proved an invaluable tool with which to analyse Insular art and culture, especially since other art-historical considerations such as aesthetic theory, style analysis, and the relative 'genius' of the artists cannot be applied to early medieval art in a way which could shed

²¹ Carver, 'Conversion and Politics,' p. 34.

light upon the cultural history of early medieval Britain and Ireland.

As previously discussed (see Chapter 1) Panofsky and other Renaissance scholars like him had two essential advantages over the early medieval art historian, namely the availability of biographies of the artists and, often, descriptions of the artistic programs being commissioned. Insular scholars do not have such luxuries. Comparatively sparse historical records, the anonymity of most of the artists, and the difficulty of assigning a specific textual knowledge to the patron, artist or audience, all contribute to the limits of iconographic analysis of Insular images. In addition, while Gombrich has argued that the symbolism of Renaissance images, while capable of conveying several nuances, can only function in support of a 'dominant meaning' that reflects the principle purpose of the work, it has been demonstrated that medieval iconography was multivalent; often conveying several, sometimes contradictory, layers of meaning all at once. This reality has proved frustrating to my original intention of proving that a single, coherent artistic programme lie behind the production of all of the Tarbat cross-slabs, and that read together they would express one message. However, the multiple levels of meaning conveyed by each individual motif or scene, and how these isolated images and scenes combine to suggest several different meanings when viewed as a whole, has illuminated the vast range of exegetical knowledge and cultural understanding that must have been possessed by the Tarbat community and the skill of their artisans in transferring these ideas onto the monuments. It can only be assumed that continuing investigation of the possible religious, political, liturgical, and literary currents of the early medieval Insular world will contribute to an even greater understanding of these monuments and of the life and habits of the community that produced them.

PAGE

NUMBERING

AS ORIGINAL

APPENDIX 1: AUTHORS AND TEXTS

A: Evidence for the Circulation of Authors and Texts in the Early Insular World

This list is by no means complete. Grammarians or other authors who have no bearing on the interpretation of iconographic images contained on the monuments in question have not been included.

In terms of the material garnered from surviving booklists, names and titles have not been repeated when they have appeared in a later booklist than the one cited. Most of the booklists are quite late, but citations from 11th and even 12th-century booklists have been included since it is possible that the texts might have been in circulation before they were recorded in the lists. Likewise, patristic sources included in manuscripts (and fragments) written or owned in England up through the 10th century have also been included, since the later 9th and 10th century works may have been copies of earlier works already in circulation.

Once the available booklists have been exhausted, the search for sources gets more complicated, in particular because it is often impossible to determine what form the citations refer to. For instance, an Anglo-Saxon or Irish author might cite a biblical or exegetical source, but it is not known what guise that particular source was in; i.e., whether it was a complete work or simply a few sentences in a collection of sayings. Quite often, secondary scholars have stated that certain Insular authors knew the work of certain Patristic authors, but have not specified particular texts. In addition, parallels between texts often lead to the conclusion that the later author knew the earlier, but again, it is impossible to determine whether the entire earlier text was known, or simply fragments, which may also only have been known through intermediate sources. This is particularly problematic in terms of

exegesis that was only known to be available in Greek or Hebrew.¹ When possible, these deficiencies have been pointed out.

I. Known Authors and Texts

Ambrose (340-397 AD)

Ambrose's *Hexaameron*, *De officiis ministrorum*, *Expositio de psalmo CXVIII*, *De initiandis (Liber 1)*, *De misteriis*, and *De sacramentis* are cited in the booklist from 1070 AD, which entail the books donated by Sæwold, the abbot of Bath around 1070, to the Church of Saint-Vaast in Arras.² Much earlier knowledge of Ambrose's works existed, since the name of Ambrose appears in a list of books bequeathed to Alcuin from Ælberht, archbishop of York (AD 778). The work is unspecified, but Aldhelm used Ambrose's *De virginibus ad Marcellinam* when writing his own tract *De Virginitate*.³ Bede refers to Ambrose's *Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam*, *De Fide*, *De Paen*, and his tract *De Spiritu Sancto* throughout his own *Commentarius in Epistolas Septem Catholicas*.⁴ In addition, *De apologia prophetae David*, *Joseph patriarcha*, *De patriarchis*, *De paenitentia*, *De excessu fratris*, and *Epistolae 64-68* are all contained in a 6th - century Italian MS that was in England from the 8th century; *De apologia prophetae David* is in a 9th century Northumbrian MS and *Epistola ad Vercellensem ecclesiam* is contained in a 9th century Italian MS that was available in Wales by the 10th century.⁵

¹For a full discussion of these issues, see Biggs, Hill, Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. xix-xx; Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish,' pp. 300-301.

²M. Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England', in H. Gneuss and M. Lapidge (eds.), *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 45-50, 58-62.

³Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, pp. 52-56.

⁴D. Hurst (ed.), *The Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles of Bede the Venerable*, Cistercian Studies 82 (1985), *passim*.

⁵H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*. *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 241 (2001), nos. 581, 799, 832, pp. 94, 127, 119.

Athanasius (296-373 AD)

The *Vita S Antonii* is the most likely work being referred to in the list of books bequeathed to Alcuin, while Aldhelm used the *Vita* while writing his *De Virginitate*.⁶ Bede quotes from Athanasius in his *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum*, as well as in his prose *Vita Cuthberti*.⁷

Augustine of Hippo (354-386 AD)

Augustine's name appears in the list of books bequeathed to Alcuin, as well as in a number of later 10th to 12th-century booklists.⁸ In addition, a number of MSS, either written in England, or in England by the 10th century contain either fragments or the entire texts of *Quaestiones Evangeliorum*, *In Epistolam Johannes ad Parthos*, *De magistro*, *Enchiridion*, *Soliloquia*, and *Epistolae* 166 and 205.⁹ Earlier circulation of his works is evidenced by Bede's familiarity works such as the *Confessiones*, *De civitate Dei*, *Sermones*, *De doctrina Christiana*, *Epistola* 55, and *Enarrationes in psalmos*, *Tractatus in Evangelium Ioannis*, *De consensu Evangelistarum* (*Harmony on the Gospels*), *In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos (tractatus x)*, *De Trinitate*, *De Sancta Virginitate* and *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*.¹⁰ Likewise, excerpts from *In psalmos*, fragments of *De Trinitate*, the entire *De consensu Evangelistarum*, and *Epistolae* 187 and 54 appear in 8th-century English MSS.¹¹ Augustine's treatise on virginity was also used by Aldhelm,¹² and his *De sermone Domini in monte* was well known to early

⁶Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50; Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 177.

⁷ While Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, p. 121, argues that no known Latin translation of Athanasius's Greek works existed in Bede's time, and that he must have got the quotes from some other Latin writer, Martin, *Commentary on the Acts*, passim, cites Bede's use of Evagrius's Latin translation of *Vita S. Antonii*. Cf. *FONTES*, which states that Bede used the Athanasius's *Vita* directly (09 June 2003).

⁸Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50, 52-55, 58-62, 76-82.

⁹ See items 27, 168, 475, 512, 716, 752, 794, 801, 808, 918, and 919.3, in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 29, 44, 82, 87, 110, 112, 119, 120, 121, 140, and 141.

¹⁰Biggs, Hill, Szarmach, *SASLC*, p. 71; Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, passim; Martin, *Commentary on the Acts*, passim; *FONTES* (07-July-03).

¹¹ See items 53, 255, 320, 792, and 799.5 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 32, 54, 62, 118, 119, and 146.

¹²Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 52.

Irish exegetes.¹³ Most of his works were most likely well known to the Irish as he is cited frequently by 7th-century Hiberno-Latin exegetes.¹⁴

Basil of Caesaria (c. 330-379 AD)

Basil's name appears in list of books bequeathed to Alcuin. Rufinus's translation of Basil's monastic rule was known to Aldhelm and his nine homilies on the *Hexaemeron* were known to Bede. Fragments of Rufinus's translation of his *Homiliae in Psalmos* are also contained in an 8th-century (French)? MS, that was most likely in England before 1100.¹⁵ In addition, his decrees on the legality of divorce were known to Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury and to Aldhelm.¹⁶

Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-543 AD)

Caesarius was a well known preacher in his own day, whose sermons often followed the typology set out by Augustine; due to this similarity, Caesarius works were frequently circulated with Augustine's, and indeed, sometimes even mistaken for his.¹⁷ Hence, Caesarius is often known as Pseudo-Augustine, and his works were very popular in Anglo-Saxon England.¹⁸ In particular, the 9th to 10th-century Anglo-Saxon poem *Christ III* utilizes material from Caesarius's upon the theme of judgement, and his works were a prominent source for Old English homilies, some of which were composed in the late 9th-century,

¹³ J. O'Reilly, 'The Wisdom of the Scribe and the Fear of the Lord in the *Life of Columba*', in T. Clancy and D. Broun (eds.), *Spes Scotorum: Hope of Scots* (Edinburgh, 1999), p. 184.

¹⁴ A. Breen, 'Some Seventh-Century Hiberno-Latin Texts and their Relationships,' *Peritia* 3 (1984): 210.

¹⁵ See Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 759.5, p. 113.

¹⁶ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50; Lapidge and Herren, *Adhelm*, pp. 54-55.

¹⁷ See T. Shahan, 'St Caesarius of Arles', The Catholic Encyclopedia Online Edition, 2003, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03135b.htm>

¹⁸ Katy Cubitt, Pers. Comm. 12/01/2005.

though they were recorded later.¹⁹ Likewise, his sermons were a popular source for Aelfric's homilies.²⁰ Much earlier evidence for his circulation, however, lies in Bede's use of Caesarius' *Exposition in Apocalypse* for his own *Exposition on the Apocalypse*.²¹

Cassian (c. 360-435 AD)

Cassian's *De institutes monachorum* is contained in a 10th-century Anglo-Saxon MS,²² but much earlier evidence for knowledge of Cassian comes from Aldhelm and Bede, who both used *De Institutis Coenobiorum*, while Bede quoted directly from his *Conlationes*.²³

O'Reilly argues that Adomnán and the Irish exegetes were intimately familiar with Cassian's exegetical precept that the study of Scripture required the moral and spiritual conversion of the reader and that this theme can be found throughout the *Vita Columba*. In particular, Adomnán was familiar with Cassian's *Conlationes*, *Institutes*, and his *Expositio psalmorum*. Even earlier, the Irish *Apgitir Chrábaid* (Alphabet of Devotion) dated from AD 600 displays the influence of Cassian's *Conlationes*.²⁴

Cassiodorus (c. 490-583)

Cassiodorus's *De anima*, *Institutiones*, and *De orthographia* are most likely the works referred to in the list of books donated by Sæwold in 1070 AD, and the Latin *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita*, commonly ascribed to him, as well as his Latin translation of

¹⁹ Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History*, p.193. The *Blickling Homilies* have been dated as early as 875 AD, while the *Vercelli Homilies*, dated to the second half of the 10th-century, used older sources. See M. Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching in Anglo-Saxon England,' *Peritia* 4 (1985): 217, 221-226.

²⁰ See Caesarius of Arles in *FONTES* (14/ 02/05).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² See items 152, and 528 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 42 and 89.

²³ Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 177; Martin, *Commentary on the Acts*, *passim*; *FONTES* (09 October 2003).

²⁴ O'Reilly, 'The Wisdom of the Scribe,' *passim*.

Josephus's *Antiquities* are cited in an 11th to 12th-century booklist from Peterborough.²⁵

Likewise, his *De orthographia* was written in a 9th-century Continental or English MS situated in England by the 10th century, while his *De anima* was written in a Northern Italian or French MS present in Wales sometime in the 9th century.²⁶ Alcuin is known to have used his *Expositio psalmorum*, but his work was also known earlier, since his *Commentarius in epistolas septem catholicas* and his *Expositio psalmorum* were used by Bede.²⁷ Likewise, the breviate version of *In Psalmos*, as well as fragments of this work appear in several Northumbrian MSS of the 8th century.²⁸

The *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita*, often ascribed to Cassiodorus, but actually written by the monk Epiphanius (probably under Cassiodorus's direction) relies upon the accounts of Sozomen, Socrates and Eusebius as filtered through Rufinus. Like Sozomen and Socrates, the author of the *Historica Tripartita* includes the story of Constantine's vision of the glowing cross in the sky in his account of Church history. Because the account of Constantine's vision was not contained in Rufinus's translation of Eusebius's work (see below) this Latin account might have been the first available to the Insular world, since there is no evidence that any of the previously cited Greek texts were known. The *Historica Tripartita* was definitely known in Anglo-Saxon England by the time of Aelfric, as he used it in the composition of several homilies.²⁹

Chrysostom (347-407 AD)

An unspecified work of John Chrysostom is included in list of books left to Alcuin. It is

²⁵Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 58-62, 76-82.

²⁶Gneuss, *Handlist*, nos. 69.5, and 581, pp. 34, and 94.

²⁷Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50; Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, *passim*; *FONTES* (18 July 2003).

²⁸ See items 154, 237, and 822, in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 42, 51, and 124.

possible that the work was either his twenty-five homilies on the Gospel of Matthew or seven homilies on St Paul since both of these works had been translated into Latin.³⁰ The earliest evidence for the circulation of Chrysostom's work in the Insular world, however, comes from the fragments (in Latin) of his works *De reparatione lapsi*, *De compunctione cordis*, *Passio S. Justi pueri* and *Pastor Hermas*, which appear in an 8th-century Northumbrian MS fragment.³¹

Clement of Alexandria (obit 215 AD)

There is a slight possibility that Aldhelm might have had knowledge of Clement's work as evidenced by his reference in his *Epistola ad Arcircium* to the Nicolaites, an heretical sect discussed by Clement. However, this information may also have come from Eusebius (via Rufinus's Latin translation) who quotes Clement's anecdote about the Nicolaites.³²

Cyprian of Carthage (200-258 AD)

Cyprian was the prime influence on North African Christianity until the time of Augustine, who knew his writings intimately. His writings and those attributed to him functioned in a place one step below Scripture from his own time until the 7th-century. Therefore, whether or not every one of his works was known to Insular scholars, many of his thoughts would have been filtered down through other writers who were familiar with them, especially Augustine.

More specifically, Cyprian's *Epistolae* are cited in the 10th-century list of books donated by Æðelwold, bishop of Winchester to the monastery at Peterborough.³³ Likewise,

²⁹ See the *FONTES* under the entries for Epiph/Ps. Cassiodorus, and Aelfric, *Supplementary Homilies* 21,22, 26. (18 July 2003).

³⁰Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50, 76-82.

³¹ Gneuss, no. 819, p. 124.

³²Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 41.

³³Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 52-55.

Book III from his *Ad Quirium Testimonia* appears in two different manuscripts most likely from Northern France that were in England by the 10th century, while 4th century fragments of his *Epistolae* appeared in England sometime before 1100.³⁴ Earlier evidence for his circulation is provided by Aldhelm, Bede and Alcuin, who all cited his *Heptateuchos*, while his *Deperditorum carminum reliquiae*, and his treatise on virginity (*de Habitu Virginum*) were used by Aldhelm.³⁵ Bede also cites *De Habitu Virginum*, as well as *De Zelo et Livore* (*On Jealousy and Envy*) in his *Commentarius Epistolarum Septem Catholicas*, and quotes from Cyprian's *De Lapsis* and *Epistola 53* in his *Explanatio Apocalypsis* and *Martyrology*.³⁶

Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 315-386 AD)

The extant works of Cyril of Jerusalem include a sermon on the Pool of Bethesda, a letter to the Emperor Constantius,³⁷ three small textual fragments, and the famous *Catecheses*.

Adomnán displays knowledge of Cyril's thirteenth *Catechesis xiii*, though it is unclear whether he actually had this text in his possession or simply knew of it through Jerome.³⁸

Eusebius of Caesaria (c. 260-340)

Fragments from Rufinus's translation of the are found in several 9th-10th century French manuscripts that were owned in England in the 10th century, and also in a 7th century

Northumbrian manuscript.³⁹ Bede used Rufinus's translation of the *Historiae Ecclesiastica* in

³⁴ See items nos. 297, 311, and 459 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 59, 61, and 80.

³⁵ Biggs, Hill, and Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. 80-82; Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 52.

³⁶ Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, *passim*; *FONTES* (16-June 2003).

³⁷ Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History* 4:5 describes Cyril's vision of a glowing cross in the sky and reports that Cyril sent a letter with this vision to the emperor. See *NPNF*, 2nd series, 2: 302. However, although this letter was included among Cyril's works until 1165, Cyril's authorship is doubtful, and the account of the vision much interpolated. See P. Schaff, (ed.), *A Religious Encyclopaedia or Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology*, 3rd edn (Toronto, New York & London, 1894), 1:595.

³⁸ Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' p. 210, note 182.

³⁹ See items 61, 137, 768 and 773.5 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 33, 41, 114, and 115.

several works, as did the anonymous author of the Old English *Martyrology* (compiled in the 9th century), and Cynewulf in *Elene*.⁴⁰ While the *Historiae Ecclesiastica* contains the story of Constantine's mother, Helen, finding the True Cross, it does not include Constantine's vision of the glowing cross in the sky and his decision to decorate his standard with the Chi-Rho. These events are described in the *Vita Constantini*, which was not translated in its entirety into Latin until 1549.⁴¹ Sections of the *Vita* are found in the Church Histories written by Socrates and Sozomen, and are later repeated in the Ps. Cassiodorus *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita* (see entry on Cassiodorus, above) This last text is the only one likely to have circulated in Britain, though it is possible that the story of Constantine's vision had passed into oral history.

Venantius Fortunatus (6th century)

Fortunatus's *Carmina* were well known in early Anglo-Saxon England, so it is most likely this work that is included in the list of books left to Alcuin.⁴² Individual *carmina* and fragments from the collected *Carmina* are found in several 10th century English manuscripts, or manuscripts owned in England in the 10th century.⁴³ Bede quoted from the *Carmina* directly while Aldhelm used them circumspectly as one of multiple sources.⁴⁴ His hymn *Pangue Lingua* was used in the *Exaltatio* and *Adoratio Crucis* ceremonies, which may have been practised in Britain by the mid 8th-century.⁴⁵

⁴⁰Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History*, p.20; Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, *passim*; FONTES (17 July 2003).

⁴¹ See 'Special Prologemena to the *Life of Constantine*', NPNF, 2nd series, 1: 466-469, for the various Latin editions of the *Life of Constantine*.

⁴²Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50.

⁴³ See items 2, 120, 142, and 284 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 26, 39, 41, and 58.

⁴⁴ FONTES (08 July 2003).

⁴⁵ See Chapter 1, pp. 31-33.

Gregory the Great (540-604 AD)

Gregory's *Moralia in Job* and his *Dialogi* are cited in the list of books donated by Sæwold, his *Homiliae XL in Evangelia* is included in another booklist from the late 11th-century, and his name appears in Alcuin's booklist, though the work is not specified.⁴⁶ The *Homiliae* are also found in a number of 8th-9th century English MSS.⁴⁷ Likewise, the complete *Dialogi*, or fragments are not only found in several 10th-century English manuscripts but are also found in 7th-8th century manuscripts probably penned in Northumbria.⁴⁸ While Hurst has argued that the *Dialogi* were not actually written by Gregory, but by a 7th-century author familiar with his *Homiliae*, there is no question that both works were well known and used in an early medieval Insular context: Bede and Aldhelm cite the *Diologi*, and Bede knew *Homiliae xl in evangelia*, *Homiliae in ezechielem*, *Moralia in Job*, and several of Gregory's *Epistulae*.⁴⁹ It is thought that Gregory's *Homiliae* were generally available in the Insular world by the late 8th-century, and indeed, individual books or fragments appear in several 8th-9th century English MSS,⁵⁰ though it is possible that they were available even earlier, as 7th-century Hiberno-Latin exegetes cite them frequently.⁵¹ Likewise, the *Moralia*, either in part, or in whole, is contained in several 7th and 8th-century manuscripts, most likely written in Northumbria and Mercia.⁵²

Gregory of Tours (538-594 AD)

⁴⁶ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 58-62, 69-73.

⁴⁷ Gneuss, *Handlist*, nos. 42, 804.5, 831.6, 911, 944.5, pp. 31, 120, 127, 140, and 146.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 207, 856.1, 924, 937.3, and 943.8, pp. 47, 132, 141, 144, and 146.

⁴⁹ Hurst, *Gregory the Great*, *passim*, particularly p.76; *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, *passim*; Martin, *Commentary on the Acts*, *passim*; Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 178; *FONTES* (17 August 2003). According to Katy Cubitt (Pers. Comm. 12/01/05) The *Diologi* are now generally accepted as having been written by Gregory.

⁵⁰ Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching,' pp. 217-219; Gneuss, *Handlist*, nos. 207, 856.1, 924, 937.3, and 943.8, pp. 47, 132, 141, 144, and 146.

⁵¹ Breen, 'Some Seventh Century Hiberno-Latin Texts', p. 210.

⁵² Gneuss, *Handlist*, nos. 840, 858, 865.5, and 946.5, pp. 129, 132, 133, and 146.

Gregory of Tours reportedly copied and adapted a large collection of miracle stories about St Andrew from a 4th-century Latin text which, due to church objection, had changed or deleted most of the theological and doctrinal implications of the original 2nd-century Greek text.⁵³

Known as the *Liber de miraculosis beati Andreae apostolica*, his version of the Andrew story does not contain the story of his martyrdom, though Part 19 of the text contains the tales of Andrew's defeat of the great serpent and his healing of a child bitten by a serpent.⁵⁴ This version may have been included in the *Liber miraculorum*, the title of a book by Gregory included in the list donated by Æðelwold, the bishop of Winchester (963-84) to the monastery at Peterborough.⁵⁵ Aelfric was familiar with Gregory's *Miraculum Clementis*, *Historia Francorum* and *De Virtutibus Sancti martini episcopi*, while the anonymous author of the Old English *Martyrology* quotes from the *Miraculum Clementis*.⁵⁶ His *Historia Francorum*, *De virtutibus Sancti Martini episcopi*, *Miraculum clementis*, and *Vitae Patrum*, were all known in the later Anglo-Saxon period.⁵⁷

Isidore of Seville (c 560-636)

While many of Isidore's works appear by name in booklists from the 10th to 12th centuries, his works were in circulation at a much earlier time in Britain and Ireland.⁵⁸ For instance, Isidore's *Sententiae*, *Allegoriae sacrae Scripturae*, *Prooemia Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, *De ortu et obitu patrum*, *De natura rerum*, and *Differentiae*, as well as fragments, or incomplete versions, of his *Etymologia* and *Synonyma* appear in a variety of 8th-century Anglo-Saxon

⁵³ See R. Van Dam (ed.), *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Martyrs* (Liverpool, 1988), pp. 48-49.

⁵⁴ Bonnet, *Gregorii Turonensis, Opera, Part 2*, 1: 826-46; James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 343.

⁵⁵ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 52-55.

⁵⁶ *FONTES* (11 August 2003).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 50-55, 58-62, 64-69, 76-82.

(and one possibly Welsh or Cornish) manuscripts.⁵⁹ In addition, Aldhelm based his discussion of the significance of the number seven in his *Epistola ad Arcircium* primarily on Isidore's (or Pseudo-Isidore's) *Liber Numerorum* and used Isidore's *De Ortu et Obitu Patrum* in his *De virginitate*, and Bede was familiar with Isidore's *Etymologia*, as evidenced by the citations in his *Commentarius in epistolas septem catholicas*.⁶⁰ Likewise, there is a possibility that the anonymous author of the Old English *Exodus* used Isidore's *Allegoriae*.⁶¹

Isidore's works were, if possible, even more popular in early medieval Ireland, reaching there directly from Spain at a very early date, possibly by the first quarter of the 7th century. In fact, the Irish copy of his *Origenes* is the only 7th-century copy still in existence.⁶² His influence was so extensive that a great deal of Irish exegesis based on his work was circulated under his name and still causes confusion today as to authorship.⁶³

Jerome (Hieronymous) (c. 342-420 AD)

Most of Jerome's works are cited in Anglo-Saxon booklists from the 10th to 12th centuries.⁶⁴ However, there is evidence for his circulation much earlier. For instance, fragments from his *In Evangelium Matthaei* appear in a Spanish MS probably owned in England by the 8th century, and in an 8th-century manuscript probably written in Northumbria.⁶⁵ *In Ecclesiastin* is also written in 8th-century Northumbrian manuscript as well as in a 5th-century Italian manuscript that was likely in England by the 7th century.⁶⁶ Likewise, portions of Jerome's *In*

⁵⁹ See items 773, 786, 787, 818.5, 821, 845, 848.4, 851.6, 885, 932, 943.4, 944.3, and 946 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 115, 118, 124, 129, 130, 131, 136, 143, 145, and 146.

⁶⁰ Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, pp. 32, 176; Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, *passim*.

⁶¹ *FONTES* (19 July 2003).

⁶² J. Hillgarth, 'Visigothic Spain and Early Christian Ireland,' p. 183; 'Ireland and Spain in the Seventh-Century,' *Peritia* 3 (1984): *passim*.

⁶³ R. McNally, 'Isadorian Pseudepigraphia in the Early Middle-Ages', in M. C. Díaz y Díaz, (ed.), *Isidoriana: Estudios sobre San Isidoro de Sevilla en el XIV Centenario de su Nacimiento* (Leon, 1961), *passim*.

⁶⁴ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50, 52-55, 58-62, 69-73, 76-82.

⁶⁵ See items 755 and 770.5 in Gneuss, *Handlist*, pp. 112 and 114.

⁶⁶ Gneuss, *Handlist*, nos. 832 and 944, pp. 127 and 146.

Epistolam Pauli ad Galatas, Tractatus in Psalmos (fragments from psalms 76 and 77) and *Epistola 53*, are copied in several 8th to 9th century Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.⁶⁷

Aldhelm cites Jerome's *Praefatio in Librum Iob* in his discussion of the number seven in his *Epistola ad Arcircium*, used *De Virginitate B. Mariae*, the *Vitas of SS Pauli, Hilarius, and Malachi*, and *Epistola xxii*, while writing his *De Virginitate*, and cited his *Praefatio ad versionem Danielis* in his letter to Leuthere.⁶⁸ Bede was familiar with Jerome's *Martyrologia*, his *Chronicon*, his tracts *Adversus Iovinianum, Adversus Helvidium*, his *Commentarii* on the books of *Ecclesiastes, Amos, Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jonah*, the *Commentarii* on the letters to *Galatians, Matthew, Philemon, and Titus*; his *Expositione Psalmorum*, his *Book of Places*, as well as *De viribus illustribus* and *Libri interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*.⁶⁹ Jerome's *Commentarii in evangelium Matthaei* was very well known to the early Irish exegetes.⁷⁰ In particular, Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* refers to Jerome's *In Ezechielem*, and he most likely had all of Jerome's Vulgate, the *Onomasticon*, his *Commentarii* on the books of the Old Testament, some of his letters (in particular the *Epistola ad Eustochium*), his *De situ et Nominibus Locorum Hebraicorum Liber*, the *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, and the *Liber Hebraicarum Quaestionum*; all of which has led to the claim that practically the whole corpus of Jerome's writings must have been known and studied throughout the Columban monasteries at this time.⁷¹

Leo the Great (Pope from 440-461 AD)

⁶⁷ Ibid., nos. 829.2, 845, and 943.6, pp. 126, 129, and 146.

⁶⁸ Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 32, 36, 52, 153, 177-178.

⁶⁹ Hurst, *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, passim; Martin, *Commentary on the Acts*, passim; Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History*, pp.19-20.

⁷⁰ O'Reilly, 'The Wisdom of the Scribe,' p. 184.

⁷¹ Meehan, Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*, pp. 13-14. Breen, 'Some Seventh Century Hiberno-Latin Texts,' p.209. Cf. Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet Page,' pp. 201, note 37, who argues for a slightly more limited knowledge of Jerome's works.

An unspecified work by Leo, but most likely his *Epistolae* or *Sermones* is included in the books left to Alcuin by Ælberht.⁷² Leo's *Sermo* 82 was used extensively by the anonymous author of the *Vita S. Birini*, exemplifying that his work was probably circulating in Britain.⁷³

Origen (185-232 AD)

Origen's twenty-six Homilies on the book of Joshua were translated into Latin by Rufinus, and are cited as *Hieronimus Super Iosue* in the 11th to 12th-century booklist from Peterborough. (The title *Hieronimus super Iosue*, reflects the fact that these commentaries were frequently ascribed to Jerome in the middle-ages, perhaps due to the fact that Jerome also translated a number of Origen's homilies.)⁷⁴ Origen was the first to comment on the entire Psalter, and his method of exegesis became the paradigm for all later commentators. Although his work was written in Greek, the essentials of his method were available in the West through Jerome's *Expositione Psalmorum* and Rufinus's translation of Origen's homilies on Psalms 36, 37 and 38.⁷⁵ Origen also deeply influenced Isidore of Seville and Gregory the Great.⁷⁶ Therefore, it is likely that even if there were no copies of Origen's work circulating in Britain in the early medieval period, his methodology was known through these other authors. Indeed he is frequently cited by name in the works of 7th-century Hiberno-Latin exegetes.⁷⁷

Rufinus (c. 344-410 AD)

⁷²Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 45-50.

⁷³ *FONTES* (08 August 2003).

⁷⁴Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 76-82. See Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, 2: 620, for a list of Origen's works translated and circulated in Latin.

⁷⁵ Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, 2: 620.

⁷⁶J. Dyer, 'The Singing of Psalms in the Early Medieval Office,' *Speculum* (1989): 536.

⁷⁷Breen, 'Some Seventh Century Hiberno-Latin Texts', p. 210.

Rufinus's Latin translations of Eusebius's *Historica ecclesiastica*, Origen's twenty six Homilies on the book of Joshua (*Hieronimus Super Iosue*), Gregory of Nazianzus's second *Oratio (Liber apologeticus de fuga)*, and Psuedo-Clementine's *Recognitiones*, are cited in the 11th to 12th -century booklist from Peterborough.⁷⁸ Rufinus's translation of the *Historica Ecclesiastica* was well known by Aelfric and Cynewulf, who both quote from the work, and was possibly known by the anonymous authors of the Old English *Martyrology*, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (MS E). Likewise, Bede quotes from the *Historica ecclesiastica* in his own *Martyrology* and in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*.⁷⁹

II. Anonymous or Pseudonymous Texts:

De pasha

A 4th-century Christian poem mistakenly attributed to Cyprian and copied among his works until the 9th century.⁸⁰ Three different Carolingian manuscripts dating from the end of the 8th-century include the poem, attesting to its popularity in the early medieval world. *De pascha* was also attributed to Tertullian under the title *De ligno vitae*,⁸¹ to Priscillian, and to Martin of Braga, and was available in Ireland by the end of the 8th century.⁸²

Physiologus

The *Physiologus*, originally a late antique Greek compilation, combined Christian as well as pagan sources such as Aristotle, Pliny, Oppian, Aelian and Solinus. By 1000 AD it had also incorporated excerpts from Isidore's *Etymologies* (itself based on earlier sources including

⁷⁸Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 76-82.

⁷⁹ FONTES (13-May 2003).

⁸⁰ Greenhill, 'The Child in the Tree', pp. 338-9, 351. The poem is included in Cyprian's *Opera*, in G. de Hartel, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, 3:3. 305-308.

⁸¹ Ps-Tertullian, *De Ligno Vitae*, PL 2:1113-1115; White, *Early Christian Latin Poets*, pp. 136-39.

⁸²Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish', pp. 322-328.

Ambrose's *Hexaemeron*). Integrating fact, fantasy and Christian moral allegory it became known as the bestiary.⁸³ The *Physiologus* appears in a 10th-century list of books donated to the monastery at Peterborough, and three Old English poems (the Panther, the Whale, and the Partridge) that appear in the 10th-century *Exeter Book* (Exeter Cathedral Library MS 3501) are based on details from the *Physiologus*. Elements of the *Physiologus* were known much earlier, however, as it was used by Aldhelm and the anonymous author (a student of Aldhelm's) of the *Liber Monstrorum*.⁸⁴ Klingender argues that the *Physiologus* was well known and partially translated in Bede's time, while Henderson argues for a limited knowledge by the Picts, involving the entries on the lion, the serpent, and possibly the monkey and the panther.⁸⁵

III. Apocrypha:

Apocryphal texts were particularly popular in Ireland, where they arrived at an early date, perhaps in conjunction with Priscillian's writings directly from Spain.⁸⁶ It has been argued that Irish biblical scholars did not have the same conception of canonical texts as did others: rather than referring to a fixed list of scriptures, 'canonical' alluded to the original written text rather than commentary or glossing. Therefore there was no clear and immediate distinction between 'canonical' and 'uncanonical' biblical texts.⁸⁷ As many southern Irish exegetical, computistical and grammatical works migrated to Northumbria, it may be that Anglo-Saxon knowledge of the apocrypha came primarily from Ireland.⁸⁸ The following list is by no means exhaustive and only includes material relevant to the interpretation of the

⁸³ Benton, *The Medieval Menagerie*, pp. 69-70.

⁸⁴ Lapidge, 'Surviving Booklists,' pp. 52-55.

⁸⁵ Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought* p. 130; Henderson, *Pictish Monsters*, pp. 9-13

⁸⁶ Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish', pp. 322-328.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 332-333.

⁸⁸ Breen, 'Some Seventh-Century Hiberno-Latin Texts', p. 214.

iconography contained on the Tarbat peninsula cross-slabs.

IIIa. Old Testament:

1 Enoch

The Book of Enoch is an ancient (between 200BC and 100AD) Hebrew or Aramaic composition known from two sets of versions, an Ethiopic one that scholars identify as '1 Enoch', and a Slavonic version that is identified as '2 Enoch', or 'The Book of the Secrets of Enoch.' Both versions have been found in Greek and Latin translations and a number of its eschatological themes and motifs (such as fallen angels and the seven archangels) appear in early Insular contexts, both literary and artistic. The motif of the seven archangels appears on Cuthbert's coffin, in the *Durham Ritual*, the *Book of Cerne*, the *Antiphonary of Bangor*, and the *Textus Roffensis*, while some of the archangels' names occur in the *Pater Noster Dialogue*. In addition, there is a possibility that Bede knew *1 Enoch* directly, as evidenced by certain discussions in his *Commentarius in Epistolas*.⁸⁹

IIIb. New Testament:

Protovangelium of James

Composed in Greek, but translated into Latin by the 6th-century, this 'Infancy' gospel relates the Nativity and dedication of Mary as well as the miracles attending the births of John the Baptist and Christ. There is evidence for the early circulation of a Latin version in the British Isles and Ireland.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Biggs, Hill and Szarmach, *SASLC*, p. 26.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 37-38; M. MacNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church*, (Dublin, 1975) pp. 39, 42-47, 49; Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish', pp. 303-305.

Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew

This gospel is a composite Latin Apocryphon dating anywhere from 550 to the 9th-century. It falls into three parts, the first of which (chapters 1-17) is a version of the *Protevangelium* of James (see above), the second of which (chapters 18-24) details the Flight into and out of Egypt, and the third, (chapters 25-42) which is based on the Infancy Gospel of Thomas (see below). The evidence is unclear as to when the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew appeared in England, though it definitely seems to have been known by the 9th-century, and it is possible that it influenced the depiction of the Flight into/out of Egypt panel on the Ruthwell Cross.⁹¹ It also seems to have been well known by the anonymous author of Vercelli Homily 6, who quotes directly from it.⁹²

Gospel of Thomas

Another so-called 'Infancy' gospel because its contents relate the childhood miracles of Christ, the original Gospel of Thomas was most likely unknown in Anglo-Saxon England, though there is a slight possibility that Aldhelm was alluding to this work when he reported that Joseph taught carpentry to Jesus in his *Epistola ad Arcircium*.⁹³ (However, he might have as easily have gotten the story from the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, if that text were available). Although there is now no Latin translation dating from the early Middle Ages, Dumville has argued that the Gospel of Thomas

⁹¹ Biggs, Hill, Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. 43-44.

⁹² See *FONTES* under entry for Anon. Evang. Ps. Math (23 September 2003). The Vercelli homilies, dated to the second half of the 10th-century, were based on older sources. See Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching,' pp. 217, 221-226.

⁹³ Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, p. 38.

was known in Ireland by the mid-8th-century.⁹⁴ Chapters 14 and 16:1-2 details how Jesus healed his step-brother James after he was bitten by a viper, but the story is also contained within the *Liber de Infanta*, (the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew).⁹⁵

IIIc. Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, or 'Passions':

Only those works that have a direct bearing on the iconography of the Tarbat cross-slabs are discussed below, though numerous *Acts* and *Passions* were in circulation in Anglo-Saxon England.⁹⁶

Acts of Andrew (Greek)

One of the five main *Acts* (along with John, Peter, Paul and Thomas) that all circulated together in a corpus. All five of these apostolic 'romances' belong initially to the 3rd century, c. 260 A.D.⁹⁷ The probability is that it was written by Leucius, following earlier traditions, and that it was afterwards revised and fitted for general reading by an orthodox hand. Elements of the Greek *Acts* are referred to by authors of the beginning of the 5th century, and some portions of the Pseudo-Abdias *Acts of Andrew*, (see below) are almost in the same words.⁹⁸

Pseudo-Abdias's *Historiae Apostolica*

Compiled in Gaul sometime between the 6th and 7th century, the *Historiae apostolica* contains information on all thirteen apostles divided between 10 books. The Ps-

⁹⁴Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish', pp. 303-305; James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 49.

⁹⁵James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 53-54, 65.

⁹⁶Biggs, Hill, and Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. 34-70.

⁹⁷ See James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 337.

⁹⁸ See B. Pick, *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul, Peter, John, Andrew and Thomas*, (Chicago, 1909), pp. 200-221,

Abdias *Historiae Apostolica* contains information on Philip's banishment of a dragon (Book 10:2) and Simon and Jude's contest with the Manichaean court magicians of Xerxes (Book 4:9), which involves Simon's and Jude's superior power to charm snakes. Likewise Matthew is able to send snakes and dragons to sleep and cure their bites through the power of the cross (Book 7:2,4).⁹⁹ The *Historiae Apostolica* also contains the description of Andrew's martyrdom in which he makes the following speech about the cross: 'For the first man through the tree of transgression brought in death; and it was necessary for the human race, that through the suffering of the tree, death, which had come into the world, should be driven out....',¹⁰⁰

It is impossible to determine if this collection was used or known in its entirety in Anglo-Saxon England. For instance, the Old English *Martyrology* (compiled in the 9th-century), and Cynewulf's *Fates of the Apostles* both use information from Pseudo-Abdias's account of Andrew's passion as well as from the separate *Passio Andreae*.¹⁰¹ The *Book of Cerne*, which dates from the first quarter of the 9th-century, but which was compiled as early as the 8th-century, contains seven prayers which show connections with Pseudo-Abdias's work as well as with the *Acti Pilati*, *Passio SS Petri et Pauli*, and the *Descensus ad Inferne* motif that was popular in both England and Ireland.¹⁰² While elements of the St Andrew legend were known in Anglo-Saxon England, the Old English *Andreas* does not relate this specific episode of Andrew's martyrdom (as it is based on the Apocryphal *Acta Andreae et*

for a discussion of the various versions of the St Andrew legend in circulation.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 465-466, 469,

¹⁰⁰ *ANCL*, 8:338.

¹⁰¹ Biggs, Hill and Szarmach, *SASLC*, pp. 50-51.

¹⁰² Dumville, 'Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish', pp. 320-331.

Matthei, rather than the Ps. Abdius account or the *Passio Andreae*.¹⁰³

Passio Andreae

Details about the passion of Andrew that are not included in the Psuedo-Abdias account but originate from a work known as the *Passio Andreae*,¹⁰⁴ show up in the Old English *Martyrology*, in Cynewulf's *Fates of the Apostles*, in Aelfric's *Catholic Homilies* and in the *Book of Cerne*, all of which argues for the separate circulation of this work in England.¹⁰⁵

Acta Andreae et Matthiae

The legend of St. Andrew was a popular one in Anglo-Saxon England as evidenced by the poem *Andreas* and *Blickling Homily 19* about St Andrew.¹⁰⁶ Both of these works draw heavily on the Apocryphal *Acta Andreae et Matthei*,¹⁰⁷ which ends with their conversion of the anthropopagi, not with the martyrdom of Andrew.¹⁰⁸ It was formerly thought that the *Acta Andreae et Matthei* were an episode of the main *Acta Andreae* 'romance' dating from the 3rd century, but this is no longer believed to be the case.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ For a discussion of the parallels between the *Actae Andreae et Matthei* and the OE *Andreas*, see Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History*, pp. 162-163.

¹⁰⁴ See A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, (eds.), *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (Leipzig, 1891-1903), 1:1-37.

¹⁰⁵ Biggs, Hill and Szarmach, *SASLC*, p. 53. See also the *FONTES* entry for Anon. Pass. Andr. (23 September 2003).

¹⁰⁶ The *Blickling Homilies* have been dated as early as 875 AD. See Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching,' pp. 217, 221-226.

¹⁰⁷ James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 453-459; B. Pick, *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul, Peter, John, Andrew and Thomas*, (Chicago, 1909), pp. 200-221.

¹⁰⁸ Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*, pp. 162-163, spotlight the parallels between the *Acta Andreae et Matthei* and the OE *Andreas*. The *FONTES* entry for Anon. Act. Andr. Matt. (23 September 2003) also details the use in *Blickling Homily 19* of the *Actae Andreae et Matthei*.

¹⁰⁹ James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 337.

B: Textual Sources Relating to/Informing the Representations of the Cross on the Tarbat Collection of Monuments¹

I. The Cross/Tree of Life at the Centre of the World

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 13:28, (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:89)

He stretched out His hands on the Cross, that He might embrace the ends of the world; for this Golgotha is the very centre of the earth. It is not my word, but it is a prophet who hath said, Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. He stretched forth human hands, who by His spiritual hands had established the heaven; and they were fastened with nails, that His manhood, which here the sins of men, having been nailed to the tree, and having died, sin might die with it, and we might rise again in righteousness. For since by one man came death, by One Man came also life; by One Man, the Saviour, dying of His own accord: for remember what He said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.

Jerome, *Commentariorum in Ezechielem* 2:5.5 (PL 25:52).

Haec dicit Dominus Deus: Ista est Jerusalem: in medio gentium posui eam, et in circuitu ejus terras; et contempsit judicia mea, ut plus esset impia quam gentes, et praecepta mea ultra quam terrae quae in circuitu ejus sunt. Judicia enim mea projecerunt, et in praeceptis meis non ambulaverunt. Jerusalem in medio mundi sitam, hic idem Propheta testatur, umbilicum terrae eam esse demonstrans. Et Psalmista nativitatem exprimens Domini: Veritas, inquit, de terra orta est (Ps. 48: 12). Ac deinceps passionem: Operatus est, inquit, salutem in medio terrae (Ps. 73: 12). A partibus enim Orientis cingitur plaga quae appellatur Asia. A partibus Occidentis, ejus quae vocatur Europa. A meridie et austro, Libya et Africa. A Septentrione, Scythis, Armenia atque Perside et cunctis Ponti nationibus. In medio igitur gentium 50 posita est, ut qui erat notus in Judaea Deus (Ps. 75), et in Israel magnum nomen ejus, omnes in circuitu nationes illius sequerentur exempla, quae gentium circa se positarum impietatem secuta, vicit etiam ipsas in scelere suo.

***De Pascha*, (Ps-Tertullian, *De Ligno Vitae*) PL 2:1113-1115**

Est locus ex omni medius, quem cernimus, orbe,
Golgotha Judaei patrio cognomine dicunt:
Hic ego de sterili succisum robore lignum
Plantatum, memini fructus genuisse salubres.
Non tamen hos illis, qui se posuere, colonis
Praebuit: externi fructus habuere beatos.
Arboris haec species uno de stipite surgit,
Et mox in geminos extendit brachia ramos:
Sicut plena graves antennae carbasa tendunt,
Vel cum disjunctis juga stant ad aratra juvencis,
Quem tulit hoc primo maturo semine lapsum
Concepit tellus: mox hinc (mirabile dictu)
Tertia lux iterum, terris superisque tremendum

¹ Authors and texts follow the order in which they were discussed in the chapter. Texts which were written in Greek are provided here only in English.

Extulerat ramum, vitali fruge beatum.
Sed bis vicenis firmatus et ille diebus
Crevit in immensum, coelumque cacumine summo
Contigit, et tandem sanctum caput abdidit alto.
Dum tamen ingenti bisenos pondere ramos
Edidit, et totum spargens porrexit in orbem:
Gentibus ut cunctis victum vitamque perennem
Praeberent, mortemque mori qui posse docerent.
Expletis etiam mox quinquaginta diebus,
Vertice de summo divini nectaris haustum
Detulit in ramos, coelestis spiritus aerae:
Dulci rore graves manabant undique frondes
Ecce sub ingenti ramorum tegminis umbra
Fons erat: hic, nullo casu turbante, serenus,
Perspicuis illimis aquis, et gramina circum
Fundebant laetos vario de flore colores.
Hunc circum innumerae gentes, populique coibant.
Quam varii generis, sexus, aetatis, honoris,
Innuptae, nuptaeque simul, viduaeque, nurusque,
Infantes, puerique, viri, juvenesque, senesque!
Hic ubi multigenis flexos incumbere pomis
Cernebant ramos, avidisque adtingere dextris
Gaudebant, madidos coelesti nectare fructus:
Nec prius hos poterant cupidis decerpere palmis,
Quam lutulenta viae vestigia foeda prioris
Detererent, corpusque pio de fonte lavarent.
Ergo diu circum spatiantes gramine molli,
Suscipiunt alta pendentis arbore fructus.
Tum si quis ex illis delapsa putamina ramis,
Et dulces, multo rorantes nectare, frondes
Vescuntur, veros exoptant sumere fructus.
Ergo ubi coelestem ceperunt ora saporem,
Permutant animos, et mentes perdere avaras
Incipiunt, dulcique hominem cognoscere sensu,
Insolitum multis stomachum movisse saporem
Vidimus, et fellis commotum melle venenum
Rejecisse bonos turbata mente sapes:
Aut avide sumptum non dilexisse, diuque
Et male potatum tandem evomuisse saporem.
Saepe quidem multi, renovatis mentibus, aegros
Restituere animos: et quae se posse negabant,
Pertluerant, fructumque sui cepere laboris.
Multi etiam sanctos ausi contingere fontes,
Discussere iterum subito, retroque relapsi,
Sordibus et coeno misti volvuntur eodem.
Multi vero bono portantes pectore, totis
Accipiunt animis, penitusque in viscera condunt.
Ergo qui sacros possunt adcedere fontes,
Septima lux illos optatas sistit ad undas,

Tingit et in liquidis jejunos fontibus artus.
Sic demum illuviem mentis, vitaeque prioris
Deponunt labem; purasque a morte reducunt
Illustres animas, coelique ad limen ituras.
Hinc iter ad ramos, et dulcia poma salutis:
Inde iter ad coelum per ramos arboris altae
Hoc lignum vitae est cunctis credentibus. Amen

Gregory the Great, *Moralia Sive Expositio in Iob* 18:1.3 (PL 76:97)

At contra in bono volucres poni solent, sicut in Evangelio Dominus cum similitudinem regni coelestis ex grano sinapis denuntiaret, dixit: Cui simile est regnum Dei, et cui simile aestimabo illud? Simile est grano sinapis, quod acceptum homo misit in hortum suum, et crevit, et factum est in arborem magnam, et volucres coeli requieverunt in ramis ejus (Matt. 13:31). Ipse quippe est granum sinapis qui in horti sepultura plantatus, arbor magna surrexit. Granum namque fuit cum moreretur, arbor cum resurgeret. Granum per humilitatem carnis, arbor per potentiam majestatis. Granum, quia vidimus eum, et non erat aspectus (Is. 53:2); arbor autem, quia speciosus forma prae filiis hominum (Ps.44:3). Hujus arboris rami sancti praedicatores sunt. Et videamus quam late tendantur. Quid enim de eis dicitur? In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum (Ps. 18: 5). In istis ramis volucres requiescunt, quia sanctae animae, quae quibusdam virtutum pennis a terrena cogitatione se sublevant, in eorum dictis atque consolationibus ab hujus vitae fatigatione respirant. Hoc igitur in loco postquam de sapientia dictum est: Abscondita est ab oculis omnium viventium, recte subjungitur: Volucres quoque coeli latet, quia in hac corruptibili carne constituti, naturae ejus potentiam ipsi quoque videndo non penetrant, qui jam per meritum sanctae contemplationis volant.

II. Extensions of the Cross/Christ/Church

Irenaeus, *Epideixis* 1:34 (Ancient Christian Writers 16:69-70)

So by obedience unto death, hanging on the tree, He undid the old disobedience wrought in the tree. And because He is Himself, the Word of God Almighty, who is invisible, His form pervades us universally in the whole world, and encompasses both its length and breadth and height and depth--for by God's Word everything is disposed and administered--the Son of God was also crucified in these, imprinted in the form of a cross on the universe; ...it is He who makes bright the height, that is what is in Heaven, and holds the deep, which is in the bowels of the earth, and stretches forth and extends the length from East to west, navigating also the Northern parts and the breadth of the South, and calling in all the dispersed from all sides to the knowledge of the Father

Lactantius, *Divinae Institutione* 4:26 (PL 6:530)

Extendit ergo in passione manus suas, orbemque dimensus est, ut jam tunc ostenderet, ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, magnum populum ex omnibus linguis et tribubus congregatum, sub alas suas esse venturum, signumque illud maximum, atque sublime, frontibus suis suscepturum.

Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Catechetica* 32 (NPNF, 2nd series, 5:500)

For since it is the property of the Godhead to pervade all things, and to extend itself through the length and breadth of the substance of existence in every part.... this is the very thing we learn from the figure of the Cross; it is divided into four parts, so that there are the projections, four in number, from the central point where the whole converges upon itself; because He Who at the hour of His pre-arranged death was stretched upon it is He Who binds together all things into Himself, and by Himself brings to one harmonious agreement the diverse natures of actual existences. For in these existences there is the idea either of something above, or of something below, or else the thought passes to the confines sideways. If, therefore, you take into your consideration the system of things above the heavens or of things below the earth, or of things at the boundaries of the universe on either side, everywhere the presence of Deity anticipates your thought as the sole observable power that in every part of existing things holds in a state of being all those things.

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 2:41.62 (PL 34:64)

Herba haec mitis et humilis est, et nihil fortius et penetrabilius ejus radicibus: ut in charitate radicati et fundati possimus comprehendere cum omnibus sanctis, quae sit latitudo, et longitudo, et altitudo, et profundum, id est, crucem Domini: cujus latitudo dicitur in transverso ligno, quo extenduntur manus; longitudo, a terra usque ad ipsam latitudinem, quo a manibus et infra totum corpus affigitur; altitudo, a latitudine sursum usque ad summum, cui adhaeret caput; profundum vero, quod terrae infixum absconditur. Quo signo crucis, omnis actio christiana describitur, bene operari in Christo, et ei perseveranter inhaerere, sperare coelestia, sacramenta non profanare Per hanc actionem purgati valebimus cognoscere etiam supereminentem scientiae charitatem Christi qua aequalis est Patri, per quem facta sunt omnia, ut impleamur in omnem plenitudinem Dei (Eph.3:17-19).

III. The Cross of Victory/Second Coming

Ps. Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiastica vocata Tripartita* 1:4-5 (PL 69:888)

Ch. 4: *A quo tempore historiae fecit initium, et quomodo Constantino signum crucis ostenditur, et qui imperatores et Caesares per idem fuere tempus.*

....Proinde Maxentius Romae velut tyrannus habebatur, adulteria impudenter exercens et earum viros occidens. Quem volens Constantinus opprimere, et Romanos a cladibus liberare, cogitabat quem in bello Deum haberet auxilio: sciens nihil prodesse deos quos Diocletianus venerabatur, et quia potius ejus pater, paganorum contempta religione, feliciter advixisset. In his ergo sollicitudinibus constitutus, in somno vidit crucis signum coelo splendide collocatum: mirantique visionem, astiterunt angeli dicentes: O Constantine, in hoc vince. Fertur autem et ipsum Christum apparuisse ei, signumque monstrasse crucis, ac praecepisse ut figuram similem faceret, et in praeliis auxilium hoc haberet, quo victoriae jura conquireret. Eusebius itaque Pamphili cum jurejurando ipsum imperatorem dicentem audiisse se refert, quia circa meridiem, declinante jam sole, crucis signum ex lumine factum, et scripturam consortam ei dicentem, IN HOC VINCE, vidisset ipse et milites qui cum eo tunc essent. Pergenti namque aliquod per iter cum exercitu, hoc, inquit, ei miraculum est ostensum. Dumque cogitaret quid esset, nox supervenit, et dormienti Christus apparuit cum

signo quod vidit in coelo, jussitque ut fieret ejus signi figuratio, quae foret auxilium in congressionibus praeliorum.

Ch. 5: Quomodo Constantinus Christianum dogma cognoverit; et de miraculis crucis, et morte Maxentii.

Cumque jam opus non esset interprete, sed aperte imperatori monstratum fuisset quid de Deo credere conveniret, mox die facta sacerdotes Christi convocans, de dogmate consulebat. At illi sacros libros offerentes, de Christo loquebantur, suaque dicta ex propheticis comprobabant. Signum vero quod apparuerat ei, dicebant tropaeum esse victoriae adversus infernum, quam victoriam ascendens in coelos egit Christus, crucifixus et mortuus, et tertia die resurgens, secundum quod sperandum esse dixerunt: quia post hujus vitae terminum circa finem saeculi praesentis, omnes homines resurgant, et immortales existant: alii quidem ad praemia rerum, quibus bene vixerunt; alii ad supplicia, eo quod ab eis mala sint gesta. Esse tamen etiam in delictis quae committuntur hic occasionem salutis purificationemque peccati: nondum initiatis quidem baptismatis adeptionem secundum ecclesiasticam legem, initiatis autem custodiam, ne delinquant. Sed quia hoc agere omnino paucorum sanctorumque virorum est, docebant quoque purificationem secundam ex poenitentia constitutam; clementem enim esse Deum, et veniam tribuere delinquentibus, si poenitentiam agentes studeant eam operibus roborare. Haec sacerdotibus explanantibus, admiratus imperator prophetias de Christo ita promissas, jussit viros eruditos ex auro et lapidibus pretiosis in vexillum crucis transformare signum quod Labarum vocabatur. Hoc enim signum bellicum inter alia pretiosius erat, eo quod imperatorem praecedere, et adorari id a militibus moris esset. Unde praecipue Constantinum reor nobilissimum decus imperii Romani in signum mutasse crucis; ut frequenti visione atque cura desuescerent a priori more subjecti; et eum solum arbitrarentur Deum quem coleret imperator, vel quo duce atque auxiliatore uteretur adversus hostes. Semper enim hoc signum proponebatur ante ordines universos, quod maxime laborantibus aciebus in praeliis adesse praecipiebat. Constituit itaque certos signiferos, qui in eo laborarent; quorum opus erat ut vicibus humeris veherent illud, et omnes acies ita lustrarent. Fertur enim quidam, eo quod aliquando ferens hoc signum, repente hostibus invadentibus expavisset, dedissetque illud alteri devehendum; cumque se de praelio subtraxisset et jacula declinasset, subito percussus interiit; ille vero qui sacrum suscepit tropaeum, multis se jaculantibus permansit illaesus. Mirabiliter enim divina regente virtute, sagittae hostium figebantur in signo; a signifero autem inter pericula protinus evolabant. Dicitur autem neque alium unquam hujus signi ministrum, ut solet, in bello vulnere mortuum, aut cladem captivitatis perpessum.

Leo the Great, *De Passione Domini VIII: Sermo 59:6-7*(CCSL 138A: 356-358. 145-149, 161-174.

Noster vero intellectus, quem Spiritus veritatis illuminat, gloriam Crucis coelo terraque radiantem puro ac libero corde suscipiat, et interiore acie videat, quale sit, quod Dominus cum de passionis suae loqueretur instantia dixit:

O admirabilis potentia Crucis! O ineffabilis gloria Passionis! in qua et tribunal Domini, et iudicium mundi, et potestas est crucifixi....Traxisti, Domine, omnia ad te, quoniam scisso templi velo, sancta sanctorum ab indignis pontificibus recesserunt: ut figura in veritatem, prophetia in manifestationem, et lex in Evangelium verteretur.

Venantius Fortunatus, *Crux Benedicta* (PL 88: 0087)

CruX benedicta nitet, Dominus qua carne pependit
Atque cruore suo vulnera nostra lavat
Mitis amore pio, pro nobis victima factus,
Traxit ab ore lupi qua sacer agnus oves.
Transfixis palmis ubi mundum a clade redemit,
Atque suo clausit funere mortis iter.
Hic manus illa fuit clavis confixa cruentis,
Quae eripuit Paulum crimine, morte Petrum.
Fertilitate potens, o dulce, et nobile lignum,
Quando tuis ramis tam nova poma geris!
Cujus odore novo, defuncta cadavera surgunt,
Et redeunt vitae, qui caruere die.
Nullum uret aestus sub frondibus arboris hujus,

Luna nec in noctem, sol neque meridie.
Tu plantata micas, secus est ubi cursus aquarum
Spargis et ornatas, flore recente, comas.
Appensa est vitis inter tua brachia, de qua
Dulcia sanguineo vina rubore fluunt.

Venantius Fortunatus, *Pange Lingua* (PL 88:0088-0089)

Pange, lingua, gloriosi praelium certaminis,
Et super crucis tropaeo dic triumphum nobilem,
Qualiter Redemptor orbis immolatus vicerit.

De parentis protoplasti fraude facta condolens,
Quando pomi noxialis morsu in mortem corrui,
Ipse lignum tum notavit, damna ligni ut solveret.

Hoc opus nostrae salutis ordo depoposcerat,
Multiformis proditoris arte ut artem falleret,
Et medellam ferret inde, hostis unde laeserat.

Quando venit ergo sacri plenitudo temporis,
Missus est ab arce Patris natus orbis conditor,
Atque ventre virginali carne factus prodiit.

Vagit infans, inter arcta conditus praesepia,
Membra pannis involuta virgo mater alligat,
Et pedes, manusque, crura stricta cingit fascia.

Lustra sex qui jam peracta, tempus implens corporis,
Se volente, natus ad hoc, passioni deditus,
Agnus, in crucis levatur immolandus stipite.

Hic acetum, fel, arundo, sputa, clavi, lancea,
Mite corpus perforatur, sanguis, unda, profluit.
Terra, pontus, astra, mundus quo lavantur flumine.

*Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis,
Nulla talem silva profert, flore, fronde, germine
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos, dulce pondus sustinens.
Flecte ramos arbor alta, tensa laxa viscera,
Et rigor lentescat ille, quem dedit nativitas,
Ut superni membra regis miti tendas stipite.*

Sola digna tu fuisti ferre pretium saeculi
Atque portum praeparare nauta mundo naufrago,
Quem sacer cruor perunxit, fusus agni corpore.

Venantius Fortunatus, *Vexilla Regis* (PL 88: 095-096)

Vexilla regis prodeunt,
Fulget crucis mysterium,
Quo carne carnis conditor
Suspensus est patibulo.
fixa clavis viscera,
Tendens manus vestigia,
Redemptionis gratia.
Hic immolata est hostia.

Quo vulneratus insuper,
Mucrone diro lanceae,
Ut nos lavaret crimine,
Manavit unda sanguine.

Impleta sunt quae concinit
David fidei carmine,
Dicens: In nationibus
Regnavit a ligno Deus.

Arbor decora, et fulgida,
Ornata regis purpura,
Electa digno stipite
Tam sancta membra tangere.
Beata, cujus brachiis,
Pretium pependit saeculi,
Statera facta est corporis
Praedam tulitque Tartari.

Fundis aroma cortice,
Vincis sapore nectare,
Jucunda fructu fertili,
Plaudis triumpho nobili.

Salve ara, salve victima

De passionis gloria,
Qua vita mortem pertulit,
Et morte vitam reddidit.

Liber Responsalis Sive Antiphonarius (PL 78: 803-804)

Antiph. O magnum pietatis opus! mors mortua tunc est, quando in hoc ligno mortua vita fuit. *Ant.* Salva nos, Christe Salvator, per virtutem crucis, qui salvasti Petrum in mari, miserere nobis.

Ant. O crux admirabilis, evacuatio vulneris, restitutio sanitatis.

Ant. Nos autem gloriari oportet.

Ant. *Cruc benedicta nitet, Dominus qua carne pependit, atque cruore suo vulnera nostra lavit.*

Ant. Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine, et sanctam resurrectionem laudamus et glorificamus, quia venit salus in universo mundo.

Ant. Nos autem gloriari oportet in cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi, in quo est salus, vita et resurrectio nostra, per quem salvati et liberati sumus.

Ant. *Cruc fidelis inter omnes, arbor una nobilis, nulla sylva talem profert fronde, flore, germine: dulce lignum, dulcem clavum, dulce pondus sustinens.*

Ant. Dulce lignum, dulcem clavum, dulce pondus sustinuit: quae digna fuit portare pretium saeculi.

Ant. Per signum crucis, de inimicis nostris libera nos, Deus Israel, alleluia.

Ant. Tuam crucem adoramus, Domine, tuam gloriosam recolimus passionem. Miserere nostri, qui passus es pro nobis.

Ant. Lignum vitae, crux tua, Domine, manifestata est; mors enim per ipsam damnata est, et mundus omnis per ipsam illuminatus est. Omnipotens Domine, gloria tibi.

Ant. Super omnia ligna cedrorum, tu sola excelsior, in qua vita mundi pependit, in qua Christus triumphavit, et mors mortem superavit, alleluia.

Ant. Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine, et sanctam resurrectionem tuam laudamus et glorificamus. Ecce enim propter crucem venit gaudium in universo mundo.

Ant. Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi, quia per crucem tuam redemisti mundum. *Ant.* O crux benedicta, quia in te pependit Salvator mundi, et in te triumphavit Rex angelorum, alleluia.

Ant. Ecce lignum crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit; venite, adoremus.

Ant. Crux Jesu Christi adaperiat nobis januas coeli. Crux, solve vinculum mortis; per hoc vitae lignum signum sit salutis nostrae. Defende nos, Jesu Christe, hic et in futuro.

IV. Insular Texts

Adomnán, De Locis Sanctis 1:12 (PL 88: 787-788)

Haec itaque columna, quam solis claritas in aestivo solstitio meridianis horis stantis in centro coeli e regione desuper circumfulgens ex omni parte circumfusa perlustrat, Hierosolyman orbis in medio terrae sitam esse protestatur. Unde et Psalmographus propter sancta passionis et resurrectionis loca, quae intra ipsam Aeliam, [Id est, Hierusalem] continentur, vaticinans canit: Deus autem Rex noster ante saeculum,

operatus est salutem in medio terrae (Ps. 68), hoc est Hierusalem, quae mediterranea et umbilicus terrae dicitur.

PS-Jerome, *Commentarius in Evangelium Secundum Marcum* 15 (PL 30: 638)

Ipsa species crucis, quid est nisi forma quadrata mundi? Oriens de vertice fulgens, Arcton dextra tenet: Auster in leva consistit: Occidens sub plantis firmatur. Unde Apostolus dicit: Ut sciamus, quae sit altitudo, et latitudo, et longitudo, et profundum. Aves, quando volant ad aethera, formam crucis assumunt: homo natans per aquas, vel orans, forma crucis vehitur. Navis per maria, antenna cruci similata sufflatur. T littera, signum salutis et crucis describitur. Et perducunt eum in Golgotha, quod interpretatur Calvaria. Tradunt Judaei, quando in hoc montis loco immolatus est aries pro Isaac, ut ibi decolletur, id est, Christus a carne sua, carnali videlicet Judaea separetur. *Et dabant ei bibere myrrhatum vinum, et non accepit. Et crucifigentes eum.* Hoc aceto succus lethalis pomi abstergitur. Et non accepit, id pro quo patitur. Unde de eo dicitur: Quae non rapui, tunc exsolvebam. Et crucifigunt eum. Hic figitur salus in ligno, ligno primo infixata est mors. Lignum primum, lignum scientiae boni et mali est. Et secundum lignum boni tantum nobis, et vitae lignum est. Extensio manus primae ad lignum, mortem apprehendit: extensio autem secundae, vitam (quae perierat) invenit. Ligno hoc vehimur per mare undosum ad terram viventium.

PS-Jerome, *Expositio IV Evangeliorum; Prologus* (PL 30: 533-534)

.... Id est, quatuor flumina de uno fonte quatuor evangelistas significat, id est, Christum. Fison, *insufflicio*, significat Joannem; Geon, *velocitas*, significat Matthaeum; Tigris, *felicitas*, significat Marcum; Eufrates, *fertilitas*, significat Lucam. Irrigant mundum, id est, *Ecclesiam*, et significant quatuor virtutes, id est, prudentiam, temperantiam, fortitudinem, et justitiam: et sicut paradisum irrigant quatuor flumina, sic et cor nostrum hae quatuor virtutes. Et homo ex quatuor elementis consistit: ex aere, igne, et aqua, et terra. Ex aere, flatus: igne, sanguis: aqua, flamma, terra, corpus. Per caput coelum, ubi sunt duo luminaria: pectus, aer: venter, aquam: pedes, terram. Item, Adam a quatuor stellis nomen accepit, quod est *artis, dosis, anatholis, mesimbrio*, vel quatuor significant evangelistas. Et sicut de Adam omnis homo nascitur: ita per quatuor evangelistas omnes ad fidem veniunt. Item arca Noe quadrata legitur ex lignis facta longitudo CCC cubitorum, et latitudo L, altitudo XXX, et uno cubito consummata, significat *Ecclesiam*: per quatuor evangelistas longitudo spes vitae aeternae, latitudo charitas, altitudo fides Trinitatis, unum cubitum unum Dominum colere. Bitumina intus et foris, charitatem Dei et proximi significant. Item arca testamenti, ubi erant duae tabulae et virga Aaron, quatuor circulis aureis portabatur; et vectes ex auro cooperti, quatuor evangelistas significant; arca *Ecclesiam*, vectes doctores. Sicut illi circumdati erant ab annulis, ita sacerdotes de veteri, et novo Testamento docti. Quatuor evangelistae portant *Ecclesiam* ab haeresi defendendo. Per virgam crux ostenditur: et sicut quadratum lignum in qua parte versum fuerit, firmum stat, ita homo ex quatuor evangelistis edoctus contra haeresim, et tribulationem firmus fiat. Item Matthaeus *donatus*: Marcus *donum excelsum*: Lucas *consurgens*: Joannes *gratia Domini*. Item rota in rota, spiritus in rota praedicatio Evangelii in mundo gyrans: Spiritus in rota Spiritus sanctus in Evangelio. Item vas linteum, et super ipsum quatuor lineae quatuor evangelistas significant: haec sunt, munda et immunda, Judaei et Gentes. Item quatuor animalia habent oculos ante et

retro clamantia, *Sanctus*: quatuor evangelistae sunt. Item supplantavit Jacob ter fratrem suum, primum per benedictionem, secundo per lentem, tertio per benedictionem: Esau diabolum significat, Jacob Christum, qui ipsum ter vicit et supplantavit: ita et nos debemus supplantare fratrem nostrum diabolum, treis vicibus, in cogitatione, in verbo, et in opere. Ideo frater noster est, quia Deus ipsum creavit, qui et nos, unum patrem habemus Deum: et bonum illum creavit, sed per suum vitium superbiendo se privavit. Quatuor evangelistae significant Matthaeus faciem hominis: Lucas vituli: Marcus leonis: Joannes aquilae: Dominus Jesus Christus totum implevit, homo nascendo, vitulus immolando, leo surgendo, aquila ascendendo. Rota in rota, lege in legem, vetus in novum. Cur quatuor evangelistae non per quatuor apostolos scribuntur, nisi per duos discipulos, et duos apostolos, quia filii Jacob de duabus liberis, et duabus ancillis nati sunt. Matthaeus mel: Marcus lac: Lucas oleum: Joannes vinum.

Bede, *In S. Joannis Evangelium Expositio* 19 (PL 92: 913)

Quid si referamus ad id quod significat: nemo ejus est expers, qui pertinere invenitur ad totum a quo toto, sicut Graeca indicat lingua catholica vocatur Ecclesia? In sorte autem quid nisi Dei gratia commendata est? Sic quippe in uno ad omnes pervenit, cum sors omnibus placuit, quia et Dei gratia in unitate ad omnes pervenit; et cum sors mittitur, non personae cujusquam, vel meritis, sed occulto Dei judicio ceditur. Nec ideo ista, non aliquid boni significasse quis dixerit, quia per malos facta sunt, non scilicet per eos, qui Christum secuti, sed qui sunt persecuti. Quid enim de ipsa cruce dicturi sumus, quae certe similiter ab inimicis atque impiis Christo facta et impacta est? Et tamen ea significari recte intelligitur, quod ait Apostolus: Quae sit latitudo, et longitudo, et altitudo, et profundum. Postremo quid est quod omnes noverunt signum Christi, nisi crux Christi? Quod signum nisi adhibeatur sive frontibus credentium, sive ipsi aquae ex qua regenerantur, sive oleo quo chrismate ununtur, sive sacrificio quo aluntur, nihil eorum rite perficitur. Quomodo ergo per id quod mali faciunt nihil boni significatur, quando per crucem Christi quam fecerunt mali, in celebratione sacramentorum ejus, bonum nobis omne signatur? Et milites quidem, inquit, haec fecerunt.

Bede, *Expositio actuum apostolorum* 10 (CCSL 121:49-50. 35-52)

Et descendens vas quoddam velut linteum magnum. Vas illud Ecclesiam significat incorruptibili fide praeditam. Linteum enim tineae non consumit, quae vestes alias corrumpit. Et ideo qui vult ad mysterium Ecclesiae catholicae pertinere, excludat de corde suo corruptionem malarum cogitationum, et ita incorruptibiliter firmetur in fide, ut pravus cogitationibus tanquam a tineis non rodatur in mente. Aliter: Tinea haereticus est, vestimentum Domini corrumpere volens, sed dispensante Domino non valens. Quod etiam in tunica illa Domini figuratum est, quam milites scindere non audebant.

Quatuor initiis submitti de coelo in terram. Quatuor initia, quibus linteum dependebat, quatuor plagas orbis terrarum designant, quibus extenditur Ecclesia. Ipsa est enim civitas Dei nostri in monte sancto ejus, dilatans exultationes universae terrae. Quod enim de coelo submittitur, indicat eam sola supervenientis Spiritus sancti gratia servari pariter atque augeri. Unde dicit in Apocalypsi Joannes: Vidi civitatem sanctam

Jerusalem novam, descendentem de coelo a Deo. Possunt etiam quatuor initiis evangelistae figurari, per quos Ecclesia coelesti munere imbuitur atque sublimatur.

Bede, Hymn 13: In eodem festo ad crucem dicendus (PL 94: 634)

Magister altus gloriam.
Sic fatur Andreas crucis
Erecta cernens cornua,
Tradensque vestem militi,
Levatur in vitae arborem.
Nec cessat altus de cruce
Docere turbam astantium,
Vitam perennem cum Deo,
Polique regnum pandere.
Quorum fide jam fervida,
Turbaeque judex territus,
Se pollicetur nexibus
Hunc mortis atrae solvere.
At Andreas coeli vias,
Regemque coeli, ac dulcium
Frequenti jam concivium
Coelesti in arce contuens:
Jesu, precor, dixit, bone
Magister, ista de cruce,
Me nemo vivum in corpore
Vinclis solutis auferat,
Prius meum quam spiritum
E carne raptum assumpseris

Bede, De Psalmorum Libro Exegesis: In Psalmum Primum (PL 93:486-487)

Si vero ad solum caput nic versus referatur, sic continuabitur: Non mirum si hic vir adfuturus talis erit, qui neque abibit, sed potius erit in lege Domini: quia erit tanquam merito illud verum lignum vitae, positum in medio Ecclesiae, et significatum a materiali in medio paradisi posito: quod lignum secundum humanitatem plantatum est secus, id est juxta decursus aquarum: id est adjunctum et adunitum est sapientiae Dei Patris, scilicet Verbo.

Tempus suum illius ligni, id est Christi, ad fructificandum dicit fuisse, postquam ipse Christus clarificatus est resurrectione et ascensione. Tempus enim non suum ad fructificandum fuit illud de quo dicitur: *Nondum erat Spiritus sanctus datus, quia Jesus nondum erat clarificatus*. Quod non ideo dicitur quia ipse Christus ante clarificationem fructum dedisset, mortuos suscitando, infirmos [Col. 0487C] sanando, plures praedicatione sua convertendo, sed quia parvus ille fuit fructus, respectu illius quem post clarificationem in apostolis dedit, cordibus eorum Spiritu sancto desuper misso, illuminatis atque confirmatis, per quos apostolos Ecclesiam toto orbe constituit, cum sonus praedicationis eorum in omnem terram et in fines orbis terrae exivit. Christus dicitur lignum vitae hac similitudine, quia sicut Adam et Eva nisi peccassent gustantes de fructu materialis ligni vitae in paradiso positi, immortales fierent, ita quicumque spiritualiter et digne Christum gustant, in anima immortales sunt,

ipso attestante cum dicit: *Quicumque digne manducaverit carnem meam, et biberit sanguinem meum, mortem non gustabit in aeternum, etc.*

Bede, *In Lucae Evangelium Expositio* 4:13.18-19 (CCSL 120: 270.1566-73)

Potest in grano sinapsis ipsa dominicae in carnationis humilitas intellegi quod acceptum homo misit in hortum suum quia corpus crucifixi saluatoris accipiens Ioseph in horto sepeliuit. Crivit autem et factum est in arborem quia resurrexit et ascendit in coelum. Expandit ramos in quibus volucres caeli requiescerat quia praedicatores dispersit in mundum in quorum dictis atque consolationibus ab huius vitae fatifatione fidelis quique resperarent.

Bede, *Homiliae: In Vigilia Paschae* (PL 94:133-134)

Quod ipso quoque statum temporis quod vel mortuus est in cruce, vel a mortuis resurrexit, ostendit. Circa horam quippe nonam, cum inclinata jam esset ad vesperam dies, et tepefactus a meridiano fervore radius solis, mysterium victoriosissimae passionis consummavit, evidenter se insinuans propter auferenda scelera, quibus a divina luce et dilectione in huius mortem peregrinationis incidimus, crucis subisse patibulum. Surrexit mane prima Sabbati, quae nunc dies Dominica vocatur, manifeste docens se nos a morte animae resuscitaturum, et in lucem perpetuae felicitatis esse perducturum. Sed et aliud nobis memorabile mysterium tempore suae passionis, sepulturae et resurrectionis intimare curavit. Sexta quippe feria crucifixus est, Sabbato quievit in sepulcro, Dominica resurrexit a mortuis, significans electis suis per sex huius saeculi aetates, inter pericula persecutionum bonis operibus insudandum. In alia autem vita quasi in Sabbato perpetuo requiem animarum sperandam: porro in die iudicii quasi in die Dominica, corporum quoque immortalium receptionem esse celebrandam, in quibus deinceps animae superno gaudio sine fine fruuntur. Quod autem in lectione evangelica dictum est, quia sanctae mulieres vespere Sabbati, quae lucescit in prima Sabbati, venerint videre sepulcrum, ita intelligendum est: quia vespere quidem venire coeperint sed lucescente mane in primam Sabbati ad sepulcrum pervenerunt, id est, vespere aromata paraverunt, quibus corpus Domini ungere desiderabant, sed parata vespere aromata mane ad sepulcrum detulerint. Quod Matthaeus quidem brevitatis causa obscurius posuit, sed alii evangelistae quo ordine sit factum evidentius ostendunt.

Christ III/The Last Judgement, *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry*, pp. 85-87, lines 195-202, 215-236

195-202 ' *ðonne sio byman stefen ond se beorhta segn,/ond þæt hate fyr ond seo hea duguð,/ ond se engla þrym ond se egsan þrea,/ ond se hearda dæg ond seo hea rod,/ ryht aræred rices to beacne,/ folcdryht wera biforan bonnað,/ sawla gehwylce þara þe sið opþe ær/on lichoman leoþum onfengen. '*

215-236 ' *þær him sylfe geseoð sorga mæste,/synfa men, sarigferðe./Ne bið him to are þæt þær fore ellþeodum/usses dryhtnes rod ondweard stondeð,/beacna beorhtast, blode bisteded, heofoncyniges hlutran dreore,/biseon mid swate þæt ofer side gesceaft/scire scineð. Sceadu beoð bidyrned/þær se leohta beam leodum byrhteð...'*

Ps-Jerome, *Expositio IV Evangeliorum: In Evangelium Secundum Matthaeum* (PL 30: 549, 558

[549] Et omnis qui audit verba mea, et non faciet ea. Id est, mos fuit in Lege quod non esset in populo qui non esset mundos, et si sanitatem accepisset, ostendisset se sacerdoti: et offerebatur pro eo munus: *duos turtures, aut duos pullos columbarum*. Et fuerat cum eis juxta hoc opus, lignum hysopum, et coccinum erga cacumen ipsius ligni, et dispergebatur sanguis alterius avis super istud lignum: super alterum avem, et ipse dimittebatur in aere. Lignum crux Christi; coccinum, passio ejus. Et oportet ad martyrium ire, per passionem Christi, et sanguis noster spargatur super crucem ejus, nam ascendat ad Ecclesiam, post passionem corporis nostri in martyrio.

[558] *Vae praegnantibus*, id est, concupiscentibus res alienas: *vae nutrientibus*, id est, in opere perpetrantibus; per eremum, ostendit persecutionem, per sabbatum finem mundi. *Ubi fuerit corpus, illuc congregabuntur aquilae*: corpus Christus est: aquilae animae sanctorum sunt. Aliter in resurrectione unaquaeque anima proprium corpus sumet: per solem, ostendit praedicationem Evangelii: per lunam, Ecclesiam: per stellas sanctos, sive praedicatores. *Virtutes coelorum commovebuntur*, hoc est agmina angelorum ad judicandum: *parebit signum in coelo*, id est, crux Christi: per tubam ostendit sonitum angelorum. *Erunt duo in agro*, id est, in praedicationem Evangelii; *unus assumetur*, id est, qui complet praedicationem in opere: *alius relinquetur*, id est, in opere justitiae; *in mola*, in mundo: *duo molentes*, id est, in Ecclesia catholica, et haereticorum.

IV. Description of Cross Cult Ceremonies (*Adoratio Crucis*)

Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 3.3 (PL 88: 810)

Interioris domus aquilonali in parte pergrande et valde pulchrum monstratur armarium, in quo capsula habetur lignea, quae similiter ligneo superclauditur operculo, in quo salutare habetur reconditum crucis lignum, in quo noster Salvator pro humani generis salute suspensus passus est. Quae videlicet praedicabilis capsula, ut sanctus refert Arculfus, in tribus continuis diebus post expletum annum super aureum altare cum tali elevatur pretioso thesauro. Quod utique altarium in eadem habetur rotunda ecclesia, duos longitudinis habens cubitos et unum latitudinis. In ternis, inquam, tantummodo anniversariis sibi succedentibus diebus dominica crux super altare elevata ponitur, hoc est in Coena Domini, qua die imperator et exercitus militum ecclesiam intrantes, et ad illud accedentes altare, aperta illa sacrosancta capsula, salutarem osculantur crucem. Primus ante omnes imperator orbis illam inclinato osculatur vultu: deinde juxta conditionum vel aetatum ordinem unus post unum accedens, honorabile osculatur patibulum. Proinde crastino die, hoc est sexta feria ante Pascha, reginae, matronae, et omnes populi mulieres, supra memorato ordine accedunt, cum omni veneratione osculantes. Tertia die, hoc est sabbato paschali, episcopus et universus post eum clerus cum timore et tremore et omni honorificentia accedunt ordinatim, victoriam osculantes lignum in sua positum capsula: finisque sanctis et laetificis talibus sacrosanctae crucis osculationibus, illa venerabilis capsula superclauditur, et ad suum cum tam honorifico thesauro reportatur armarium. Sed et hoc non negligenter intuendum quod non duo, sed tria ibidem instar crucis habeantur brevia ligna, hoc est transversum lignum, et longum, incisum et in duas aequas divisum partes; e quibus tripartitis honorificabilibus lignis, quando illa aperitur capsula,

miri odoris fragrantia ac si omnium florum inibi collectorum mirabili plena suavitate exoritur, satians et laetificans omnes in propatulo intra illius ecclesiae parietes interiores positos, qui eodem temporis spatio intrantes stant. Nam de nodis eorumdem trinalium lignorum liquor quidam odorifer, quasi in similitudinem olei expressus, talem facit universos intrantes ex diversis gentibus aggregatos supra memoratam sentire suavissimi odoris fragrantiam. Cujus videlicet liquoris si etiam parvula quaedam stillula super aegrotantes imponatur, qualicunque languore vel morbo molestati, plenam recuperant sanitatem. Sed de his ista sufficiant descripsisse.

C: Textual Sources Relating to/Informing the Figural and Non-Figural Ornament on the Cross Slab at Nigg.¹

I. The Recognition of Christ

Jerome, *In Abacuc* 2:3.2 (CCSL 76A: 620-21.52-68)

Vel certe admiratione turbatus, in laudes tuas trepidus erumpo, dicens: In medio duorum animalium cognosceris. Quod multi putant de Filio intellegi, et Spiritu Sancto, eo quod Pater per Filium intellegatur et Spiritum. Quae quidem et duo seraphim in Esaia, et duo Cherubim, scribi interpretantur in Exodo, quae contra se respiciunt, et in medio habent oraculum; et in Esaia uelantia caput et pedes Domini, in praesenti tantum saeculo uolent, et alter ad alterum mysterium inclament Trinitatis, et mittatur unus de Seraphim, quod interpretatur ardens, et ueniat in terram et mundet prophetae labia, et dicat: Ignem ueni mittere super terram, et quam uolo ut ardeat. Hoc aestimant alii, et ad hanc interpretationem multis scripturarum untuntur testimoniis. Porro simplex interpretatio, et opinio uulgi de Salvatore intellegit, quod inter duos latrones crucifixus agnitus sit. Qui autem melius, hoc dicunt, quod in prima Ecclesia quae de circumsicisione fuit, et de praeputio congregata, duobus populis se hinc inde cingentibus, intellectus sit Saluator et creditus. Sunt qui duo animalia, duo intellegant testamena, nouum et uetus, quae uere animantia sint, quae vitalia, quae spirent et in quorum medio Dominus cognoscatur.

Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 18:32 (CCSL 48:623.5-10)

In Oratione autem sua cum Cantico, cui nisi Domino Christo dicit, Domine, audiui auditionem tuam, et timui; Domine, consideravi opera tua, et expavi? quid enim hoc est, nisi praecognitae, novae, ac repentinae salutis hominum ineffabilis admiratio? In medio duorum animalium cognosceris, quid est, nisi aut in medio duorum Testamentorum, aut in medio duorum latronum, aut in medio Moysi et Eliae cum eo in monte sermocinantium?

Bede, *In Canticorum Abacuc* 3:2, CCSL 119B: 383, lines 60-68

In medio duorum animalium innotesces. Potest in medio duorum animalium in medio Moysi et Eliae intelligi. Ibi enim innotescebat discipulis tribus in monte sancto quia moriturus esset, dicens eis quia passurus esset in Jerusalem. Ibi innotescebat quia surrecturus esset, et immortalis futurus clarificato vultu ejus instar solis, et vestimentis ejus nitentibus in similitudinem nivis. Ibi innotescebat quia Filius Dei erat, dicente ad eum de coelis voce paterna: Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui, ipsum audite. Potest etiam in medio duorum latronum non inconvenienter accipi, inter quos crucifixus moriendo innotescebat, quia homo erat. Obscurato autem sole, terra commota, et caeteris quae Evangelium narrat circa crucem factis miraculis, innotescebat quia Deus erat. Interpellando ipse Patrem pro interfectoribus suis, quam pius esset innotescebat. Quo etiam exemplo propheta qui hoc praevidebat in spiritu admonebatur non solum patienter pressuras ferre malorum, sed et eis persequentibus gratiam suae benignitatis impendere.

¹ Authors and texts follow the order in which they were discussed in the chapter. Texts which were written in Greek are provided here only in English.

II. Serpents as a sign of heresy

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* 16 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:5)

Great is the Baptism that lies before you...a welcome into the kingdom; the gift of the adoption! But there is a serpent by the wayside watching those who pass by: beware lest he bite thee with unbelief... How then mayest thou pass him? Have thy feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace (Eph 6:15) that even if he bite, he may not thee. Have faith in dwelling, steadfast hope, a strong sandal, that thou mayest pass the enemy and enter the presence of the Lord.... Give thy mind wholly to study, that it may forget base things. If thou find anyone saying to thee, Art thou then going in, to descend into the water? Has the city just now no baths? Take notice that it is the dragon of the sea (Is.27:1) who is laying these plots against thee.

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 15: 27 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:113)

And shouldest thou ever hear any say that the kingdom of Christ shall have an end, abhor the heresy; it is another head of the dragon, lately sprung up in Galatia.

Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*: Preface to Letter 2 (NPNF, 2nd series, 5:34)

Plunge with thy intellectual arm the sword of the Spirit through both these heretical pamphlets, lest, though broken on the head, the serpent affright the simpler sort by still quivering in the tail.

Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechesis: DeTrinitate* 30 (NPNF, 2nd series, 5:498)

If, however, any one thinks to refute our argument on this ground, that even after the application of the remedial process the life of man is still in discord through its errors, let us lead him to the truth by an example taken from familiar things. Take, for instance, the case of a serpent; if it receives a deadly blow on the head, the hinder part of the coil is not at once deadened along with it; but, while the head is dead, the tail part is still animated with its own particular spirit, and is not deprived of its vital motion: in like manner we may see Sin struck its deadly blow and yet in its remainders still vexing the life of man.

Gregory of Nyssa, Letter 17: *To Eustathia, Ambrosia and Basilissa* (NPNF, 2nd series, 5: 542)

The Lawgiver of our life has enjoined upon us one single hatred. I mean, that of the Serpent: for no other purpose has He bidden us exercise this faculty of hatred, but as a resource against wickedness. "I will put enmity," He says, "between thee and him." Since wickedness is a complicated and multifarious thing, the Word allegorizes it by the Serpent, the dense array of whose scales is symbolic of this multiformity of evil. And we by working the will of our Adversary make an alliance with this serpent, and so turn this hatred against one another, and perhaps not against ourselves alone, but against Him Who gave the commandment; for He says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy," commanding us to hold the foe to our humanity as our only enemy, and declaring that all who share that humanity are the neighbours of each one of us. But this gross-hearted age has disunited us from our neighbour, and has made us welcome the serpent, and revel in his spotted scales. I affirm, then, that it is a lawful thing to hate God's enemies, and that this kind of hatred is pleasing to our Lord: and by God's enemies I mean those who deny the glory of our Lord, be they

Jews, or downright idolaters, or those who through Arius' teaching idolize the creature, and so adopt the error of the Jews.

III. Serpents as the Sins of Iniquity

Ambrose, *In Psalmum XLVIII Enarratio: hujus titulus est: in finem filiis Core, psalmus David (PL 14:1155)*

Audite haec, omnes gentes: auribus percipite omnes qui habitatis orbem terrae. In vocem Domini salutaris agnoscimus gentes vocantis ad Ecclesiam; ut errori renuntient, veritatem sequantur, et pii cultus munus agnoscant. Sed quia serpentis venenis infecta erant corda successionis humanae, et peccatis obnoxia conscientia dum desperat veniam, se revocare non poterat: remedium pollicetur, indulgentiam sponte pietatis suae largitate promittit; ut reus non timeat, bene conscius gratuletur, quod bono domino exhibeat ministerium servitutis, qui noverit peccata donare, honorare virtutes. Denique eadem serie vocationis etiam in Evangelio nos Dominus adhortatur dicens: *Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego vos reficiam. Tollite jugum meum super vos, et discite a me, quia mitis sum, et humilis corde*(Matth. XI, 28 et 29). Deinde jugum suum suave, et onus leve esse commemorat; quoniam qui desperaverit medicinam, sanus esse non poterit. Et ideo omnibus grata est mansuetudo, quae vulnera interiorum curat animorum.

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos 41:3 (CCSL 38: 461-462. 1-10)*

Sed forte non hoc Scriptura solum nos in cervo considerare voluit, sed et aliud. Audi quid aliud est in cervo. Serpentes necat, et post serpentium interemptionem majori siti inardescit, peremptis serpentibus ad fontes acrius currit. Serpentes vitia tua sunt: consume serpentes iniquitatis, tunc amplius desiderabis fontem veritatis. Avaritia forte in te tenebrosus aliquid sibilat, et sibilat adversus verbum Dei, sibilat adversus praeceptum Dei: et quia tibi dicitur, Contemne aliquid, ne facias iniquitatem; si mavis facere iniquitatem, quam aliquod commodum temporale contemnere, morderi eligis a serpente, quam perimere serpentem. Cum ergo adhuc faveas vitio tuo, cupiditati tuae, avaritiae tuae, serpenti tuo; quando in te invenio tale desiderium, quo curras ad fontem aquarum?

IV. The Serpent as the 'Old Man'

Augustine, *Sermo 64:3 (PL 38: 425-426)*

Noli ex omni parte horrere serpentem: habet quod oderis, habet quod imiteris. Serpens enim cum fuerit senectute praegravatus, et senserit pondus vetustatis, coarctat se per cavernam, et deponit tunicam veterem, ut novus exultet. Imitare illum, christiane, qui audis Christum dicentem, Intrate per angustam portam. Et Paulus apostolus tibi dicit: Exuite vos veterem hominem cum actibus suis, et induite novum. Habes ergo quod imiteris in serpente. Noli mori pro vetustate, sed pro veritate. Qui moritur pro commodo temporali, pro vetustate moritur. Cum autem exutus fueris omni ista vetustate, imitatus es astutiam serpentis. Imitare illum et in hoc: serva caput tuum. Quid est, serva caput tuum? Tene apud te Christum.

VI. The Brazen Serpent

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 13:20 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:87)

This was the figure which Moses completed by fixing the serpent to a cross, that whoso had been bitten by the living serpent, and looked to the brazen serpent might be saved by believing. Does the brazen serpent save when crucified, and shall the not the Son of God incarnate save when crucified also? On each occasion life comes by means of wood.

Basil of Caesaria, *Homily on the Spirit* 14:31(NPNF, 2nd series, 8:20)

The Manna is a type of the living bread that came down from heaven; and the serpent on the standard [a type] of the passion of salvation accomplished by means of the cross, wherefore they who even looked thereon were preserved.

Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 12:28, 12: 30 (PL 42: 269, 270)

(12:28)...Ipse mihi innuitur in virga Moysi, quae in terra serpens effecta, ejus mortem figuravit a serpente venientem: sed quod apprehesa causa ejus rursus virga redditur significant quod spsterius peractis iam omnibus in fine actionis, ad id quod fuerat, resurgendo revertitur, ubi per vitae reparationem morta consumpta, nihil serpentis apparet.

(12:30)... Et hostis intercludere molitus viam, extensis Moysi minibus signo cruces dominicae superatur. Et morsus mortiferi serpentum exalto et respecto aeneo serpente sanantur: quod verbis spsius Domini declaratur, Sicut exaltavit, inquit, Moyses serpentem in eremo, sic oportet exaltari Filius hominis; ut omnis qui crediderit in eum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam aeternam

Augustine, *De Trinitate Libri* 3:10.21 (CCSL 50A: 148.54-67)

...ita virga Moysi conversa in serpentem ipsum Christum factum obedientem usque ad mortem cruces... sicut intuentes illum serpentem exaltatum in heremo serpentium morsibus non peribant. Vetus enim homo noster confixu est cruci cum illo ut euacuetur corpus peccati. [Rom 6.6] Per serpentem autem mors intellegitur quae facta est a serpente in paradise modo locutionis per efficientem id quod efficitur demonstrante. Ergo virga in serpentem, Christus in mortem, et serpens rursus in virgam, christus in resurrectionem totus cum corpore suo quod est ecclesia, quod in fine temporis erit quem serpentes, cauda significant quam Moyses tenuit ut redigeretur in virgam.

Augustine, *Sermones De Vetero Testamento* 6:7 (CCSL 41:65.104-109)

...Virga regnum significant, serpens mortalitatem. A serpente enim homini mors propinata est. Ipsam mortem dignatus est dominus assumere. Virga ergo veniens in terram serpentis speciem habuit, quia regnum dei, quod est Christus Iesus, venit ad terram. Mortalitate indutus est, quam et fixit in cruce....

Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 12:11 (CCSL 36:127.19-46)

Quid sunt serpents mordents? Peccata de mortalitate carnis. Quis est serpens exaltatus? Mors Domini in cruce. Que enim a serpente mors, per serpentis effigiem

figurate est. Morsus serpentis lethalis, mors Domini vitalis. Adtenditur serpens, ut nihil valeat serpens. Quid est hoc? Ad tenditur mors, ut nihil valeat mors. Sed cuius mors? Mors vitae.... Sed in morte Christi mors mortua est.... Interim modo, fraters, ut a peccato sanemur, Christum crucifixum intueamur; quia sicut Moyse, inquit, exaltavit serpentem in eremo, ita exaltari oportet Filium hominis; ut omnis qui credit in eum, non perdat, sed habeat vitam aeternum. Quomodo qui intuebantur illum serpentem, non peribant morsibus serpentum, sic qui intuentur fide mortem Christi, sanantur a morsibus peccatorum. Sed illi sanabantur a morte ad vitam temporalem, hic autem ait: ut habeant vitam aeternam. Hoc enim interest inter figuratam imaginem et rem ipsam; figura praestabat vitam temporalem; res ipsa cuius illi figura erat, praestat vitam aeternam.

Ps-Ambrosius, *Sermo 46:2.4 'De Salomone'* (PL 17:695-696)

Et ut aquila serpentes devorat, et eorum venena calore coquit interno: ita et Christus Dominus noster, percusso dracone, id est, diabolo lacerato, quod humanum sibi corpus assumit, peccatum illud quod hominem tenebat obnoxium, tamquam perniciosum virus exstinxit, sicut Apostolus ait: Et de peccato damnavit peccatum in carne sua; et alibi: Qui cum peccator non esset, pro nobis peccatum fecit. Ad hoc quoque Moyses serpentem aeneum in eremo suspendit in ligno, qui proprius erat typus corporis Christi, ut quicumque in eum aspiceret, non periret; corpus enim hominis per transgressionem vas fuerat serpentis effectum. Sic et alibi ipse Moyses virgam projecit in terram, quae in similitudinem est corporata serpentis: quae et ipsa imago erat corporis Domini, ideo tantae virtutis in se typum gerebat, is qui absorbit omnium Aegyptiorum potestatem.

Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministorum 3.15.94* (CCSL 15:188-189.29-37)

Proiecit virgam et serpens factus est qui devoravit serpentes Aegyptiorum, significans quod Verbum caro fieret quae serpentis diri venena vacuaret per remissionem et indulgentiam peccatorum. Virga est enim Verbum directum, regale, plenum postestatis; insigne imperii. Virga serpens facta est quoniam qui erat Filius Dei ex Deo Patre natus Filius hominis factus est, natus ex Virgine qui quasi serpens exaltatus in cruce, medicinam vulneribus infudit humanis. Unde ipse Dominus ait: Sicut Moyses exaltavit serpentem in deserto ita exaltari oportet Filium hominis

PS-Bede, *In Pentateuchum Commentarii: Explanatio in Secundum Librum Moisis 14* (PL 91:310)

Percussit virga Moyses aquas, et transierunt filii Israel. Rubrum mare significat baptismum, Christi sanguine consecratum. Virga autem qua mare tangitur, sicut supra dictum est, crux Christi est, quam per baptismum accipimus.

VI. David the Lion-Slayer

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos 7.2* (CCSL 38:36.273-276)

Domine Deus meus, in te speravi; salvum me fac ex omnibus persequentibus me, et eripe me. anquam cui non restat jam perfecto nisi invidus diabolus, superato omni bello atque adversitate vitiorum, dicit: Salvum me fac ex omnibus persequentibus me, et eripe me: nequando rapiat ut leo animam meam. Dicit Apostolus: Adversarius

vester diabolus tanquam leo rugiens circuit, quaerens quem devoret. Itaque cum diceret per pluralem numerum, *Salvum me fac ex omnibus persequentibus me*, singularem postea intulit dicens, *nequando rapiat ut leo animam meam: non enim ait, nequando rapiant, sciens quis restiterit inimicos, et perfectae animae vehementer adversus. Dum non est qui redimat, neque qui salvum faciat: id est, ne ille rapiat, dum tu non redimis neque salvum facis; si enim Deus non redimat neque salvum faciat, ille rapit.*

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 56:10-11 (PL 36: 667-668)

(10) *Quaerebas forte cum diceret, Misit de coelo, et salvum me fecit: Quid misit de coelo? quem misit de coelo? Angelum misit, ut salvum faceret Christum, et per servum salvus fit Dominus? Omnes enim Angeli creatura serviens Christo est. Ad obsequium mitti potuerunt Angeli, ad servitium mitti potuerunt, non ad adiutorium: sicut scriptum est, quod Angeli ministrabant ei, non tanquam misericordes indigenti, sed tanquam subjecti omnipotenti. Quid ergo misit de coelo, et salvum fecit me? Modo audimus in alio versu quid de coelo miserit: Misit de coelo misericordiam suam et veritatem suam. Ad quam rem? Et eruit animam meam de medio catulorum leonum. Misit, inquit, de coelo misericordiam suam et veritatem suam: et ipse Christus ait, Ego sum veritas. Missa est ergo veritas, ut erueret animam meam hinc de medio catulorum leonum; missa est misericordia. Ipsum Christum invenimus et misericordiam et veritatem; misericordiam nobis compatiens, et veritatem nobis retribuens. Hoc est ergo quod paulo ante dixi, quia et ipse se resuscitavit. Si enim veritas resuscitavit Christum, et si veritas animam Christi eruit de medio catulorum leonum; ut misericors fuit mori pro nobis, ita verax fuit resurgere ad justificandos nos. Dixerat enim se resurrecturum, et veritas mentiri non potuit; et quia veritas et verax, propterea cicatrices veras ostendit, quia vera vulnera pertulit. Has cicatrices tenuerunt discipuli, palpaverunt, manifestaverunt sibi; exclamavit qui misit digitos in compunctum latus, et ait, Dominus meus et Deus meus. Misericordia pro illo mortuus erat, et veritate ad illum resurrexerat. Misit de coelo misericordiam suam et veritatem suam: et eruit animam meam de medio catulorum leonum. Qui sunt catuli leonum? Populus ille minutus, male deceptus, male seductus a principibus Judaeorum: ut illi leones, illi catuli leonum. Omnes fremuerunt, omnes occiderunt. Audituri enim sumus hic et caedem ipsorum, modo in consequentibus versibus psalmi hujus.*

(11) *Et eruit, inquit, animam meam de medio catulorum leonum. Quare dicis, Et eruit animam meam? Quid enim passus eras, ut erueretur anima tua? Dormivi conturbatus. Expressit Christus mortem suam. Certe de illo David legimus quod fugerit in speluncam, non tamen quia dormivit in spelunca. Alius David est in spelunca, alius David est qui dicit, Dormivi conturbatus. Videmus perturbationem ipsius; non illo turbato, sed illis turbantibus. Turbatum se enim dixit, secundum opinionem frementium, non secundum cedentis conscientiam. Putaverunt se illi turbasse, putaverunt vicisse: ille autem dormivit conturbatus. Tam placatus erat iste turbatus, ut quando vellet, dormiret. Nemo dormit turbatus: omnes qui perturbantur, aut a somno excitantur, aut in somnum vergi non permittuntur. Ille autem turbatus est, et dormivit. Magna humilitas perturbati, magna potestas dormientis. De qua potestate veniebat quod dormivit? De qua ipse dicit: Potestatem habeo ponendi animam meam, et potestatem habeo sumendi eam: nemo tollit eam a me; sed ego eam pono, et iterum sumo eam. Turbaverunt illi, et dormivit ipse. Cujus typum gerebat Adam, quando immisit ei Deus soporem, ut de latere illi conjugem faceret. Num enim non poterat uxorem facere primo homini etiam de latere vigilantis? aut propterea voluit eum*

dormire, ne sentiret cum sibi costa detraheretur? Postremo, quis ita dormit, ut osse sibi convulso non expergiscatur? Qui potuit sine dolore auferre costam dormienti, potuit et vigili. Sed quare voluit dormienti facere? Quia dormienti Christo in cruce facta est conjux de latere. Percussum est enim latus pendentis de lancea, et profluxerunt Ecclesiae Sacramenta. Dormivi, inquit, conturbatus. Et in alio psalmo manifestat hoc, ubi ait: Ego dormivi, et somnum cepi. Ibi expressit potestatem suam. Poterat et illic dicere, Dormivi, sicut dixit hic. Quid est autem, Ego dormivi? Id est, quia volui, dormivi. Non illi me in somnum nolentem compulerunt; sed mea voluntate ego dormivi, secundum illud: Potestatem habeo ponendi animam meam, et potestatem habeo iterum sumendi eam. Propterea ibi sequitur et dicit: Ego dormivi, et somnum cepi; et exsurrexi, quoniam Dominus suscipiet me.

1D: Textual Sources Relating to/Informing the Figural and Non-figural Ornament on the Cross-slab at Shandwick.¹

I. The Silver Cross at Golgotha

Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 1:7 (PL 88: 784)

Alia vero pergrandis ecclesia orientem versus in illo fabricata est loco qui Hebraice Golgotha vocitatur: cujus in superioribus grandis quaedam aerea cum lampadibus rota in funibus pendet, infra quam magna argentea crux infixata est eodem in loco ubi quondam lignea crux, in qua passus est humani generis Salvator, infixata stetit

II. Angels

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 56:10 (PL 36: 667)

Quaerebas forte cum diceret, Misit de coelo, et salvum me fecit: Quid misit de coelo? quem misit de coelo? Angelum misit, ut salvum faceret Christum, et per servum salvus fit Dominus? Omnes enim Angeli creatura serviens Christo est. Ad obsequium mitti potuerunt Angeli, ad servitium mitti potuerunt, non ad adiutorium: sicut scriptum est, quod Angeli ministrabant ei, non tanquam misericordes indigenti, sed tanquam subjecti omnipotenti. Quid ergo misit de coelo, et salvum fecit me? Modo audimus in alio versu quid de coelo miserit: Misit de coelo misericordiam suam et veritatem suam. Ad quam rem? Et eruit animam meam de medio catulorum leonum.

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 15:22, *NPNF*, 2nd series, 7:111.

But what is the sign of His coming? lest a hostile power dare to counterfeit it. And then shall appear, He says, the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. Now Christ's own true sign is the Cross; a sign of a luminous Cross shall go before the King, plainly declaring Him who was formerly crucified: that the Jews who before pierced Him and plotted against Him, when they see it, may mourn tribe by tribe saying, 'This is He who was buffeted, this is He whose face they spat on, this is He whom they bound with chains, this is He whom of old they crucified, and set at nought. Whither, they will say, shall we flee from the face of Thy wrath?' But the Angel hosts shall encompass them, so that they shall not be able to flee anywhere. The sign of the Cross shall be a terror to His foes; but joy to His friends who have believed in Him, or preached Him, or suffered for His sake. Who then is the happy man, who shall then be found a friend of Christ? That King, so great and glorious, attended by the Angel-guards, the partner of the Father's throne, will not despise His own servants. For that His Elect may not be confused with His foes, He shall send forth His Angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds. He despised not Lot, who was but one; how then shall He despise many

¹ Authors and texts follow the order in which they were discussed in the chapter. Texts which were written in Greek are provided here only in English.

righteous? Come, ye blessed of My Father, will He say to them who shall then ride on chariots of clouds, and be assembled by Angels.

**Cassian, *Quae est Prima Abbatis Nesterotis: De Spiritali Scientia, Collatio 14:10*
(PL 49: 970-972)**

Deinde hoc tibi est omnimodis enitendum, ut, expulsa omni sollicitudine et cogitatione terrena, assiduum te ac potius jugem sacrae praebeas lectioni, donec continua meditatio imbuat mentem tuam et quasi in similitudinem sui formet, arcam quodammodo ex ea faciens Testamenti, habentem in se scilicet duas tabulas lapideas, id est, duplicis Instrumenti perpetuam firmitatem; urnam quoque auream, hoc est, memoriam puram atque sinceram, quae reconditum in se manna perpetua tenacitate conservet, spiritualium scilicet sensuum et angelici illius panis perennem coelestemque dulcedinem; nec non etiam virgam Aaron, id est, summi verique pontificis nostri Jesu Christi salutare vexillum, immortalis memoriae semper viriditate frondescens. Haec namque est virga quae posteaquam de radice Jesse succisa est, vivacius mortificata revirescit. Haec autem omnia duobus cherubim, id est, historicae et spiritualis scientiae plenitudine proteguntur. Cherubim enim interpretatur scientiae multitudo, quae propitiatorium Dei, id est, placiditatem pectoris tui jugiter protegent, et a cunctis spiritualium nequitiarum incursibus obumbrabunt. Et ita mens tua non solum in arcam divini Testamenti, verum etiam in regnum sacerdotale provecta, per indissolubilem puritatis affectum, quodammodo absorpta spiritualibus disciplinis, illud implebit pontificale mandatum, quod a legislatore ita praecipitur: Et de sanctis non egredietur, ne polluat sanctuarium Dei, id est, cor suum, in quo jugiter habitaturum se Dominus repromittit, dicens: Inhabitabo in eis, et inter illos ambulabo. Quamobrem diligenter memoriae commendanda est et incessabiliter recensenda sacrarum series Scripturarum. Haec etenim meditationis jugitas duplicem nobis confert fructum. Primum quod dum in legendis ac parandis lectionibus occupatur mentis intentio, necesse est ut nullis noxiarum cogitationum laqueis captivetur; deinde quod ea quae creberrima repetitione percurra, dum memoriae tradere laboramus, intelligere id temporis obligata mente non quivimus, postea ab omnium actuum ac visionum illecebris, praecipueque nocturna meditatione taciti revolventes, clarius intuemur, ita ut occultissimorum sensuum, quos ne tenui quidem vigilantes opinatione percepimus, quiescentibus nobis et vel soporis stupore demersis, intelligentia reveletur.

Bede, *De Tabernaculo*, Liber 1: CCSL 119A: 19-21. 547-609

Item: Per duo cherubim possunt duo testamenta figurari quorum unum futuram domini incarnationem aliud factam clamat respiciunt que se mutuo quia in attestazione ueritatis quam praedicant in nullo ab inuicem discrepant uertunt uultus in propitiatorum....

Recte ergo cherubim scientia multiplicata dicitur quia in utroque testamenta fidelibus magis ex tempore magis que cogitio ueritatis innotuit...

Item de medio duorum cherubim loquitur dominus quia per uerba utriusque testamenti consono no voce ad fidem ueritatis erudite uel certe de medio cherubim loquitur quia per unigenis tum suum qui in medio duorum testamentorum in carne appararuit humano generi Deus pater uoluntatem suam manifestare dignatus est. (lines 604-6090)

III. Lions

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 10:3 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:57-58)

Believe thou In One Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God. For we say "One Lord Jesus Christ," that His Sonship may be "Only-begotten": we say "One," that thou mayest not suppose another: we say "One," that thou mayest not profanely diffuse the many names of His action among many sons. For He is called a Door; but take not the name literally for a thing of wood, but a spiritual, a living Door, discriminating those who enter in. He is called a Way, not one trodden by feet, but leading to the Father in heaven; He is called a Sheep, not an irrational one, but the one which through its precious blood cleanses the world from its sins, which is led before the shearers, and knows when to be silent. This Sheep again is called a Shepherd, who says, I am the Good Shepherd: a Sheep because of His manhood, a Shepherd because of the loving-kindness of His Godhead. And wouldst thou know that there are rational sheep? The Saviour says to the Apostles, Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Again, He is called a Lion, not as a devourer of men, but indicating as it were by the title His kingly, and steadfast, and confident nature: a Lion He is also called in opposition to the lion our adversary, who roars and devours those who have been deceived. For the Saviour came, not as having changed the gentleness of His own nature, but as the strong Lion of the tribe of Judah, saving them that believe, but treading down the adversary. He is called a Stone, not a lifeless stone, cut out by men's hands, but a chief corner-stone, on whom whosoever believeth shall not be put to shame.

IV: The Figural Composition

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 41:1, 3 (PL 36: 464-466)

(1) Olim est ut desiderat anima nostra in verbo Dei gaudere vobiscum, et in illo vos salutare, qui est nostrum adiutorium et salutare. Quod ergo Dominus dat, audite per nos, et in illo exsultate nobiscum in sermone ejus, et in veritate et in charitate ejus. Psalmum enim suscepimus, de quo loquendum est vobis, congruum desiderio vestro. Coepit enim ipse psalmus a sancto quodam desiderio, et ait qui sic cantat: Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Quis ergo est qui hoc dicit? Si volumus, nos sumus. Et quid quaeras extra quisnam sit, cum in tua potestate sit esse quod quaeris? Tamen non unus homo est, sed unum corpus est: corpus autem Christi Ecclesia est. Nec in omnibus qui intrant Ecclesiam, invenitur tale desiderium: sed tamen quicumque suavitatem Domini gustaverunt, et quod eis sapit agnoscunt in Cantico, non putent se solos esse; sed talia semina sparsa credant in agro dominico, toto orbe terrarum, et cujusdam unitatis christianae esse vocem hanc: Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, sic desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Et quidem non male intelligitur vox esse eorum qui, cum sint catechumeni, ad gratiam sancti lavacri festinant. Unde et solemniter cantatur hic psalmus, ut ita desiderent fontem remissionis peccatorum, quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum. Sit hoc, habeatque locum intellectus iste in Ecclesia et veracem et solemnem. Verumtamen, fratres, videtur mihi etiam in

Baptismate fidelibus nondum esse satiatum tale desiderium: sed fortassis, si norunt ubi peregrinentur, et quo eis transeundum sit, etiam ardentius inflammantur.

(3) Sed forte non hoc Scriptura solum nos in cervo considerare voluit, sed et aliud. Audi quid aliud est in cervo. Serpentes necat, et post serpentium interemptionem majori siti inardescit, peremptis serpentibus ad fontes acrius currit. Serpentes vitia tua sunt: consume serpentes iniquitatis, tunc amplius desiderabis fontem veritatis. Avaritia forte in te tenebrosus aliquid sibilat, et sibilat adversus verbum Dei, sibilat adversus praeceptum Dei: et quia tibi dicitur, Contemne aliquid, ne facias iniquitatem; si mavis facere iniquitatem, quam aliquod commodum temporale contemnere, morderi eligis a serpente, quam perimere serpentem. Cum ergo adhuc faveas vitio tuo, cupiditati tuae, avaritiae tuae, serpenti tuo; quando in te invenio tale desiderium, quo curras ad fontem aquarum? Quando concupiscis fontem sapientiae, cum adhuc labores in veneno malitiae? Interfice in te quidquid contrarium est veritati: et cum te videris tanquam vacare a cupiditatibus perversis, noli remanere quasi non sit quod desideres. Est enim aliquid, quo te tollas; si jam egisti in te, ut non sit impeditor contra te. Dicturus enim es forte jam mihi, si cervus es: Deus novit non me jam avarum, non me jam cujusquam rem concupiscere, non adulterii cupiditate flagrare, non cujusquam odio invidiaque tabescere, et caetera hujusmodi; dicturus es, Non habeo haec: et quaeris forte unde delecteris. Desidera unde delecteris; desidera ad fontes aquarum: habet Deus unde te reficiat, et impleat venientem ad se, et sitientem post interemptionem serpentium, tanquam velocem cervum.

Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 8:13 (PL 36:115-116)

Insuper, ait, et pecora campi. Nullo modo vacat quod additum est, insuper. Primo, quia pecora campi possunt intelligi et oves et boves; ut si rupium et arduorum locorum pecora caprae sunt, bene intelligantur oves pecora campi. Itaque etiamsi ita positum esset, Oves et boves universas et pecora campi, recte quaereretur quid sibi vellent pecora campi, cum etiam oves et boves hoc possint intelligi; quod vero additum est etiam, insuper, cogit omnino ad nescio quam differentiam cognoscendam. Sed sub hoc verbo quod positum est, insuper, non solum pecora campi, sed etiam volucres coeli, et pisces maris, qui perambulant semitas maris, accipiendi sunt. Quae est igitur ista distantia? Veniant in mentem torcularia, habentia vinacia et vinum; et area, continens paleas et frumentum; et retia, quibus inclusi sunt pisces boni et mali; et arca Noe, in qua et immunda et munda erant animalia: et videbis Ecclesias interim hoc tempore usque ad ultimum iudicii tempus, non solum oves et boves continere, id est sanctos laicos et sanctos ministros, sed insuper et pecora campi, volucres coeli, et pisces maris, qui perambulant semitas maris. Pecora enim campi congruentissime accipiuntur homines in carnis voluptate gaudentes, ubi nihil arduum, nihil laboriosum ascendunt. Campus est enim etiam lata via, quae ducit ad interitum; et in campo Abel occiditur. Quare metuendum est, ne quisque descendens a montibus justitiae Dei, Justitia enim, inquit, tua velut montes Dei, latitudines et facilitates voluptatis carnalis eligens, a diabolo trucidetur. Vide nunc etiam volucres coeli, superbos, de quibus dicitur: Posuerunt in coelum os suum. Vide quam in altum vento portentur, qui dicunt: Linguam nostram magnificabimus, labia nostra apud nos sunt, quis noster Dominus est. Intuere etiam pisces maris, hoc est curiosos qui perambulant semitas maris, id est, inquirunt in profundo hujus saeculi temporalia, quae tanquam semitae in mari tam

cito evanescunt et intereunt, quam rursus aqua confunditur, postquam transeuntibus locum dederit vel navibus, vel quibuscumque ambulatibus aut natantibus. Non enim ait tantum, *Ambulant semitas maris*; sed, *perambulant* dixit; ostendens pertinacissimum studium inania et praeterfluentia requirentium. Haec autem tria genera vitiorum, id est voluptas carnis, et superbia, et curiositas, omnia peccata concludunt. Quae mihi videntur a Joanne apostolo enumerata, cum dicit: *Nolite diligere mundum, quoniam omnia quae in mundo sunt, concupiscentia carnis est, et concupiscentia oculorum, et ambitio saeculi*. Per oculos enim maxime curiositas praevallet; reliqua vero quo pertineant, manifestum est. Et illa Dominici hominis tentatio tripartita est: per cibum, id est per concupiscentiam carnis, ubi suggeritur, *Dic lapidibus istis ut pane fiant*: per inanem jactantiam, ubi in monte constituto ostenduntur omnia regna hujus terrae, et promittuntur si adoraverit: per curiositatem, ubi de pinna templi admonetur ut se deorsum mittat, tentandi gratia utrum ab Angelis suscipiatur. Itaque postea quam nullo istorum tentamento valere apud eum potuit inimicus, hoc de illo dicitur. Postquam complevit omnem tentationem diabolus. Propter torculariorum itaque significationem, subjecta sunt pedibus ejus non solum vina, sed etiam vinacia: non solum scilicet oves et boves, id est sanctae animae fidelium, vel in plebe, vel in ministris; sed in super et pecora voluptatis, et volucres superbiae, et pisces curiositatis: quae omnia genera peccatorum nunc bonis et sanctis mixta esse in Ecclesiis videmus. Operetur igitur in Ecclesiis suis, et a vinaciis vinum separet: nos demus operam ut vinum simus et oves aut boves; non vinacia, aut pecora campi, aut volucres coeli, aut pisces maris qui perambulant semitas maris. Non quia ista nomina isto solo modo intelligi et explicari possunt, sed pro locis; namque alibi aliud significant. Et haec regula in omni allegoria retinenda est, ut pro sententia praesentis loci consideretur quod per similitudinem dicitur; haec est enim dominica et apostolica disciplina. Repetamus ergo ultimum versum qui etiam in principio Psalmi ponitur, et laudemus Deum dicentes: *Domine Dominus noster, quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra! Decenter quippe post textum sermonis ad caput reditur, quo totus idem sermo referendus est.*

Augustine, *Enarrationes on Psalmos* 49:16-18 (PL 36: 576-577)

(16) *Adhuc iste Israel forte non intelligit quae holocausta ejus in conspectu suo habeat semper, et adhuc de bobus, de ovibus, de hircis cogitat: non cogitet; Non accipiam de domo tua vitulos. Holocausta nominavi; jam animo et cogitatione ad terrenos greges currebas, inde pingue mihi aliquid eligebas: non accipiam de domo tua vitulos.*

Praenuntiat Testamentum novum, ubi omnia illa sacrificia vetera cessaverunt. Erant enim tunc praenuntiantia futurum quoddam sacrificium, cujus sanguine mundaremur. Non accipiam de domo tua vitulos, neque de gregibus tuis hircos.

(17) *Quoniam meae sunt omnes bestiae silvae. Quid a te quaeram quod ego condidi? Magisne est hoc tuum cui possidere dedi, quam meum qui feci? Quoniam meae sunt omnes bestiae silvae. Sed forte ait ille Israel, Bestiae Dei sunt, illae bestiae ferae quas non includo in chorte mea, quas non alligo ad praesepe meum: caeterum bos ille et ovis et hircus, mea sunt haec. Pecora in montibus et boves. Mea sunt illa quae non possides, mea sunt ista quae possides. Si enim servus meus es tu, totum peculium tuum meum est. Neque enim est peculium Domini quod sibi servus comparavit, et non erit peculium Domini quod ipse Dominus servo creavit. Ergo meae sunt bestiae silvae quas tu non*

cepisti; mea sunt et pecora in montibus quae sunt tua, et boves qui sunt ad praesepe tuum: omnia mea sunt, quia ego creavi ea.

(18) Cognovi omnia volatilia coeli. Quomodo cognovit? Appendit, numeravit. Quis nostrum novit omnia volatilia coeli? Sed etsi alicui Deus det notitiam omnium volatilium coeli, non sic ipse novit, ut dat nosse homini. Alia est notitia Dei, alia hominis: sicut alia possessio Dei, alia hominis; id est, aliud est possidere Dei, aliud possidere hominis. Non enim tu quod possides, totum habes in potestate, aut quamdiu vivat bos tuus in tua potestate est, aut ut non pereat, aut non pascatur. Apud quem summa potestas est, summa et secreta cognitio est. Tribuamus hoc Deo, laudantes Deum. Non audeamus dicere: Quomodo novit Deus? Ne forte hoc a me, fratres exspectetis ut explicem vobis quomodo cognoscat Deus; hoc solum dico: non sic cognoscit ut homo, non sic cognoscit ut angelus; et quomodo cognoscit, dicere non audeo, quoniam et scire non possum. Unum tamen scio, quia et antequam essent omnia volatilia coeli, noverat Deus quod fuerat creaturus. Quae est illa notitia? O homo, videre coepisti volatilia, postea quam plasmatus es, postea quam sensum videndi accepisti. Haec volatilia de aqua nata sunt ad verbum Dei, dicentis: Producant aquae volatilia. Ubi noverat Deus quae imperabat ut aqua proferret? Jam certe noverat quod crearet, et antequam crearet noverat. Tanta est ergo notitia Dei, ut apud ipsum essent quodam ineffabili modo antequam creata essent: et a te exspectat ut accipiat quod antequam crearet habebat? Cognovi omnia volatilia coeli, quae tu mihi non potes dare. Quae tu mihi mactaturus es, ego cognovi omnia: non quia feci cognovi, sed ut facerem. Et species agri mecum est. Pulchritudo agri, ubertas omnium in terra gignentium, mecum est, inquit. Quomodo cum illo? Utrum et antequam fierent? Cum illo enim erant omnia futura, et cum illo sunt omnia praeterita: futura ita, ut non ei detrahantur omnia praeterita. Cum illo sunt omnia cognitione quadam ineffabilis Sapientiae Dei in Verbo constituta, et ipsum Verbum omnia. An aliquo modo cum illo est agri species, quia ipse ubique est, et ipse dixit: Coelum et terram ego impleo? Quid cum illo non est, de quo dicitur: Si ascendero in coelum, tu illic es, et si descendero in infernum, ades? Cum illo est totum: sed non sic cum illo est, ut aliquam ex his quae creavit contagionem, aut eorum indigentiam patiatur. Nam tecum est forte columna juxta quam stas, et cum fatigatus fueris, incumbis in eam. Indiges eo quod tecum est, non indiget Deus agro qui cum illo est. Cum illo ager, cum illo species terrae, cum illo species coeli, cum illo omnia volatilia, quia ipse ubique. Et quare apud ipsum omnia? Quia et antequam essent omnia, aut crearentur, ei nota erant omnia.

Saltair na Rann, Cantos 1.8, 1.77-78, 2.25-26, in *The King of Mysteries*, pp. 99, 107, 112.

(1.8) From it the King shaped every creature;
he established them, without the fair mystery of enchantment:
both smooth and rough, with beauty,
both dead and living

(1.77) The King made many beasts
beneath the vast unreckonable sea:
none save my King can reveal
their names or their numbers

**(1.78) The King made multitudes of hosts
of birds in flight,
of wild beasts in the mountains,
of herds on the smooth plains.**

**(2.25) The hosts of the race of Adam, with mighty deeds,
rightly divided into companies:
glory comes to them according to their deserts
in each separate abode**

**(2.26) Saints and holy virgins, with grace,
showered with bliss after the grievous struggle:
they will be parted from the host outside
and born into the great stronghold.**

1E: Textual Sources Relating to/Informing the Figural and Non-Figural Ornament on the Hilton of Cadboll Cross slab¹

I. Vine-Scroll–Wine/Blood/Christ

Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2:2.19 (ANCL 4:200)

Afterwards the sacred vine produced the prophetic cluster. This was a sign to them, when trained from wandering to their rest; representing the great cluster, the Word, bruised for us. For the blood of the grape--that is the Word--desired to be mixed with water, as His blood is mingled with salvation. And the blood of the Lord is twofold. For there is the blood of His flesh, by which we are redeemed from corruption; and the spiritual, that by which we are anointed. And to drink the blood of Jesus is to become partakers of the Lord's immortality; the Spirit being the energetic principle of the Word, as blood is of flesh.

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 17.18 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:128)

But others mocking said, they are full of new wine, and they spoke truly though in mockery. For in truth the wine was new, even the grace of the New Testament; but this new wine was from a spiritual Vine, which had oftentimes ere this borne fruit in Prophets, and had budded in the New Testament. For as in things sensible, the vine ever remains the same, but bears new fruits in its seasons, so also the self-same Spirit continuing what He is, as He had often wrought in Prophets, now manifested a new and marvellous work. For though His grace had come before to the Fathers also, yet here it came exuberantly; for formerly men only partook of the Holy Ghost, but now they were baptized completely.

Ambrose, *De Fide* 2:20.135 (PL 16:559)

Est etiam poculum quo secreta mentis mundare consuevisti, poculum non natureae veteris, nec ex vite solemni: sed poculum novum de coelo delatum in terram, expressum ex illo botryone peregrine, qui sicut uva de vite, ita ille in carne cruce pependit e lingo. Ex hoc ergo botryone est vinum quod laetificat cor hominis, sobrietatem inebriat, crapulam fidei et verae religionis exhalat, crapulam castitatis infundit.

Ambrose, *De Fide* 4:12.167 (PL 16: 648-649)

Sed non solum se esse vitem dixit, sed etiam botryonem voce prophetica nuncupavit, tunc quando ad vallem botryonis exploratores Moyses jussu Domini direxit. Quae est illa vallis, nisi humilitas incarnationis, et fecunditas passionis? Et puto botryonem ideo dictum, quia ex vinea illa translata ex Aegypto, hoc est, ex familia Judaeorum, utilis mundo fructus emicuit.

Ephraim Syrus, *Hymns on the Nativity* 1 (NPNF, 2nd series, 13: 224)

¹ Authors and texts follow the order in which they were discussed in the chapter. Texts which were written in Greek are provided here only in English.

Caleb the spy bore the cluster on the staff, and came and longed to see the Cluster, whose wine should comfort the world. Him did Jesus son of Nun long for, that he might conceive the force of his own surname: for if by His name he waxed so mighty how much more would He by His Birth? This Jesus that gathered and carried, and brought with him of the fruit, was longing for the Tree of Life to taste the Fruit that quickens all.

Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 13:16 (CCSL 36:139. 19-23)

Ecce habes sacramenta, et ego concedo. Habes formam, sed sarmentum es de vite praecisum; tu formam ostendis, ego radicem quaero; de forma fructus non exit, nisi ubi est radix; ubi autem est radix, nisi in caritate?

Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 80.1-2

(See below, Part IV. Vine/Church/Heretics)

Augustine, *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 24.44-5, 25.48,

(See below, Part IV. Vine/Church/Heretics)

Gregorii Magni, *Homiliae in evangelia* 11:1

(See below, Part IV. Vine/Church/Heretics)

Bede, *Homiliae Liber Secundus, Homilia 15: In Ascensione Domine*

(CCLS 122: 280-81.21-24)

...quod bene duo viri illi qui botrum de terra repromissionis ad populum in deserto exspectantem in vecte portabant, insinuant. Botrus quippe vecti impositus Dominus est in cruce exaltatus, qui dicit: Ego sum vitis vera. Et alibi poculum vini discipulis porrigens: Hic est calix, inquit, novum testamentum in meo sanguine, quod pro vobis fundetur.

II. Vine-Scroll Inhabitants

Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 21: 4.1 (PL 41:712)

Habebit enim tunc istam carnis substantia qualitatem ab illo inditam, qui tam miras et varias tot rebus indidit, quas videmus, ut eas, quia multae sunt, non miremur. Quis enim nisi Deus creator omnium dedit carni pavonis mortui ne putresceret? Quod cum auditum incredibile videretur, evenit ut apud Carthaginem nobis cocta apponeretur haec avis: de cuius pectore pulparum, quantum visum est, decerptum servari iussimus: quod post dierum tantum spatium, quanto alia caro quaecumque cocta putresceret, prolatum atque oblatum, nihil nostrum offendit olfactum. Itemque repositum post dies amplius quam triginta, idem quod erat inventum est: idemque post annum, nisi quod aliquantum corpulentiae siccioris et contractionis fuit

Bede, *Homiliae Liber Primus, Homilia 18: In Purificatione Beatae Mariae* (CCSL 120: 129-130.42-61)

Et ut darent, inquit, hostiam secundum quod dictum est in lege Domini, Par turturum, aut duos pullos columbarum. Hostia haec pauperum erat. Praecepit quippe Dominus in lege ut qui posset, agnum pro filio vel filia, simul et turturem sive columbam offerret; qui vero non sufficeret ad offerendum agnum, duos jam turtures, vel duos

columbae pullos offerret. Ergo Dominus nostrae per omnia memor salutis, non solum homo fieri, cum Deus esset, sed etiam cum dives esset, pauper fieri dignatus est pro nobis, ut nos sua paupertate, simul et humanitate divitiarum, et divinitatis suae donaret esse participes. Sed libet paulisper intueri cur hae maxime volucres in hostiam Domini jubentur offerri. Nam et Abraham patriarcha tanto ante legem tempore has in holocaustum Domino legitur obtulisse, et in plerisque legis caeremoniis, qui mundandus esset, per has jubebatur mundari. Columba ergo simplicitatem, turtur indicat castitatem; quia et columba simplicitatis, et castitatis amator est turtur, ita ut si conjugem casu perdiderit, non aliam ultra quaerere curet....

III. Good/Bad Vine

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 1:4 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:7)

Thou art transplanted henceforth among the spiritual olive trees, being grafted from the wild into the good olive tree, from sins into righteousness, from pollutions into purity. Thou art made partakers of the Holy Vine. Well then, if thou abide in the Vine, thou growest as a fruitful branch; but if thou abide not, thou wilt be consumed by the fire. Let us therefore bear fruit worthily.

Basil of Caesaria, *Hexaemeron: Homily* 5:6 (NPNF, 2nd series, 8:79)

Without doubt you remember the parable where the Lord calls Himself a vine and His Father the husbandman, and every one of us who are grafted by faith into the Church the branches. He invites us to produce fruits in abundance, for fear lest our sterility should condemn us to the fire.

John Chrysostom, *Concerning the Statues* 19:9 (NPNF 9:468-469)

Afterwards, intending to speak of the oaths and treaties, "He took," saith he, "of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field, that it might take root by great waters. He placed it to be looked upon; and it grew, and became a weak vine, and of small stature, and it stretched out its branches towards him, and its roots were under him." Here he calls the city of Jerusalem a vine; but in saying that it stretched out its branches towards the eagle, and that its roots were under him, he refers to the treaties and alliances made with him; and that it cast itself upon him. Next, purposing to declare the iniquity of this, he saith, "And there was another great eagle," (speaking of the Egyptian king), "with great wings, and having many claws; and the vine did bend itself toward him, and its tendril toward him, and shot out its branches, that it might be watered. Therefore, I said, Thus saith the Lord God: Shall it prosper?" That is to say, "after having broken the oath, and the treaties, shall it be able to remain, or to be safe, or to avoid falling?" Presently, for the purpose of shewing that this is not to happen, but that it is certainly to be destroyed on account of the oath, he discourses concerning its punishment, and alleges the cause.

Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* 6:10 (PL 76:1164)

Omnis enim arbor non faciens fructum bonum, exidetur, et in ignem mittetur, quia unusquisque perversus paratam citius genennae concremationem inventit, qui hic fructum boni operis facere contemnit.

IV. Vine/Church/Heretics

Augustine, *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 24.44-45, 25.48 (CCSL 96: 68, 171.1-11, 49-55)

(24.44-45) Sed illa vitis quae per orbem terrarum, sicut de illa prophetatum, et ab ipso Domino praenuntiatum erat, fructuosos palmites diffundebat, tanto pullulabat amplius, quanto uberiore martyrum sanguine rigabatur. Quibus per omnes terras innumerabiliter pro fidei veritate morientibus, etiam ipsa persequentia regna cesserunt, et ad Christum cognoscendum atque venerandum fracta superbiae cervice conversa sunt. Oportebat autem ut eadem vitis, sicut a Domino identidem praedictum erat, putaretur, et ex ea praeciderentur infructuosa sarmenta, quibus haereses et schismata per loca facta sunt, sub Christi nomine, non ipsius gloriam, sed suam quaerentium, per quorum adversitates magis magisque exerceretur Ecclesia, et probaretur atque illustraretur et doctrina ejus et patientia

(25.48) Haec tene fixa in corde tuo, et invoca Deum cui credis, ut tueatur te adversus tentationes diaboli: et esto cautus, ne tibi aliunde hostis ille subrepat, qui ad solatium malevolentissimum damnationis suae, cum quibus damnetur inquit. Non enim per eos solos qui christianum nomen oderunt, et dolent eo nomine occupatum esse orbem terrarum, et adhuc simulacris et daemoniorum curiositatibus servire desiderant, audet ille tentare christianos: sed etiam per eos quos paulo ante commemoravimus, de unitate Ecclesiae, velut putata vite, praecisos, qui haeretici vel schismatici dicuntur, conatur etiam id quidem interdum.

Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 80.1-2 (PL 35:1839)

(1) Iste locus evangelicus, fratres, ubi se dicit Dominus vitem, et discipulos suos palmites, secundum hoc dicit quod est caput Ecclesiae, nosque membra ejus, mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Jesus...

(2) Ego sum, inquit, vitis vera, et Pater meus agricola est. Omnem palmitem in me non ferentem fructum, tollet eum: et omnem qui fert fructum, purgabit eum, ut fructum plus afferat. Numquid unum sunt agricola et vitis? Secundum hoc ergo vitis Christus, secundum quod ait, Pater major me est: secundum autem id quod ait, Ego et Pater unum sumus, et ipse agricola est. Nec talis quales sunt, qui extrinsecus operando exhibent ministerium; sed talis ut det etiam intrinsecus incrementum. Nam neque qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui rigat; sed qui incrementum dat Deus. Sed utique Deus est Christus, quia Deus erat Verbum; unde ipse et Pater unum sunt: et si Verbum caro factum est quod non erat, manet quod erat. Denique cum de Patre tanquam de agricola dixisset quod infructuosos palmites tollat, fructuosos autem purget ut plus afferant fructum; continuo etiam seipsum mundatorem palmitum ostendens, Jam tos, inquit, mundi estis propter sermonem quem locutus sum vobis..Ecce et ipse mundator est palmitum, quod est agricolae, non vitis officium: qui etiam palmites operarios suos fecit....

Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* 11:1 (PL 76:1154)

Qui habet vineam, universalem scilicet Ecclesiam, quae, ab Abel justo usque ad ultimum electum qui in fine mundi nasciturus est, quot sanctos protulit, quasi tot palmites misit.

Bede, *In Canticorum Abacuc* 3:17-18 (CCSL 119B: 406. 689-699)

Si quis autem hos etiam versiculos figurate quaerat exponi, ficus, vinea, et oliva, erat synagoga Judaeorum, quod dulcedinem bonae operationis fragrantiam fervidae dilectionis, pinguedinem animi misericordis Deo devota proferebat. Oves et boves typice erant in eadem plebe; oves, videlicet, in eis qui vocem summi Pastoris humiliter audiebant; boves vero in illis qui, jugum legis gnaviter portantes, ad faciendos bonorum operum fructus corda audientium sedulo docendo et castigando, quasi terram Domini arando, parabant; hisque spiritualiter viventibus spirituales faciebant escas campi divinarum Scripturarum latissimi, quorum pabulo delectabatur ille qui ut jumentum factus erat apud Dominum, et semper illi adhaerebat dicens: ominus regit me et nihil mihi deerit, in loco pascuae ibi me collocavit. Sed haec ficus, tertio ad eam veniente Domino, hoc est in legislatione per Moysem, in sedula increpatione et exhortatione per prophetas, in oblatione gratiae per se ipsum, virtutis fructum ferre neglexit, propter quod ad maledictionem ejus aeterna ariditate damnata est. Defecit generatio in vineis quondam Domini, id est fructus charitatis in turbis Judaeorum, propter quod sitiendi illi acetum pro vino obtulerunt, id est virtutum suavitatem in se quaerenti vitiorum acridinem, virtutes eorum desideranti vitia proferebant.

V. Marriage/Wedding/ Bridegroom

Cyprian, *Testimoniorum contra Judaeos* 3:2.19 (PL 4: 713-714)

Hujus re mysterium ostensum est apud Jessum nave, quando jussus est excalciare se quod scilicet sponsus non ipse esset. Erat enim in Lege ut quisquis nuptias recusaret, calciamentum deponeret, calciaretur vero ille qui sponsus futurus esset. Sint lumbri vestri praecincti et lucernae ardentes, et vossimiles hominibus exspectantibus dominum suum quando veniat a nuptiis, ut cum venerit et pulsaverit aperiantie. Beati servi illi quos adveniens dominus invenerit vigilantes.

Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* 12:1-7 (PL 76: 1119-1122)

(1)Sed ad regnum aeternae beatitudinis pervenire non valet, qui non vult opere implere quod docet. Quomodo ergo in eo minimus vocabitur qui ad hoc nullo modo intrare permittitur? Quid itaque per hanc sententiam nisi praesens Ecclesia regnum coelorum dicitur? In qua doctor qui mandatum solverit minimus vocatur, quia cujus vita despicitur, restat ut ejus praedicatio contemnatur. In quinque autem corporis sensibus unusquisque subsistit, geminatus autem quinarius denarium perficit. Et quia ex utroque sexu fidelium multitudo colligitur, sancta Ecclesia decem virginibus similis denuntiatur. In qua quia mali cum bonis et reprobi cum electis admisti sunt, recte similis virginibus prudentibus et fatuis esse perhibetur....

(3)De adventu sponsi clamor in media nocte fit, quia sic dies iudicii subrepat, ut praevideri non valeat quando venit. Unde scriptum est: Dies Domini sicut fur in nocte ita veniet. Tunc omnes virgines surgunt, quia et electi et reprobi a somno suae mortis excitantur. Lampades ornant, quia sua secum opera numerant, pro quibus aeternam

recipere beatitudinem exspectant. Sed lampades fatuarum virginum exstinguuntur, quia earum opera, quae clara hominibus foris apparuerant, in adventu iudicis intus obscurantur. Et a Deo retributionem non inveniunt, quia pro eis receperunt ab hominibus laudes quas amaverunt. Quid est autem quod tunc a prudentibus oleum petunt, nisi quod in adventu iudicis cum se intus vacuas invenerint, testimonium foris quaerunt? Ac si a sua fiducia deceptae proximis dicant: Quia nos quasi sine opere repelli conspicitis, dicite de nostris operibus quid vidistis....

(5)... Ecce aperiri clamant, et, repulsionis suae dolore compulsae, appellationem dominantis ingeminant, dicentes: Domine, Domine, aperi nobis. Preces offerunt, sed nesciuntur, quia tunc velut incognitos Dominus deserit, quos modo suos per vitae meritum non agnoscit....

(7)... Illud ergo tempus quo fugere non licet modo debet cogitari dum licet. Illa hora nostri exitus est semper intuenda, ista Redemptoris nostri admonitio ante mentis oculos semper ponenda, qua ait: Vigilate itaque, quia nescitis diem neque horam....

Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturis Veteris et Novi Testamenti, Sermo 90:6 (PL 38: 563)*

Vestis nuptialis charitas. Bona caetera sine charitate non prosunt. Charitas et cupiditas in homine. Quae est ergo vestis illa nuptialis? Haec est vestis nuptialis: Finis autem praecepti est, Apostolus dicit, charitas de corde puro, et conscientia bona, et fide non ficta. Haec est vestis nuptialis. Non quaecumque charitas: nam plerumque videntur se diligere etiam homines participes malae conscientiae. Qui simul latrocinia faciunt, qui simul maleficia, qui simul histriones amant, qui simul aurigis et venatoribus clamant, plerumque diligunt se: sed non est in eis charitas de corde puro, et conscientia bona, et fide non ficta. Talis charitas vestis est nuptialis. Si linguis hominum loquar et Angelorum, charitatem autem non habeam, factus sum, inquit, ut aeramentum sonans, aut cymbalum tinniens. Advenerunt linguae solae, et dicitur eis, Quid huc intrastis non habentes vestem nuptialem? Si habuero, inquit, prophetiam, et sciero omnia sacramenta, et omnem scientiam, et habuero fidem, ita ut montes transferam, charitatem autem non habeam, nihil sum. Ecce sunt illa miracula hominum plerumque non habentium vestem nuptialem. Si haec, inquit, habeam omnia, et Christum non habeam, nihil sum. Nihil, inquit, sum. Ergo prophetia nihil est? ergo scientia sacramentorum nihil est? Non illa nihil sunt: sed ego, si illa habeam, et charitatem non habeam, nihil sum. Quanta bona nihil prosunt sine uno bono? Si non habeam charitatem, si eleemosynas largior in pauperes, si ad confessionem nominis Christi usque ad sanguinem, usque ad ignes accedo, possunt ista fieri et amore gloriae, inania sunt. Quia ergo possunt fieri etiam amore gloriae inania, non charitate pinguissima pietatis, etiam ipsa commemorat, et ipsa audi: Si distribuero omnia mea in usum pauperum, et si tradidero corpus meum ut ardeam, charitatem non habeam, nihil mihi prodest. Haec est vestis nuptialis. Interrogate vos; si habetis illam, securi estis in convivio dominico. Duae sunt in homine uno, charitas et cupiditas. Charitas nascatur in te, si nondum nata est; et si nata est, alatur, nutriatur, crescat. Illa vero cupiditas, et si in hac vita exstingui penitus non potest; quia si dixerimus quod peccatum non habemus, nos ipsos seducimus, et veritas in nobis non est: in quantum autem est in nobis cupiditas, in tantum sine peccato non sumus: charitas crescat, cupiditas decrescat; ut aliquando illa perficiatur, hoc est charitas, cupiditas consumatur. Induite vos vestem nuptialem: vos alloquor, qui necdum habetis. Jam intus estis, jam ad convivium acceditis, et vestem in honorem sponsi nondum habetis: vestra adhuc

quaeritis, non quae Jesu Christi. Vestis enim nuptialis in honore accipitur conjugationis, id est sponsi et sponsae. Nostis sponsum: Christus est. Nostis sponsam: Ecclesia est. Deferte nubenti, deferte ducenti. Si istis bene detuleritis qui nubent, vos filii eritis. Ergo in hoc proficite. Diligite Dominum, et ibi discite diligere vos: ut cum diligendo Dominum dilexeritis vos, securi diligatis proximos sicut vos. Quando enim non invenio se ipsum diligentem, quomodo ei permitto proximum, quem diligit sicut se ipsum? Et quis est, inquit, qui non diligit se ipsum? Ecce quis est: Qui diligit iniquitatem, odit animam suam. Numquid diligit se, qui amat carnem suam, et odit animam suam, malo suo, malo animae suae et carnis suae? Quis autem diligit animam suam? Qui diligit Deum ex toto corde suo, et ex tota mente sua. Jam tali committo proximum Diligite proximos, tanquam vos ipsos.

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 1:16.15 (CCSL 32:15.1-8)

Est enim ecclesia corpus eius, sicut apostolica doctrina commendat, quae coniux etiam eius dicitur Corpus ergo suum multis membris diversa officia gerentibus nodo unitatis et caritas tanquam sanitatis adstringit. Exercet autem hoc tempore et purgat medicinalibus quibusdam molestiis, ut erutam de hoc saeculo in aeternum sibi copulet coniugem ecclesiam non habentem maculam aut rugam aut aliquid eiusmodi.

Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* 19.7; 21.9-11 (CCSL 121A: 491.76-77; 523.5-8; 525.16-18)

(19.7) Operibus iustitiae semper insistendo spiritali se convivio et pereni regno dignam exhibuit....

(21.9) Sponsam et uxorem dicit ecclesiam, quae immaculata permanens spirituales semper deo filios generat.

(21.11) Tunc enim amplius decora videbitur, quando per spiritum, quo eius sponsus creditur conceptus et genitus, imaginem plene meruerit portare caelestem.

Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturis Veteris et Novi Testamenti, Sermo 95:6-7* (PL 38: 583-584)

(6) Non enim vere, charissimi, ille qui inde projectus est unum hominem significat: absit. Multi sunt Et ipse Dominus qui hanc parabolam proposuit, Sponsus ipse convivii convocator et convivarum vivificator, ipse nobis exposuit, quia homo ille non unum hominem significat, sed multos, ibi, in ipso loco, in eadem parabola. Non eo longe, ibi expono, ibi frango et manducandum appono. Ait enim, cum inde missus esset ille non habens vestem nuptialem in tenebras exteriores: ait ergo, et secutus adjunxit, multi enim sunt vocati, pauci vero electi. Unum hinc projecisti, et dicis, Multi enim sunt vocati, pauci electi. Sine dubio electi non sunt projecti: et ipsi erant pauci qui discumbentes remanserant; et multi erant in illo uno, quia ille unus unum corpus malorum est, qui non habet vestem nuptialem.

(7) Vestis nuptialis, charitas. Quid est vestis nuptialis?... Si charitatem, inquit, non habeam, nihil sum, nihil mihi prodest. Ecce vestis nuptialis: induite vos, o convivae, ut securi discumbatis.

Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium* 13:13 (PL 35: 1499)

Quid ergo dicam, fratres? Et haeretici habent virgines, et multae sunt virgines haeticorum. Videamus si sponsum amant, ut virginitas ista custodiatur. Cui custoditur? Christo, inquit. Videamus si Christo, non Donato: videamus cui servetur ista virginitas; cito probare poteritis. Ecce ostendo sponsum, quia ipse se ostendit: perhibet illi testimonium Joannes, Hic est qui baptizat. O tu virgo, si sponso huic servas virginitatem tuam, quare curris ad eum qui dicit, Ego baptizo; cum amicus sponsi tui dicat, Hic est qui baptizat? Deinde sponsus tuus totum orbem tenet; quare tu in parte corrumpere? Quis est sponsus? Quoniam rex omnis terrae Deus. Ipse sponsus tuus totum tenet, quia totum emit. Vide quanti emerit, ut intelligas quid emerit: quod pretium dedit? Sanguinem dedit. Ubi dedit, ubi fudit sanguinem suum? In passione. Nonne sponso tuo cantas, aut cantare te fingis, quando emptus est totus orbis: Foderunt manus meas et pedes, dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea: ipsi vero consideraverunt, et conspexerunt me; diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea, et super vestem meam miserunt sortem? Sponsa es, agnosce vestem sponsi tui. Super quam vestem missa est sors? Interroga Evangelium; vide cui desponsata sis, vide a quo arrhas accipias. Interroga Evangelium; vide quid tibi dicat in passione Domini. Erat ibi tunica: videamus qualis: desuper texta. Desuper texta tunica quid significat, nisi charitatem? desuper texta tunica quid significat, nisi unitatem? Hanc tunicam attende, quam nec persecutores Christi diviserunt. Ait enim: Dixerunt inter se, Non dividamus eam, sed sortem super eam mittamus. Ecce unde audistis Psalmum. Vestem persecutores non consciderunt: christiani Ecclesiam dividunt.

1F: Textual Sources Relating to/Informing the Figural and Non-Figural Ornament on the Carvings at Portmahomack

TR1

I. The Chalice

Treatise on the Mass (Warren, *The Stowe Missal*, p. 40)

1. The altar is the figure of the persecution which is inflicted. The Chalice is the figure of the Church which has been set and founded on the persecution and martyrdom of the prophets *et aliorum*

7. The elevation of the Chalice, after the full uncovering thereof, *quando canitur oblata*, that is a commemoration of Christ's birth and of His glory through signs and miracles.

II. Daniel:

Clement of Rome, 1 Epistle Clement 45 (ANCL add. vol. 9:242-243)

Ye are fond of contention, brethren, and full of zeal about things which do not pertain to salvation. Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them. There you will not find that the righteous were cast off by men who themselves were holy. The righteous were indeed persecuted, but only by the wicked. They were cast into prison, but only by the unholy; they were stoned, but only by transgressors; they were slain, but only by the accursed, and such as had conceived an unrighteous envy against them. Exposed to such sufferings, they endured them gloriously. For what shall we say, brethren? Was Daniel cast into the den of lions by such as feared God? Were Ananias, and Azarias, and Mishael shut up in a furnace by those who observed the great and glorious worship of the Most High? Far from us be such a thought! Who, then, were they that did such things? The hateful, and those full of all wickedness, were roused to such a pitch of fury, that they inflicted torture on those who served God with a holy and blameless purpose [of heart], not knowing that the Most High is the Defender and Protector of all such as with a pure conscience venerate His all-excellent name; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. But they who with confidence endured [these things] are now heirs of glory and honour, and have been exalted and made illustrious by God in their memorial for ever and ever. Amen.

Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechesis 5:4 NPNF 2nd series, 7:30

Faith stoppeth the mouths of lions, as in Daniel's case: for the Scripture saith concerning him, that Daniel was brought up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. Is there anything more fearful than the devil? Yet even against him we have no other shield than faith, an impalpable buckler against an unseen foe. For he sends forth divers arrows, and shoots down in the dark night those that watch not; but, since the enemy is unseen, we have faith as our strong armour, according to the saying of the Apostle, In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. A fiery dart of desire of base indulgence is often cast forth from the devil: but

faith, suggesting a picture of the judgment, cools down the mind, and quenches the dart.

Cyprian, Epistle 61.2.1, (To Lucius the Bishop of Rome, Returned from Banishment) (CCSL 3C: 380-381.14-20) Neque enim in tribus pueris minor fuit martyrii dignitas quia morte frustrate de camino ignis incolumes exierunt aut non consummatus Daniel extitit in suis laudibus, quia qui leonibus missus fuerat ad praedam, protectus a domino uixit ad gloriam. In confessoribus Christi dilata martyria non meritum confessiones minuunt, sed magnolia diuinae protectionis ostendunt.

Cyprian, De Lapsis 19 (CCSL 3: 232.387-390)

Quid vero justius Noe, qui cum repleta esset terra peccatis, solus inventus est justus in terris? Quid gloriosius Daniele? quid illo ad facienda martyria in fidei firmitate robustius, in Dei dignatione felicius qui toties et cum confligeret vicit, et cum vinceret supervixit? Quid Job in operibus promptius, in tentationibus fortius, in dolore patientius, in timore submissius, in fide verius? Nec his tamen, si rogarent, concessurum se Deus dixit. Cum propheta Ezechiel pro delicto populi deprecaretur, terra, inquit, quaecumque peccaverit mihi ut delinquat delictum, extendam manum meam super eam, et obteram stabilimentum panis et immittam in eam famem, et auferam ab ea hominem et pecora. Etsi fuerint tres viri hi in medio ejus, Noe, Daniel et Job, non liberabunt filios neque filias, ipsi soli salvi erunt. Adeo non omne quod petitur in praejudicio petentis sed in dantis arbitrio est; nec quicquam sibi usurpat et vindicat humana sententia, nisi annuat et censura divina.

Cyprian, De Dominica Oratione 21 (CCSL 3A: 103.386-398)

Neque enim de esse quotidianus cibus potest justo, cum scriptum sit: Non occidet Dominus fame animam justam. Et iterum: Junior fui, et senui; et non vidi justum derelictum, neque semen ejus quaerens panem. Item Dominus promittat et dicat: Nolite cogitare dicentes: Quid edemus, aut quid bibemus, aut quid vestiemur? Haec enim nationes quaerunt. Scit autem pater vester quia horum omnium indigetis. Quaerite primum regnum Dei et justitiam ejus, et haec omnia apponentur vobis. Quaerentibus regnum et justitiam Dei omnia promittit apponi. Nam cum Dei sint omnia, habenti Deum nihil deerit, si Deo ipse non desit. Sic Danieli, in leonum lacu jussu regis incluso, prandium divinitus procuratur, et inter feras esurientes et parcentes homo Dei pascitur. Sic alitur Helias in fuga; et in solitudine corvis ministrantibus, et volucris cibum sibi apportantibus, in persecutione nutritur. Atque, o humanae malitiae detestanda crudelitas! ferae parcunt, aves pascunt, et homines insidiantur et saeviunt.

Augustine, Epistola 93.5.19 (PL 33: 331)

...imo vero serviant reges terrae Christo, etiam leges ferendo pro Christo. Majores vestri Caecilianum et socios ejus regibus terrae puniendos falsis criminibus objecerunt; convertantur leones ad comminuenda ossa calumniantium, nec Daniel ipse intercedat, innocens comprobatus, et de lacu quo illi pereunt liberatus: qui enim parat proximo suo foveam, ipse justius cadet in eam.

Augustine, De Correctione Donatistarum: Epistola 185: 2.7, 5.19 (PL 33: 795, 801)

(2.7) Hoc enim contigit Donatistis, quod accusatoribus sancti Danielis. Sicut enim in illos leones, sic in istos conversae sunt leges quibus innocentem opprimere voluerunt; nisi quod propter misericordiam Christi, magis pro eis sunt istae leges, quae illis videntur adversae: quoniam multi per illas correcti sunt, et quotidie corriguntur; et se esse correctos, atque ab illa furiosa pernicie liberatos gratias agunt.

(5.19)... Quomodo ergo reges Domino serviunt in timore, nisi ea quae contra iussa Domini fiunt, religiosa severitate prohibendo atque plectendo? Aliter enim servit, quia homo est; aliter, quia etiam rex est: quia homo est, ei servit vivendo fideliter; quia vero etiam rex est, servit leges iusta praecipientes et contraria prohibentes convenienti vigore sanciendo. Sicut servivit Ezechias, lucos et templa idolorum, et illa excelsa quae contra praecepta Dei fuerant constructa destruendo: sicut servivit Josias, talia et ipse faciendo: sicut servivit rex Ninivitarum, universam civitatem ad placandum Dominum compellendo: sicut servivit Darius, idolum frangendum in potestatem Danieli dando, et inimicos ejus leonibus ingerendo : sicut servivit Nabuchodonosor, de quo jam diximus, omnes in regno suo positos a blasphemando Deo lege terribili prohibendo. In hoc ergo serviunt Domino reges, in quantum sunt reges, cum ea faciunt ad serviendum illi, quae non possunt facere nisi reges.

Augustine, *Epistolam Joannis ad Parthos Tractatus Decem* 8.7 (PL 35:2039)

Intendite quid dicam: Deus, homo, pecora: verbi gratia, supra te Deus; infra te pecora. Agnosce eum qui supra te est, ut agnoscant te quae infra te sunt. Ideoque cum Daniel agnovisset supra se Deum, agnoverunt illum supra se leones. Si autem non agnoscis illum qui supra te est, superiorem contemnis, subderis inferiori. Propterea superbia Aegyptiorum unde domita est? De ranis et muscis. Poterat Deus et leones mittere, sed aliquis magnus leone terrendus est. Quanto illi erant superbiores, tanto de rebus contemptibilibus et abjectis fracta est eorum cervix mala. Sed Danielem agnoverunt leones, quia ille subditus Deo erat.

III. Habakkuk

Gregory the Great, *Vita S. Benedicti (ex libro II dialogorum)* 22 (PL 66: 176)

Et certe Scriptura teste novimus quod propheta ex-Judaea sublevatus, repente est cum prandio in Chaldaea depositus, quo videlicet prandio prophetam refecit, seque repente in Judaea iterum invenit. Si igitur tam longe Habacuc potuit sub momento corporaliter ire et prandium deferre, quid mirum si Benedictus Pater obtinuit quatenus iret per spiritum, et fratrum quiescentium spiritibus necessaria narraret, ut sicut ille ad cibum corporis corporaliter erexit, ita iste ad institutionem spiritalis vitae spiritaliter pergeret?

TR20

I. Constantine's Plaque and Standard

Eusebius, *De Vita Beatissimi Imperatoris Constantini* 3:3, (PL 8: 050)

Caput III. *De imagine Constantini, cui crux quidem superposita erat, infra autem draco.*

Quinetiam in sublimi quadam tabula ante vestibulum palatii posita, cunctis spectandum proposuit salutare quidem signum capiti suo superpositum: infra vero hostem illum et inimicum generis humani, qui impiorum tyrannorum opera Ecclesiam Dei oppugnaverat, sub draconis forma in praeceps ruentem. Quippe divina oracula in prophetarum libris, draconem illum et sinuosum serpentem appellarunt. Idcirco imperator draconem telis per medium ventrem confixum, et in profundos maris gurgites projectum, sub suis suorumque liberorum pedibus cera igne resoluta depingi proponique omnibus voluit; hoc videlicet modo designans occultum humani generis hostem, quem salutaris illius tropaei quod capiti ipsius superpositum erat, vi ac potentia in exitii barathrum detrusum esse significabat. Atque hoc quidem imago variis coloribus depicta tacite indicabat. Mihi vero eximiam imperatoris intelligentiam mirari subit, qui divino quodam afflatu impulsus, ea pingendo expressit, quae prophetarum vocibus de bestia illa multo ante praedicta fuerant: Deum scilicet machaeram ingentem et terribilem adacturum esse in draconem serpentemque fugientem, et occisurum esse draconem qui est in mari. Horum igitur figuram expressit imperator, rem ipsam pictura prorsus imitatus.

Eusebius, *De Vita Beatissimi Imperatoris Constantini* 1:31 (PL 8: 023)

Caput 31: *Descriptio signi instar crucis formati quod Romani labarum vocant*

Erat autem ejusmodi. Hasta longior auro contecta, transversam habet antennam instar crucis. Supra in ipsa hastae summitate corona erat affixa, gemmis et auro contexta. In hac salutaris appellationis signum; duae videlicet litterae, nomen Christi primis apicibus designabant, litera, ρ in medio sui decussata. Quas quidem literas imperator in galea gestare posthaec etiam consuevit. Porro ex antenna quae oblique per hastam trajecta est, velum quoddam dependebat; textum videlicet purpureum pretiosis lapidibus inter se junctis, et luminis sui fulgore oculos praestinguentibus coopertum, multoque intertexto auro inexplicabilem quamdam pulchritudinis speciem intuentibus praebens. Atque hoc velum antennae affixum, latitudinem longitudini aequalem habuit. Ipsa vero recta hasta ab infima sui parte in magnam longitudinem producta, in superiori parte sub ipso crucis signo ad ipsam veli variis coloribus depicti summitatem, auream Deo cari imperatoris et liberorum ejus imaginem depictam pectore tenus sublimem gestabat. Hoc igitur salutari signo, tanquam munimento adversus oppositas quorumvis hostium copias imperator semper est usus; aliaque ad ejus similitudinem expressa signa cunctis exercitibus praeferri jussit.

III. Dragons as Symbols of Heresy/Torments of Hell

Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis* 9:17 (PL 93: 158-159)

Et habebant caudas similes scorpionum, etc. Sicut scorpius palpando incedit, sed cauda ferit, ita fraudulenta pernicies malorum blanda et innoxia in facie videtur, sed dum occulte perimit, quasi latenter mortem trahit.

Potest earum nocere hominibus mensibus sex. Hanc vitam rursus insinuat, ubi potest valere mendacium vel ad capiendum inutiles, vel ad cruciandum temporaliter spirituales.

Gregory the Great, *Moralia Expositio in Iob* 33.48, CCSL 143B, 1715.31-42.

Quae utruorumque actio, id est potentium atque loquacium, in Ioannis apocalypsi brevi est sententia comprehensa, qua dicitur: Potestas equorum in ore et in caudis eorum erat. In ore namque doctorum, scientia; in cauda vero, saecularium potentia figuratur.... Istis ergo equis, id est nequissimis praedicatoribus, ubique carnali impulsu currentibus, in ore et in cauda potestas est....

Augustine, *Enarrationes on Psalmos* 90:13 (CCSL 39: 1275-1276.1-30)

‘Super aspidem et basilicum ambulabis, et conculcabis leonem et draconem.’
Quis sit serpent, nostris; quomodo super illum calcet ecclesia, quae non uincitur, quia cauet astutias ipsius. Que madmodum autem sit leo et draco, puto et hoc nosse Caritatem uestram. Leo aperte saeuit; draco occulte insidiatur: utramque uim et potestatem habet diabolus. Quando martyres occidebantur, leo erat saeuens; quando haeretici insidiantur, draco est subrepens. Vicisti leonem, uince et draconem; non te fregit leo, non te decipiat draco.... Virginitatem corporis paucae feminae habens in ecclesia, sed uirginitatem cordis omnes fideles habent. In ipsa fide uirginitatem cordis timebat corumpi adiabolo; quam qui perdiderint, sine causa sunt uirgines corpore. Corrupta corde quid seruat in corpore. Adeo mulier catholica praecedit uirginem haeticam. Illa enim non est uirgo in corpore, ista mulier facta est in corde; ex mulier non a marito Deo, sed a serpente. Quid autem ecclesia? Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis. Rex est serpentium basiliscus, sicut diabolus rex est daemoniorum. Et conculcabis leonem et draconem.

Gregory the Great, *Homilia* 19:7 (PL 76: 1158)

Fratres aderant, ejusque exitum, in quantum Deo largiente poterant, oratione tuebantur. At ille subito ad devorandum se draconem venire conspiciens, magnis vocibus coepit clamare, dicens: Ecce draconi ad devorandum datus sum qui propter uestram praesentiam devorare me non potest. Quid mihi moras facitis? Date locum ut ei devorare me liceat. Cumque hunc fratres ut signum sibi crucis imprimeret admonerent, respondebat uirtute qua poterat, dicens: Volo me signare, sed non possum, quia a dracone premor. Spumae oris ejus faciem meam liniunt, guttur meum ejus ore suffocatur. Ecce ab eo brachia mea comprimuntur, qui jam et caput meum in suo ore absorbit. Cumque hoc ille pallens et tremens et moriens diceret, coeperunt fratres uehementius orationibus insistere, et oppressum draconis praesentia suis precibus adiuuare. Tunc repente liberatus, magnis coepit vocibus clamare, dicens: Deo gratias; ecce discessit, ecce exiit, ante orationes uestras fugit draco qui me acceperat.

Gregory the Great, *Vita S. Benedicti (ex libro II dialogorum) Dialogi* 2:25 (PL 66:182)

Gregorius: Quidam autem ejus monachus mobilitati mentem dederat et permanere in monasterio nolebat. Cumque eum uir Dei assidue corripere, et frequenter admonere, ipse uero nullo modo consentiret in congregatione persistere, atque importunis precibus ut relaxaretur immineret, quadam die idem uenerabilis Pater, nimietatis ejus taedio affectus, iratus iussit ut discederet. Qui mox ut monasterium exiit, contra se assistere aperto ore draconem in itinere inuenit. Cumque eum idem draco qui apparuerat devorare uellet, coepit ipse tremens et palpitans magnis vocibus clamare,

dicens: Currite currite, quia draco iste me devorare vult. Currentes autem fratres draconem minime viderunt, sed trementem atque palpitantem monachum ad monasterium reduxerunt. Qui statim promisit nunquam se esse a monasterio recessurum, atque ex hora eadem in sua promissione permansit: quippe qui sancti viri orationibus contra se assistere draconem viderat, quem prius non videndo sequebatur.

IV. Dragons and Baptism

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* 16 (NPNF, 2nd series, 7:5).

Great is the Baptism that lies before you...a welcome into the kingdom; the gift of the adoption! But there is a serpent by the wayside watching those who pass by: beware lest he bite thee with unbelief.... How then mayest thou pass him? Have thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace that even if he bite, he may not thee. Have faith in dwelling, steadfast hope, a strong sandal, that though mayest pass the enemy and enter the presence of the Lord.... Give thy mind wholly to study, that it may forget base things. If thou find anyone saying to thee, Art thou then going in, to descend into the water? Has the city just now no baths? Take notice that it is the dragon of the sea who is laying these plots against thee.

TR28

1. Cattle/Leviticus/Firstborn

Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum* 1:50.249-250 (PL 16: 99-100)

(249) Non mediocre officium levitarum, de quibus dicit Dominus: Ecce eligo levitas de medio filiorum Israel pro omni primogenito aperiente vulvam filiis Israel: redemptiones eorum erunt isti, et erunt mihi levitae. Mihi enim sanctificavi primogenitum in terra Aegypti. Cognovimus quia non inter caeteros levitae computantur, sed omnibus praeferuntur, qui eliguntur ex omnibus, et sanctificantur; ut primogenita fructuum atque primitiae quae Domino deputantur, in quibus est votorum solutio, et redemptio peccatorum. Non accipies, inquit, eos inter filios Israel: sed constitues levitas super tabernaculum testimonii, et super omnia vasa ejus astare, et super quaecumque sunt in ipso. Ipsi tollant tabernaculam et omnia vasa ejus, et ipsi ministrent in eo, et in circuitu tabernaculi castra ipsi constituent, et promovendo, tabernaculum ipsi deponant levitae: et constituendo castra, rursum ipsum tabernaculum ipsi statuunt. Alienigena quicumque accesserit, morte moriatur.

(250) Tu ergo electus es ex omni numero filiorum Israel, inter sacros fructus quasi primogenitus aestimatus, praepositus tabernaculo, ut praetendas in castris sanctitatis et fidei, ad quae si alienigena accesserit, morte morietur, positus ut operias arcam Testamenti. Non enim omnes vident alta mysteriorum, quia operiuntur a levitis; ne videant qui videre non debent, et sumant qui servare non possunt. Moyses denique circumcisionem vidit spiritualem: sed operuit eam, ut in signo circumcisionem praescriberet. Vidit azyma veritatis et sinceritatis, vidit passionem Domini: operuit azymis corporalibus azyma veritatis, operuit passionem Domini, agni vel vituli immolatione. Et boni levitae servaverunt mysterium, fidei suae tegmine; et tu mediocre putas quod commissum est tibi? Primum ut alta Dei videas, quod est sapientiae: deinde ut excubias pro populo deferas, quod est justitiae: castra defendas,

**tabernaculumque tuearis, quod est fortitudinis: te ipsum continentem ac sobrium
praestes, quod est temperantiae.**

APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE CARVED DECORATION OF THE TARBAT PENINSULAR MONUMENTS

A: The Cross Slab at Nigg

SIDE A

Field 1. The Pediment

The figural composition in the roughly triangular pediment contains two human figures, three animal figures, six inanimate objects and two borders along the left and right-hand edges of the triangle. The border on the right-hand side consists of three strands rising out of a triangular-shaped container marked by horizontal lines at a 90-degree angle. Because of the imperfect triangular shape of the pediment on the right-hand side, the strands are forced to make another 90-degree turn to the left, at which point they intertwine and follow the edge of the pediment upwards until they terminate in three bulbous forms directly above the head of the right-hand human figure. The border on the left hand side is similar but has two variations, since the left-hand side of the triangular pediment is regular, the interwoven strands come out of the container sideways, and the terminations are not as bulbous. A bird, with visible beak, wings and tail, flies downwards from the slightly rounded apex of the triangle with a circular object in its mouth. This object has a small triangular piece missing on the left hand side. This appears to have been deliberately cut out after the original carving was finished since the edges are not exact and the cut itself is shallow and uneven. On either side of the bird are two, kneeling profile human figures. They wear long belted robes reaching to their feet, curly hair (with that of the right-hand figure being longer) and hold books in their outstretched arms. Directly beneath are two, inward facing quadrupeds characterised by visible ribs and tapering torsos, tails that curl between

their hind legs, and heads with small ears and blunt muzzles. Directly in-between the two beasts is an object with a flat top and long stem that ends in two separate legs.

Field 2 (A-F). The Cross

The centre of the cross (field 2A) contains a closed pattern of circular interlace composed of three registers of vertical knots interconnected by diagonal and curved strands characterised by angular bends.¹ The zoomorphic ornament in the left cross-arm (field 2B) features four interlaced quadrupeds whose serpent-like heads cross at the neck in the centre of the design while their bodies and hindquarters curl around themselves in the nearest corners. The tails and extended torsos often force the delicate limbs of the creatures into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.' The right cross-arm (field 2C) also contains four interlaced quadrupeds. These creatures are grouped into two pairs of confronted beasts whose necks cross while their long sinuous bodies stretch to place their hindquarters at the diametrically opposed corners. The serpent-like heads of all four creatures meet in the middle of the composition to form a lozenge shape. All of these creature's limbs are forced in the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' by the extended torsos or tails. In addition to the interlaced animals in the left and right cross-arms, two extra animals interlace in the narrow passages formed by the stepped armpits of the cross. These creatures appear to originate from the central knot work as their heads rather than their hindquarters appear in the right and left arms of the cross. Both the lower section of the upper cross-arm (field 2D) and the connecting passage are currently missing. However, from the ornament that remains, it can be seen that zoomorphic motif is the same, though the configuration of the quadrupeds is different. At the top of the composition, a pair of confronted beasts rear apart from the chest but

¹ Classified as pattern no. 708. *ECMS* 1:281.

cross long, delicate forelegs, while their respective blunt-muzzled and large-eared heads are placed in the top corners of the panel.² Their long, sinuous bodies do not cross each other, but instead curl around themselves and through the torsos and forelegs of a second pair of beasts, leaving the first pair's hind legs to dangle beneath, along the same sides of the panel that their heads are placed. The interlaced hindquarters of the third pair of beasts are placed between the rearing heads of the first pair. The serpent-like heads of the second pair meet in the centre lower portion of the composition. Once again, the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' is employed in the placement of almost all the limbs.

The bottom cross arm (field 2D) contains the most complex configuration of all since greater length allows for the incorporation of eight interlaced beasts; six quadrupeds with snake-like heads with ears, and two snake-tailed, one-armed beasts with slightly blunter muzzles and possible fangs. All of the heads of the various beasts are located in the upper half of the composition, while their bodies move in a downward direction. The two snake-tailed beasts are located at the top of the composition in the narrow passageway between the centre of the cross and the cross arm, but because of the border between the two fields they do not interact with the knot work in any way. These two beasts cross necks and bodies while their tails loop around the down-hanging, crossed necks of the next lower pair of beasts. This second pair of quadrupeds has shoulders that are forced into the top corners of the composition while their forelegs cross over and under their partner's necks as well as the necks of the third pair of beasts. The extremely long torsos of the second pair also cross in the middle of the composition leaving their hindquarters to dangle along the edges of the panel. The aforementioned third pair of beasts is adorned with their

² The details of the animals heads in this panel would have been impossible to determine without the

chests against the edges of the panel and their backwards-rearing heads almost, but not quite touching in the middle. Their extremely long torsos cross and then stretch to the opposite far corners. The final pair of confronted quadrupeds cross their own necks, forelegs, torsos and limbs, as well as passing over and under the torsos of the two pairs of beasts above them. The hindquarters of this final pair of beasts coil around themselves, placing their hind limbs in the bottom corners of the panel, along with those of the pair above them. In almost every case, the limbs of the animals are forced into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' either by torsos or other limbs or by tails that also interlace in a decorative design in the lower portion of the composition.

The cross-shaft (field 2F) is filled with a key pattern characterised by interlocking T-shapes set on a diagonal axis, which form lozenge shapes filled with straight line-spirals and triangles along the edges and corners.³

Field 3 (A-B). Above the Cross Arms:

According to the drawings made by Petley, the two upper panels directly above the cross arms originally contained four bosses each. However, the subsequent damage to the cross-slab means that only two in each panel are available for description. The left hand panel (field 3A) contains two identical raised bosses, each of which is covered by seven triple-strand spirals, some of which are also raised into bosses, all connected by C-shaped peltae.⁴ In the background of the panel are two smaller triple-strand spirals also raised into bosses and, between the two large bosses, the remnants of a lozenge design initially placed in the centre of four, large raised

help of Ian Scott's drawings in Henderson, 'Variations on an Old Theme', pp. 143-166, fig. 8.1.

³ Pattern type no. 958. *ECMS* 1: 348.

⁴ This design has been mislabelled as pattern type no. 1096 in *ECMS* 2:77. The closest match to this configuration seems to be pattern type no. 1091, in which seven triple strand spirals are connected with S-shaped peltae. See *ECMS* 1:398-399.

bosses.⁵ The key pattern filling the lozenge is characterised by interlocking T shapes on a diagonal axis, forming interior lozenges filled with straight line spirals, almost identical to the design on the cross-shaft, except that the middle four lozenges were filled with curved, rather than straight lines.⁶ The structure of the panel on the right hand side (field 3B) also originally featured four large, raised bosses, though in this case, each was different. Of the two remaining bosses, the left-hand one is carved with a flattened, central triple-band spiral surrounded by a key pattern adapted to an annular space. The right-hand boss features a single row of symmetrical loops with an additional strand on the inside of the wreath,⁷ which surrounds a flattened, triple strand spiral. According to Petley's drawings, a third boss, located in the lower left side of the panel, was lozenge shaped and carved with dense mesh interlace exactly like that covering the lozenge-shaped bosses in field 4A (see below).⁸ The final boss was missing even in the early 19th-century and not recorded. Like field 3A, the background of the right-hand panel was filled with smaller raised triple-band spirals, and a lozenge shaped central design filled with small triple-band spirals with C-shaped connections.⁹

Field 4 (A- B). Directly Below the Cross Arms:

The composition in the left-hand panel (field 4A) includes four large circular bosses, two at the top and two at the bottom, and two lozenge-shape bosses in the middle. All of the bosses are covered in a tight mesh interlace, characterised by angular bends around the edges. Each of the pair of circular bosses has three snakes surrounding them, which perhaps originate from the bosses. Two of these snakes

⁵ See *ECMS*, 2, fig 73, or Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-shire,' plate xxvi.

⁶ Pattern type no. 829B. *ECMS* 1: 316.

⁷ Pattern type no. 1020. *Ibid*, p. 302.

⁸ See *ECMS* 2, fig. 73, or Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-shire,' plate xxvi.

touch heads in the space between the boss pair, two place their heads in the corners of the panel, and two move into the centre of the panel where they meet two of the snakes from the opposite pair and interlace. The central lozenge-shaped bosses are surrounded by either an additional four snakes, or by two snakes that appear to be double-headed. Two of these heads meet in the middle above the lozenge bosses, and two below, while the other four heads touch the edges of the panel. In the interstices of this design are sixteen miniature bosses scattered geometrically throughout the panel in pairs connected with very low relief C-shaped peltae.

The right hand panel (field 4B) comprises eight circular raised bosses covered with the same curvilinear interlace as those in the left panel. The uppermost and bottommost pair of bosses are each surrounded by three snakes. As in the left panel, one snake from each boss crosses heads with its mate in the interstice of the boss pair, and the second pair of snakes place their heads in the corners. This third pair of beasts touches heads in the space between the outermost register of bosses and the inner four bosses, with the pair from the bottom register being bitten by two of the snakes originating from a pair of the central bosses. Interlaced lozenge-shapes are carved within the interstices formed by the snakeheads in the upper and lower register of boss pairs, perhaps growing out of the tongues of the snakes. The two central pairs of bosses have only two snakes each surrounding them. Four of these snakes meet and perhaps bite, in the very centre of the design, forming the borders of yet another lozenge shape. The remaining two serpents terminate with bowed heads underneath the uppermost pair of bosses while the previously mentioned pair of snakes from the upper pair of central bosses curve down to bite the snakes originating from the bottom-most pair of bosses. Various plant-like scrolls and flourishes, as well as two

⁹ *Ibid.*

miniature bosses, situated along the edges in the middle of the panel, round out the decoration.

Field 5 (A-B). The Lower Panels

When complete, field 5A most likely had a design in which four medium sized bosses located at the four points of the compass, and eight pairs of small bosses, all interconnected by shallowly carved C-shaped and peltae, rotated around two very large bosses. Two additional medium-sized bosses located in between the two mirror-like configurations, rest alongside the edges of the panel, connected by a bar of interlace. Four small, independent bosses, one in each of the four corners of the panel, would have completed the design.¹⁰ As the stone is now, the entire upper configuration of bosses, the two middle medium-sized bosses along the edges, and the topmost medium and smaller bosses from the lower configuration can still be seen. The right hand panel (field 5B) has a more easily identifiable design in that six medium sized bosses within a clearly carved circular border rotate around an only slightly larger central boss. The bosses are connected with C-shaped peltae and it is likely that they were initially carved with spirals. It is apparent that two such circles existed in the original design, and the upper three bosses from the lower circle can still be seen. A number of small and medium sized bosses also decorate the background of the panel outside the circles, with two smaller bosses in the top corners and four bosses geometrically arranged in the interstices of the two circles.¹¹

SIDE B

¹⁰ Spiral pattern no. 1070. *ECMS* 1: 393.

Field 1A. The Pictish Symbols:

The Pictish Symbols are described in full within the chapter.

Field 1B. The Figural Composition

On the left side, directly below the break in the stone is a right-facing human figure identifiable by profile feet, but missing its head. This figure is wearing a knee-length cloak with a swathe of drapery hanging from the shoulder and is carrying a long skinny object in its left-hand parallel to its body. An additional square object is attached to the long object, which is actually carved behind the hand. To the right of this figure are the remains of three animals. The uppermost left facing animals' hindquarters are visible, characterised by two long, slender legs, a long tail held tightly against the body, and striations along the remains of the torso. Directly beneath this animal are the very faint remains of what appears to be a blunt-muzzled right facing quadruped, with only a single faint hind leg, or perhaps a long tail, decipherable. The third animal also appears to be right facing, while there is no head, the chest, forelegs and hindquarters can be faintly seen. Another severely damaged figure is carved directly against the right-hand border, roughly parallel with the three animals. While the very faint remains of a head are slightly visible, only the two frontally faced, downward hanging feet make identification as a humanoid figure possible. A second register of figures comes into view is carved beneath the top group. Along the left side is the well-preserved body of a right facing quadruped featuring short, thin hind legs, short tail, and a torso covered with densely packed spirals that convey the impression of a curly wool coat. Directly beneath this animal

¹¹ Pattern no. 1071. *Ibid.*

is a clearly carved triangular shape with parallel lines running from top to bottom. The figure to the right of this pair is severely damaged with only a forearm and swathe of drapery hinting at its human status. Rearing up at this figure is a right facing quadruped whose head is gone, but whose broad chest and tapering torso, hind legs and short tail are visible. The lowest register of figures also contains a mixed group of human and animal forms. On the left side of the composition is another human figure dressed in a knee-length garment with a right-facing down turned head, right arm raised upwards and left arm held down along its body. Circular objects are held in both hands. Directly to the right of this figure is a right facing quadruped, identifiable as a horse by the shape of its head, body and legs, as well as by the extremely faint remains of a right-facing human rider in profile. Underneath the horse and rider are two more profile animals, both facing to the right. The left-most beast has a thin, tapering torso, a medium length tail with a slight curve held tightly against the hind legs, and a slightly rounded head with small ears and blunt muzzle. This animal may be biting the hindquarters of the larger quadruped to its right, which has slightly longer legs, broader chest and a narrower, tapered head.

Field 2 (A-O). The Frame:

The frame is divided into sixteen different panels of decoration, with many echoing motifs, which shall be described in clockwise order beginning in the bottom left-hand panel. Field 2A contains a key pattern more properly classified as a 'diaper pattern,' in which the surface is divided into squares by diagonal lines and filled in with cruciform shapes. The triangular bays at the corners of the design are further subdivided into three smaller triangles.¹² Field 2B is filled with interlace work

¹² Pattern type no. 964. *ECMS* 1: 350.

composed of two vertical rows of four circular knots. The orientation of the two upper and lower knots is diametrically opposed to the orientation of the two central pairs of knots. The knots are connected by curved strands with v-bends that are on a diagonal axis, making a closed pattern with no outside strands.¹³ Field 2C is incised with a closed pattern of two vertical rows of four spiral-like knots connected with cross-joinings and diagonal strands.¹⁴ Field 2D contains a closed pattern of interlace work composed of two vertical rows of four circular knots interconnected by diagonal strands and distinguished by both angular v-bends and more gentle u-bends.¹⁵ Field 2E features a key pattern characterised by Y and T shaped bars arranged along a horizontal line and triangles filled in with strait spirals.¹⁶ Field 2F is located at the point where the vertical line of the frame begins to arch, thus forming a semi-triangular panel. Within this panel is a lozenge shape ornamented with a closed pattern of single strand interlace characterised by angular bends along the longer diagonal. A strait line spiral makes up a triangle to fill the interstice between the lozenge and field G, and was most mirrored in the interstice between field F and E, though it can no longer be seen due to damage. Field G contains a key pattern in which strait line S-shaped bars form parallelograms that are placed on a diagonal axis and filled with strait line spirals, with the two centrally placed parallelograms vertically divided into triangles.¹⁷ The panel making up the keystone of the arch (field H) is completely defaced. Field I contains a mirror image of the design in Field G. Though now severely damaged, field J used to feature a very similar design to that contained in Field F;¹⁸ a central lozenge ornamented with a triquetra knot that merges

¹³ Classified as a mixture of pattern type nos. 607 and 613 in *ECMS 2*: 82; *ECMS 1*:237.

¹⁴ Pattern type no. 662. *ECMS 1*: 259.

¹⁵ Pattern type no. 704. *Ibid.* p. 279.

¹⁶ Pattern type no. 980. *Ibid.* p. 354.

¹⁷ Classified as a variation of pattern type no. 958. *ECMS 2*:81; *ECMS 1*: 348.

¹⁸ See *ECMS 2*, fig. 79; Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-shire,' plate xxvi.

into a key pattern is flanked by two triangular spirals in the interstices between the lozenge and fields I and K.¹⁹ Field K is also almost entirely obliterated but the 19th-century drawings show a key pattern characterised by interlocking T and H-shape bars set diagonally to a horizontal line and finished with small triangles.²⁰ Field L contains very similar interlace to Field D with a closed pattern formed by two vertical rows of four circular knots connected by diagonal and curved strands with both v and u-bends.²¹ Like field C, field M is incised rather than carved in relief. Likewise the patterns in both fields are almost identical, with the only difference being that in one of the crossings, a band moves over instead of under. Field N contains a closed pattern of two vertical rows of knots connected by diagonal strands and characterised by v-bends.²² Field O is ornamented with a diagonal key pattern that forms a series of lozenge shapes filled with straight-line spirals.²³

¹⁹ The knot is classified as type no. 798. *ECMS* 1:304.

²⁰ See *ECMS* 2, fig. 79; Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-shire,' plate xxvi. The design is classified as pattern type no. 974. *ECMS* 1: 353.

²¹ Pattern type no. 702. *ECMS* 1: 278.

²² Pattern type no. 695. *Ibid.* p. 274.

²³ This pattern is tentatively identified as pattern no. 967 in *ECMS* 2:82; *ECMS* 1: 350.

B. The Cross Slab at Shandwick

SIDE A:

Although there are no moulded borders on the face of the Shandwick Cross slab, the cross bisects the decoration into left and right fields. For ease of description the various images on the left and right sides have been further separated into separate fields.

Field 1: The Cross:

The centrally placed cross, with squared terminals, extends to both the left, right and upper edges of the rectangular slab. In its present state the cross-shaft extends slightly into the lower third of the slab, however, in its original state, before being inserted into the cement block, the cross occupied only top half of the slab. The arms and the shaft are separated from the roughly rhomboid-shaped centre by oval-shaped armpits, a slight modification of the standard Anglo-Saxon type 12A crosshead.¹ In addition, the oval armpits are irregular due to the intrusions of decorative details. These bosses, which run in two parallel rows along the shaft and the arms as well as along the perimeter of the centre of the cross, are further embellished with triple-band spirals connected by low relief C-shaped peltae, in places almost too worn away to see.

Field 2 (A-B). Ornament Above the Cross-arms

The decoration within these two fields has been greatly defaced or worn away leaving only a few details to be picked out. This damage existed before 1812, as

¹ Cramp, 'Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament,' p. xvi. The Anglo-Saxon type 12A is classified as 101 A in *ECMS* 1: 51.

recorded in the drawing by Petley.² Only a vaguely D- shaped high relief design, originally carved with interlace can still be deciphered. Within the interior space of this shape are the clear remains of a much lower relief single-strand interlace knot. This design is echoed by the interlace design carved below in the lower right corner of the field, abutting the hollow oval armpit of the cross.

The ornamental designs in 2B have been almost completely worn away or defaced, with only two hollowed-out circles abutting the irregular armpit of the cross clearly seen.

Field 3 (A-B). Directly Below the Cross Arms

Both of these fields have also suffered from wear, but not nearly to the extent as 2A and 2B, and most of the details are still possible to pick out. On the left-most side (3A) a human figure is placed within a frame made up of two twisting strands that form a cable. Although the body of this figure is frontally faced, the head and the feet turn inwards, to the right. This figure has knee-length robes and four triangular points protruding from the robes, two at the shoulders and two from the waist, like the points of a star. Abutting the cross shaft to the right of this figure is an interlace design composed of a continuous strand forming a double-layered figure-of-eight. Both the top of the frame around the human figure, and the strand of interlace intrude slightly into the hollow oval armpit of the cross.

Field 3B also contains a human figure within a cable frame and a strand of interlace in the shape of a figure-of-eight. Besides the fact that the interlace design is slightly bigger than that in 3A, the composition and detail of 3B mirrors 3A. Thus the human figure's head and feet face inwards towards the cross-shaft.

² See Petley, 'Carved Stones in Ross-shire,' plate xviii.

Field 4 (A-B). The Upper-Mid Panels

The animal in the left field (4A) is a large, thick torsoed, thick-necked, left-facing quadruped, with an elongated, blunt-muzzled, down-turned head, and no visible tail. The animal lowers its head to touch a thin, elongated, amorphous shape located underneath its legs, which may be a second animal. 4B contains a left-facing quadruped whose body is characterized by a thickened chest and tapering torso, an extremely long tail curving high above its back, and a leonine head held aloft, featuring tiny ears, open jaws and one visible fang. An amorphous shape hangs from the jaws.

Field 5 (A-B). The Lower-Mid Panels

Located directly beneath the large animals, fields 5A and 5B terminate at roughly the same point as the cross shaft. 5A, located to the left of the cross-shaft, features two quadrupeds whose adjacent bodies form figures-of-eight. The heads of the two beasts touch in the centre of the design while their necks loop below, moving through their hooked forelegs. The backs of their thickened shoulders touch at the bottom of the design before their elongated torsos move upwards, passing through the jaws of the beasts, then loop around the outside upper corners of the composition. The thickened hindquarters of the beasts drop back down into the centre of the design, briefly touching backs, before terminating abruptly directly above the heads of the creatures. The hind legs of each creature, though unequal in size, both hook around the torsos in the exact same manner as the forelegs. All four legs of each creature hook together at the clawed feet, which are placed close against their bodies.

The ornament in field 5B is greatly damaged with almost half the sculpture

missing.³ From what remains however, it is easy to surmise that the design must have been symmetrical and that it probably involved four creatures, two of whose heads are still visible. These beasts appear to be serpentine with flattened out, fish-like tails. No other limbs are visible. The interlace is much simpler than that contained in 4A, though a figure-of-eight format once again appears to be the main component of the design, as does the fact that the creatures' heads are located in the centre of the composition, while their bodies move outwards.

Field 6: The Lowest (Visible) Panels

Only the left half of the design in Field 6 remains intact, although the original design was symmetrically divided into two parts. The design was originally composed of four large circles whose perimeters are formed by thickly carved serpentine beasts. The two remaining circles each display two serpentine heads that touch noses in the middle of the outer edges (on the 'west' side). The ears on each head extend to form interlace knots in the interstices of the circles. The bodies of the creatures gradually narrow and cross over in the centre of the design, then move into the opposite circles to form densely packed interlace knot work within them. Additional interlace is formed in the rhomboid-shaped interstice of the design. The knot work within the circles is raised another few centimetres above the high-relief perimeter, to a height of approximately 10 cm away from the surface of the stone, in effect turning the circles into large, raised bosses.

Field 7. (A- B):

These fields are now entirely covered by the cement base of the stone, but

³ According to the drawing by Petley, this damage must have occurred before 1812.

from drawings made by Petley and Stuart, it appears that the field on the left (7A) was carved with a key pattern, while that on the right (7B) featured a spiral pattern.⁴

These two fields did not appear to be separated by a border.

SIDE B:

Field 1. The Upper Symbol Panel:

Field 1 contains a double-disc symbol without the typical Z-rod accompaniment. Though the upper portions of the symbol are almost entirely defaced, the low-relief spiral work is still possible to discern. Six triple-band spirals are arranged around a seventh spiral and are connected by hooked peltae that terminate in much smaller triple-band spirals or in triangular shapes further ornamented by almond-shaped spots and leaves.⁵ The connecting bar contains triple spirals connected by C-shaped peltae ornamented with almond-shaped spots, but no leaves.⁶ These decorative details echo the raised spiral and peltae designs on the bosses within the cross on Side A.

Field 2. The Lower Symbol Panel:

Field 2 contains four animals, all quadrupeds. The largest, a left-facing, highly stylized, profiled beast, features a down-turned, elongated snout ending in a curled nose, and a foreleg, hind leg, tail and crest that also end in curls. The outline of this beast extends to all four edges of the panel. Its shoulder and hindquarters are roughly level, as are its feet, and its tail drapes behind its back leg, while its crest of the beast, which lies along its back, is further decorated with a simple key pattern.⁷

⁴ *Ibid*; Stuart, 'Sculptured Stones of Scotland,' plate XXVI.

⁵ Pattern no. 1100. *ECMS* 1: 399.

⁶ Pattern no. 1120. *Ibid.* p. 403.

⁷ Pattern no. 899. *Ibid.* p. 334.

Two much smaller horned quadrupeds face each other between the larger beast's legs, while a third quadruped with a tail curving above its back resides in the lower left hand corner of the panel underneath the larger beast's forehead.

Field 3 (A-F): The Figural Panel

For description purposes Field 3 has been divided into six discrete groups.

Field 3A, located at the left-hand side of the panel contains three human figures and two animals. The human figure on top is mounted on a horse, carries a spear, and wears no discernible clothing besides a possible hat. Both horse and human face right. Directly below this mounted human are two more human figures who face each other and carry swords in their right hands and square objects in their left. Neither human is wearing identifiable clothing or armour. A right-facing quadruped resembling a deer or a lamb is kneeling between the two humans.

Field 3 B, a group of two humans and three beasts, is located in the middle top part of the panel. The topmost figure is another human on horseback. Again, both horse and human face right and the human has no identifiable clothes. Directly under the horse is a right-facing, horned quadruped and immediately adjacent is a bird of roughly the same size as the quadruped. The right most of all of these figures is a very large human who faces to the right and is on foot. This figure wears a hat and a garment that reaches to its shins, and also carries a hunting or drinking horn in one of its hands. Alternatively, it has recently been suggested that that this figure is actually in the process of devouring another human figure, and what appears to be the horn is actually one, or both of the legs.⁸

Field 3C, a group of five animals, is located in the middle lower part of the

⁸ Thanks due to Douglass Scott for pointing out this possibility and for sending me the excellent photo in which such a composition can be deciphered.

panel, directly below field 3B. The upper two quadrupeds, both facing right, are difficult to categorise due to wear to the stone, though the one to the left might be a lion, due to its blunt heavy paws, long tail, thick chest and squared muzzle. The creature to its right might be a boar, due to its cloven feet, short tail and elongated snout. Beneath these two creatures is a right-facing smaller animal with a long tail and small, pointy ears, which looks remarkably like a fox. The lowest creatures are a pair of confronted bovines, identifiable by their horns.

Field 3D, located in the upper right-hand corner, is composed of one mounted human and two additional beasts. The mounted figure carries no spear, nor wears any discernible clothes, but is possibly holding reins. Though the horse is galloping to the right, the human has turned around in its seat to reach behind, and is thus facing left. Directly below the galloping horse's legs is a dog, also running to the right, apparently in pursuit of the final figure in the group, a large, right-facing stag.

Field 3E, located on the right of the panel, contains an extremely large bird, a small leonine quadruped with a long tail that may be a cat or a lynx, and a human mounted on another quadruped, which resembles a goat, due to its beard. All four figures face the right.

Field 3F, in the lower right corner, contains one bird, one human and one beast. The human, clothed in a hooded garment that reaches his thighs, faces right and crouches directly behind a stag, at which it aims a bow and arrow. A bird clings to the back of this archer. The stag is moving to the right but has turned its head around to face the archer.

Field 4:

Field 4 is described entirely within Chapter 3.

Field 5 (A-B). The Lowest Panels:

Though presently truncated by the cement slab, field 5A originally contained at least four circles composed by interlaced snakes whose tails formed knot work both within and without the circles.⁹ Each pair of heads touches another pair at the 'north' and the 'south' sides of circles. Thus all four heads touch at the meeting of top and lower pairs of circles. The interstice formed by the four circles is rhomboid-shaped and is also filled with interlace.

Field 5B, located on the bottom right side of the slab is filled with a key pattern characterized by diagonal, interlocking T and Z-shapes.¹⁰

⁹ Pattern no. 438. *ECMS* 1: 193.

¹⁰ Pattern no. 974. *Ibid.* p. 353.

C: The Hilton of Cadboll Cross Slab

SIDE A: (From the recently excavated base of the Hilton of Cadboll slab)

Field 1. The Decorative Panel

The bottom of this centrally placed, stepped panel has flaked off in a crescent shape, but it is apparent when one compares the carving on Side A to Side B (see below) that the decoration on Side A extended further than Side B. In fact, the carving on this side reaches significantly below the side tenons, which presumably would have marked where it was placed within a base. The stepped panel is filled with a key-pattern characterized by diagonal lines and interlocking Z and L shaped bars. Ten of the resulting rhomboid-shapes feature raised double-band spirals, while the remainder figure a variety of interlocking straight and curved lines.

Field 2 (A-B). The Empty Panels:

Two identical side panels are placed on either side of the stepped base. Bordered by flat carved mouldings, both of these panels have been worked smooth, but have no other carving. Each of these blank panels is also placed beneath the line one would expect to be visible as it is horizontal to the side tenons.

Field 3 (A-B). Zoomorphic Interlace

The left side (field 3A) features the remains of either three different animals or two animals and a band of interlace. The left-most quadruped within the configuration is complete and features a round eye, a large ear that is laid back along the neck, a blunt muzzle with wide-

open jaws, visible fangs, and an extended tongue that terminates in a serpent's head. The neck of the beast is marked by gently curving incisions giving the impression of fur, and the body is very narrow with no thickening at the shoulders or haunches. The limbs of the creature are also very thin and spindly, and the foreleg hangs rather limply around the extended tongue. The extremely long tail of the beast moves through the hind legs forcing them into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock', and then loops around the torso before terminating between its legs. The second creature, looped around the first at the neck, is marked by fish-like scales carved on its body. This creature is missing its head and its hindquarters, although it is possible that a single leg, hanging perpendicular to the line of its torso, might originate from this beast. A single foreleg clearly does belong to this creature. The third element in the composition is marked by a median incised line running the length of its body. This creature (if it is an animate form) moves in complicated loops, primarily around itself, before disappearing behind the body of the second beast. In general, the design in this panel is very loose and unstructured with no underlying geometric pattern.

The remains of the two quadrupeds to the right (field 3B) are smoothly carved with no differentiated body markings. Unlike the configuration to the left (field 3A) the design in this field is quite symmetrical. Both of the creatures are missing their heads, and part of their torsos, but retain all of their limbs. Their chests cross in the center of the design while their bodies curve under, and then around and over each other, to place their hindquarters directly below where their own heads would have been. While neither of the creatures' bodies thicken significantly at the hindquarters, those on the right are slightly bigger than those on the left. The tail of the right-most creature also interlaces with the hindquarters of the other beast, forcing

them into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' as does its own tail. Much like the creature to the left in field 3A, the forelegs of the creature to the right of this configuration also hang very limply.

SIDE B:

The carving on the reverse of the Hilton of Cadboll slab is executed in a relatively shallow, though rounded, relief. This can be separated into 5 different fields of decoration. Fields 1 and 2 form a decorative border all around the slab and are separated from the inner fields by a plain flat moulding which further subdivides fields 3, 4, and 5 from each other.

Field 1. (Incorporating the vine-scroll border from both the base fragment and the larger slab)

Due to the complexity and variation of the ornament, this field is further subdivided as follows: 1A describes the border decoration as it appears on the base of the slab, 1B describes the right-hand border, and 1C describes the left-hand border. The right-hand decorative border is labelled 1B and the left-hand border 1C rather than the reverse, (as would normally be done) because the decoration on the right side (field 1B) presents a 'type' that the left-hand side (field 1C) diverges from.

Field 1A. The Base of the Border

The base of the vine-scroll ornament features a centrally positioned vine source flanked by addorsed, winged quadrupeds enclosed by vine scrolls. The scrolls spring from a two-tiered stepped base that also sprouts four shorter stems that interlace with each other and that terminate in a single, large leaf and two berries. Two, rather long, ovoid shapes to either side of the base

perhaps represent additional leaves. Although the quadrupeds are addorsed, the creature to the right does turn its head backwards in order to grasp at a single berry. Both creatures have extended ear-lapets, long, attenuated bodies, markings that delineate feathers and wings, and long tails that move between their hind legs in a manner that forces them into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.'

The main vine-stem to the left features a peculiar mixture of jointures. The scroll that encloses the quadruped, a strait stem extending to the left-hand corner of the panel and terminating in a triple-berry configuration, and a second, trumpet-shaped jointure, all spring from the first jointure, which is marked by four parallel incised lines. The second jointure contains the two vine stems that move upwards to entangle the creatures in field 1C and also contains a third stem which curls around the strait stem in the corner of the panel. The left-hand quadruped is enclosed within one pass of the vine-stem, which passes through its legs, under its torso, and behind its head, before terminating in a bunch of berries too far below its mouth to eat. The vine-scroll configuration to the right of the base is very similar except that there is only one jointure, and only one main vine-stem moves upwards to enclose the beasts in field 1B.

Field 1B: The Right Side border (see fig. 4.4)

Field 1B features eight creatures, alternately facing left and right, who inhabit the vine-scrolls. Some offshoots from the main vine-stem form elaborate knots or entangle with the elongated tails or limbs of the creatures before terminating in leaves and small trefoil points. Other offshoots terminate within the scrolls in bunches of berries, or outside the scrolls in leaves or trefoil bunches of berries.

Beginning at the top and moving down towards the base, the scrolls and creatures are as

follows. (Bi) A left-facing quadruped with a tail curved between its hind legs and a head that head extends beyond the scroll to bite the berries above it. A second bunch of berries are found below its body. The creature's forelegs rest adjacent to a vine, but it is not actually perched on the vine. Instead, the animal is entangled within the vine, which passes both over and under its long neck, and both behind and in front of its wings and body. (Bii) This right facing winged biped faces reaches above the scroll to bite at the berries. A second bunch of berries terminates above its back. This creature's long tail ends in a tripartite division of feathers that hangs down low into an empty space. As above (and indeed in each scroll) this bird-like creature is entangled within the vine, and its feet do not even give the illusion of resting on the vine. (Biii): Another winged quadruped, this creature faces left and has a tail that curves between its legs to terminate in a large tip that extends to the creature's left foreleg. This creature's forelegs also demonstrate what is known as the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.' The head of this beast is in the direct line of the vine that dangles berries directly in front of its mouth. From here the vine passes behind the creature's head to terminate in a second bunch of berries over its back. (Biv) Like Bii, this scroll contains a right-facing winged biped. The vine passes below its long tail (which ends in a similar, but more rounded tripartite feather cluster than the creature in Bii) then moves in front of its wing and, like the arrangement in Biii, then passes directly before the creature's beak to allow it to nibble at the berries before it terminates in a second bunch of fruit which lies over its tail. Offshoots from the main vine do not in this instance form knot work in the corner underneath the creature's feet; instead they terminate in two indeterminate shapes, perhaps meant to represent leaves, with a bunch of berries between them. (Bv): This left-facing creature is a winged biped whose extremely long tail is entwined with one of the vine tendrils forming a loose knot in the

lower right corner. The vine passes over the wing, under the tail and through the front legs to terminate in a berry bunch directly in front of the creature's mouth. Mirroring the design directly above (Biv), the vine's offshoots beneath the creature's feet terminate in two indeterminate shapes on either side of a bunch of berries. (Bvi) Much like Bv, the berries of this vine terminate directly in front of this right-facing winged biped's mouth. However, this creature's tail (which is the same, rounded, tripartite tail of Biv) is not entwined within any tendrils and the vine actually bisects the wing before it passes under the tail and through the legs. Like every preceding creature, this biped's feet rest adjacent to the vine, rather than being perched securely on it. (Bvii) The composition of the vine-scroll and berries differs yet again in this field. A left-facing winged quadruped is contained within a scroll which passes under its wing, over its body and through its legs to then cross behind the creature's neck where it bifurcates: one strand terminates in a berry bunch above its back while a second strand curves around to cross back over the creature's neck and then under the primary vine to terminate in a berry bunch directly below the creature's mouth. This creature also displays a curious decorative detail in that its tail curves up over its back before passing behind its body to curl below its abdomen. (Bviii) As with Bvii, the composition of this vine-scroll is quite complex. The vine passes through the wing of this right-facing winged biped before travelling under its long tail and through its legs before proceeding to cross behind its neck and bifurcate into two separate strands. One of these terminates in a berry bunch directly beneath its ear (rather than the usual spot over the creature's back) while the other crosses over its neck and under the primary vine to terminate in a berry bunch directly in front of the creature's mouth.

Field 1C. The Left Side Border (see fig. 4.4)

The creatures in the left side of border decoration are quite similar to those in field 1B, with only small decorative differences such as smooth rather than ridged wings. The character of the vine-scroll, however, is quite different as it is much more rigidly schematic and so forces the animals into various contortions. Rather than a gently rolling vine as on the right, the main stem of the vine on the left side zig-zags sharply back and forth up the panel, while offshoots spring from a jointure to form the scrolls through which the primary vine moves and in which the creatures are tightly bound. As well as being caught by the vine scrolls, the creatures are further tied by the diagonal stem that generally passes under their tails, or hindquarters, on top of their wings, and under their necks. In contrast to the creatures on the right side, those on the left do not remain neatly within a clearly defined space but have limbs or tails that extend far below or above the scroll within which they are caught. As on the right the scrolls and creatures will be described from the top to the bottom of the design. (Ci): The long-tailed winged biped within this field can be said to face right as its chest is oriented in this direction, though its head is curved back upon itself and is tucked under the wing. The curvilinear vine passes between its legs, curves up around its neck, passes behind the diagonal strand and then moves behind the head of the animal to re-emerge on top of the wing. The strand then passes underneath itself and terminates in a leaf. There are no berry bunches on this vine. In between this creature and that beneath it, two vine tendrils form a loose knot work design adjacent to the hanging tail of the creature above, but are not intertwined with it. Cii: This right-facing creature has two extremely long forelegs, but no clearly identifiable wings, hind-legs or tail. The scroll is even more convoluted in this field than in Ci as it forms two and a half revolutions around the animal,

passes over and under its body, and forces the limbs into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock. In addition, a vine tendril intertwines with a foreleg form a loose knot between the scrolls. There are no berries within this creature's grasp. (Ciii) The chest of the winged quadruped in this field, like that in Ci, faces right, while its head is turned backwards in a failed attempt to reach the berries. The vine-stem first passes under the creature's body and then over the diagonal stem. This creature's tail rather remarkably passes behind its left leg and in front of its right leg before terminating in a simple loop, once again displaying the 'Anglo-Saxon lock.' There is no interlace or knot work between the creatures in Ciii and Civ; instead there are three discreet bunches of berries that are not accessible to any of the creatures. (Civ) This left-facing winged biped is forced almost horizontal by the berry-less stem entering its mouth. The vine passes twice around this creature and twice through its legs, forming another variation on the 'Anglo-Saxon lock'. The tail of this creature hangs below the scroll to intertwine with two vine tendrils that terminate in berry clusters. (Cv) The winged quadruped inhabiting this scroll is somewhat unique on this side as it is able to successfully nibble at a berry cluster that terminates in its mouth. The hindquarters of this creature extend far into the field of the creature below it, whose forelegs, in turn, reach up between the former's legs. The tail of this quadruped twists up over its back, passes behind its body, and is entwined in a vine tendril that also terminates in berries. (Cvi) Another winged quadruped, the creature in this scroll faces left. The vine scroll in this instance passes behind the creature's mouth, without affording it anything to eat, and terminates in a berry bunch over its back. The hindquarters of the creature also extend far below the scroll coming to rest on the scroll directly beneath it. (Cvii) The right-facing winged biped in this field stretches its head far above the scroll to reach the berry cluster, and its tail hangs far below to touch the top of the

scroll below. The vine scroll passes through the creature's legs to form another example of the 'Anglo-Saxon lock'. To the right of the tail two vine tendrils cross each other and terminate in berry clusters. (Cviii) Only the very top of this creature and scroll are visible, as the stone has been sheared off at the bottom. It is only possible to see one of the creature's forelegs extended up into the space between the scrolls on the left side and to decipher a small portion of the chest and mouth. From the arrangement, however, it appears as that this left-facing creature is in much the same position as that in Civ, being forced almost horizontal by the berry-less vine passing into its mouth.

Field 2: The Top Border (The Pictish Symbol)

Field 2 is not separated from field 1 by any moulded border, and a few tendrils from the vine scroll encroach upon this field from both the left and right-hand side. The field contains a Double Disc and Z-rod symbol. The Z-rod itself runs from right to left (forming a reverse Z) rather than right to left. The upper right line terminates in two right-facing tridents, one behind the other, while the lower left line terminates in two tridents that face inwards toward each other. The decoration within the discs is quite worn but it can be seen that each disc contains three triple-band spirals arranged around a central triple-band spiral, to which they are connected by C-shaped peltae.¹ The left-hand spirals move in a counter-clockwise motion, while those in the right disc move in a clockwise motion. The connecting bridge is filled with two separate pieces of one-strand interlace characterised by circular loops and angular bends that perfectly fit the

¹Classified as pattern no.1096. *ECMS* 1: 398.

asymmetrical spaces in which they appear.²

Field 3: Pictish Symbols

Field 3 contains two Pictish symbols: the so-called Crescent and V-rod and the Double Disc. These are placed upon a perfectly smooth, empty field producing a startling effect. The left-hand termination of the V-rod trisecting the Crescent is composed of a floral design resting on top of a trident, while the right-hand termination displays two tridents, one on top of the other and a very small floral point at the end. The central panel of the crescent contains a key pattern characterised by diagonal lines forming interlocking T-shapes, and straight-line spirals as well as some curved-line spirals.³ The space formed by the point of the V-rod contains a simple double spiral. The two outer panels of the crescent each contain triple-band spirals in a configuration like that in the discs above, but modified to fit the triangular spaces.⁴ It is noteworthy that like the spiral configurations in the discs above, the spirals on the left move in a counter-clockwise motion while those on the right move in a clockwise motion. The Double Discs directly below the crescent and V-Rod symbol are both filled with a dense mesh interlace characterised by curved bends and concentric rows of symmetrical loops.⁵

Field 4: The Figural Composition

Field 4 contains a figural scene composed of four humans on horseback, two on foot, four

²Classified as pattern no. 809. *Ibid.* p. 307.

³Classified as pattern no. 1022 (border pattern no. 965 adapted to fit the fan shaped segment) by Allen and Anderson. *ECMS* 1:362.

⁴Classified as pattern no. 1119. *ECMS* 1: 402.

⁵Classified as pattern no. 794. See *ECMS* 1:302.

quadrupeds and a mirror and comb symbol. The humans in this field all approximately the same size in relation to each other, as are the horses. The quadrupeds are also a 'realistic' size in comparison with the horses and humans, making the whole scene coherent. At the top a frontally faced female figure (identifiable by her long hair, lack of facial hair and long robes) sits on a horse that trots left. As well as the reins that the female holds in her hands, the horse has a bridle on its head and faint lines on its back which may signify saddle cloths. The female also displays an annular object that rests directly above her hands. This female figure and horse are superimposed on a second human and horse pair, discernable only by the outline of a human nose and beard and an outline of a second horse. In the upper left corner of the field, directly in front of the horses' heads is a mirror directly above a comb. These two objects are the only two in the scene that are unrealistically large. To the right of the riders, positioned above the haunches of the horses, is a leaping quadruped, presumably a hound. Further right, adjacent to the border, are two human figures, both facing left, dressed in long robes with flowing drapery, who hold long, narrow, cylindrical objects to their mouths. The nearer figure is partly superimposed on top of the further figure.

Directly between the legs of the two upper horses is the third rider, a left-facing beardless horseman with mid-length hair who holds a spear and shield in addition to the reins that connect to the horse's bridle. Like the horse above, faint lines on the horse's back may signify saddlecloths. An unidentifiable straight object runs from this horse's belly, behind its right foreleg, to touch the leaping quadruped situated directly beneath the rider's feet. This left facing quadruped, most likely a deer, is pursued by two other quadrupeds, which can be identified as hounds. One of these hounds bites the deer on its chest from below while the other attacks its

hindquarters. In another display of rudimentary perspective, the head of the deer actually rises above the left foreleg of the horse, giving the impression that the horse is running parallel to, but beyond, the deer. The long thin object (perhaps a spear) touching the back of the deer passes behind the horse's right foreleg, and seems to pose a greater danger of skewering the horse than the deer.

The last figure in this scene is another left-facing beardless figure with mid-length hair on horseback. Like the other horseback figure to his left, he is dressed in short robes, holds a spear and reins (which are not clearly differentiated from each other) and is seated upon a saddlecloth. The left foreleg of his horse passes behind the body of the hound that attacks the deer's hindquarters, adding yet another dimension of perspective.

Field 5:

Field 5 comprises the bottom of the cross-slab and the upper middle part of the excavated base, which contains the extremely damaged remnants of the design carved on the larger slab. From the remains visible on the two stones the pattern appears to have been originally made up of triple-band spirals arranged in pairs that formed two rows around a centre. Eight smaller double-band spirals fill in the spandrels round the edge, and all of the spirals are connected by C-shaped peltae. The design is further embellished with triple-leaved floral designs in the four corners and triangular pellets in the interstices.⁶

⁶ Classified as spiral pattern no. 1078. *ECMS* 1: 396.

D: THE PORTMAHOMACK MONUMENTS

TR1

SIDE A:

Field 1. The Inhabited Vine Scroll

The inhabited vine-scroll on TR1 is contained within two parallel flat-band mouldings forming a border around the central figurative panel. Carved in shallow relief, the scrolls spring from a central chalice-shaped source that is confronted by two winged quadrupeds. The scrolls continue on to the edges of the decoration and then move up the sides of the monument. As there are countless variations in the depiction of each beast and the behaviour of the vine entangling them, each will be described separately.

a) Confronting the vine-source from the left-hand side, an elongated, right-facing, winged-quadruped is entangled within a vine-stem that passes both over and under its torso, wings and forelegs two and a half times before terminating in a quadralobed berry cluster immediately in front of its open mouth. One escaping vine-tendrill terminates in an up-pointed triple leaf directly underneath the creature's torso. The quadrupeds' legs rest on the bottom border of design rather than on the vine-stem, which forces the creature's forelegs into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock'. The hindquarters extend far beyond the scroll and are also forced into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' by the beast's own tail.

b) The scroll and inhabiting creature immediately to the right of the central vine source are greatly damaged, but from what remains it appears that both the vine and the creature mirrored the winged quadruped to the immediate left of the vine source. Although it is impossible to determine which way the head was facing, the torso of this beast is facing left and thus confronting the vine-source. The remains of an up-pointed triple leaf can be seen underneath the torso as can the tail of the beast that loops below and through the hind legs in exactly the same manner as does the tail on the confronting beast.

c) In the left-hand corner of the design, an elongated, left-facing, winged quadruped is entangled within a vine that passes two and a half times over and under its body and wings and forces the forelegs (which rest in the corner of the frame) into the 'Anglo-Saxon lock' before terminating in a leaf directly in front of the creature's mouth. The hind legs of this creature are forced by the diagonal slope of the vine-stem to rise above its head and further contort in an extremely unnatural and stylised manner: while one is stretched out to its fullest extension, the other is doubled back on itself to cross back over the body. A curly tail, which arches high over the rear end before passing behind and below the extended leg, completes the composition. In addition, this creature's elongated ear lapet tangles with a vine tendril forming a simple interlace knot with angular bends in the corner space between this scroll and the one immediately above it.

d) Damage to the scroll and creature in the right-hand corner makes it impossible to determine if this right-facing winged quadruped exactly mirrored that in the left-hand corner, but many of the same characteristics are visible such as the diagonal slope of the vine, the strange behaviour of the hind legs and the same curly tail. The remains of an interlace knot in the space between this scroll and the one immediately above it imply that this creature also had an extended ear lapet. The main difference is in the vine itself, which in this case only passes twice around the creature and terminates in a leaf below its torso rather than in front of its mouth.

e) Both the creature and the vine along the left vertical side of the border decoration have suffered damage. From what remains it appears that an elongated, right-facing heavy-tailed, winged biped is entangled in a vine which passes two and a half times over and under its body, wings, tail and legs. This creature does not perch on the vine, nor do its legs rest upon the frame. The vine-stem terminates in a sideways tri-lobed berry bunch (or possibly a triple-leaf) underneath its body. The head of this creature is not visible, but from the proportions of its neck it appears that it would be stretched well above the scroll.

f) Damage to the scroll in the right vertical side of the border makes it impossible to determine if this elongated, left-facing winged beast is a biped or a quadruped. It is entangled within two passes of the vine, which terminates in a down-pointed tri-lobed berry cluster (or triple leaf) directly above its back. The beast is not perched on the vine and its hind end (whether tail or legs) dangle far below. The head is not visible, but the neck is again quite long.

g) Only the elongated hindquarters of a beast, most likely a quadruped, are visible in the remains of this topmost left-hand scroll.

Field 2: The Figural Panel

This greatly damaged panel is carved in high relief with animals and humanoid figures. At the top left-hand corner, are the chest, forelegs and torso of a left-facing quadruped. The legs of this creature are slim and tapered and possibly hooped though wear makes this impossible to determine with surety. The torso of this creature tapers upwards, before the line of carving descends downwards in a bulge. To the right of this bulge the unbroken line of carving descends into the hindquarters of the beast. This makes for a rather unnaturally elongated creature in a composition that otherwise features naturalistically portrayed creatures.

To the right is the lower half of a human or angelic figure (identifiable by its legs) Shallowly carved lines jutting out from the waist may represent either wings, the stylised drapery of cloth, or possibly even a trumpet.

The lower register of figures comprises an interrelated group consisting of two left-facing quadrupeds and a humanoid figure. The left-most quadruped has no head but the body is characterised by a broad chest, tapering torso, slim legs with no hooves, and a long heavy tail that hangs down behind its legs to its feet. The second quadruped, which is much less damaged, has the same characteristics. In addition, its clearly visible head shows a blunt snout, open mouth, visible fangs and the suggestion of short rounded ears. The right-facing humanoid figure is characterised by a torso that

bends at the waist, and outstretched arms and legs. Damage to this figure makes it impossible to determine if it is wearing any clothing. This figure is 'sat' with outstretched legs a few millimetres above, rather than directly on top of, the back of the left-most quadruped. Its right arm is stretched behind and slightly above its head while its left arm reaches into the open mouth of the second left-facing quadruped.

SIDE B. Narrow Left Side:

Described in full in Chapter 5.

SIDE C. Narrow Right Side:

Described in full in Chapter 5.

TR2:

TR2 features a central vertical panel carved with interlaced knots and the remains of two separate panels of ornament to either side. The central panel of interlace is composed of three vertical rows of low relief interlaced knots forming a closed encircled pattern characterised by diagonal lines and v-bends.¹ The remains of the heavily damaged upper panels to either side of the central shaft are both recessed and carved with interlaced serpents. The three visible serpents within the panel on the right side have open mouths and clearly visible fangs; at least two of them are biting either their own bodies or another serpent's body. In contrast, the two serpents in the centre of the left-hand panel demurely touch noses, though the serpent in the lower corner has an open mouth and visible fangs. This left-hand panel also retains evidence of boss and spiral ornament with one small boss clearly visible.

The lower panels of decoration are separated from the serpent panels by a plain, flat-band moulding, the remains of which is the only evidence of a lower panel on the left-hand. However,

¹ Categorized as pattern no. 709. See *ECMS* 1: 281.

remnants of ornament can be seen in the right panel, wherein raised bosses are surrounded by the very faint remains of a spiral and peltae design with C-shaped connections.

TR10

This heavily damaged fragment is very worn with breakage along the top, bottom and left sides, the back face and the lower part of the front face. It retains carving on two faces: Side A (broad), and Side 2 (narrow).

SIDE A

Side A features the remains of a heavily damaged spiral and peltae design in shallow relief. Two large adjacent spirals with an approximate radius of 35mm (the diameter being impossible to determine) and three bands that originate from a single point, move in opposite directions; the top anti-clockwise, the bottom clockwise. These spirals are joined to two smaller three-band spirals, also moving in opposite directions, by C-shaped peltae that are embellished by a bisected hollow triangle at their widest point. In addition, a further triangular flourish is carved on top of the smaller spirals that fits perfectly into the corner made by the remains of the angular, flat-band frame (approximately 25mm wide) enclosing the design.

SIDE B

The narrow face of the fragment features an inscription carved in relief and the vestige of an interlace design. The Latin inscription is carved in relief along eight horizontal lines with letters approximately 45mm high. Above the inscription and a blank area of smoothed stone, the very bottom of an interlace design can be seen. Not enough remains to assign this design a pattern number, but it appears to have been a simple design with angular bends at the corners.

TR20

Broken along its shorter side and diagonally along its bottom edge, the TR20 fragment is heavily damaged with a great deal of chipping, though the carving that remains is well preserved. The fragment retains relief decoration on both the front and reverse faces.

SIDE A:

A wide plain flat border runs along the top of the stone while a thinner (25mms) flat-band border runs down the left hand-side of the stone. In addition, a variety of plain, flat-band mouldings function to separate the decoration into discreet panels, fields 1-3.

Field 1. Top Decorative Panel

The top panel features a shallowly carved decorative design featuring spirals connected with C-shaped peltae. The spirals within this design are of two different sizes; the larger form two horizontal rows and move in a clockwise motion while the smaller, which are found primarily along the border of the design, move in a counter clockwise motion. Large or small, both types of spirals incorporate three separate bands originating from a single point. Each of these bands goes on to form its own pelta, which in turn, terminates in either a smaller spiral along the edge of the design or hooks into three other peltae in the central row between the large spirals. The peltae are further embellished by a central triangular shape bisected by vertical line.

Field 2. The Quadruped

Beneath the spiral and peltae design is an oddly shaped recessed panel created by the borders of the decorative panels around it, within which a right-facing quadruped is carved in relief. Crouched in an anatomically impossible position with its hind legs bent in opposite directions so that its feet meet in the centre, the beast is further stylised with incised scrolls at the shoulders, hips and knees, and a

forward pointing ear. In addition, its tail, which curls around itself as it arches over its back, terminates in a serpentine head viewed from above with prominent side ridges representing either eyes or ears. Further noteworthy details are the long claws on the feet, the elaborately curled nose, the open mouth that contains two large fangs in addition to the rows of teeth, and a tongue which extends all the way to the border of the panel.

Field 3. Lower Decorative Panel

The remains of a panel of spiral ornament, which bisects a curvilinear flat band moulded border occupies the space directly beneath the crouching quadruped. This panel has been sheared off diagonally at the bottom, but it is probable that the original shape was diamond or lozenge-shaped. The ornament within this panel is a spiral and peltae design. This design also features two different sizes of triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae, but the layout of the design is quite different from the pattern at the top of the slab. Two pairs of small spirals occupy the central space of the design. The spirals within each pair move in opposite directions. Peltae ornamented with a central bisected triangle and foliate flourishes connect these spirals to each other and also to four other pairs of large spirals that form a square around the central space. (Only one spiral each from two of the right-hand spiral pairs is visible due to damage to the panel but it is apparent that four complete pairs were originally present). Like the central spirals, each of these spirals moves in a direction opposite to that of its mate. The pattern is finished by an additional small spiral pair topped by ornamental triangular shapes that reach into the very corners of the panel. Small individual triangles are also placed in the interstices left by the spirals, peltae and border of the panel.

SIDE B

The remains of three panels of relief carving, two figurative, one decorative, are visible on the back face of TR20. Like side A, a plain flat border runs along the top of the fragment and flat-band

borders separating panels from each other. All three panels on the reverse are incomplete due to the damage to the stone.

Field 1. The Animal Panel

The top recessed panel suffers from damage on both sides, though only the border on the right side seems to have been broken away, as the figurative carving on this side is complete. At the top right, a quadruped with a down-reaching head, and a slight indication of shoulder scrolls, paces to the left. This beast has an extended muzzle, rounded ear at the back of its head, slightly open mouth and possible fangs, gently humped back, and flat-bottomed, slightly elongated paws. A left-facing quadruped is located below. This beast, which is twice as large, carries its head erect, has a short, squared snout, visible fangs, a lightly incised oval-shaped eye, a long tail hanging down to its feet, and large block-like flat paws, although the hind-most paw carries the suggestion of a tri-partite division into claws. Its neck is very thick and light scoring in this area suggests a deliberate attempt to convey a mane. There is also the hint of a decorative scroll at the hip. The head, chest and foreleg of a mirror-image beast that confronts this left-facing beast are all that remain of the creature on the left side of the panel. In all pertinent details, the characteristics of this animal are the same as the creature to the right. Situated in between these two animals are the downward pointing haunches and hind legs of a third beast. This deliberately truncated animal displays slender legs that end in upward pointed hooves and a short, tufted tail held tightly against the body.

Field 2. The Human Composition

The middle panel contains the remains of four frontally-faced human figures. On the far left, only the vague outline of a head, or perhaps a nimbus, remains, due to the angle of the broken stone and subsequent wear. However, the head, shoulders, waist, one arm (and possibly a hand) of the figure immediately to the right are visible. This figure has two locks of well-groomed hair on the left and one

on the right, the faint remains of a moustache and close-shaven beard, round eye sockets and incised circles for cheeks. His garments are characterised by a high, squared collar and sophisticated lines of drapery that fold in such a way to suggest arms crossed on his chest or that his hands are held together in prayer, though this is not clearly visible. In addition the lines suggest a robe draped on both shoulders over a separate tunic. The next figure is visible practically to the hem of his robes. He is characterised by bushy hair with three locks on the left and one on the right, and a full beard and moustache. Almond-shaped eyes set low down in the forehead, round cheeks and a nose are also clearly visible. His elaborate robes features a crosshatch design down the central panel, and a separate length of cloth that is draped over his right shoulder and hangs down from his left arm. It is difficult to determine if this cloth was draped over the left shoulder as well. In addition, a separate length of cloth follows the curvilineature of his left arm that is held across his chest. This figure's right arm is held against the right side of his body, and he grasps what may be a staff. The right-most figure is visible from his head to his toes though the right side of his body has been sheared away. This figure has short, well-groomed hair with no side curls, almond-shaped eyes, round cheeks, prominent nose and a forked beard rounded at the tips. He also has elaborately draped robes with a squared neckline and faint lines of a crosshatch design visible at the hem. A separate drape of cloth crosses his chest and hangs down slightly from his right cloth-draped hand, which holds a book, to which he points with his left hand. Standing on tiptoe, his feet point to the left, and are shod in sandals characterised by a strap and circular buckle around the ankle.

Field 3

Only the very remnants of an ornamental design, perhaps interlace, can be seen in the bottommost panel.

TR22

TR 22 retains carving on one long and one narrow face, while all other sides are broken. The

long side opposite the carving has been broken but smoothed.

SIDE A

The long face retains the remains of three recessed panels inhabited by three individual animals. The central panel is undamaged while the leftmost panel is sheared off at the feet of the animal. Only the head of the rightmost animal is visible due to the breakage of the stone at this point. The panels do not follow a straight horizontal line, but instead move gradually upwards from left to right, with the base of the right-most panel being slightly higher than the base of the middle panel.

Field 1

The left-most panel is inhabited by a right-facing, pacing quadruped with an erect, though downward pointing, head that is characterised by a tapered ear which points forward, a squared muzzle with barely visible fang, a round eye socket, and an extended tongue. The chest, torso and legs are all quite thick, though the torso does taper slightly at the haunches. Damage to the panel makes it difficult to determine the nature of the paws. The creature's long tail is pressed close to the body and curves up between its hind legs. In general, the beast is very naturalistically portrayed with no stylised scrolls at the shoulders or hips.

Field 2

The middle panel contains a quadruped whose tail and nose touch the sides of the panel. This naturalistically portrayed quadruped steps to the right and raises its right foreleg to the edge of the panel. The downward pointing head, which touches its raised foreleg, features a small, erect, pointed ear, a long tapering snout with a barely visible tusk, a slightly curved mouth, and an oval shaped eye. The body of the animal is thick and stocky with a curved back, short, straight tail, and cloven feet.

Field 3

The heavily damaged panel at the far right contains only the head of a left-facing beast. The down turned head is characterised by a squared snout with a pointed nose, an erect pointed ear that is significantly wider at the base than the tip, a clearly visible fang, and an open mouth and extended tongue.

SIDE B

The narrow side of the fragment, broken along the top and bottom, displays an equal-armed, hollow-armpit cross with squared terminals carved in relief.² Its arms extend all the way to the edges of the panel and thus merge with the dressed stone on each side of the panel.

TR28/35:

Joined together, the two fragments form a sub-rectangular slab carved in a mixture of very shallow relief and incised lines, five of which form the top border, and two of which form the bottom border. The stone beneath the lower border has been only very roughly smoothed. The decoration within the borders consists of a series of animals: at the top right is a left-facing, pacing quadruped carved in shallow relief that features faintly incised shoulder and hip scrolls. This beast's head displays a rounded eye socket and a beak that appears closed, except for a faint discoloration in the stone that may be evidence of an open beak that has since flaked away. Faint marks on the head and chest suggest that feathers originally might have been indicated. The torso of the animal displays a slight hump over its shoulder and a small protuberance on the underside. A long curled tail arches over its back and its stiff legs are cloven footed.

Immediately to the left of this creature is a left facing, crouching quadruped carved in shallow relief. This creature features stylised shoulder scrolls and other 'unnatural' details such as abnormally

² Type 11a in Cramp, *Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament*, p. xvi; type 101 in *ECMS* 1; 51.

elongated forelegs which are bent underneath the torso in an anatomically impossible manner, while the hind legs, proportionately much smaller, are in a rearing posture, thus combining characteristics of both rest and motion in one awkwardly portrayed stance. The head of the beast features an elongated, blunt muzzled snout, a thick, back-pointed, ear, and an oval eye socket. A long, thick tail curls down to hang well below the torso, and all of the legs are hoofed.

Directly below this pair of animals is a left-facing quadruped double their size. Carved in shallow relief, this animal features incised shoulder and hip scrolls as well as additional scrolls along the neck joint. The stone is broken along the snout of the beast, making it impossible to determine what type of head it had. However, from the remains of the carving it is possible to determine that the mouth was open and that it possibly had a protruding tongue. No ears are visible on the creature, and the eye socket is slightly oval. The torso is thick and tapers slightly at the hips. The tail is long, heavy and straight with the suggestion of a tuft at the tip. The legs of this creature are not all on the same 'ground' plane, nor are they of the same proportion. The hindmost leg thus appears to be considerably shorter than the other three, all of which follow a visual line that rises slightly upwards from the right to the left. Furthermore, the hindmost leg ends in a clawed 'paw' while the other three legs end in blunt, block-like, paws.

Immediately to the left of this creature are the remains of a right-facing, hoofed, rearing quadruped whose forelegs appear quite unnaturally short in proportion to the visible chest and the assumed length of the torso.

The remains of four beasts occupy the lowest register of the composition. At the far left are the remnants of a right-facing beast that displays a head with a small forward-pointing ear, an oval eye-socket and tapered, rounded snout. In proportion to the hoofed, slightly back-bent forelegs, the head seems unnaturally small. One of the forelegs intrudes into the incised line of the lower border. The other three beasts form an integrated unit, a clearly identifiable bovine group. All three are characterised by the stylised shoulder, hip and neck scrolls; despite this they are also depicted with a

naturalism not seen in any of the other creatures carved on this stone. For instance, the left hind leg of bovine at the left is slightly bent and held slightly up off the line of the border, creating a very naturalistic impression of a cow resting its weight on one leg. The front legs, on the other hand are quite stiff. The animal's head is characterised by a small, back-pointed ear, a curved horn, and a slightly tapered but blunt snout, while a gravel inclusion in the stone doubles as its eye. This creature lowers its head to touch the hindquarters of the very small right-facing animal below it. This creature has stiff legs and a short tail, and a head with the same general shape as the head above it, though its ear is obscured, as is a significant proportion of its body, by the head of the third bovine, which is actively engaged in licking it. This left-facing creature, which is significantly larger than the left-most bovine, raises one foreleg off of the border, giving an impression of steadying the small creature in the middle. Meanwhile, its hindmost leg intrudes into the border of the composition.

TR33

TR33 is an extremely worn and damaged slab that features a low relief cross with right angled armpits and wedge-shaped terminals.³ A disc is carved in extremely shallow relief in the crossing of the arms, while four additional detached discs are located between the cross arms. The shaft of the cross narrows considerably in width from the top to the bottom of the cross and an additional set of cross arms appear towards the bottom of the shaft, though these are rather inexpertly carved with the lower line of the arms unevenly sloping downwards from the left to the right. In addition, the left side of the base of the shaft does not quite match up with the line of the shaft above it. The areas directly below these arms have only been very roughly carved out with the deepest relief occurring adjacent to the bottom of the shaft while the terminals of the cross arms are practically level with the surrounding stone. The cross-shaft rests upon a horizontal platform characterized by two incised parallel bars below which the stone is only very roughly smoothed and suffers from considerable flaking.

³ Classified as type 1B by Cramp, 'Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament', p. xvi.

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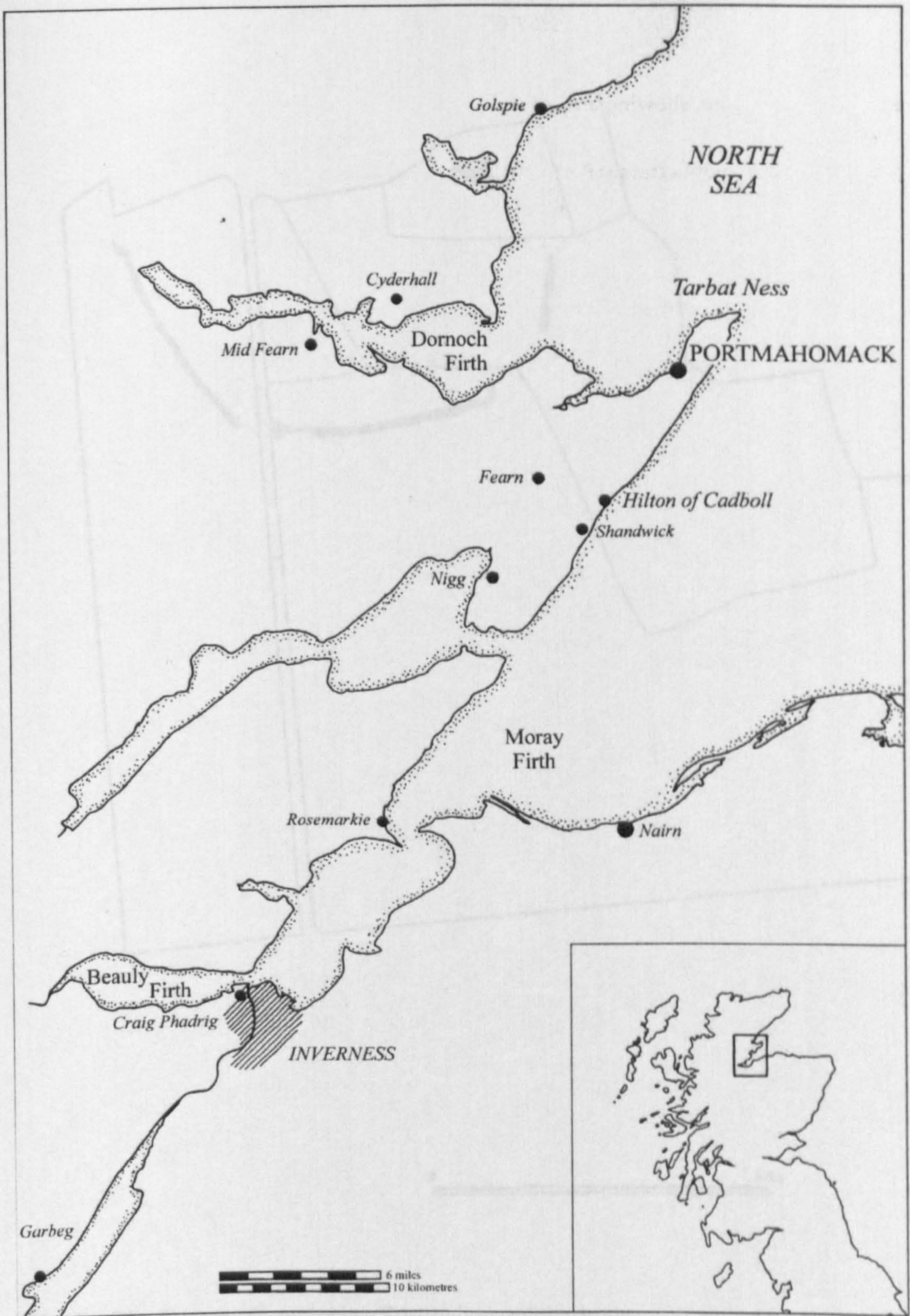


Fig. 1.1 Map of the Tarbat Peninsula

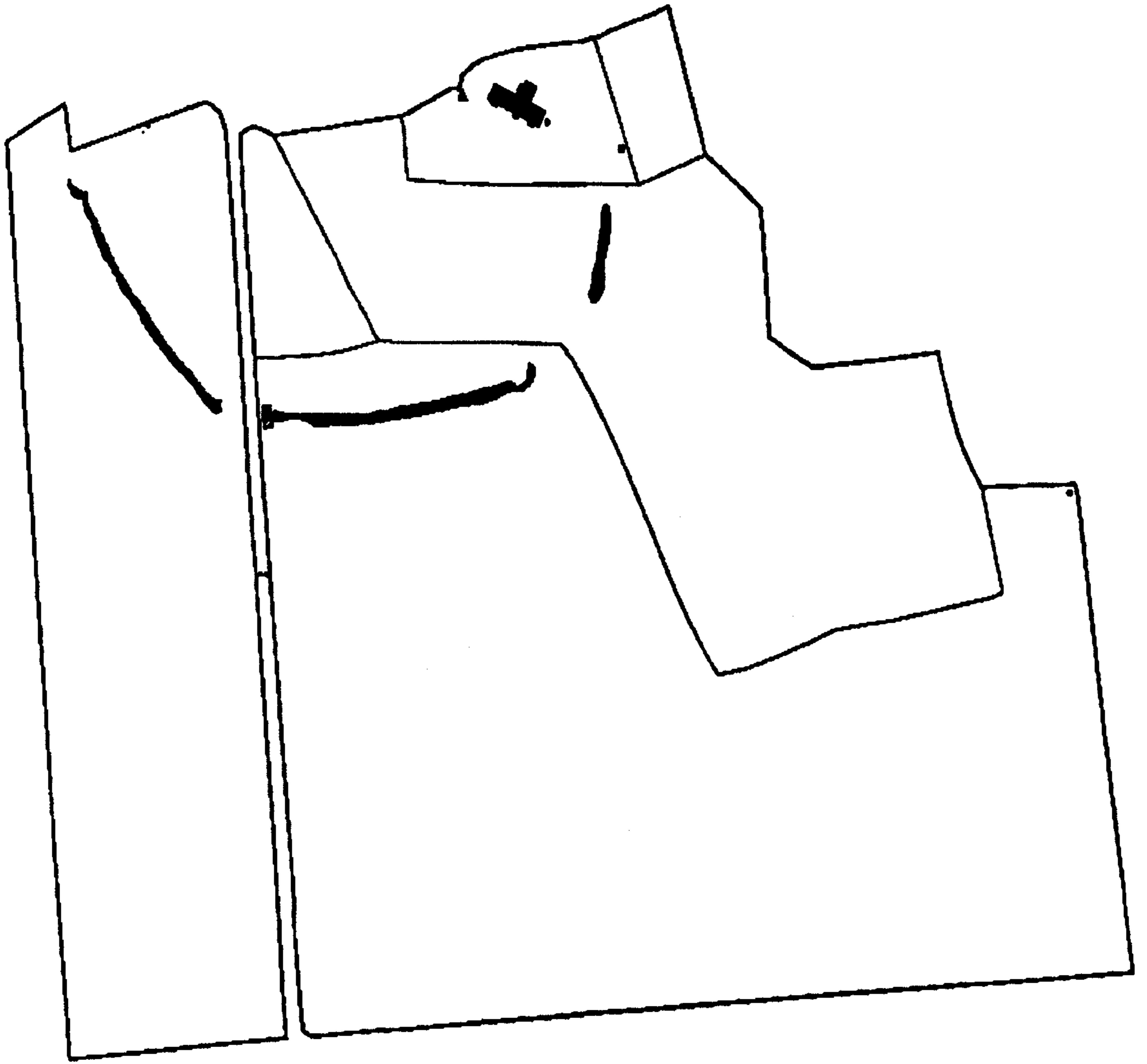


Fig. 1.2 The Cropmark enclosing Portmahomack harbour



Fig. 2.1 The Cross-Slab at Nigg. Side A



Fig. 2.2. The Cross-Slab at Nigg. Side B. Drawing by Ian Scott

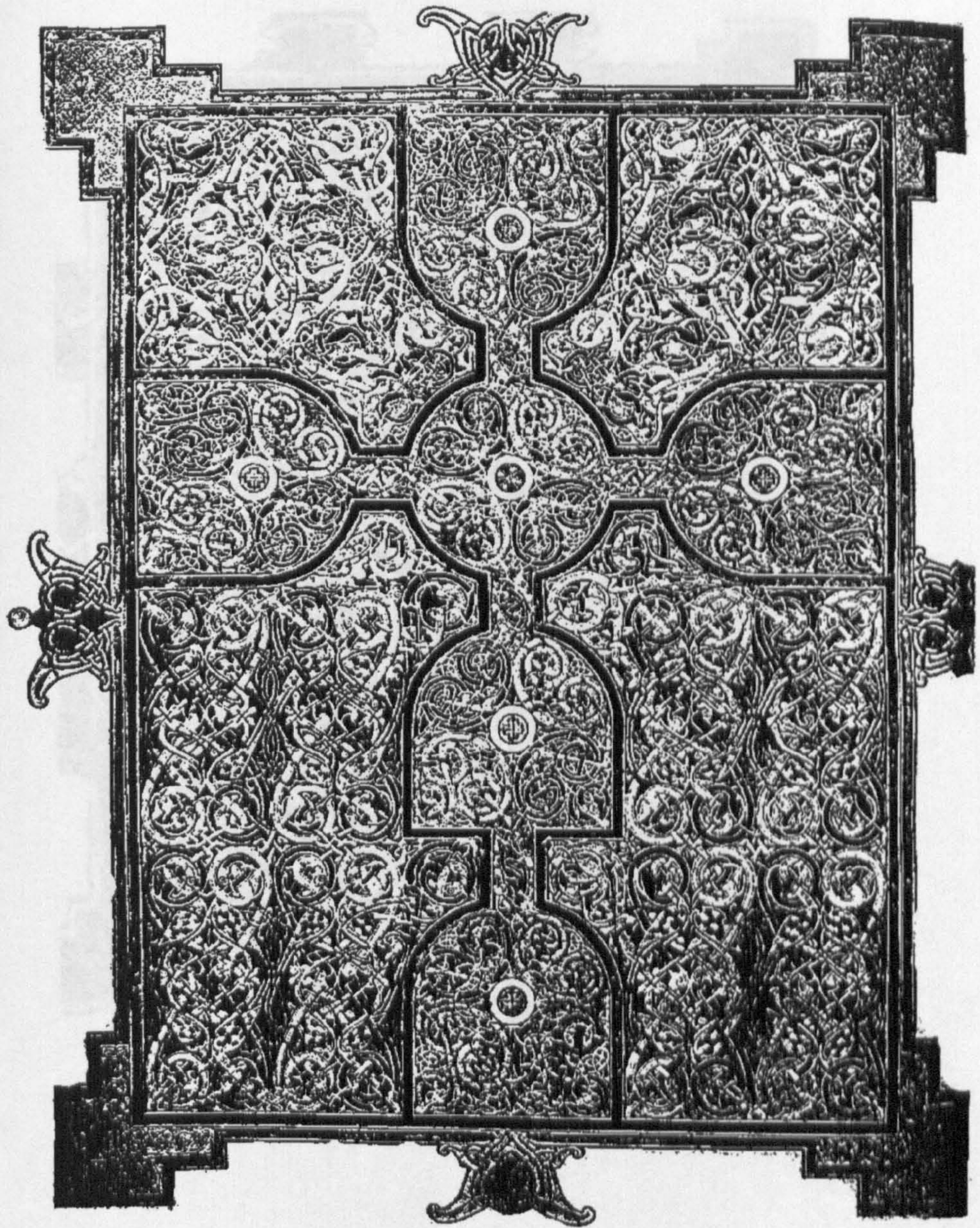


Fig. 2.3 The *Lindisfarne Gospels* folio 26v

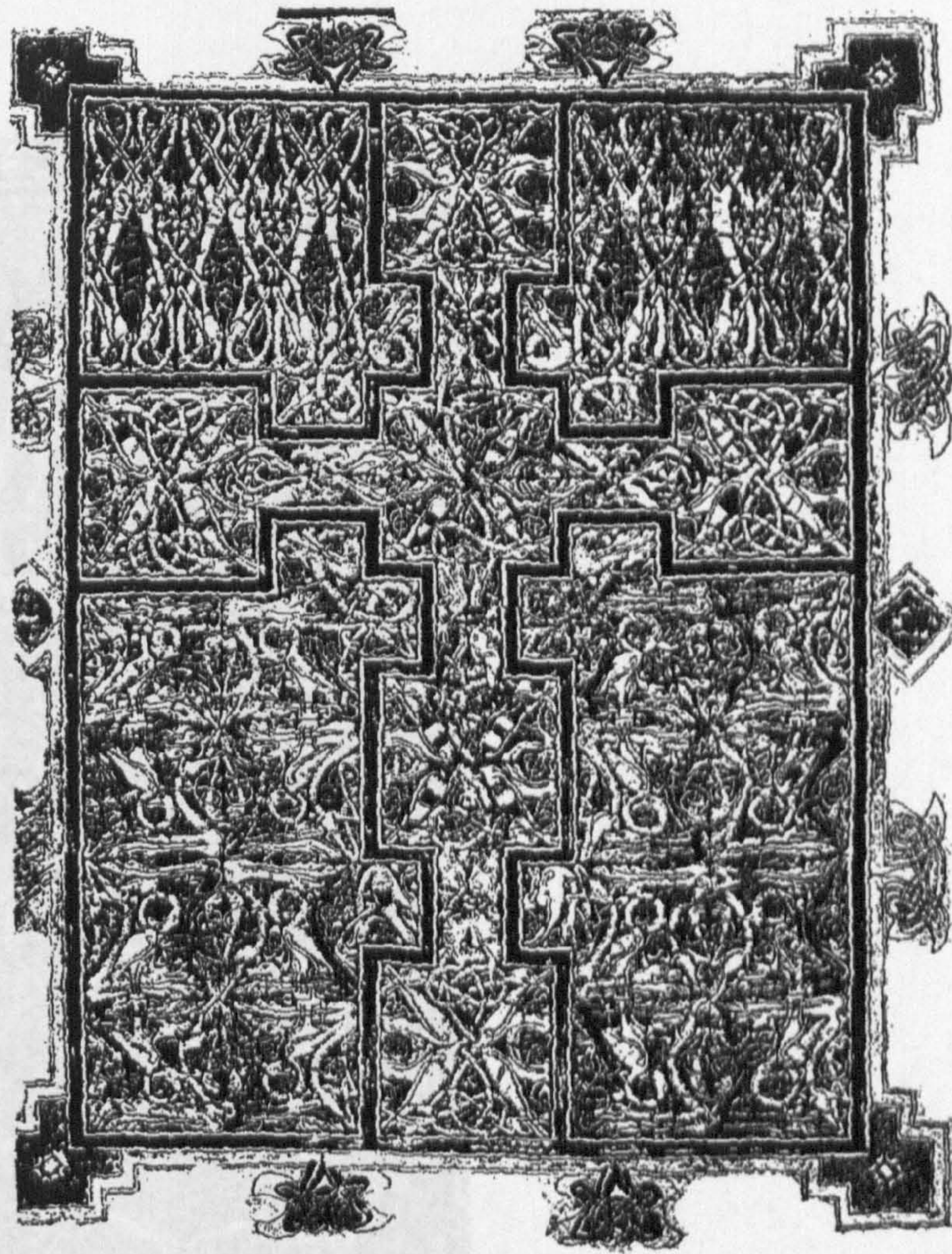


Fig. 2.4 The *Gospels of St Chad* (Lichfield Gospels) p. 220

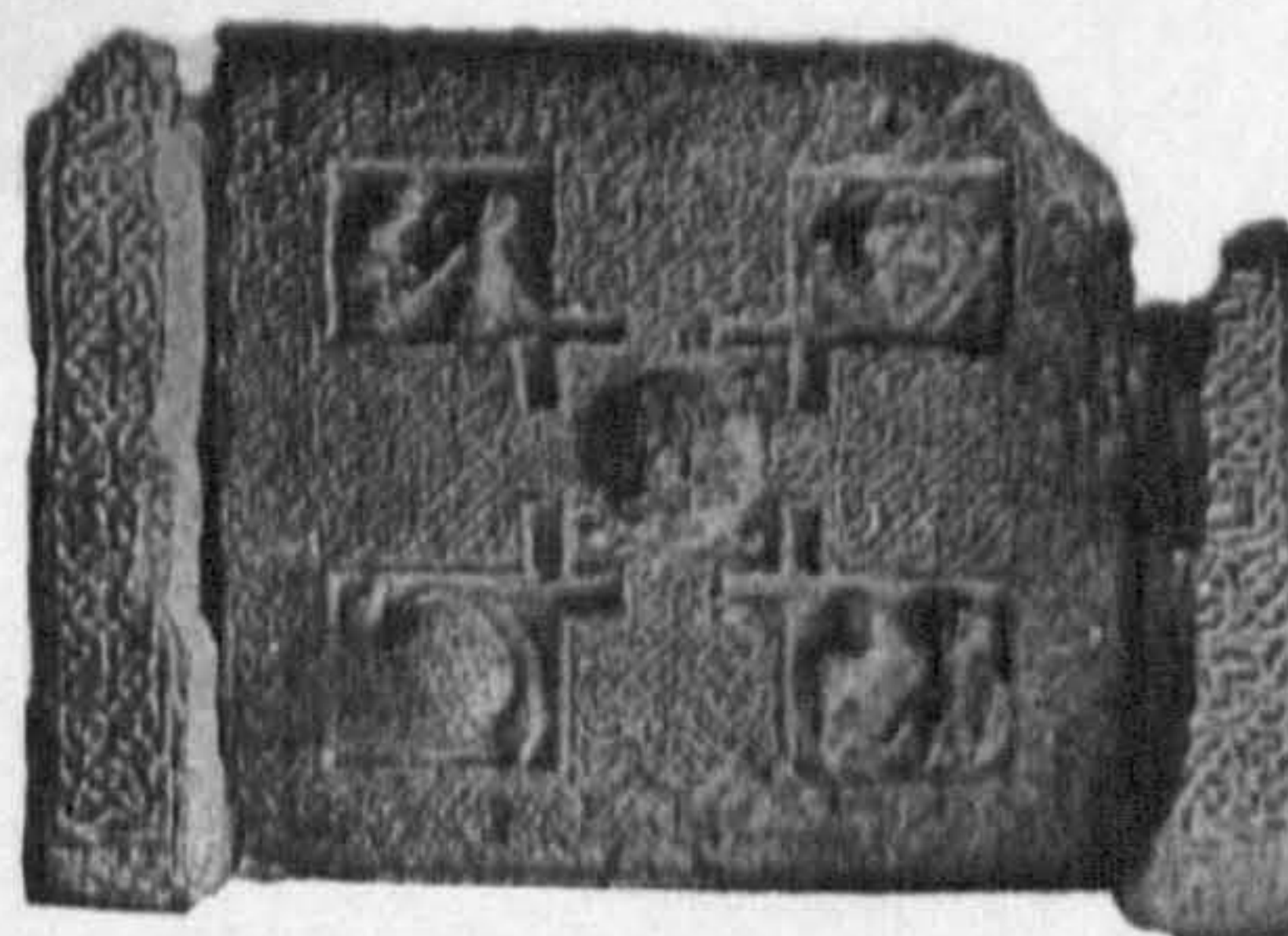


Fig. 2.5 The St Andrews Sarcophagus end panel

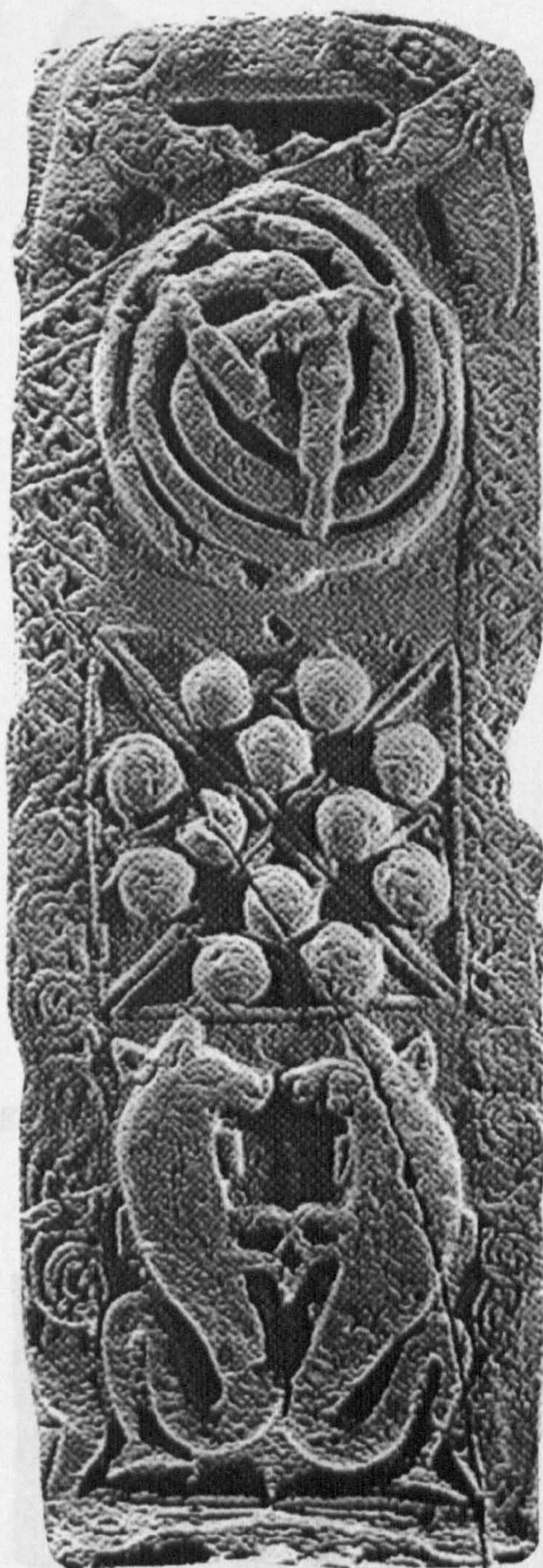


Fig. 2.5 Derynadin, p. 10

Fig. 2.6 Meigle 26: detail of serpent bosses

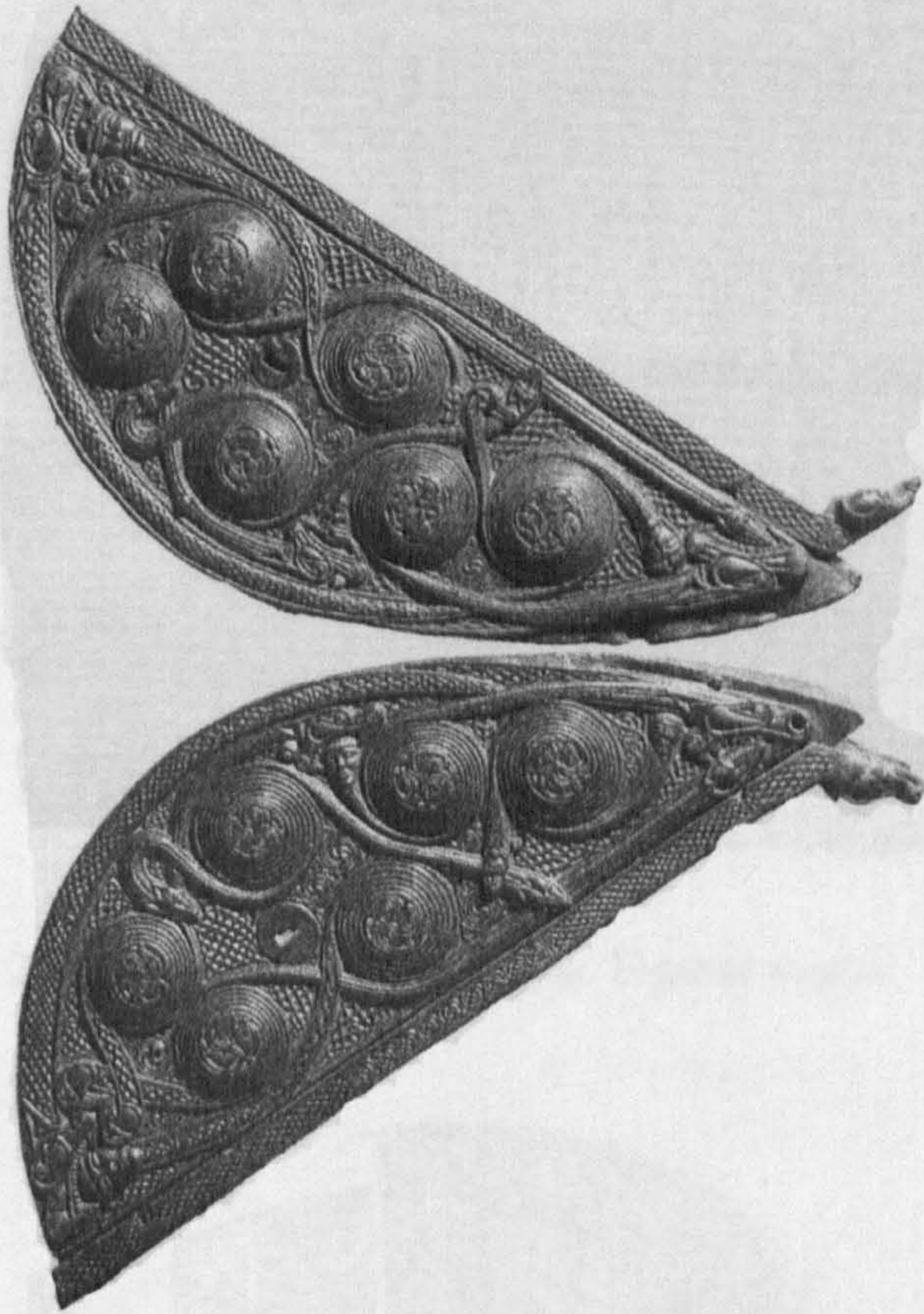


Fig. 2.7 St Germain-en-laye finial fragments

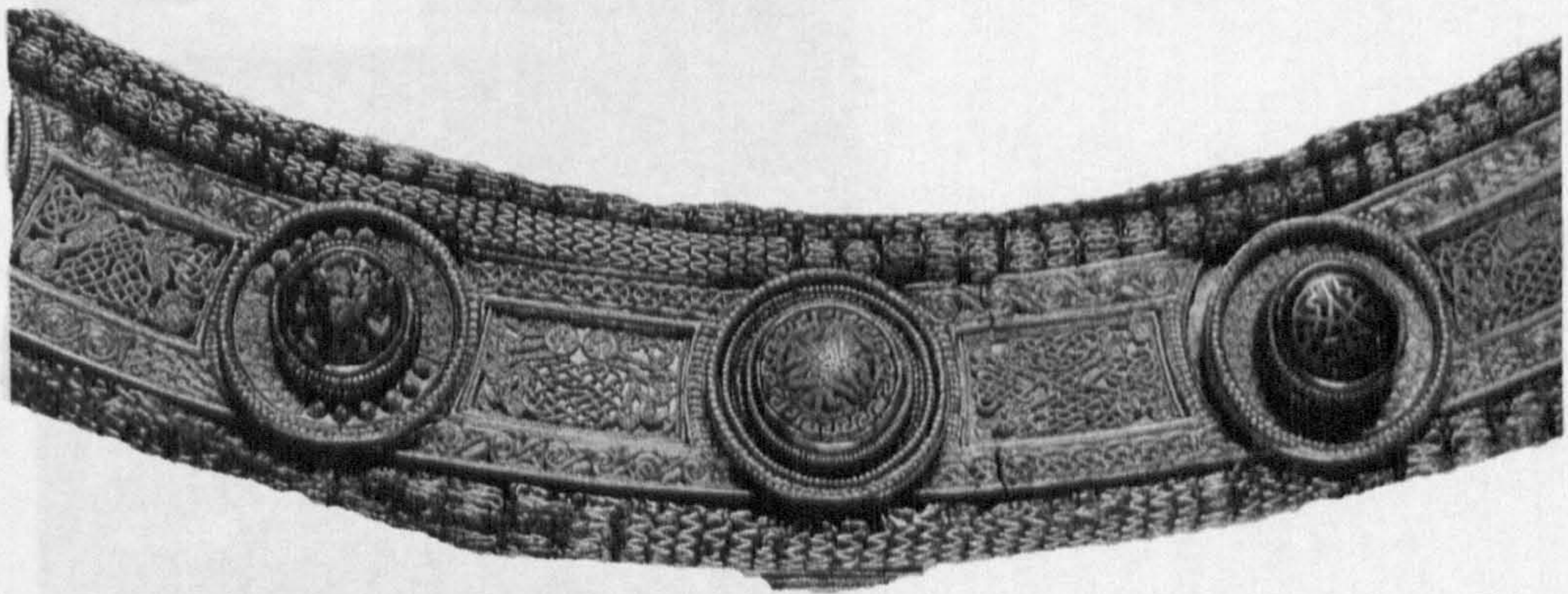


Fig. 2.8 Derrynaflan paten: detail

Fig. 2.10 Throne of Archbishop...



Fig. 2.9 St Andrews Sarcophagus. Figural scene

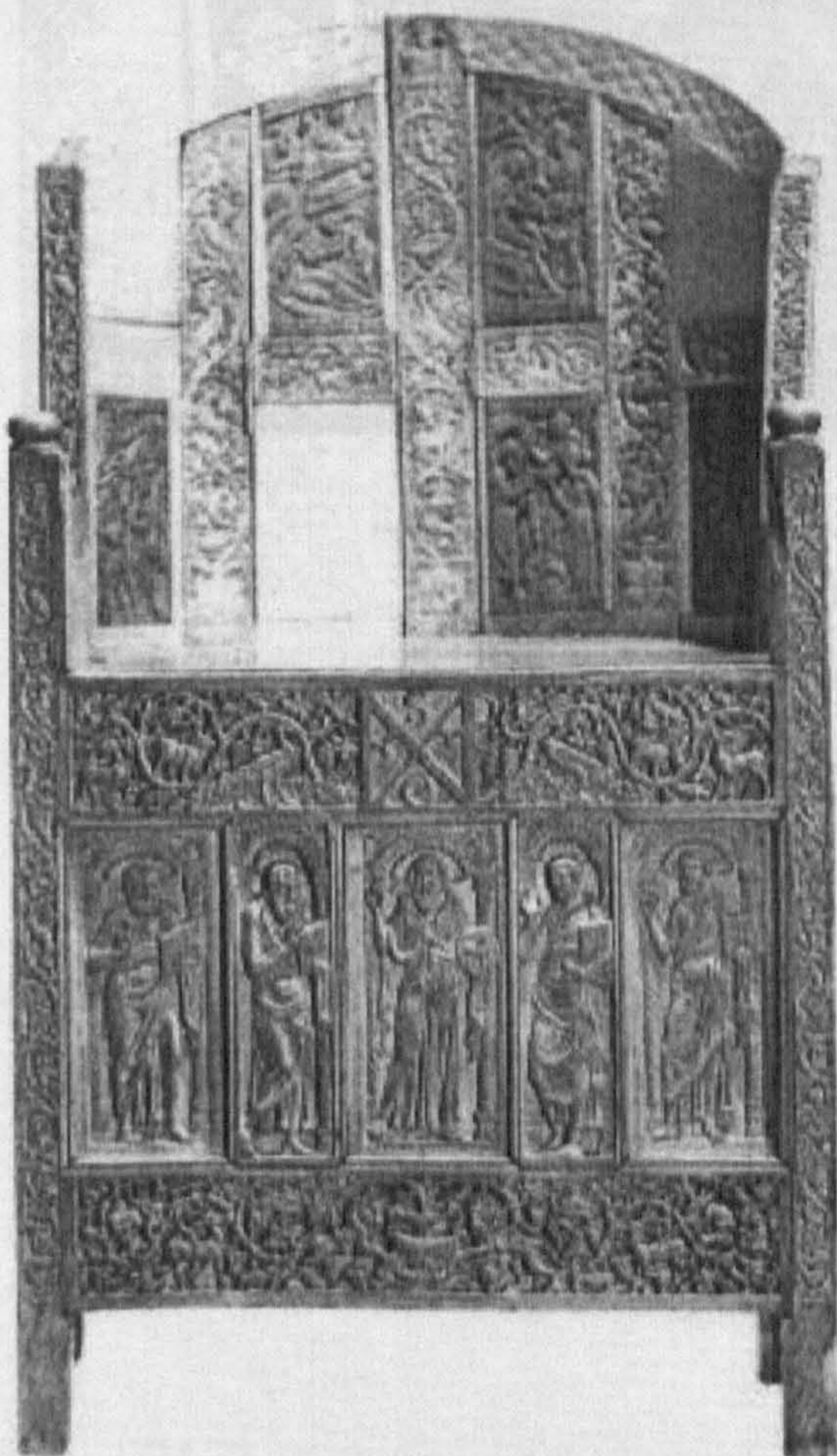


Fig. 2.10 Throne of Archbishop Maximilian in Ravenna



Fig. 2.11 The *Vespasian Psalter*, folio 30v

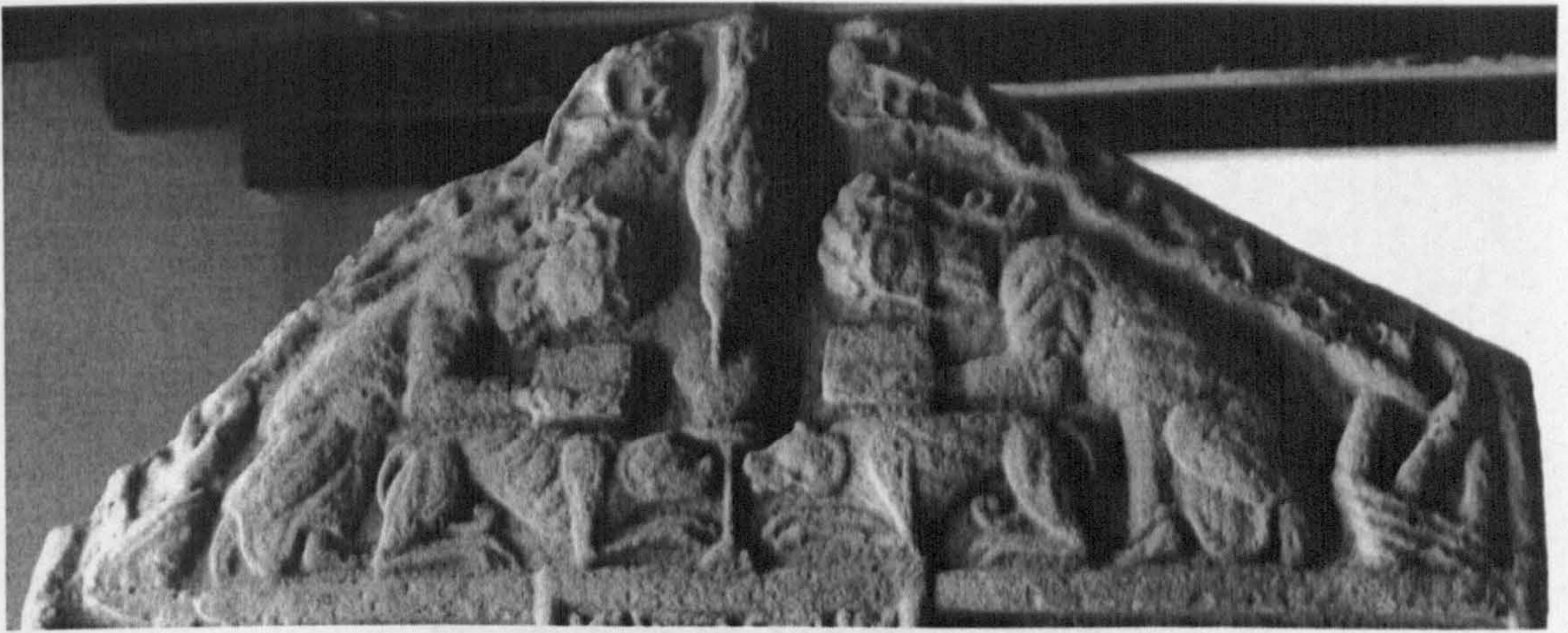


Fig. 2.12 Nigg Pediment, detail

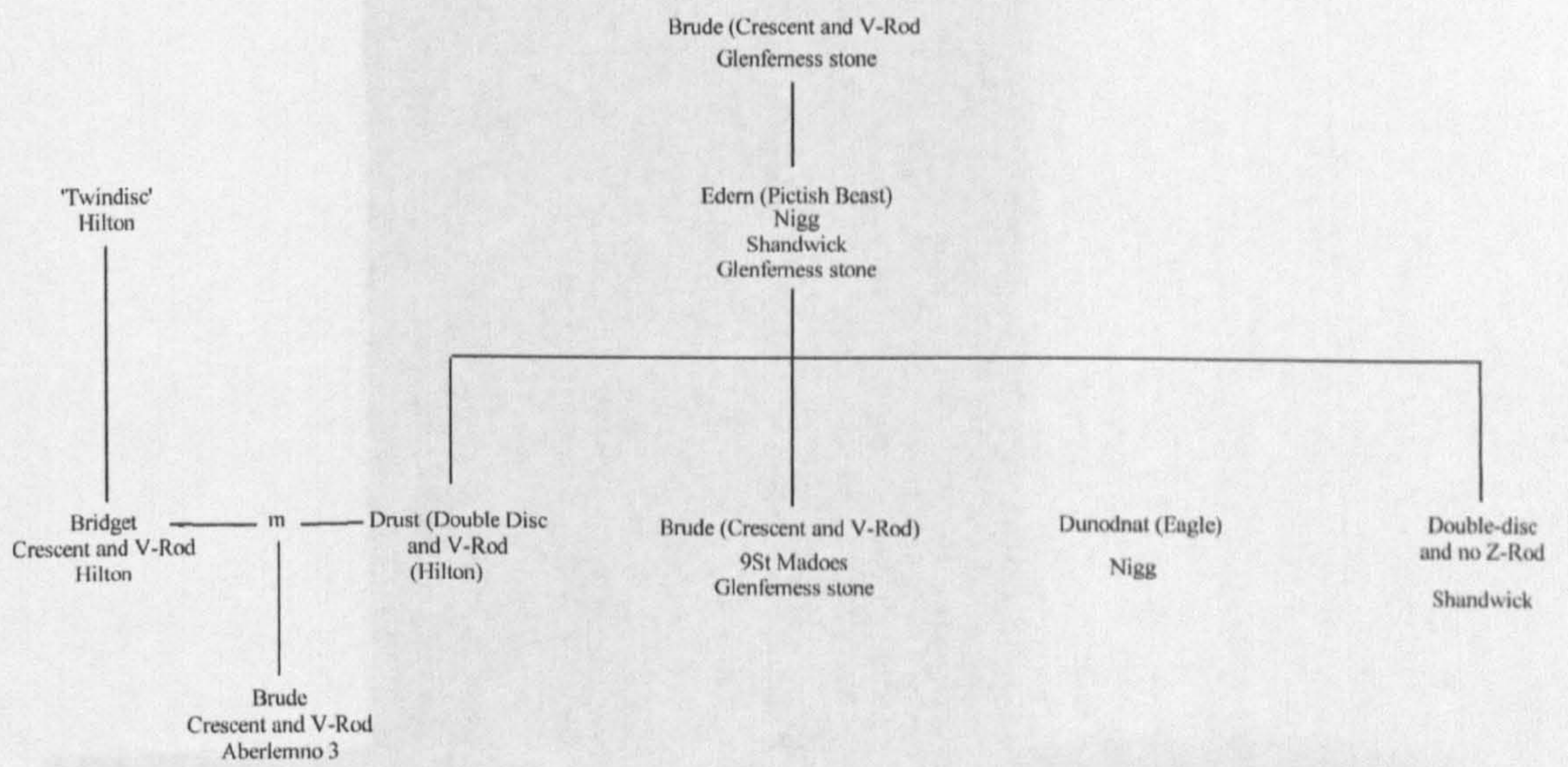


Fig. 2.13 Possible Tarbat peninsula pedigree



Fig. 3.1 The Shandwick Cross-slab. Side A

Fig. 3.2 The Cross-slab



Fig. 3.2 The Cross-slab at Shandwick Side B



Fig. 3.3 Shandwick Cross-slab detail: the 'Hunt scene'



Fig. 3.4 Shandwick 'hunt-scene' detail

Fig. 3.6 The Bernzoll Patch



Fig. 3.5 Meigle 2. *Crux gemmata*



Fig. 3.6 The Berenzoff Paten.



Fig. 3.7 The Eassie Cross-slab



Fig. 3.8 The Shandwick lion



Fig. 3.9 *Book of Kells* folio 285r
(Una Autem) detail of lion



Fig. 3.10 St Vigeans 1

Fig. 4.1 Edition of Call



Fig. 3.11 The *Book of Kells* folio 34r. detail



Fig. 4.1 Hilton of Cadboll Cross-Slab. Fragment from Side A

Fig. 4.3 Hilton of Cadboll Cross-Slab



Fig. 4.2. The Hilton of Cadboll Cross-slab. Side B



Fig. 4.3. Hilton of Cadboll Cross-Slab fragment. Bottom of Side B

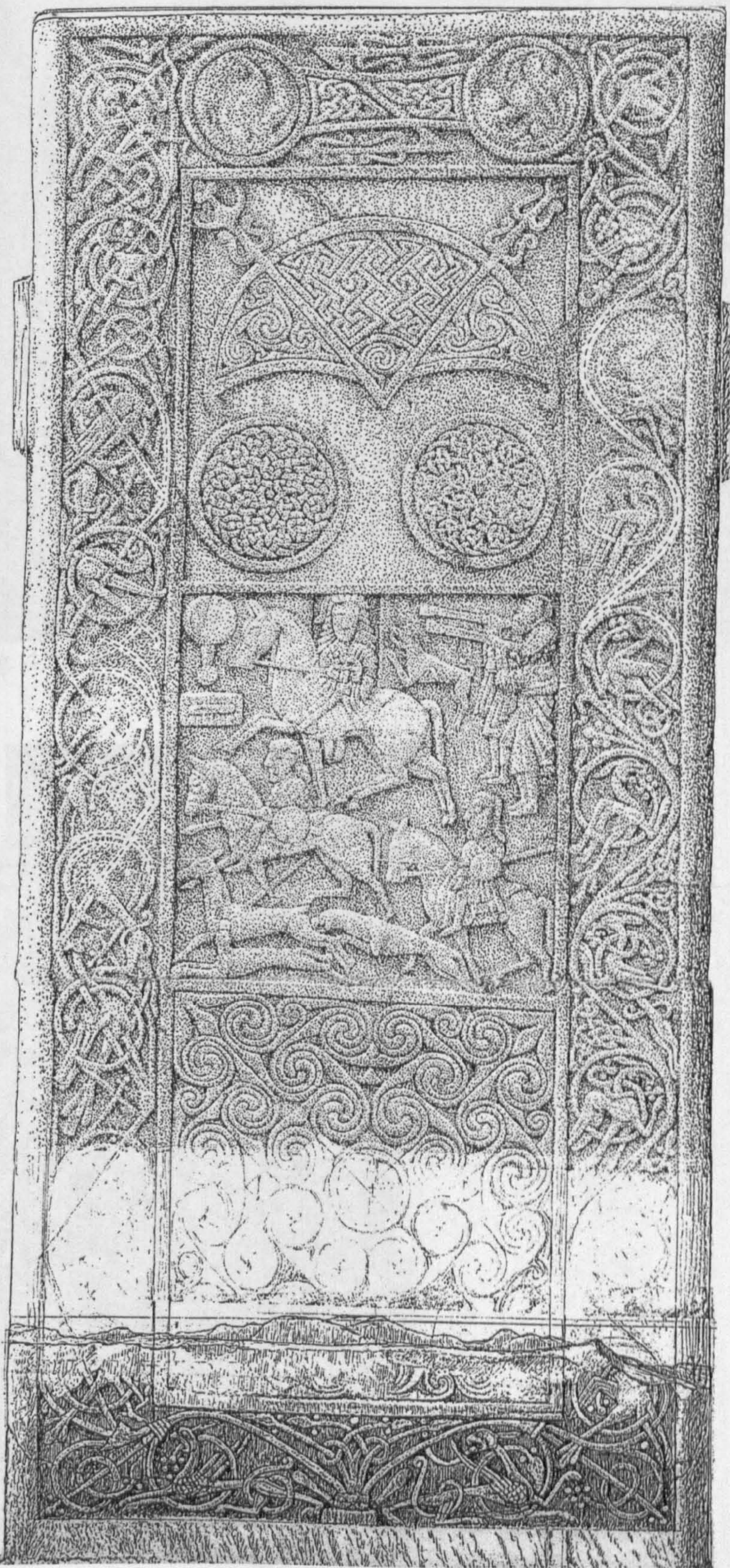


Fig. 4.4. Reconstruction of Hilton of Cadboll Side B. Drawing by Ian Scott



Fig. 4.5. West (Broken) Cross at Kells. South side.



Fig. 4.6. Cross of Patrick and Columba (South Cross) at Kells



Fig. 4.7 Jarrow 19



Fig. 4.8a Cross-shaft from Croft-on Tees, Yorkshire



Fig. 4.8b Cross-shaft from St Leonards, York

Fig. 4.11. Middle 2. Cont.

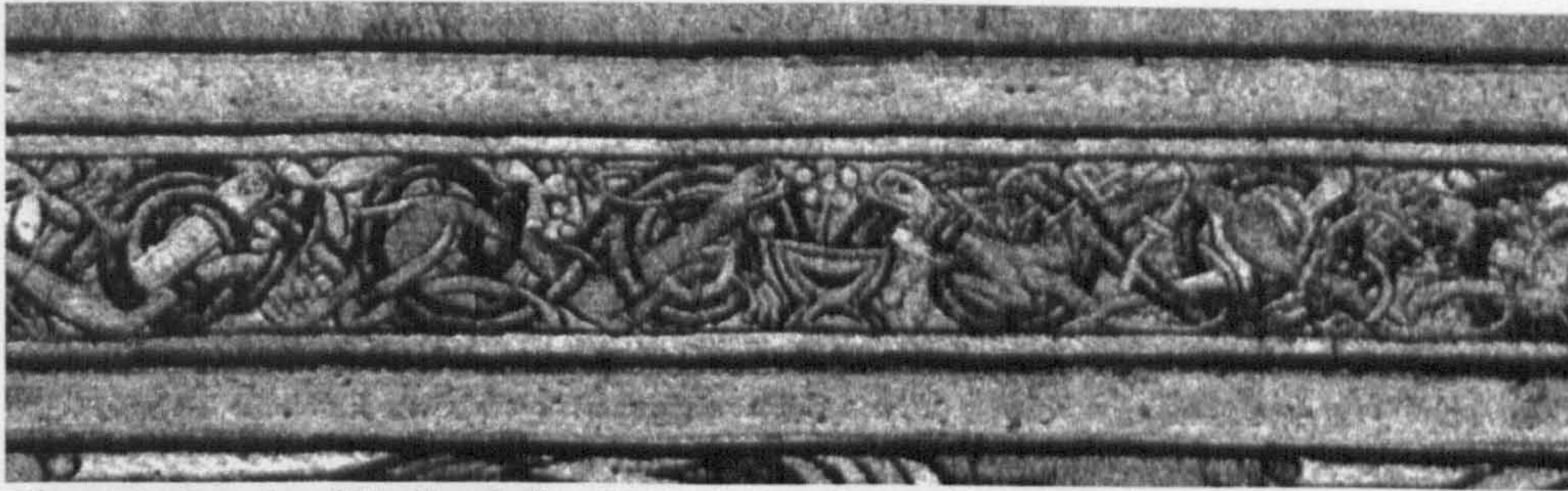


Fig. 4.9 *Book of Kells*, folio 285r (*Una Autem*) detail of vine-scroll border



Fig. 4.10 Aberlemno 3: detail



Fig. 4.11. Miegle 2. detail



Fig. 4.12 Monfieth 2

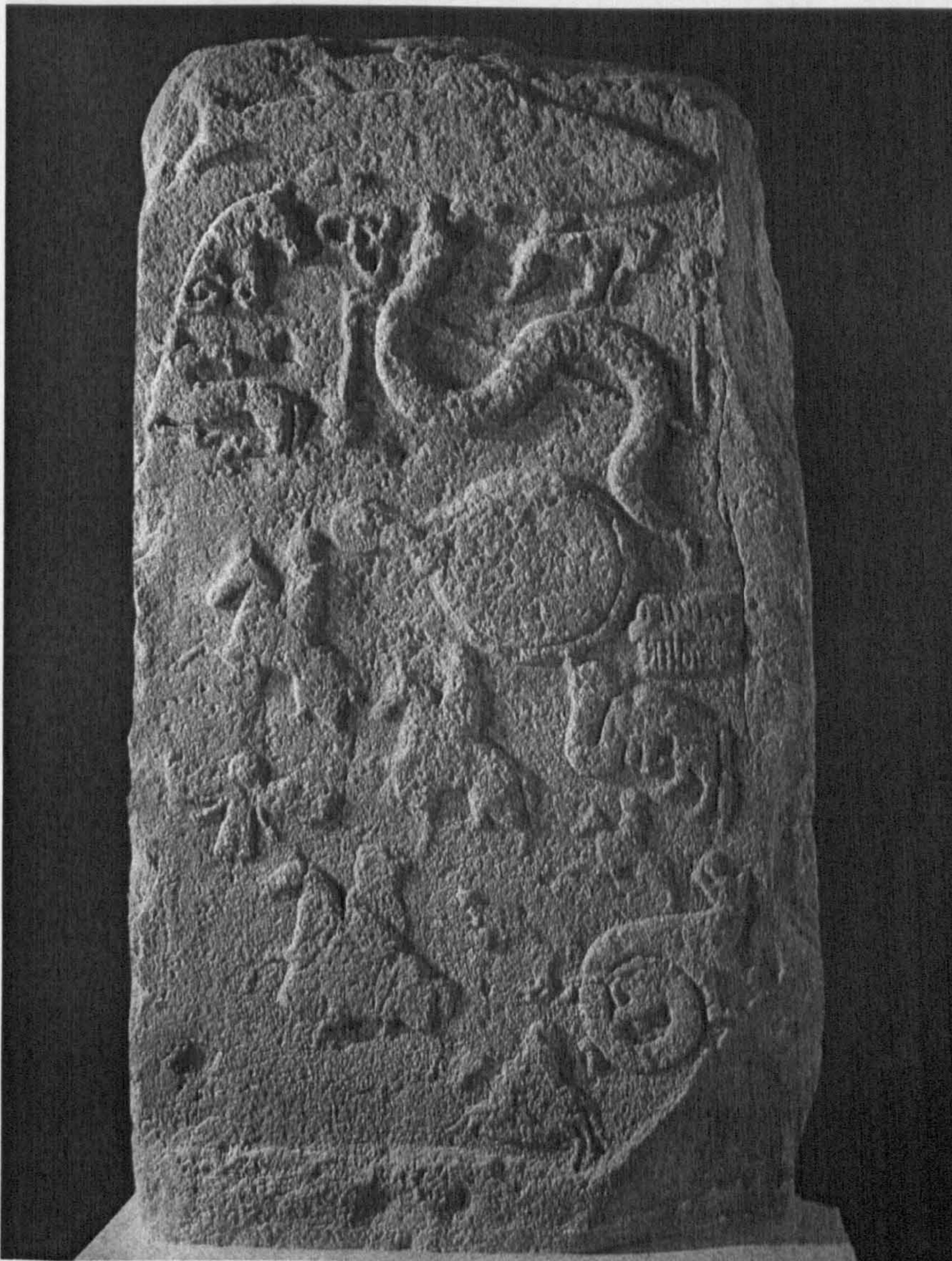


Fig. 4.13 Meigle 1: 'hunt-scene'

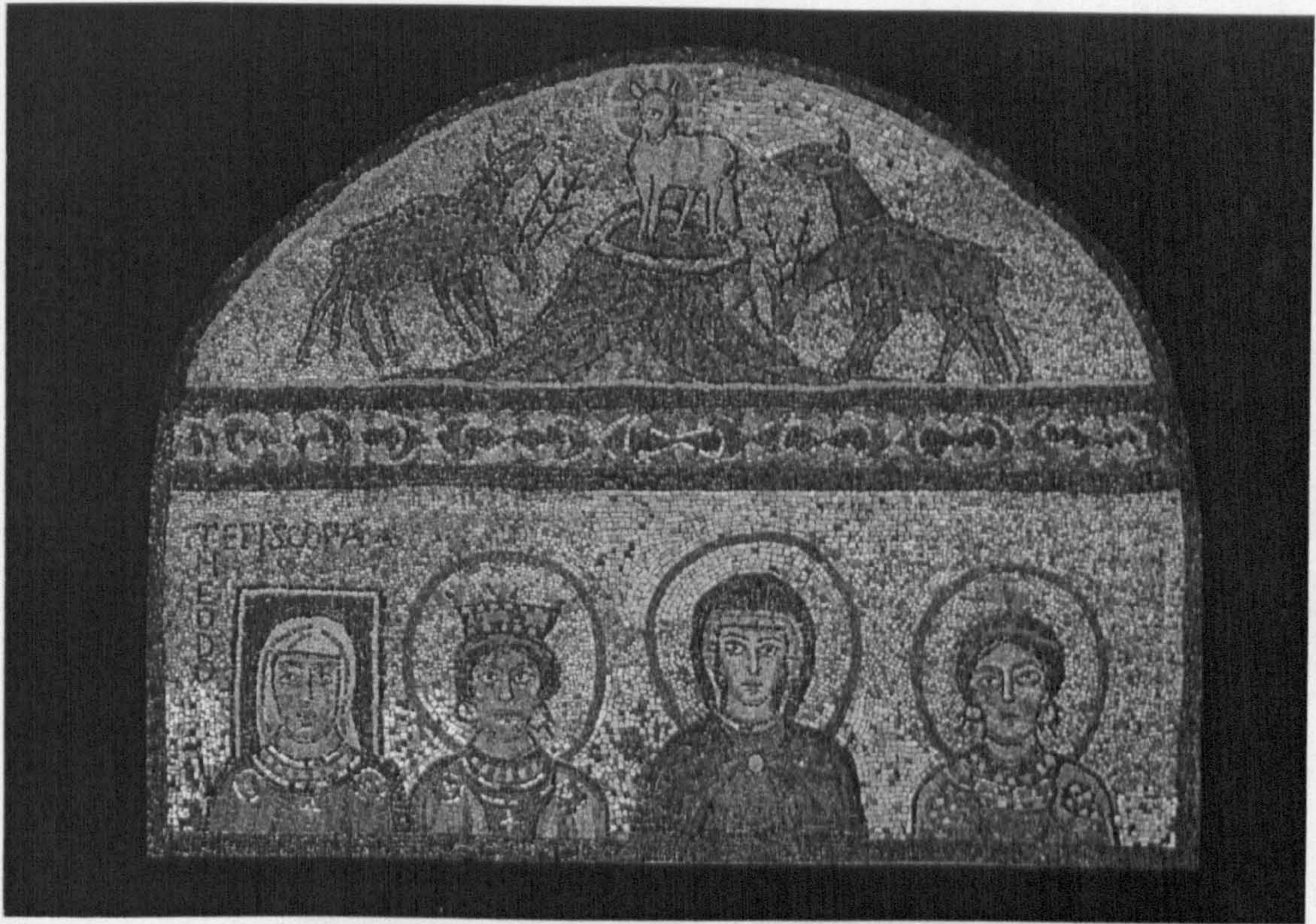


Fig. 4.14 Mosaic in San Zeno Chapel, Church of S. Prassede, Rome



Fig. 5.1 TR1 Side A

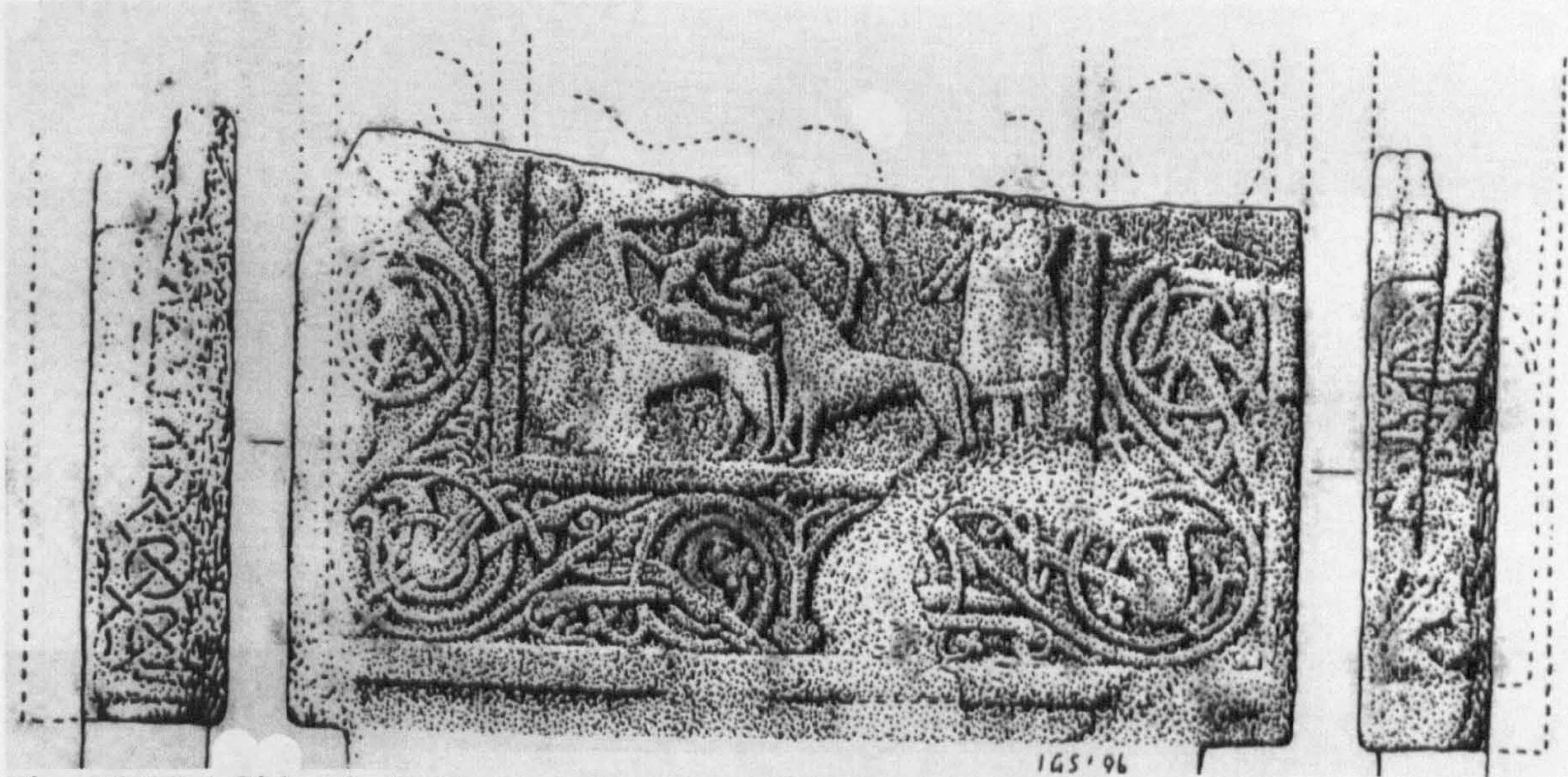


Fig. 5.2 TR1 Sides A, B, C. Drawing by Ian Scott



Fig. 5.3 St Vigeans 14



Fig. 5.4 7th-Century Burgundian Buckle

Fig. 5.5 The TR 2 Fragment



Fig. 5.5. The TR 2 Fragments



Fig. 5. 6a TR 5



Fig. 5.6b TR 6

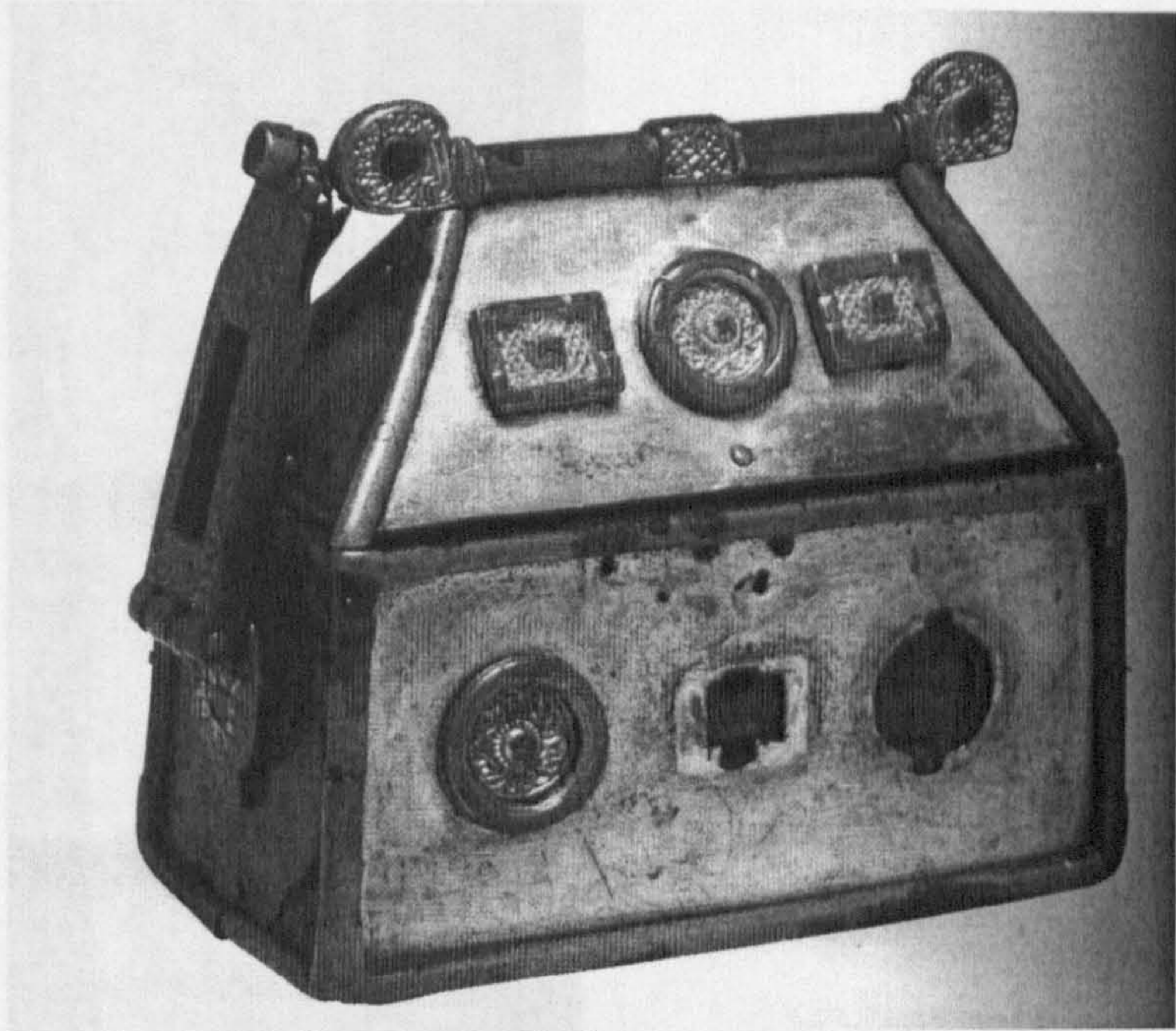


Fig. 5.7 The Monymusk Shrine

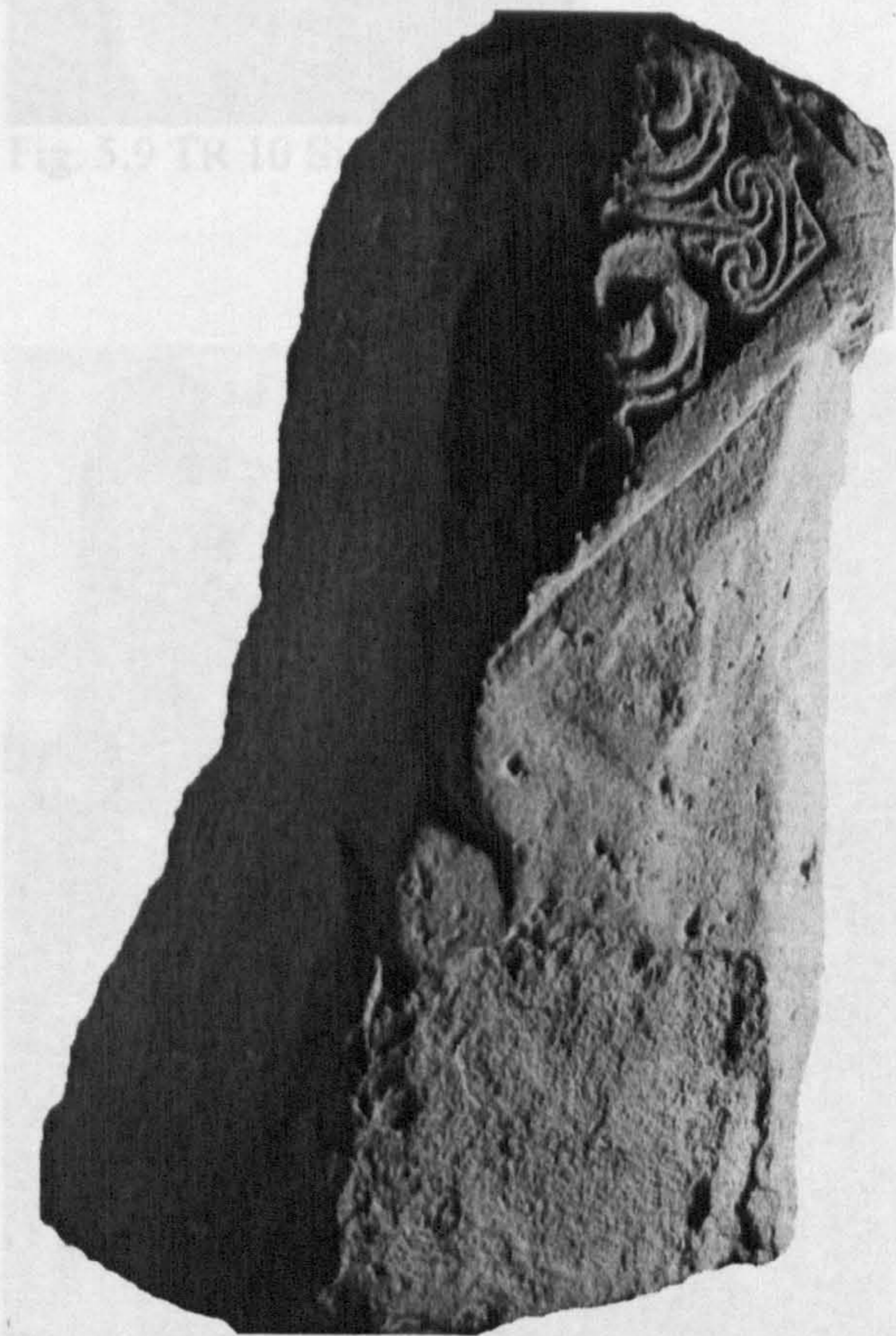


Fig. 5.8 TR 10 Side A

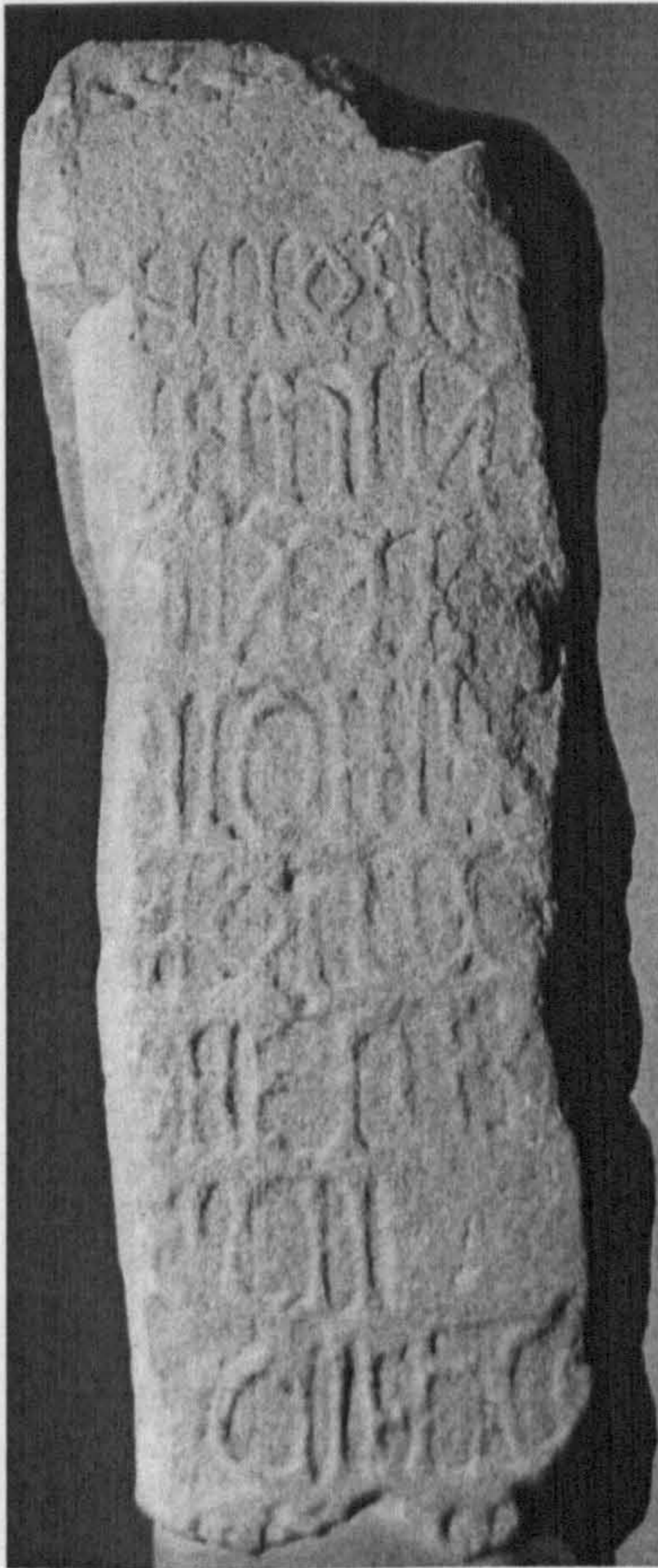


Fig. 5.9 TR 10 Side B. The Inscription



TR40



Fig. 5.11 TR20 Side A

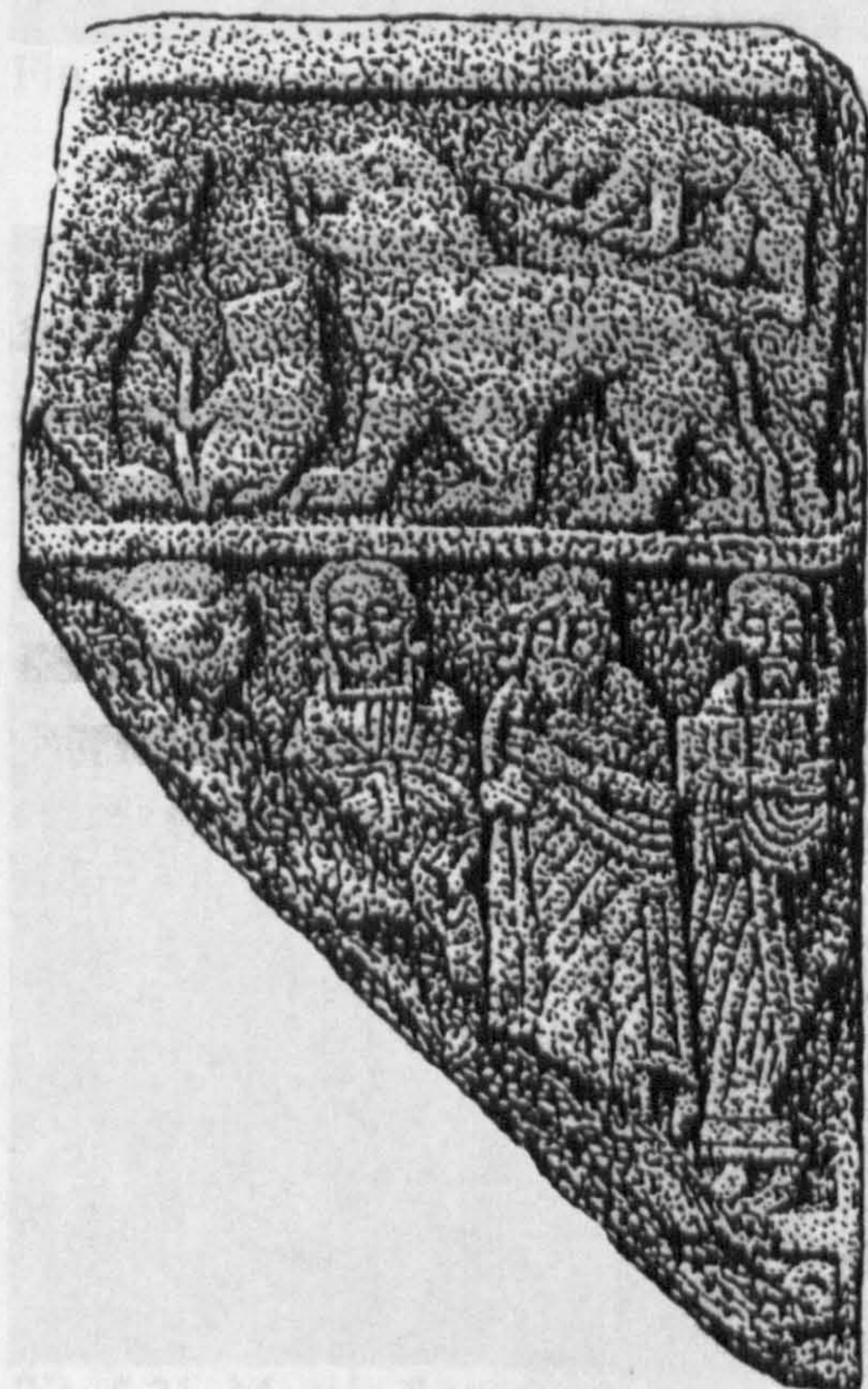


Fig. 5.12 TR20 Side B. Drawing by Ian Scott



Fig. 5.13 Fresco from the *cubiculo della Velata* in the Catacombs of Priscilla, Rome: Jonah and the Whale.



Fig. 5.14 Woodrae Cross-slab detail



Fig. 5.21 Mosaic from St Catherine's Monastery Church, Mt Sinae, Egypt
Detail: Andrew



Fig. 5.16 TR22 Side A

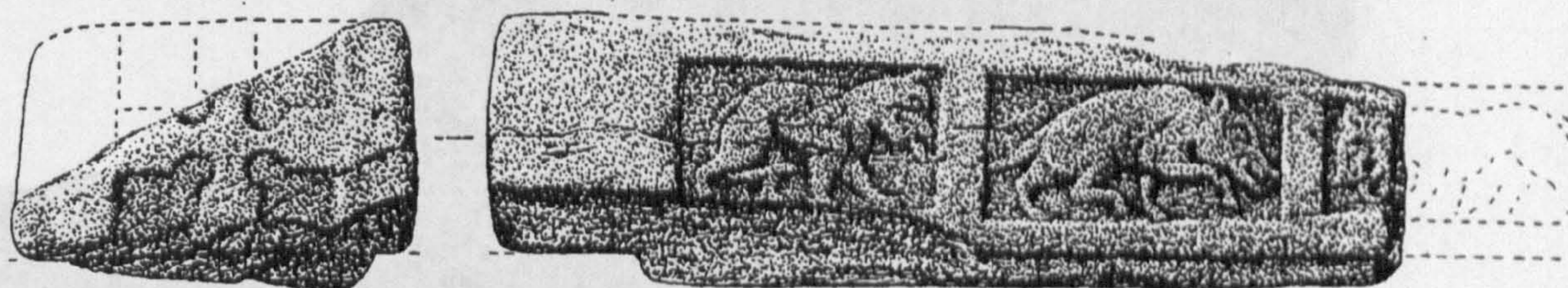


Fig. 5.17 TR22 Side A and Side B (narrow end). Drawing by Ian Scott

Fig. 5.19 TR 28/35

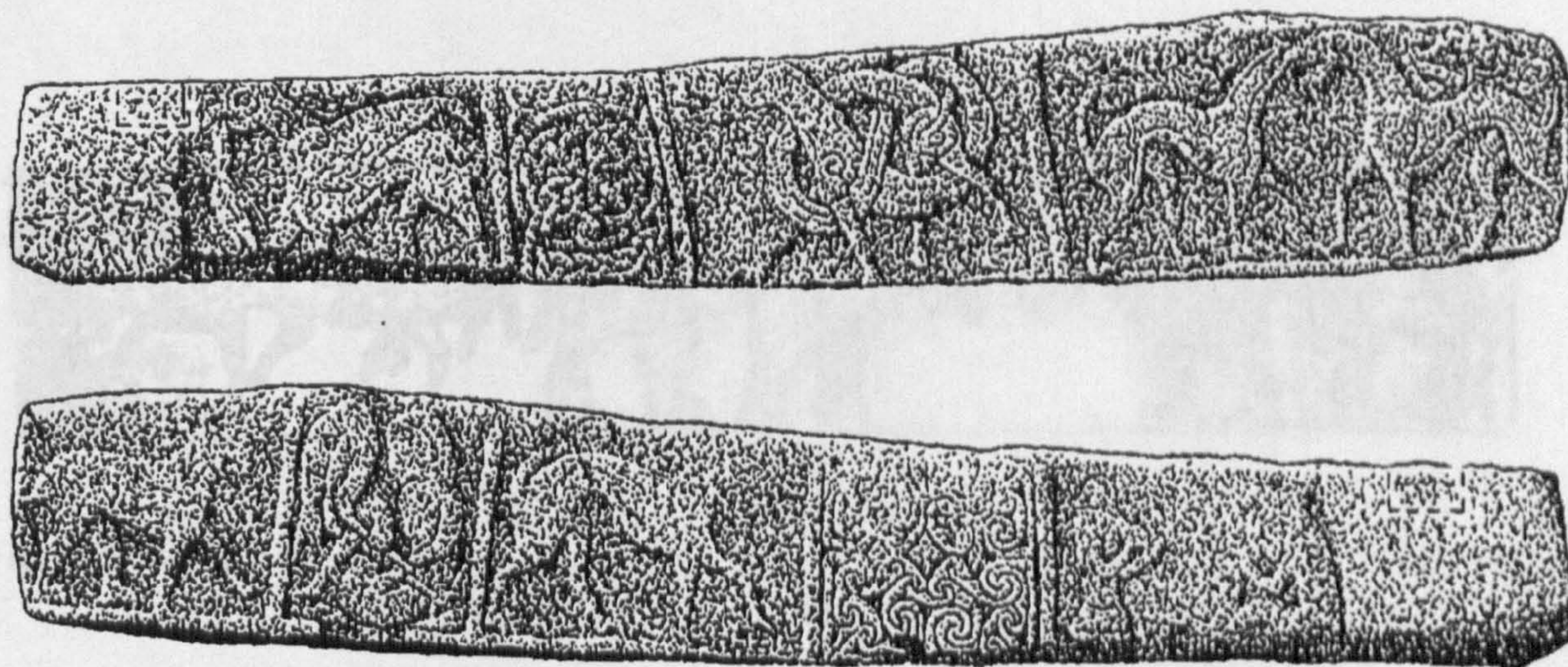


Fig. 5.18 Meigle 9



Fig. 5.19 TR 28/35

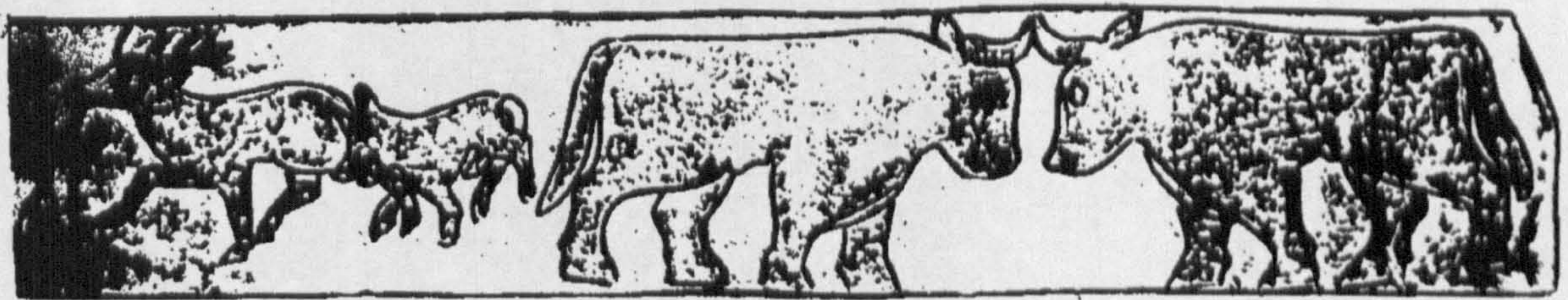


Fig. 5.20 Meigle 12

Fig. 5.21 TR 33



Fig. 5.21 TR33

Fig. 5.23b Ionian grave

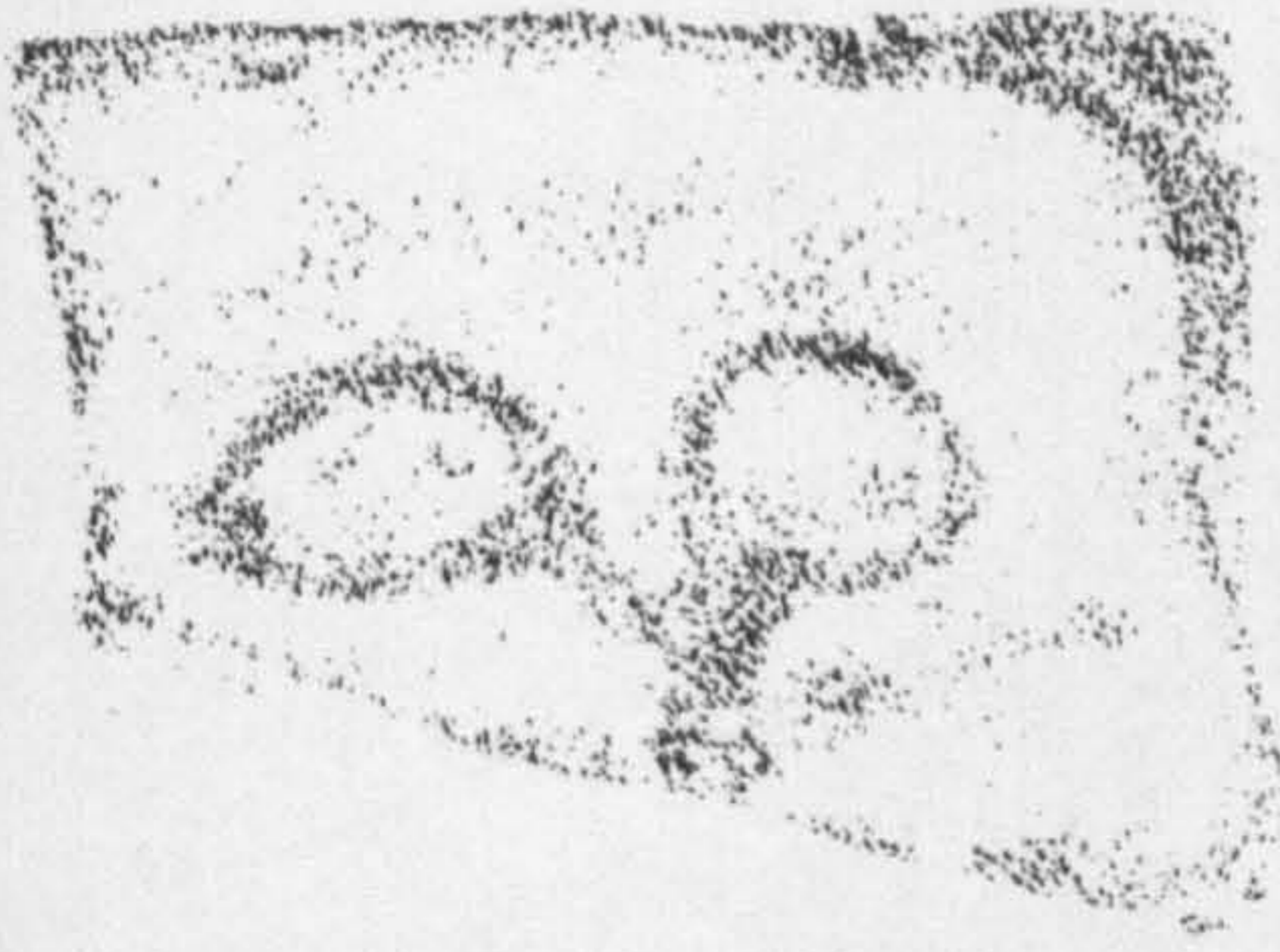


Fig. 5.22 TR225

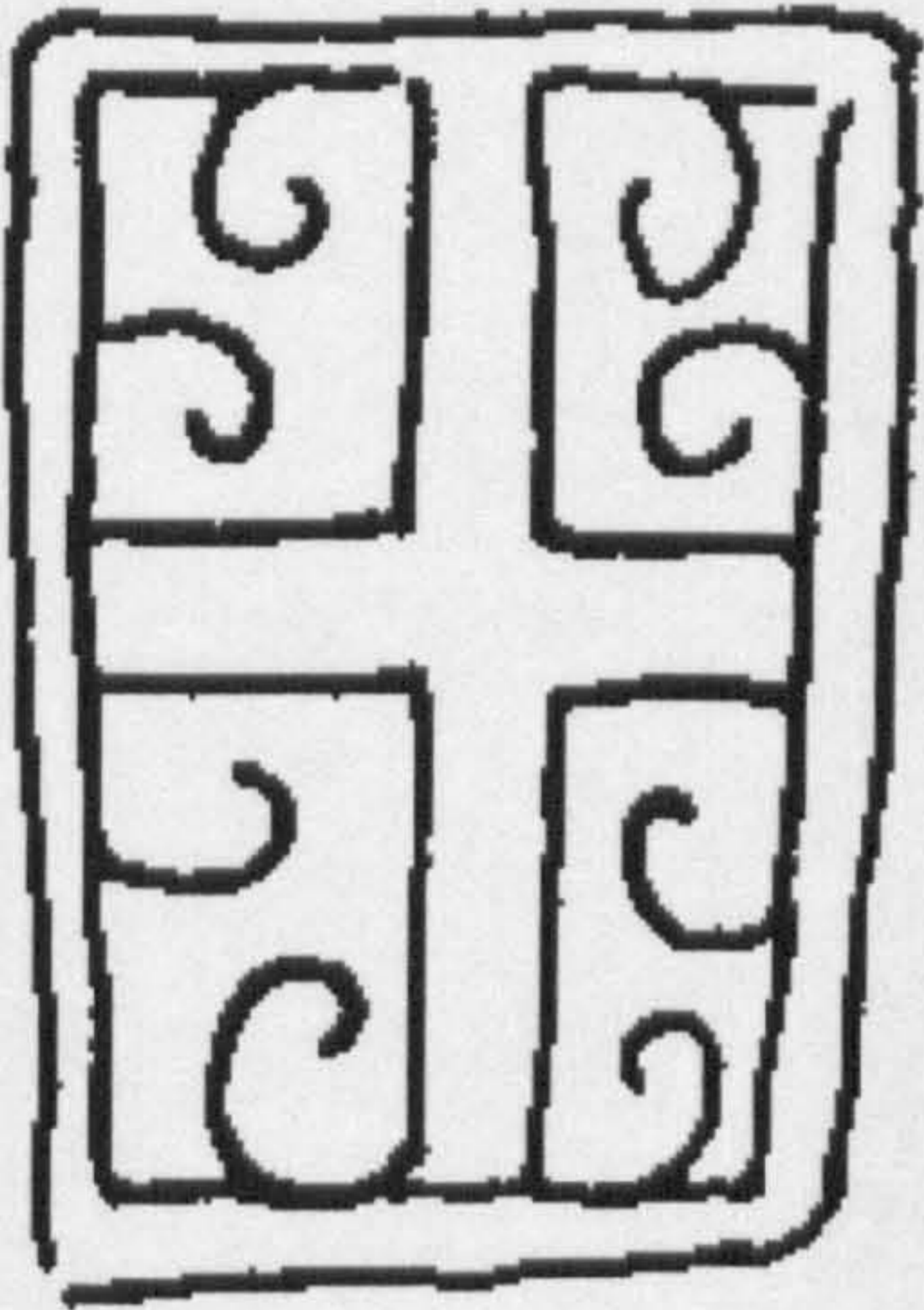


Fig. 5.23a Merovingian gravemarker

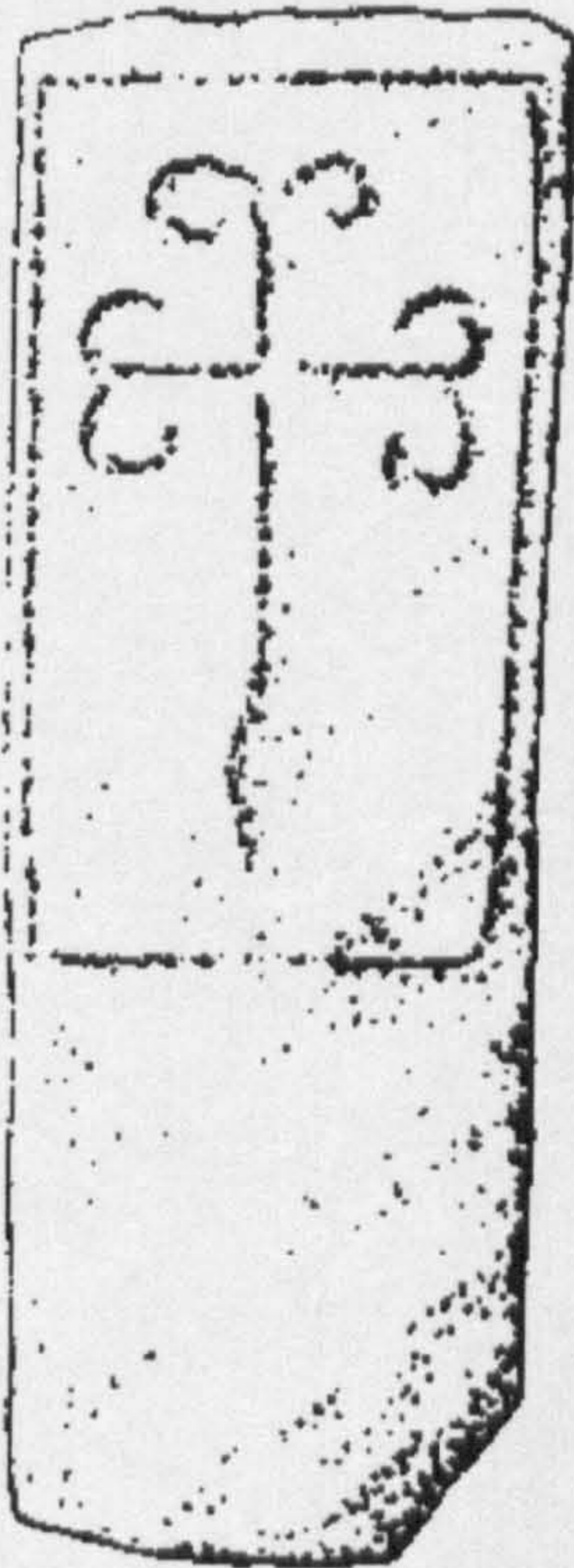


Fig. 5.23b Ionan gravemarker