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the horses of the gododdin

Those with any knowledge of early Welsh poetry or of the history of the "Old North" (the term used by us Welsh for the extensive Welsh-speaking areas of southern Scotland and northern England which persisted well into the C7th and beyond), will have noticed that the title of this paper is ambiguous. The Gododdin was the name of a Dark Age, Brittonic-speaking tribe whose territory was centred on Din Eidyn (Edinburgh). It is also the name of a series of elegies to members of the warband of that tribe attributed to a C6th poet of the Old North, Aneirin. My intention is to examine the references to horses in Y Gododdin (the poem) to see what information can be gleaned from them about the actual horses of the historical Gododdin.

Y Gododdin, as printed in Ifor Williams' edition, Canu Aneirin (Williams, 1938), is a poem of 1257 lines arranged in 103 stanzas. It consists of a series of elegies for individual members and for groups of members of the warband of the Gododdin who fell at the battle of Catraeth. This singular defeat of the men of the Gododdin at the hands of the Angles is thought to have taken place c600. Unfortunately, however, there is no external validation of the events referred to in the poem: there are no references to the battle of Catraeth or to the reputed author of the poem in any contemporary sources. There is also an enormous gap of some six and a half centuries between the C6th date of the composition of the poem and that of our earliest copy of it, a C13th manuscript known as the Book of Aneirin. If we accept the book as the authentic work of Aneirin and as contemporary elegies for the heroes of the battle of Catraeth, then we are faced with at least two problems. The first is that of the language of the poem: what we have in the manuscript is either Old Welsh or early Mediaeval Welsh with very few traces of what linguists imagine would have been the language of the C6th Celts of the Old North. The second problem is that of transmission: we must assume that at some date the poem was somehow passed from the Old North to Wales either orally, in a series of manuscripts now lost, or both orally and scribally, and was then for some reason cherished by the Welsh until at least 1250. As yet the case for the authenticity of Y Gododdin has not been proven, but a convincing case for regarding it as a later pseudo-historical work has not been made either. For this reason, I shall presume innocent until proven guilty and, for the purpose of this paper, I shall regard Y Gododdin as the authentic work of Aneirin, court poet to the

king of the Gododdin tribe whose army was devastated in the battle of Catraeth around the year 600.

As a source of historical information about the horses of the Gododdin, this poem is extremely limited since it deals with only a few aspects of life and with only one social class. It has no mention of travelling, hunting or trading, and references to members of any other than the highest echelons of society are scarce. The only type of horse described, therefore, is that used by the nobility for battle or exchanged as gifts. Another limiting factor is that the role played by the horse in the poem may be to some extent a symbolic one. Horses are referred to chiefly as a means of praising the heroes of Y Gododdin for their glorious deeds in battle, for their nobility and for their wealth and generosity. Because of this, the references to horses must be treated with great care. A horse, seen as an extension of the hero, is likely to be described in an idealistic way, possibly with much hyperbole. One must also bear in mind the fact that the poet's choice of vocabulary would often be governed by the constraints of metrics and rhymes, and that an oral poet would possibly be working with a catalogue of formulaic stock phrases of varying date and origin. The effect of this last factor will be discussed in some detail in the last section of this paper, but first to the poem itself:

> Trychant eurdorchog,
> Gwneddgar, gwaenog,
> Trychan trahaog,
> Cyfun, cyfarfog;
> Trychan meirch godrudd
> A grysiws ganthudd,
> Trychwn a thrychant,
> Tru, nid atgorsant.

> Three hundred gold-torqued warriors,
> Warlike, splendid in action,
> Three hundred haughty ones,
> Of one mind, fully armed;
> Three hundred impetuous horses
> Charged forward with them,
> Three hounds and three hundred heroes,
> Alas, they did not return.

(Translation based on Jarman, 1988, 58-9).

As the poet's main purpose was not to narrate the story of the battle but to praise its fallen heroes, actual descriptions of the battle of Catraeth, like the above, are scarce in the poem. Indeed, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the events of the battle with any certainty, or to be sure how exactly it was fought. The "three hundred gold-torqued warriors" who "went to Catraeth" are consistently depicted in the poem as a troop of cavalry. But as an

army made up exclusively of mounted warriors would be extremely unusual in Europe at this time, Prof Jackson (1969, 13-8) is probably correct in arguing that each horseman would have been accompanied to battle by his own retinue of foot-soldiers of which there is no mention in the poem. This would also make a more even match against the vast Anglian army, numbered at a hundred thousand according to one account.

The question of whether it was the custom of the Anglo-Saxons to fight on foot or on horseback has been the subject of a debate that has been raging among English historians for the best part of forty years (see for example: R Glover, 1952; R A Brown, 1973, 34-43; R H C Davis, 1989, 141-4; M Strickland, 1992, xxi). The accepted view at present seems to be that although they probably rode to and from battle, the Anglo-Saxons would dismount to fight. It is therefore appropriate that the only reference to English horsemen in the Gododdin describe them fleeing from the fray, as in the elegy for the son of Fferog, of whom it is said: "With mighty hand he set fire to the fleeing horseman":

> Ffêr ei law, ffaglai ffowys farchog.

> (Jarman, 26-7).

The meaning probably is that he caused his enemy to flee at such speed that sparks would be struck from the horse's hooves.

It is more difficult to establish how the men of the Gododdin fought, as most of the references in the poem are ambiguous. There are some lines, however, which do seem to suggest that they, unlike their adversaries, would remain on horseback throughout a battle. In the elegy for Urfai, for example, it is said that it was usual for him ". . on a spirited horse to defend Gododdin/ In the forefront of the battle of the ardent ones":

> Gnawd i ar ffysgiolin amddiffyn Gododdin
> Ym mlaen trin terydd rai.

> (Jarman, 64-5).

References to blood-stained horses and also to riding over the bodies of the enemy do add to the impression that the heroes of the Gododdin were mounted in battle.

It is equally difficult to tell from the few references that we have to the battle itself whether the warriors of the Gododdin would attack as an organised force or as individuals. Our knowledge of the weaponry used by them, however, does furnish us with some clues about their method of fighting. References to weapons are plentiful in Y Gododdin, as

descriptions of the splendour of the hero as he set off for battle were an important part of the poet's repertoire of praise. Here are the first few lines of the opening stanza of the poem, an elegy for Owain son of Marro:

> Greddf gŵr, oed gwas,
> Gwryd amddias;
> Meirch mwth myngfras
> O dan forddwyd mygrwas;
> Ysgwyd ysgafn lydan
> Ar bedrain main fuan;
> Cleddyfawr glas glân,
> Eddi aur affan.

> In might a man, a youth in years,
> Of boisterous valour;
> Swift long-maned steeds
> Under the thigh of a handsome youth;
> A light broad shield
> On a slender swift horses crupper;
> Bright blue swords,
> Fringes of worked gold.

(Jarman, 2-3).

In addition to swords and shields, spears with shafts of ash and holly are also mentioned in Y Gododdin. Whether these spears were used as javelins or as lances is an interesting question. Scholars are not sure whether the mounted warriors of this period before the introduction of stirrups could actually run a man down with a lance without unseating themselves (see for example White, 1962, 1-2). There are certainly no obvious references to charging the enemy in Y Gododdin or indeed in any other early Welsh poem, but descriptions of heroes scattering or literally "sowing" spears are quite common.

> Heesid onn o bedryollt ei law
> I ar feiniell fygedorth.

(Jarman, 20-1).

Marchlew: "Scattered ash spears from the grasp of his hand/ From his steaming slender bay horse".

The references in the poem to fighting techniques do seem to suggest that the cavalry charge was not a tactic used by the horsemen of the Gododdin at Catraeth, but that they fought individually, thus enabling their heroic feats to be recorded for posterity by their poet. This is

confirmed by the description of Bleiddig son of Eli: "He drank the wine of brimming glass vessels,/ And in the day of conflict he performed feats/ Upon [his horse] Arfwl Can . .".

> Eryfesid gwin gwydrlestri llawn,
> Ac yn nydd camawn camp a wnëi
> I ar Arfwl Can . .

(Jarman, 58-9).

Arfwl Can is the only name for a horse recorded in Y Gododdin. It contains two elements: *arfwl*, thought perhaps to be cognate with Old Irish *adbul, adbol* which has the meaning "huge, great, immense" and *can* "white". It is interesting that apart from another very similar horse's name, Arfwl Melyn "Huge Yellow", found in a narrative poem of the C9th (see Rowland, 1990, 456, 503), this is the only reference to the size of a horse in early Welsh poetry. It seems that it was only after the Norman conquest of Wales, when larger horses were imported and bred especially for charging, that the size of a horse began to be emphasised in the praise poetry.

References to white horses, however, are extremely common in Y Gododdin as in early Welsh poetry in general. Out of the six adjectives used by Aneirin to describe the colouring of horses, four of them refer to pale colours: *can* "white", *gwelw* "pale", *llwyd* "grey" and *erchlas* "dappled-grey". The other colours referred to are *gell* "yellow" or "bay" and *coch* "red" or "sorrel", although the last could refer to blood-stains rather than hair colouring. The predominance of white and grey might suggest that they were the common colours of the type of horse used by the men of the Gododdin. But, as first suggested by Jane Ryan (1993, 85-7), the opposite is perhaps more likely to be true. In heroic societies such as those reflected in Y Gododdin, it was believed that it was the recording by a poet of a hero's deeds in battle that gave him immortality. In order to draw attention to his own ferocity and bravery in combat, a horseman would need to stand out amongst the throng. As the saying from a C10th Welsh gnomic poem suggests: "a horseman is wont to be visible".

> Bid amlwg marchawg.

(Jackson, 1935, 35).

Horses of unusual colours, therefore, would be especially desirable to the warriors of the Gododdin, and because of their distinction they would be worthy of note by the poet. The

horses used by the post-Roman North British tribes were probably the descendants of Roman military horses, crossed with native stock. As far as I am aware, it is impossible to discover what the colouring of these horses would have been, but we are told that white and grey colouring is generally quite unusual among "primitive" pony races today (Geurts, 1977, 36-9). It is interesting to note also that white horses were accorded special status in many early societies, possibly due to their rarity. For example, the Irish seem to have had a specific term *gabor*, for white or pale coloured horses which were highly valued according to early Irish law (*ex inf* Dr Patricia Kelly, RIA).

It seems that the usual way of describing horses in <u>Y Gododdin</u> and in early Welsh poetry in general was to use one or two adjectives, such as those of colour discussed above. The use of imagery for horses is extremely rare. Indeed, I counted thirty-two adjectives for horses in <u>Y Gododdin</u> but discovered only one metaphor. It occurs at the beginning of an elegy for the warband of the Gododdin:

> Gosgordd Gododdin i ar rawn rhyn,
> Meirch eiliw eleirch a seirch gwehyn,
> Ac yng nghynnor llu lliwed ddisgyn
> Yn amwyn calledd a medd Eidyn.
>
> The war-band of Gododdin on rough-haired steeds,
> Swan-coloured horses, tightly harnessed,
> And in the van of the host an army attacking,
> Defending the groves and mead of Eidyn.

(Jarman, 60-1).

Eiliw eleirch is translated "swan-coloured" by Prof Jarman, but another possible translation of this phrase is "of the appearance of swans". To my mind the metaphor not only implies colour but also the head-carriage and spirit of the horse. To have an outline like that of a swan, it would have to be arching its neck and tucking in its nose, and this is what a horse does when it is pulling against a tight rein in its eagerness to go faster. The spirit and speed of the horse are two qualities commonly referred to in <u>Y Gododdin</u>. It is *gwareus* "playful", *browys* "spirited" and *godrudd* "impetuous"; *mwth* "swift", *llemenig* "bounding", *rhagrygiawr* "racing forward". The same two qualities are also suggested by references to its arching neck, its long legs and slender body. There must have been both practical and poetic reasons for the choice of these adjectives by the poet. A good war-horse would have to be fast and fearless, but references to its eagerness to reach the forefront of battle and its efficiency in the fray might also have been used by the poet to suggest the bravery and the skill of its rider.

As the horse was so often used in poetry as a reflection of the hero, one might expect to find in Y Gododdin references to the richness of its trappings being used to suggest the wealth and nobility of its owner. However, there is hardly any mention of ornamented fittings in early Welsh praise poetry in general, and the only references I could find in Y Gododdin were to a *gobell*, a yellow saddle, possibly dyed (Jarman, 36-7), and to *eddi aur affan*, which , according to Sir Ifor Williams, may possibly refer to a fringe of worked gold, possibly on the horse's surcoat (Jarman, 2-3). This is surprising in view of the fact that most of the pre-Roman Celtic horse-fittings found by archaeologists on the Continent and in the British Isles have been decorated, inlaid with enamel and coloured glass in intricate patterns (see, for example, Megaw, 1989, 218-9). One would expect that the men of the Gododdin, like their predecessors, and like the members of any heroic society, would use ornamentation as a means of displaying their wealth. However, it may be that ornamented horse-trappings were used for ceremonial occasions only and not in battle, and that this is possibly why they are not mentioned in the poem.

In Y Gododdin it seems that it is the horses themselves rather than their trappings that are used by the poet to reflect the wealth of the fallen heroes. A good war-horse was a valuable and desirable commodity and therefore a status symbol, just like the sports-car of today. In the elegy to Blaen, horses are listed along with other luxuries:

> Blaen, gwirod fragod a'i dybyddai,
> Blaen, aur a phorffor cainasmygai,
> Blaen, eddystrawr pasg a'i gwaredai
> Wrth lef agerw, bryd a'u derllyddai.
>
> Blaen, drink of bragget came to him;
> Blaen, delighted in gold and purple clothing;
> Blaen, well-fed horses ran under him
> At the sound of battle: his high intent merited them.

(Jarman, 12-3).

Because of their prestige it is no wonder that references to the giving of horses as gifts was a customary way of suggesting the generosity of a hero in early praise poetry in general. It is this convention that is played upon by the poet of the following early Irish quatrain which satirises a stingy patron for giving him a cow instead of a horse:

> Ro-cúala
> ní tabair eochu ar dúana;
>   do-beir a n-í as dúthaig do,
>   bó.

"I have heard that he gives no steeds for poems; he gives what is native to him, a cow".

(Murphy, 1956, 90-1).

There is a reference in <u>Y Gododdin</u> also to the giving of horses in return for praise poetry. Cynddilig Aeron: ". . desired around him the praise of poets/ In return for gold and great horses and drunkenness on mead".

> Hu mynnai yng nghylch byd eidol anant
> Er aur a meirch mawr, a medd feddwaint.

(Jarman, 44-5).

The references to the giving of horses to poets and other suppliants probably serves in <u>Y Gododdin</u> as an indication of the hero's nobility as well as his generosity. Because they were so costly to feed and maintain, it was only members of the higher classes of society who could afford to keep and ride horses, let alone give them away. That the noblemen of the Gododdin kept herds of horses is suggested by lines such as those praising Gwawrddur for giving : ". . gifts of horses from the herd in winter".

> Goddolai o haid meirch y gaeaf.

(Jarman, 64-5).

These may have been herds of already broken horses or semi-wild breeding herds with stock taken away from them for breaking. The significance of the giving of horses in winter is not completely clear, but it is probable that only the best stock would be kept over the winter months and therefore giving away horses at that time would be an extremely generous gesture on the part of Gwawrddur.

The war-horses of Mediaeval Wales were stabled and fed on grain for most of the year. A reference in the elegy to Blaen quoted above suggests that this might also be true of the horses of the Gododdin. The line: "Blaen, well-fed horses ran under him" probably refers to grain-fed horses. There are references to horses fed on oats and barley in other early Welsh poems, and we learn from the Mediaeval Welsh laws that the status of an *amws* or war-horse depended on its being stabled and fed on grain or hay for most of the year, being allowed out to graze only between mid-April and mid-May and during October. If it was left in pasture for longer than this, it would lose its special legal value as a war-horse (see Jenkins, 1986, 172-3).

I would imagine that the horses of the warband of the Gododdin would also be stabled so that they would be clean, dry and fit for work at all times.

What the poem has revealed about the horses of the Gododdin, then, is that they were used in battle, but that their riders probably hurled spears at the enemy rather than charged them. It is possible that the men of the Gododdin had a predilection for pale-coloured horses because they were unusual and would make the rider distinctive in battle. Horses were regarded as luxuries and given as gifts by members of the nobility to their poets. These noblemen probably kept herds or studs of horses, but their own war-horses would possibly be stabled and grain-fed for most of the year.

These conclusions seem sound enough, but how dependable is <u>Y Gododdin</u> as a source of information about life in the "Old North" during the C6th? At the beginning of this paper I mentioned a few of the features of early praise poetry which should be taken into account when using a text like <u>Y Gododdin</u> as a quarry for historical information. I would like now to take a look at one of those features, namely the formulaic nature of the poetry.

In reading through my collection of references to horses and their riders in early Welsh poetry, I found that some expressions would crop up time and time again. One of the most striking occurs in descriptions of the hero on his horse where the relation between rider and mount is usually expressed in one of two ways. Firstly, as one would expect, a preposition meaning "on " or "upon" is used, as in the lines:

> Heesid onn o bedryollt ei law
> I ar feiniell fygedorth.

"He scattered ash spears from the grasp of his hand from upon a steaming slender bay horse".

(Jarman, 20-1).

Equally common, in <u>Y Gododdin</u> at least, is an expression which refers to the horse as being "beneath" the rider. An example of this occurs in the section of the elegy for Owain son of Marro which I quoted above:

> Meirch mwth myngfras
> O dan forddwyd mygrwas.

> Swift long-maned steeds
> Under the thigh of a handsome youth.

(Jarman, 2-3).

Another stylistic device common to early Welsh praise poetry seems to be the use of compound adjectives without nouns in references to horses. In the line *I ar feiniell fygedorth* "Upon a steaming, slender bay horse", there is no noun for "horse" at all. What we have are two compound adjectives *meiniell* "slender and bay" and *mygedorth* "steaming", with the noun "horse" implied. A similar example is *Ar freichir meinllwyd* "Across the long-legged slender-grey [horse]" (Jarman, 36-7): *breichir* being a compound of *braich* "limb" and *hir* "long" and *meinllwyd* "slender and gray". There are six examples of this technique of omitting the noun in Y Gododdin, each one of them occurring in descriptions of horses. The third recurring feature I discovered was a pair of rhyming word *meirch*, the plural of *march* "horse", and the word *seirch* which seems to have been used for both horse armour and human armour in the early poetry. There are nine examples of the pair in Y Gododdin in lines such as:

Ardeml meirch a seirch a serig ddillad.

Nerth meirch a gwrmseirch ac ysgwydawr.

Dyfforthes ei gadfeirch gadseirch greuled.

Diriaid o seirch meirch yng nghynnor gawr.

These three features seem to point to oral composition during performance, as one of the characteristics of poets who practice this art is that they possess a stock of set phrases or stylistic devices which they draw upon. However, this is not likely in the case of Y Gododdin. Although there is no doubt that Aneirin composed his elegies without recourse to quill and vellum and performed them before a live audience, it does not seem likely that he improvised or composed his poetry during performance. It is true that Y Gododdin contains many conventional expressions and turns of phrase, but there is no evidence of the "formula" as defined by Milman Parry which, according to himself and Albert B Lord, is essential for oral composition during performance (see Lord, 1964, 30). It seems more likely that the elegies of Y Gododdin were composed orally beforehand and performed from memory in the same way as strict-metre poetry is still composed and performed by some local poets in Wales today (see further Roberts, 1992, 5-6).

It appears then that the formulaic element in Y Gododdin is due to another factor altogether. To my mind, that factor is the backward-looking nature of early and Mediaeval Welsh praise poetry in general. Although many of these poems deal with contemporary events and figures and contain an accurate reflection of the political situation of their day, the praise

of the hero is usually expressed in an extremely traditional way, the poets often employing archaic vocabulary and themes that had been handed down over the centuries until they were sometimes anachronistic.

As no earlier poem than Y Gododdin has survived in Welsh, it is difficult to know to what extent its poet depended on the work of his predecessors. We can, however, gain an insight into the profound conservatism of Welsh praise poetry by looking at the way the successors of Aneirin, the poets of the C12th and C13th Welsh princes, echo Y Gododdin and other early Welsh praise poetry in their eulogies and elegies. A few of these poets, like C12th Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr and Owain Cyfeiliog, have deliberately modelled poems on Y Gododdin, echoing some of its famous lines and phrases (see Lewis, 1976, 146-7); but most of the Poets of the Princes seem to have recycled the themes and sayings of their predecessors without attempting to evoke any particular poem from the past. One example of this "recycling" is the use by the poets of the *topos* or theme of the hero feeding birds of prey in battle, which has been traced by Prof T J Morgan (1950) from Y Gododdin in the C6th to the work of those poets who sang on the eve of the Norman conquest of Wales at the end of the C13th.

If we look at the descriptions of horses and their riders in the praise poetry of the Poets of the Princes, we find that there is great similarity between them and the descriptions in Y Gododdin, despite the fact that five centuries divide them. I have not yet made a thorough analysis of the hundreds of references to horses in the work of the Poets of the Princes, but just by flicking through my reference cards I could see that the stylistic features I noticed in Y Gododdin are also present here: the rhyming pair *seirch/meirch*, the use of compound adjectives with no noun in describing a horse, and even the expression referring to the horse under its rider. I also came across the phrase *meirch mai* "horses of the plain" inherited by the Poets of the Princes from early Welsh poems other than Y Gododdin, but possibly originating in poetry composed before the C6th as it contains what may be a fossilised genitive form which otherwise only occurs in placenames like Myddfai and Cilfai (see further Owen, 1992, 17-8). More significantly though, despite the fact that the techniques of mounted combat had changed dramatically after the introduction of stirrups, the descriptions of fighting on horseback in the work of the Poets of the Princes seem to be very similar to those in Y Gododdin. In the poetry, the heroes praised by poets are still hurling spears at the enemy, when in real life they were probably charging with a lance.

There could well be similar anachronisms in Y Gododdin, but they are much more difficult to discover as we have so little historical and archaeological information about

warfare, and indeed about life in general, in the C6th. Over twenty years ago Prof Idris Foster drew attention to the references to gold torques, the commonest ornament attributed to Mynyddog's warband, and showed that they reflected the aristocratic fashion of the pre-Roman Iron Age, a fashion that had disappeared among the Celts centuries before the time of the battle of Catraeth (Foster, 1965, 234). I would not go as far as Prof John T Koch (1987) who claims to have found in Y Gododdin a reference to chariot-fighting and who argues, rather provocatively perhaps, that it is possible to discern in the poem the remains of elegies belonging to pre-Roman times, but I do agree with him that the backward-looking nature of the tradition to which Y Gododdin belongs needs to be taken into consideration when attempting to use it as a historical source. Praise-poets like Aneirin were professional craftsmen whose craft had been passed on to them by their predecessors over countless generations. The form and content of the artefacts which they were called upon to produce were strictly prescribed by tradition. For them, originality was not "the saying of something never said before", but rather the ability to develop a received idea. As young apprentices in the craft of poetry they would have studied the poems of their teachers and of their teachers before them, thus arming themselves with traditional themes, set phrases, stylistic devices, and rhyming or alliterating pairs. Some of these might be centuries old and therefore anachronistic, but they would still be used as they would lend dignity to the poem and give validity to the praise.

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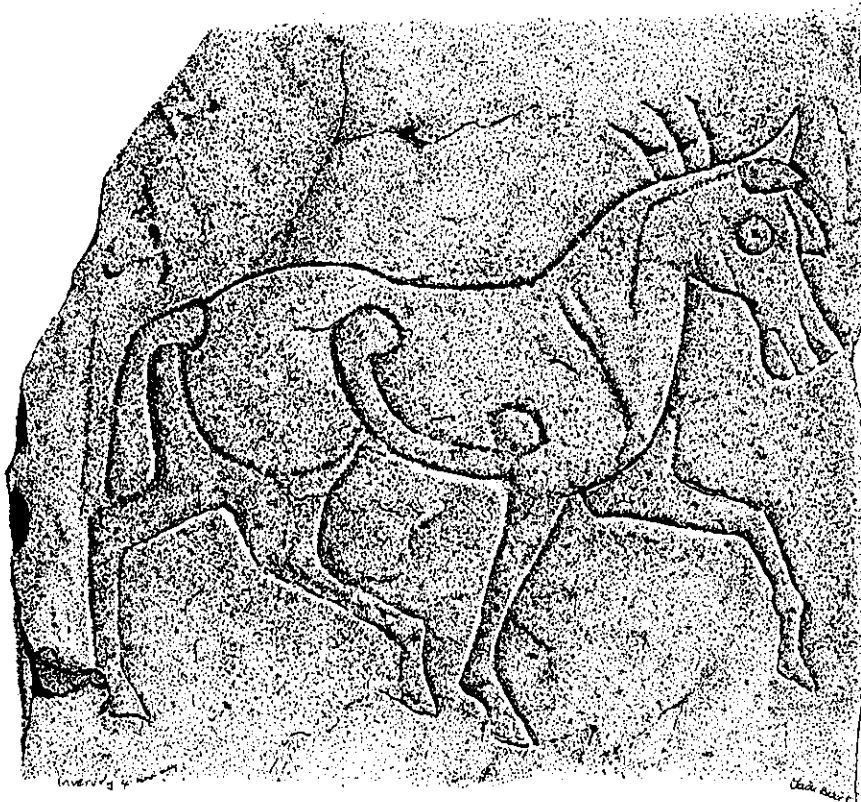
the mythical pict and the monastic pedant:
the origins of the legend of the galloway picts

Whilst it has long been accepted and understood that the historical period of the Picts is from the C4th to the C9th AD, and that their geographical provenance lies generally to the north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus and mainly in north-eastern Scotland, a separate tradition of the existence of a Pictish kingdom in Galloway persists to the present day. It is easy to dismiss this tradition as false antiquarianism derived ultimately from flawed scholarship - the route by which the belief developed can be traced clearly through the literary sources - but there have always been lingering doubts amongst certain groups of scholars, doubts which stem largely from a failure to appreciate the motives of the men compiling the chronicles which are our main sources of evidence for so-called Pictish Galloway.

The group of "Pictish" symbols incised into a rock outcrop which flanks the entrance to the hillfort of Trusty's Hill (NX 588 560), near Anwoth, was for long believed to be an isolated example, perhaps the product of a force of raiders out of the north. But while there is ample literary evidence for the activities of forces of Pictish raiders outwith their historical homeland, such chauvinistic declarations of "Bridei woz 'ere" mentality are virtually unknown elsewhere from the territories raided by the Picts - the only other certain example being the famous boar carving on the rock of Dunadd in Mid Argyll. A further complication was added in 1986 when a series of carvings were found on rock outcrops at Eggerness to the north of Garlieston in Wigtownshire (Morris and van Hoek, 1987; Gray, 1992). These have not been dated with any certainty, but affinities with late pre-Roman Iron Age Insular Celtic styles and indeed with Pictish forms have been pointed out. In terms of quality, the Eggerness examples bear no comparison with those from Trusty's Hill, but the simple statement that there are affinities with Pictish styles - notably the attempts at shoulder spirals on some of the animals - has seen the re-opening of the debate. Should we now reconsider our previous categoric rejection of any possibility of a Pictish settlement in Galloway? As an historian, the answer, I believe, is no, and in the following paper I will set out the reasons for a continued rejection of the myth of the Galloway Picts.

Fig. 1. Pictish symbols, Trusty's Hill, Anwoth (Tom E Gray).

When examining the evidence for the presence of a Pictish community in Galloway, past scholars have drawn on a wide variety of source-types to marshal their arguments. Archaeology, place-names, oral tradition and documentary history have all been used as weapons in the debate, to differing degrees of effectiveness. Re-examination of the evidence, however, shows that the value of the first two classes of source is minimal. The archaeological evidence in particular is, with the exception of the two groups of sculpture mentioned above, totally non-existent. The authenticity of the most clearly "Pictish" of these, those at Trusty's Hill, is itself open to question (Jackson, 1984, 37), and the possibility that we are dealing with relatively modern forgeries should not be discounted out of hand. As distant outliers, far from the main concentration of Class I sculpture in north-east Scotland, their carving has been attributed to the efforts of a Pictish raiding party, perhaps commemorating the capture of the fort at whose gate they were carved. Stell has suggested that the vitrification apparent in the fort defences may have been caused by the burning of the site by such a raiding party in the C6th or C7th AD, while the name of the hillfort itself may

commemorate the leader of the expedition (Stell, 1986, 121-2). Beyond the sculpture at the entrance to the fort, however, the excavation of the site by Charles Thomas in 1960 failed to produce any further evidence for a Pictish population (Thomas, 1961).

Fig. 2. Deer carving, Eggerness, Garlieston (Tom E Gray).

Thomas' excavation of the site was by no means total; selective trenching of the interior and of the defensive circuits was undertaken rather than blanket clearance. From what was dug, however, it is clear that Trusty's Hill was a fort originally of native, pre-Roman construction, presumably by the Iron Age people settled in the Solway region whose name was recorded by Ptolemy as Novantae. After a period of several centuries of abandonment and dereliction, the fort defences were rebuilt and extended, presumably by the Brythonic descendants of the Novantae in the face of the steady encroachment into Galloway of Anglian colonists from Northumbria. Similar defences and the development of a small centre of local lordship were identified by Laing in his re-excavation of the site at Mote of Mark (NX 845 540) on the Urr estuary (Laing, 1973). At both sites there is evidence for the violent destruction of the settlement, that at Mote of Mark being followed by what appears to be squatter occupation of the ruined fort by Anglian colonists. It cannot be said with certainty,

however, who was responsible for the destruction of the two forts, despite the presence of Anglian material at Mote of Mark or the presence of Pictish sculptures at Trusty's Hill.

Excavations at other sites throughout Galloway, such as Rispain, Whithorn, Cruggleton and Lochrutton (Haggarty and Haggarty, 1985; Hill, 1988-92; Ewart, 1986; Barbour, 1902-03), all of which represent important power centres, have similarly failed to produce material evidence for the existence of a visibly Pictish culture in the region. Certainly, there is nothing which would bear comparison with artefacts from such classically Pictish sites as Dundurn, Burghead, Craig Phadraig or Buckquoy. The native material culture of the Novantae in Galloway, as illustrated by the artefactual evidence from such excavations as there have been, is part of the late European La Tène tradition, grafted onto an Iron Age B substratum, and as such its immediate affinities are with the native Brythonic populations of Strathclyde and Cumbria.

These cultural affinities are more immediately obvious in the place-name record. Place-names in Galloway have been subjected to considerable research in recent years, particularly through the work of Daphne Brooke, and the Brythonic or P-Celtic element within them has consistently emerged as the principal stratum upon which the modern name map has been constructed. Whilst the Pictish homelands in northern and north-eastern Scotland were also P-Celtic in linguistic background, the generics used in their processes of name-forming can be seen to be markedly different from those in the other P-Celtic zones of Scotland. For example, no *pit*-names occur in the Scottish south-west, while *tref* - meaning a homestead - either in simplex form or as compounds, has a distribution bounded by the Forth on the north. There are, however, sites within Galloway with names which associate them with the Picts in general, or specific individuals with Pictish names. The most obvious of the former is "Pict's Knowe", an earthwork site in the parish of Troqueer in eastern Galloway, some three miles south-west of Dumfries (NX 954 721). This was for long identified as a fort, but examination and re-survey of the site in 1990 confirmed that it was in fact a Class I henge monument of probably Bronze Age date (Barclay and Fojut, 1990, 69-71). The identification of the site with the Picts seems to be a product of wishful antiquarianism.

The second site associated by name with the Picts is again Trusty's Hill. Here, the specific element of the name has been interpreted as a corruption of the Pictish forename Drest or Drostan, or its more common P-Celtic form, Tristan. The chief problem with this name, however, is in separating it from the tangle of myth and legend which has built up around it since the C18th, much of which clearly derives from Medieval Romance poetry traditions of Tristram and Iseult. Local tradition places a "Pictish" king Drust as ruler of Galloway in the

early C6th and makes him a contemporary of St Ninian, but there is no sound historical evidence to back this up. Indeed, we are here crossing the line between place-name evidence and folklore tradition, where knowledge of Ninian's activities as evangelist of the Southern Picts led to a wish to identify sites in Galloway with his mission work. The origin of the name may in fact lie in the upsurge of interest in Celtic legend in the late C18th, at which time the partly vitrified fort-site on the Rough Firth at Rockliffe was named the "Mote of Mark", Mark being the uncle of Tristan and husband of Iseult.

So much then for archaeology and place-names. The clear absence of Pictish forms from either the archaeological or the onomastic record is quite damning. Although a limited range of sites in Galloway have been excavated in recent years, at none has there been any evidence for a recognisable Pictish material culture. Moreover, despite over two centuries of antiquarian collection and investigation in Galloway, no evidence beyond the sculptures at Trusty's Hill and Eggerness has been identified. Likewise with place-names, where even the knowledge that large areas of the place-name map have been subjected to considerable alteration from the C14th onwards cannot lend any comfort that recognisably Pictish linguistic forms have been subsumed into the modern record. Nevertheless, the two remaining strands of evidence, the folk tradition and the documentary record, preserve details that have in the past been used to compensate for the deficiencies encountered in other sectors.

The popular tradition of Galloway Picts is deeply-seated in local literature. The tale of the last of the Picts tricking the Scots into killing his only son, then hurling himself to his death over the cliffs of the Mull of Galloway with a defiant laugh on his lips, and so cheating his captors of the secret recipe of heather ale, turned into a short story by Crockett, represents the fully developed folk-tradition. But where and how did such a tradition develop? It is most commonly dismissed as stemming from the mistaken transmission of information in early sources, or simple errors on the parts of ill-informed chroniclers. That references to Picts in Galloway occur only in English sources has been used as an argument against placing any value on them, presumably because they were the work of "foreigners" who were in no position to pass comment on the complex ethnic mix of Early Mediaeval Galloway. Such dismissive arguments fail to take into account that these early writers, such as Richard of Hexham, were compiling their narratives in places which had suffered from direct contact with the Galwegians, or were receiving first hand information from men like St Ailred of Rievaulx, who had visited Galloway in person. It was not until John MacQueen's study of the "Picts in Galloway", which focused particular attention on the value of the C12th sources, that any

serious attempt was made to provide a reasoned explanation for the insistence of these chroniclers on an identification of the Picts with Galloway (MacQueen, 1960-61).

The "problem" of the Galloway Picts, as identified by MacQueen, revolved around two opposing literary and chronological traditions. The earlier, which originated with Bede, developed out of C8th hagiographies concerned with St Ninian. These presented him as the evangelist of the Southern Picts, as opposed to those dwelling north of the Mounth who were converted through the efforts of St Columba and his followers. The second tradition originates with a group of northern English monastic chroniclers, who were writing in the mid C12th, and whose works were to have a profound influence on contemporary Romance literature. These chroniclers either directly refer to the Galwegians as Picts, as in Richard of Hexham, or imply the presence of Picts in Galloway, as in Reginald of Durham (Howlett, 1886, 152, 157; Surtees Society, 1835, I, 177-9). It is difficult to reconcile these two traditions, for it would seem that both are talking about unrelated situations, and attempts to draw the two together have often been tendentious.

Bede, who died in 735, was in a position to obtain much information concerning both the Picts and Galloway. In his Ecclesiastical History of the English People, he shows clearly that he is no doubt about the place of the latter: it is part of "the province of the Bernicians" (Sherley-Price, 1955, 146). His comments on Ninian and Whithorn, deriving from a source familiar with the newly-established Anglian see there, possibly from Bishop Pehthelm himself, are a later interpolation directed against the Columban Church of Iona, but show clearly that the local Galloway tradition was that the direction of Ninian's missionary work lay to the north. The Picts whom Ninian evangelised, he states, were the Southern Picts "who live on this side of the mountains", which he had earlier commented divided them from the Northern Picts evangelised later by Columba. The mountains to which Bede refers form the Mounth, which divided Pictland into distinct halves.

From his position in the well-placed Northumbrian monastery of Jarrow, Bede could cull details of Pictish history from various sources, for Pictland was a territory with which the Northumbrians had many connections. Although the royal houses of the two kingdoms were linked by marriage, the relationship was a stormy one and had often led to war and, on occasion, to temporary Northumbrian overlordship of their northern neighbour. Indeed, as recently as 711 a Northumbrian army had slaughtered a Pictish force on the Plain of Manaw and reasserted their hegemony north of the Forth. One obvious source would have been Bishop Trumwine of Abercorn, whose see had been set up in 681 ostensibly as the bishopric for the Picts. He had been forced to flee to his Northumbrian homeland in 685 when the

victorious Picts followed up their victory over King Ecgfrith at Dunnichen with raids into Lothian, and would probably have been well-known to Bede in person. As a result, Bede's writings show a sound knowledge of Pictish affairs, and it is unlikely that he would have committed so basic a mistake as to mislocate their homeland. Nevertheless, his description of one particular group of Picts seems to lie at the root of much of the later tradition of a Pictish kingdom in Galloway.

The reference in question is to the "Niduarian Picts" and occurs in his Life of St Cuthbert (Colgrave, 1940, 83, 193). Some historians, most notably Skene, have translated this as "Picts of the Nith" and interpreted it as firm evidence for the existence of Picts in Galloway (Skene, 1886, I, 131-2 and note 19). The section in question in the Vita Cudberti, however, deals with a people who were reached by sea from eastern Northumbria, which implies a location elsewhere on the eastern seaboard. Indeed, when stripped of all later elaboration, the arguments in favour of their being a people of south-western Scotland rely substantially on the similarities between Nidua and Nith. This equation was for long accepted as being sound, but recent studies of the etymology of the river-name do not support the argument. Rivet and Smith's study of late Roman sources produced a number of forms, all derived from a common root Novius, but the later development of the name cannot be traced satisfactorily due to the several changes in the linguistic background of the population of Nithsdale: Brythonic to Anglian to Gaelic to English, with a fair smattering of Scandinavian thrown in for good measure (Rivet and Smith, 1979, 428). Hunter-Blair, however, pointed out that Bede's source apparently referred to Niuduera regio. While admitting that Niud could evolve into Nith, he proposed a location in Fife (Hunter-Blair, 1954, 165-8).

A location in the eastern part of the central belt of Scotland, centred on the region around Stirling and possibly extending along both sides of the Firth of Forth, is the one favoured by Daphne Brooke in her study of the missionary work of St Ninian among the Southern Picts (Brooke, 1989, 33-4). Her research suggests that Ninian's work was conducted principally amongst the Maeatae, from centres in the vicinity of the Antonine Wall. Here the interpretation of the Nid- element of Niduari as being from the OE neothe-, nithe- meaning "down" (in Brooke's view signifying a lowland people) and the suffix deriving from were "folk", is perhaps revealing of how the Northumbrians viewed this people (Levison, 1940, 289). But it should be stressed that though the name "Lowland Folk" Picts may have seemed appropriate in Anglian eyes for the natives of the carseland of the Forth, it represents only the assimilation of a lost name from a different language group into their own through the application of Anglian name values to a Pictish or Brythonic original form. The identification

of these "Lowland-dwellers" with the low-lying lands around the Forth estuary is, it should be stressed, by no means certain, but Brooke goes on to underscore the probability that the identification is correct by pointing to the existence in the Lothian plain of a series of P-Celtic -*tref* names prefixed by the *Nid*- element, eg Niddry and Niddrie. In sum then, it would seem that the weight of the evidence points away from Galloway and towards a region which was one of the key strategic zones in post-Roman northern Britain. As Brooke pointed out, Ninian was no simple peripatetic churchman out merely to save the souls of an errant Pagan population, but was a political negotiator of the highest calibre. His "mission" should perhaps be seen more in the light of a diplomatic offensive aimed at diverting the main thrust of Pictish expansion away from the Brythonic lands of southern Scotland (Brooke, 1989, 34).

The lack of documentation relating to Galloway from c800 to c1100, and the diversionary attraction of that other Galwegian red herring, the Gall-Gaidhil, have combined to prevent any satisfactory attempts at tracing the development of the C12th tradition from these early Northumbrian sources. The principal writers of this second stream of sources, Richard of Hexham, Ailred of Rievaulx, Reginald of Durham and Walter Daniel, were all in positions where they either had firsthand knowledge of Galloway and the Galwegians, or were reporting from reliable informants. It is interesting to note that all four were writing from monasteries located in the territory of the former kingdom of Northumbria and that two - Richard of Hexham and Reginald of Durham - were based in churches which were amongst the greatest ecclesiastical and scholastic centres of Anglian Northumbria. All, moreover, were well acquainted with the writings of Bede, and Ailred's <u>Life</u> of St Ninian, which the writer tells us he translated, edited and recomposed from a version written in "a barbarous language" (Forbes, 1874, 3-4), which was probably the northern dialect of Old English, represents a direct continuation of Northumbrian hagiographical tradition. There is no doubt in Ailred's mind about the location of the land of the Picts where Ninian carried out his missionary work: it is Southern Pictland, not Galloway. Of these four C12th writers, however, only Richard of Hexham makes the specific identification of the Picts with the Galwegians. Reginald makes the identification by implication, but Ailred and his subsequent hagiographer, Walter Daniel, omit any firm identification of the Picts with south-west Scotland.

Richard of Hexham was the earliest of the group, an Augustinian canon writing his chronicle at Hexham Priory shortly before 1141, when he was elected as prior of that house. The Galwegians figure prominently in his account of King David I of Scotland's campaigns in northern England in 1138, which culminated in the Scottish defeat at the Battle of the Standard near Northallerton. The Priory lay in the direct path of David's army, and Richard

must have had firsthand knowledge of the events which he records. During the course of his narrative he refers to ". . Picts, who are commonly called Galwegians . .", and enters into considerable detail regarding their role in the invasion (Howlett, 1886, 157). His account, which owes much to the hyperbolic tradition of Anglo-Saxon monastic chronicle descriptions of the enormities of the Norse and Danes in the C9th and C10th, forms what is basically a stock list of the types of atrocity committed by all subsequent armies seen as "enemies of God" throughout the C12th and C13th. The savagery of nobles in the "Anarchy" of King Stephen's reign, or of the mercenaries utilised by King John, is all reported in a similar vein.

It is the easiest answer to dismiss Richard's testimony on the grounds that he was introducing simply another exotic element to add special colour to his list of the racial groups which served in King David's despised army. After all, since their involvement with other enemies of Rome in the Barbarian Conspiracy of 367, the Picts had been represented as the enemy of civilised, and by extension Christian, southern Britain. They had been the traditional northern enemies of Northumbria, a threat paralleled in the south by the Pagan Mercians, and the Scottish push to the Tweed and beyond in the course of the C10th and C11th was seen as the realisation of the previous efforts of their Pictish precursors. It would be natural, therefore, to list this people as one of the elements which formed: ". . that detestable army, worse than all Pagan peoples . ." (Howlett, 1886, 151), which the heroic English army, in its guise as the saviours of Christian civilisation, were to vanquish. This motif of Christian civilisation versus Pagan barbarism is one which is to recur in subsequent descriptions of the battle, but in these there is always a conscious effort to distance the otherwise pious and devout King David from the excesses of his frightful allies. The blame has to be shifted from David in person to individual components of the army under his command, and the usual recipient of most of the opprobrious comments are the Galwegians. The problem remains, however, that Richard's personal experience at Hexham should have put him in a position to comment upon the ethnic make-up of David's army without recourse to literary embellishment, whatever the motive in diverting attention from the king in person.

Ailred of Rievaulx's prose composition De Standardo, written in the mid 1150's, formed the next link in the development of the tradition. The abbot's unique social position put him in an eminently well-informed situation, and it is clear that much of his prose narrative is drawn from eyewitness accounts. Although De Standardo was written mainly as a panegyric for Walter L'Espec, Lord of Helmsley, the proximity of Ailred's abbey at Rievaulx to the battlefield of Northallerton adds weight to its value as a source. It contains the stock list of Galwegian atrocities committed during the campaign which preceded the battle, but

presents their conduct in the final clash of the armies in a more favourable light (Howlett, 1886, 196-7). Ailred, it must be remembered, was the only one of the writers who had visited Galloway in person. Bearing this in mind, his avoidance of the term "Pict" is perhaps more significant, and his consistent use of "Galwenses" or "Galwalenses" is more likely to be indicative of the term used by the natives of Galloway to describe themselves. Ailred's biographer, Walter Daniel, writing soon after his subject's death in 1167 and before the Galloway rebellion of 1174, similarly avoids giving a specific name to the Galwegians. He does, however, refer to the region as "Galwadia" rather than "Pictavia" (Powicke, 1950, 45, 74).

The final writer in this group, Reginald of Durham, was a correspondent of Ailred's, writing in the later 1160's. He is one of the main sources of detail relating to the abbot's visit to Galloway, and preserves details of Ailred's presence in Kirkcudbright in his work on the miracles of St Cuthbert, the Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti (Surtees Society, 1835, 177-9). To Reginald, Galloway is the land of the Picts and, to show that he was not simply mislocating events, Kirkcudbright is described as: ". . in the land of the Picts" (Ibid, 177-8). He refers to a "Pictish scholar" and describes the clergy serving in the church of Kirkcudbright as: ". . certain clerks, who are called Scollofthes in the Pictish tongue . .". Clearly, Reginald viewed the Picts and Galwegians as one and the same. It is MacQueen's contention, however, that by the time that Reginald was writing in the later C12th Gaelic was already the dominant language in Galloway (MacQueen, 1960, 141). By the "Pictish tongue", therefore, Reginald must mean Gaelic speech. Brooke, however, has pointed to the prevalence of Brythonic names in Galloway and suggests that P-Celtic linguistic traditions remained strong down into the C12th (Brooke, 1991, 314). Is the "Pictish" tongue of Reginald, therefore, not perhaps a descendant of the Brythonic speech of Cumbria? It is unlikely, but not impossible.

Various common strands and shared motives link all these monastic writers, but it is the personal background of Ailred and the political restraints on his work that probably had the single greatest impact on the development of the tradition of Galloway Picts rather than the direct experiences of Richard during the 1138 campaign. Nevertheless, a common link runs through both Richard's and Ailred's work, and that was the desire to preserve the good name of King David by absolving him from direct responsibility for the excesses committed in his name by the troops under his command. Ailred's close personal relationship with David I posed particular problems for him in writing De Standardo as a eulogy for Walter L'Espec, for in praising the heroic Walter for his role in saving northern England he was indirectly criticising David for his invasion. To circumvent this problem, Ailred adopted the expedient

of using a scapegoat on whom blame for the worst of the excesses could be heaped. The scapegoat was, of course, the people of Galloway. Ailred had adopted a similar expedient in his earlier treatise on the Saints of Hexham (Surtees Society, 1863), which drew heavily on the chronicle of Symeon of Durham. In Symeon, there is considerable space devoted to the atrocities committed in northern England in the 1070's by the Scottish army led by David I's father, Malcolm III (Arnold, 1882, 190-2), atrocities which form part of the same gory stock-list recited by Richard of Hexham six decades later. Symeon does not mince his words: it is King Malcolm who was responsible for the actions of what was undeniably a Scottish army. There is no mention of either Galwegians or Picts. Ailred, however, when treating the same material, is again careful to avoid offending the sensibilities of King David, or to cast blame on Malcolm, father of the king and husband of the devout Margaret, who was a descendant of the ancient line of Anglo-Saxon kings (Surtees Society, 1863, 183). For the first time, Galwegians are introduced into King Malcolm's army, and it is their evil influence over the king which is depicted as the source of the gruesome massacres which followed. Indeed, in the campaigns of 1138 we are told that the Galwegians were almost completely outwith the control of the Scottish king, Richard of Hexham commenting that they threatened the king's life when he intervened in a dispute over a female captive (Howlett, 1886, 185-6).

The motives of Richard of Hexham and Ailred of Rievaulx may have seemed harmless enough to them, simply being the deflection of blame from a man who was otherwise one of the greatest benefactors of the Church in C12th Britain. Nevertheless, it was to have far-reaching consequences, and an impact on literary traditions far from northern Britain. The close links between Cistercian monasteries, to which order Rievaulx belonged, and the transmission between Augustinian houses, of which Hexham was one, of local anecdotal and ethnographical information, probably led to the awareness of Galloway and Picts of Galloway reaching northern Europe by the 1150's at the latest. Galloway, a savage and inhospitable land inhabited by a barbarous race of people, soon became a familiar motif in Romance literature, as epitomised in the works of Chrétien of Troyes and Beroul. Chrétien, for example, made Gawain king of Galloway rather than Gales (Wales), his traditional kingdom, the selection being made for its exotic impact. Beroul, however, makes Galloway into the fearful land from which no knight returns, to which the false knights attempt to persuade King Mark to send his nephew, Tristan, in the expectation that he would not survive (Frederick, 1970, 106). From the later writings of Chrétien, Galloway acquired a reputation which shows it to have been synonymous with the Otherworld, as is clear from its description in the Perceval cycle. In Guillaume le Clerc's Fergus, Galloway is the wild and uncivilised homeland of his naive young

hero, which is contrasted strongly with the wealth and sophistication of eastern Scotland (Frescolin, 1983).

To the Romance poets, however, what mattered was not that Galloway was the land of the Picts, but that it was a wild and dangerous place, an exotic location into which they could insert their poetic heroes. The savagery of the Galwegians in the writings of Richard of Hexham and Ailred of Rievaulx struck a chord with the Continental composers which was taken up and developed. What was not taken up and developed, however, was the tradition that the population of this Godforsaken land was Pictish. Whilst this identification had deep meaning for the monastic chroniclers of northern England, imbued with the traditions of Anglian Northumbria, it was a piece of antiquarianism of no significance to Continental audiences. Taken out of its political and literary context, it ceased to have any relevance and faded quickly from the Romances.

The use in British writings of the term "Pict" to mean a Galwegian died out in the later decades of the C12th. The final writer to make use of the term is Jocelin of Furness, writing in his Vita Kentigerni in the period c1181-99. In Jocelin, though, we are far from the tradition of Richard of Hexham or Ailred; although he writes about the "Picts" of Galloway, his observations have a purely antiquarian ring and are not laden with the ulterior motives of his predecessors. His phraseology demonstrates his thinking: Galloway is "the land of the Picts, which is now called Galwiethia" (Forbes, 1874, 96), where Kentigern returned an apostate people to the bosom of Christ. The identification of Picts with Galwegians certainly stems from the tradition of Richard and Ailred, but in Jocelin's case his demonstration of his familiarity with their writings is misplaced. He knew that Kentigern had conducted an evangelising mission to the Picts and knew also that Richard of Hexham and his copyists called the Galwegians Picts. Galloway, therefore, must have been Pictland. But earlier Lifes of Kentigern place the saint's mission firmly in Pictland proper, where he rebuilt on the advances made by Ninian decades earlier.

Jocelin of Furness' statement that Pictland "is now called" Galloway demonstrates the prevalence and deep-seated nature of the tradition, but shows also that it was understood to be harking back to older beliefs. By the time that Jocelin was writing, Galloway was clearly seen to be no longer the land of the Picts in contemporary writings. From this time onwards there is the development of a new tradition which drew on the writings of Roger of Howden, who was personally acquainted with the region and its rulers in the period from 1174 to 1186. For him, the Galwegians are consistently "Galwalenses", and it is this and several variant forms of the name that become the basis for all subsequent Latin works.

The tradition of the Galloway Picts in the C12th is, therefore, a phenomenon of short duration and originates apparently with the work of Richard of Hexham. While it is unsafe simply to reject Richard's use of the term out of hand, due especially to his personal familiarity with the events of 1138, his motives must be viewed in a suspect light. But he was writing in a Northumbrian context, and in one deeply imbued with the traditions of Bede. Indeed, his descriptions of the northern counties as the "localities of the Bernicians, Deirans, Northumbrians and Cumbrians" (Howlett, 1886, 164) serves to underscore the antiquity of the tradition which he was consciously emulating. Richard was writing as a continuator of Bede and presents his history almost as a continuation of the long struggle between the Northumbrians and their northern enemies. Of course, by the time he was writing in the 1130's the Picts had merged with the Scots and their very name had ceased to be used, but no history of the wars of the civilised Northumbrians against their heathen, barbarous enemies would be complete without the involvement of their greatest foe. For Richard it was unthinkable that a whole people could simply disappear without trace: obviously they had assumed a new name. It is perhaps a disappointment to find that Richard's use of the term "Picti" derives most probably from unsound antiquarianism and the misapplication of an obsolete name. The structure of Richard's references to the Picts of Galloway show that "Galwegians" was the name used for the inhabitants of south-western Scotland at the time of even his writings, but his dismissal of the term as vulgar in origin may reveal his thinking. In his use of the term Richard was seeking to demonstrate his superior knowledge of northern history, and his persistent references to Picts can be seen as nothing more than a pedantic insistence upon the use of the "correct" term, as opposed to "Galwegian", a name used by the vulgar, uneducated masses.

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the papil, shetland, stones and their significance

The remote ecclesiastical site of Papil, West Burra, Shetland, has long been known for its collection of Early Christian stones, and field survey has shown evidence for an earth vallum and the remains of an earlier church platform beneath the present ruined church (MacDonald and Laing, 1967-68, 128-9). An interesting feature of the vallum is the fact that it appears to be rectilinear, rather than curvilinear, the usual layout for a Celtic enclosure. However, the rectilinear plan recalls that of a number of major early monastic sites such as Clonmacnois and Iona, which appear to have been modelled on Mediterranean prototypes (Thomas, 1971, 32), and this might point to both an early date and a high status for the Papil site.

It is not with the site, however, that this survey is concerned, but with the stones recovered from the kirkyard. The most famous of these is the "Papil" or "Burra" Stone, described by Allen and Anderson (1903, III, 10-5, Figs 5-7), which comprises a flat slab of reddish sandstone with incised and low relief carvings. In addition to this, there is a slab with an incised interlaced cross (Moar and Stewart, 1943-44, 92-3, Pl V.1), found in association with a complex of pieces from corner-post shrines. Of these, the most notable is a frontal panel with a false relief scene depicting a procession of clerics and what appears to be a free-standing cross (Ibid, 92, Pls V.2-VI). Charles Thomas in his discussion of the St Ninian's Isle shrines has suggested that there is evidence for three shrines at Papil, those which he has designated Shrines B and C being double shrines (1973, 25-7). Of the corner posts from Papil, one (Thomas' 27a) has a long-stemmed cross surmounted by a double scroll design, which Thomas rather fancifully saw as a pair of confronting S-dragons, similar in character to those found on Shrine A at St Ninian's Isle. Two other stones, one with an incised scroll pattern (Thomas, 1973, no 30) and one with a Viking Runic inscription (Ibid, no 31) need not be discussed as they are not particularly relevant here. For convenience, the cross-slab from Papil is here designated as Papil I, the slab with interlaced cross Papil II, the shrine front as Papil III and the ornamented shrine post as Papil IV.

Papil I

Papil I, now in Edinburgh, is the most carefully executed of the Papil Stones. The main design comprises an incised wheel-headed cross with slender stem rising above a rectangular panel. There are interlace knots in the angles of the arms, which are pointed ellipses, and further triquetra interlace knots in the spandrels.
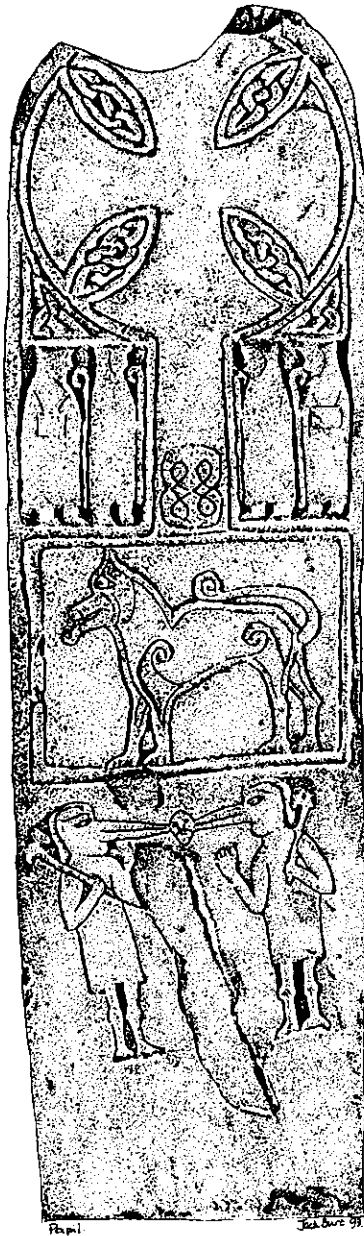
Under the cross, facing each other on either side of the shaft, are pairs of hooded figures holding crosiers, one on each side with a book satchel. On the base panel is a lion. Beneath the panel are two crane-headed men with a human head facing out between their beaks.

The cross should probably not be isolated from the rectangular panel beneath, and should thus be seen as a representation of a free-standing cross, an interpretation which might be borne out by the cross carved on Papil III. In contrast to Papil III, however, the cross is not of a type encountered in Pictland or for that matter in Ireland, though it bears a superficial similarity to some late Welsh and Cornish crosses. The design of the head, however, is essentially that of a cross of arcs, a motif which occurs in a variety of contexts. A variant of the design occurs on bowl no 1 of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure, but a much closer comparison, with interlace, can be seen in the Book of Durrow, on folio 85v, where it forms the centre of the carpet page confronting the opening of St Mark's Gospel, and on the Virgin and Child page in the Book of Kells, where it is a minor ornamental detail.

Fig. 3. Papil I (drawn by Jack Burt).

A more complex form of a cross of arcs appears on a group of clay moulds for glass studs from Iona (discussed by Laing, 1993, no 197, and Graham-Campbell, 1981, 24). The same type of cross pattée occurs in Anglo-Saxon metalwork, for example on one of the C8th Witham pins from Lincolnshire (Webster and Backhouse, 1991, no 184, 227-8), or on a silver mount from Whitby, Yorkshire (Peers and Radford, 1943, Fig 10, 6). The origin of the motif lies in the Chi-Rho, which reached Ireland from the Continent perhaps in the C5th, but was not commonly employed until the C6th and C7th. The earliest in Scotland are perhaps those at Kirkmadrine (C6th) and that on the St Peter's Stone from Whithorn, of the C7th. The development of this type of cross may be seen in Iona and its sister monastery at Clonmacnois. Perhaps belonging to the Iona school is the pillar cross from Cladh a' Bhile, Ellary, Argyll, conveniently figured in Pictish Arts Society Journal 3, 41, which has a cross of arcs. Its Irish development has been chronicled for us by Father Lionard (1961, 110-2), where he suggested that they are concentrated in the C8th, but span the period from the C7th to the C12th.

The triquetra knot occurs in a number of Anglo-Saxon contexts, starting with (in a slightly more complex form) the early C7th manuscript Durham A.II.10 (Webster and Backhouse, 1991, no 79, 111-2) and continuing on the stone Hexham chair. It is widespread in Anglo-Saxon art in the C8th, but I cannot readily think of a Pictish parallel for it, though it appears on Irish motif pieces, and in Wales.

The interlinked double pelta that appears on the shaft of the cross is an unusual motif, but a version of it appears on Irish cross-slabs (Lionard, 1961, Fig 29, 140).

The lion on the panel has been seen as a "Pictish symbol", but there is really no need for this, since it is almost the exact counterpart of the lion Evangelist symbol in the Book of Durrow, folio 191v, only reversed. If the panel is seen as the base for a free-standing cross, then the lion is the counterpart of the animals that appear on the bases of some Irish crosses, where hunt scenes are common. More significantly, similar creatures can be seen on the back of the arms of St Martin's Cross, Iona.

The figures of clerics can be compared with similar figures in Pictish sculpture, but again a Pictish comparison is not the only possible one. Very similar figures appear on the Ardchattan cross-slab from Argyll (Curle, 1939-40, Pl XXV) in the heart of Dál Riada. The treatment of the Papil cowls is identical to that on the Ardchattan Stone.

The last feature of Papil I that deserves comment is the figure composition at the bottom. Here there are two features to note - the bird-men appear to be wearing bird masks and possibly bird leggings, ie they are not simply anthropomorphic birds, but men dressed up. It has been suggested that the scene represents a misunderstood version of the Temptation of

St Anthony (Radford, 1962, 173), but this seems highly unlikely. Bird-headed men do appear in Pictish art however, for example on the stone from Murthly, and the cross-slab at Rossie Priory, both in Perthshire. The newly-discovered slab from Cunningsburgh, Shetland, shows a man with a wolf mask (Robertson, 1992, 27-8), and the Kettins Stone in Angus shows a (winged?) figure between two other figures wearing what appear to be a bull and a wolf mask. It could well be that what we see in these carvings is a representation of some kind of ceremony or possibly even dance, which involved the wearing of animal masks. Although unusual, mythological scenes sometimes appear on Irish stones (eg at Kilfenora, Co Clare); it is probably reasonable to assume that the bird episode shown on Papil I is due to Pictish influence. The bird-men carry T-shaped axes. These are possibly ultimately of Frankish origin, but occur in both Irish and Anglo-Saxon contexts. The most famous examples appear being wielded in the Bayeux Tapestry, and an actual example is known from Loch Faughan Crannog, Co Down (Collins, 1955, Fig 11, no 68). No dating is possible for this find; the Crannog has yielded E Ware of the C7th-C8th, but is likely to have had a longer occupation. Wilson has discussed the development of this axe type in Anglo-Saxon England, and has illustrated a surviving example from Crayke, Yorkshire, which is almost identical to the axes wielded on the Papil Stone (1976, Fig 6, 1 (h)). Wilson has suggested that although they may have evolved earlier, they were certainly current mainly in the C9th and later (1976, 253-81).

However, it is not necessarily the case that the bird-men scene was part of the original decoration of the stone. The technique is somewhat different, and it has the appearance of a possible addition, particularly as it is at a slight angle to the rest of the ornament, as Thomas has noted (1973, 29).

Papil I has to be considered alongside a second Shetland stone, the cross-slab from Culbinsgarth, Bressay, also now in Edinburgh. This somewhat crude stone has shallow relief work on both sides, with a cross on the front of generally similar type to that on Papil I, beneath which is a cruder but generally similar lion. A single cleric, again hooded and again with a crosier, stands beneath the cross-head on either side, that on the right with a book satchel round his neck. Between the two clerics, however, is a mounted figure, and above the cross-head a man is being devoured by two sea serpents. Beneath the lion is another animal, probably a boar. On the reverse a cross formed of and surrounded by interlace surmounts a panel with two confronted animals, while two crosier-holding clerics, one again with a book satchel, confront one another beneath. Along the edges of the stone is an inscription in Pictish oghams (Crawford, 1987, Fig 60, page 170). Stevenson was of the view that the Bressay Stone was a crude copy of Papil I (1955, 128), but this is simplistic.

Papil II

This is a fragmentary cross-slab, with a crudely-incised expansional cross. The type is otherwise absent in Pictland, but occurs widely in Ireland and also appears on Iona.

Fig. 4. Papil II (drawn by Niall M Robertson).

In discussing the type, Lionard has shown from examples with datable inscriptions that all the Irish examples with interlace and frets are, with one exception, of the C10th (1961, 131, 134). He suggested that the cross type originated in Byzantine crosses with splayed ends, and may have first appeared either in Ireland or Northumbria. The particular type represented on Papil II is, however, more closely paralleled at Glendalough (Co Wicklow). There are three closely related cross-slabs with square rather than circular centres on Iona (RCAHMS, 1982, nos 67-9, 189-90), while another example of the same family has been found at Cill Eileagain, Islay (RCAHMS, 1984, no 334, 165-6), where it is dated to the C10th.

The stone can also be paralleled in Wales, at Llanwynnws, Cardiganshire, where the cross with looped interlace arms was seen by Nash-Williams as directly the result of Irish

influence, a fact borne out by its accompanying inscription, which indicated a date in the C9th (1950, no 125, 101-2).

Papil III

The shrine frontal, though less carefully executed than Papil I, shares features in common with it, particularly in its treatment of the procession of cowled figures. Superficially, they share features in common with Pictish stones, but again the Ardchattan figures can be cited as close comparisons for style.
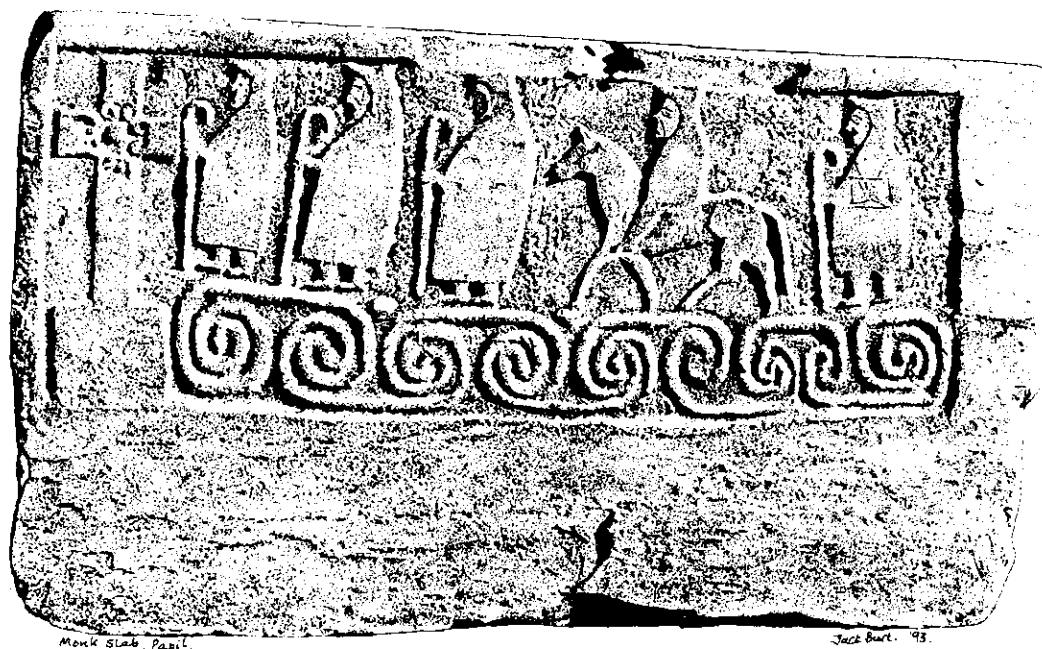

Fig. 5. Papil III (drawn by Jack Burt).

The free-standing cross on a square base is perhaps the most interesting feature of this slab. The cross rising from a base was, as noted above, a feature of Papil I, and a similar type of cross appears on some Pictish cross-slabs, for example at St Vigeans and Fowlis Wester. The origin of the cross potent on a base could possibly again lie in Byzantine art, where such crosses (on a stepped base) appear on coins, for example of Heraclius (610-41), one of whose coins was used as the centrepiece of an Anglo-Saxon pendant, as Lionard noted (1961, 115).

Crosses on bases occur at Iona, for example on stones 42, 43 and 47 (RCAHMS, 1982, 185-7), where they are dated to the late C8th or C9th.

Papil IV

The final stone from Papil to be considered calls for little comment. The design comprises an incised cross potent surmounted by a double scroll. The cross type is common in Ireland, and the double scroll motif can be seen in a variant form (flanking the shank rather than the head) on the well-known slab from Reask, Co Kerry, of the C7th (Laing and Laing, 1992, Fig 173, page 167)).

Fig. 6. Papil IV (rubbing after Moar & Stewart, 1943-44).

Discussion

Having looked at the Papil Stones individually, it is to be noted that, despite Pictish features in their decoration, the stones point to strong influence from Ireland. Papil II displays a type of cross absent in Pictland, but clearly present in Dál Riada as well as in Ireland. While neither Papil I nor II have exact counterparts in Ireland or Dál Riada, there are elements in their decoration that point in that direction.

The question of date is a difficult one. Papil II is perhaps the easiest, as it belongs to the C9th or more probably C10th. Papil IV is probably the earliest of the stones, and would fit a C8th or even C7th date. The two shallow-relief slabs are more problematical. Despite

elements in Papil I which can be matched in the Book of Durrow, and which might therefore point to a C7th date, it seems extremely unlikely that the slab is as early. If the bird-men are contemporary with the rest of the carvings on the slab, a date in the C9th is suggested by the axes they carry, which are of a type not known as early as the C7th. If the sculptor was basing his designs on a manuscript model, which might be suggested by the linearity of the design and the Durrow-like lion, then the model might have been antique when the stone was carved. No figural work can be dated with any certainty before the C8th in Celtic Britain or Ireland, with the possible exception of some crudely incised outline figures, for example on the Balleyvourney slab from Co Cork. Both Papil I and Papil III share features in common with a group of slabs from Co Donegal, notably the stones from Fahan Mura, Carndonagh (discussed in Laing and Laing, 1990, 46) and Drumhallagh (Archl Survey of Co Donegal, no 1551). Although assigned to the C7th by Henry, Harbison has recently put forward a convincing argument for a date in the C9th for them (1989, 59).

The likeliest interpretation of the Papil Stones is perhaps provided by the placename Papil itself. It belongs to a well-known group of placenames in the Northern Isles containing the Norse element *papi*, derived from *papar*, "hermit", the Norse name for Irish-Scottish ecclesiastics (Wainwright, 1962, 100). Papil should be seen not as a Pictish monastic site, but a Dalriadic Scottish one in which, not surprisingly, some Pictish influence was apparent in art. Given the growing belief that the Book of Durrow was produced on Iona, the Papil lion should be seen not as a Pictish model for the manuscript, but as a Dalriadic design produced under Pictish influence. In the light of all this, the rectilinear planning of the Papil vallum perhaps echoes the layout of the model, Iona, itself.

Lloyd Laing.

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hilton of caoboll: a mysterious woman

Pictish art has presented us with countless frustrating puzzles, and the Hilton of Cadboll Stone is no exception; here I investigate the enigmatic hunt-scene depicted in the middle portion of the stone (see the front cover of the Journal). We know that hunt-scenes were common subject matter for the Pictish artist, and in fact, the scene is very like another at Aberlemno, well over 85 miles away to the south of Cadboll; on this roadside stone the two horn-blowers occupy the top right hand corner, while armed horsemen chase deer off the edge of the stone. The principal difference is what makes our scene so interesting: whereas the Hilton of Cadboll Stone lacks the Aberlemno standing figure of David, it does portray the very rare sight of a woman on horseback (1).

This woman is recognisable as such not because of her long patterned hair (this was also a common style for men of the time), but because she is sitting side-saddle on her horse. Behind her the outline of another mount can just be seen, and it was pointed out in 1959 that the bearded profile of a man is visible to the left of the woman's head (Stevenson, 1959, 41-2). This is by no means definite, in my opinion, but it must be admitted that a special quadrangular recess placed behind the lady's head seems to serve no other purpose than to enable this further detail to be added.

Who is this lady? Why is she so important that her male companion is almost totally obscured? And does she offer us the answer to the mystery of the mirror and comb symbol, carved immediately to her left?

The answer lies, I think, partly in her hands. When the stone was gifted to the National Museum in Edinburgh in 1921, J Romilly Allen commented that the rider ". . appears to be holding something in her hands in addition to the reins" (1922, 62). This puzzle was taken up again by R B K Stevenson, who ventured an educated guess at an outsize penannular brooch; he challenged the previous assumption of what were the hands and what was the second rein, and described the possibility of there being a disc-ended brooch with long horizontal pin placed to keep the lady's cloak fastened (1959, 41).

This suggestion, although termed very plainly a mere *possibility*, unfortunately appears to have been accepted automatically by the archaeological establishment as the last word on

the matter. The official Museum plaque and publication state categorically that "The lady . . is wearing a penannular brooch" (Close-Brooks, 1981, Fig 31).

I think this is probably quite wrong. If she is wearing a brooch, why make it so implausibly large - no difficulty was experienced in carving an appropriately sized and positioned penannular brooch on a figure on the Cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice, or on the broken cross-shaft at Kells, both in Ireland (Allen, 1894, 164). If the brooch was to be intentionally emphasised as a symbol it would not be characteristic of Pictish sculpture to see it superimposed in this way on a naturalistic figure; instead it would be placed adjacent to the woman, like the mirror and comb.

I would suggest an alternative: I think the object may be a torc, that most ancient of Celtic adornments, which often signified chiefship. This would account for the circular shape ending in large knobbed terminals. The horizontal bar I think is the second rein after all, and the vertical one I can only explain in the same way that Stevenson did - as an edge of the mantle behind. The woman's hands, not visible, would be found at the end of each rein.

I consider the torc to be appropriate because it could act as a very simple symbol of royal blood, demonstrating immediately to the contemporary eye the identity of the woman. This is not a symbol in the normal sense, and is quite at home in its place in the woman's hands.

The question still remains: who is she? Assuming for now that Anthony Jackson's theory of marriage stones is true, we could imagine that we are observing a bride (2). It will immediately be pointed out that no other stone depicts a bride (3) - but perhaps this woman was worth celebrating. The unorthodox addition of an obviously insignificant male behind her supports this theory: no marriage is complete without the groom, however special the bride (4). Perhaps the family of this woman commissioned the stone to record the marriage, in the customary way, and to honour their favourite daughter (for what she was favoured we are never likely to know). By her torc we know that she was of a chiefly family, but this can safely be assumed in any case, as no lesser clan would have the power or wealth to erect so impressive a stone (5).

This leads us on to the next problem - the mirror and comb. These are traditionally assumed to be connected with women in some way. Recently it has been argued that men were equally in need of such implements with their long braided hair (Adron, 1991, 42), but in answer we have seen Fortescue's useful reference in PAS Journal 2, 13, to Bede II, 11. Here,

Pope Boniface writes c625 to King Edwin of Northumbria, offering him a tunic and cloak as a motivation to convert to Christianity. To Queen Æthelburh, however, as an incentive to try to convert her husband, he sends: "... a silver mirror, together with a gold and ivory comb" (Bede, 1990, 125). This makes it plain beyond a doubt that a mirror and comb were considered appropriate gifts for a lady, and not a man.

So, the symbol is relevant to women. How? It is here that I wish to discount Anthony Jackson's explanation that the mirror and comb symbol represents the giving of bridewealth by the wealthier tribes; according to him, wife-givers are superior to wife receivers, and when a chiefly tribe accepts a wife it redresses the balance by offering a large bridewealth. However, when the chiefly tribe *provides* the wife, the lesser clans: "Just acknowledge their inferiority and do not try to equalise by giving significant bridewealth payments, as this would challenge the authority structure" (1984, 89). We have established that the chiefly tribe which erected the Cadboll Stone provided the wife in this case (why celebrate the marriage of a lesser woman into your clan?) - so bridewealth was not provided, and the mirror and comb means something else. Perhaps it signifies the giving of a royal woman into another lineage (6).

Or perhaps not. Any thoughts?

Catriona Black.

Footnotes

(1) The Aberlemno roadside stone has been cited as the "prototype" of the Hilton of Cadboll hunt scene by Stevenson (1959, 41). However, it cannot be proved that it was not in fact the other way around: the symbols on the Aberlemno Stone (NB the same as on Cadboll) appear to be more intricately patterned, a likely indication of a later date.
(2) Jackson's theory (1984) is that the Picts, a (possibly) matrilinear society, felt the need to record the various lineages of their tribes, primarily in order to work out the successors to their throne. Each symbol therefore represents one tribe and pairs denote their intermarriage.
(3) But see my paper "Women in Pictish Sculpture" in PAS Newsletter 8, Summer 1991, 5-16 (Ed).
(4) At the same time the obscured rider is significant in his insignificance: if he was of no consequence he would not be there, cluttering up the scene. It was clearly imperative that he be included despite his obvious lack of individual importance.
　　Prof Leslie Alcock has suggested that the man riding parallel to the Cadboll woman represents the chief groom "... an important officer in an early medieval Celtic court" (1993, 232) (Ed).
(5) It is also pointed out by R W Beck (1992, 141) from his close study of the horses of the Pictish monuments that the woman's mount is a specialised riding horse, as distinct from ordinary working horses of the time. Moreover, he finds that the lady's "... is easily the best

horse, from an equestrian's point of view, of the three we can see on this stone". The supports the assumption of her aristocratic status.

(6) It should be noted here that the intermarriage of two important clans is also possible, but in this case it would be unlikely that the royal husband be so hidden on the stone.

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the hilton of cadboll torc - some thoughts

Catriona Black's suggestion in the preceding article that the female figure on the Hilton of Cadboll Stone is holding a torc is an interesting one, but a few points spring to mind:

1) It is probably not the only torc depicted on a Pictish stone. Meigle 22 shows a figure with fantastic hair and legs who is sitting in a cross-legged pose and should probably be identified as the Celtic god Cernunnos (Ritchie, 1989, 61). The Meigle figure is similar to the example on the Gundestrup Cauldron which is clearly wearing a torc (Bergquist and Taylor, 1987). Although it is not entirely clear, there are traces that the Meigle figure is also wearing something around the neck, in all likelihood a torc. Interestingly, the Gundestrup Cernunnos is also holding a torc in his right hand in a manner similar to Black's suggestion concerning Hilton of Cadboll.

Fig. 7. Meigle 22 (Tom E Gray, by courtesy of Historic Scotland).

2) The splendid La Tène torcs of the C5th and C4th BC are normally found in female graves. During later periods, however, torcs are male items and there is no evidence that women wore them after the C4th BC. A torc is therefore an unlikely possession for a Pictish woman of the C8th AD, but if one accepts Black's interpretation it could be a gift for her future husband.

3) Black argues that the torc is a symbol of chiefship but this is contradicted by the prime source for torcs in Early Historic Scotland, the poem Y Gododdin. Verses B.90 and B.91 both start by mentioning *trychant eurdorchog* - "three hundred gold-torqued warriors" (Jarman, 1988, 58-9). If all the three hundred warriors mentioned in the poem wore torcs it is unlikely that they were a symbol of chiefship, though they were probably indicative of some form of social status.

4) It has recently been argued that two large silver penannular rings with expanded terminals from the late C7th or early C8th Norrie's Law hoard are actually torcs (Laing and Laing, 1990, 135). Though there are difficulties with this explanation, it is probable that these items represent a mixture of Celtic and Roman influences and are a cross between torcs and penannular brooches (Cessford in prep). They would have been worn in pairs, as the two examples from Norrie's Law help to confirm, on the chest as the Roman military decorations (*torquata*) and penannular brooches were. The item depicted on Cadboll is, however, quite unlike the objects from the hoard.

<div align="right">Craig Cessford.</div>

References

Bergquist, A & Taylor, T	-	The origin of the Gundestrup cauldron (Antiquity 61, 1987), 10-24.
Cessford, C	-	Torques and the Gododdin poem - an archaeological perspective (in prep).
Jarman, A O H	-	Aneirin: Y Gododdin Britain's Oldest Heroic Poem (Gomer Press, Llandysul, 1988).
Laing, L & Laing, J	-	Celtic Britain and Ireland AD 200-800: The Myth of the Dark Ages (Irish Academic Press, 1990).
Ritchie, A	-	Picts (HMSO, 1989).

the torc and chieftainship

I am delighted to see that my ideas have stimulated debate. I welcome Craig Cessford's contribution, but wish to argue with his third point, regarding the evidence provided by Y Gododdin; I look forward to reading his fuller article on the subject.

Can Y Gododdin really be taken as a prime source for torcs in early Scotland? Apart from the doubts that have been cast on the poem's historical validity (Dumville, 1988), its frequent reference to torcs is far from illuminating, and is open to a whole range of interpretation.

Admittedly, Cessford's "Three hundred gold-torqued warriors" would seem to be an exaggerated amount of chiefs, but of course this style of poetry is given to exaggeration. "The son of Nwython slew / Of the gold-torqued / A hundred princes" (B.98): does this mean that all of the gold-torqued were princes, or do we simply have to discount these descriptions as the creations of a poet with imagination?

I would also add that every time gold torcs are mentioned there appears to be a reason for it. The word *eurdorchawg* is loaded with meaning; it would seem to imply a higher status for each of these men, and at the very least that they are of the aristocratic class (Charles-Edwards, 1978, 57). In B.22 Llif is ". . the gold-torqued warrior" and "The princely hero". In A.42 Beli is "A lord above the bloodshed" and then ". . a gold torqued ox". These are just some examples of the link between torcs and high status in Y Gododdin.

So, in a nutshell, it is risky to view Y Gododdin as hard historical evidence, but if we examine it closely we can find much evidence to support the connection between the gold torc and chieftainship.

Catriona Black.

References

Charles-Edwards, T M   -   The Authenticity of the Gododdin: An Historian's View in Bromwich, Rachel & Jones, R B (Eds) Astudiaethau ar yr Hengerdd (Cardiff, 1978).

Dumville, David   -   Early Welsh Poetry: problems of historicity in Roberts, Brynley F (Ed) Early Welsh Poetry (Aberystwyth, 1988).

aRchive RepoRt

A very welcome cash donation has been received from one of our keenest members - Adèle Stewart. This is much appreciated and steps will be taken to use the gift to fill a gap in the Archive.

PAS Archive

A comprehensive list of the books/booklets held has been prepared from the Archive files and is kept up to date. It is displayed in a red folder marked "Library List" and is available for consultation by members at Society meetings.

In order that members should have an idea of the scope covered by the Archive files I have added particulars of the filing system to the red folder. The system has been built up piecemeal to meet the needs of the collection as it grew, and it is capable of further expansion. A copy is attached to this report.

Future of PAS Archive

The Archive has now reached the stage where it can begin to be useful. One of our objectives is to publish, in the context of the Dark Ages, a comprehensive bibliography of works on the Picts, the proto-Picts, and their neighbours. Our Historiographer, Dr Jack Burt, and your Archivist have already started work on this worthwhile but formidable task and good progress is being made. Meanwhile, in the next PAS Journal I shall include an article on "Suggested Reading for the Beginner", which will help to cater for the needs of all the new members that PAS is now attracting. A more advanced list will also be prepared.

Eric H Nicoll.

Additions to the Library

|		
Alcock, Leslie	-	The neighbours of the Picts: Angles, Britons and Scots at war and at home (Groam House Lecture 4, 1993).
Atterton, Julian	-	The Last Harper (Richard Drew Publishing, Glasgow, 1987).*
Flanagan, Laurence	-	The Antiquities of Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Tourist Board, 1986).
Fojut, N & Pringle, D	-	The Ancient Monuments of Shetland (HMSO, 1993)
Gibson, Colin	-	This is Our Heritage, An Illustrated Journey Around Angus (Angus District Libraries, 1991).
MacDonald, Aidan	-	Curadán, Boniface and the early church at Rosemarkie (Groam House Lecture 3, 1992).
Newton, Norman S	-	Southend: A Guide for Visitors (Highlands & Islands Development Board, 1988).
Peterson, Eddie	-	In and Around Strathearn, Perthshire (Copyright E Peterson, 1992).
Ramsay, Dorothy M	-	The Flame Within (Pittenhope Publishing, Glenrothes, 1993).*
Ramskou, Thorkild	-	Prehistoric Denmark (National Museum, Copenhagen, 1970).
Ross, Anne	-	Pagan Celtic Britain (Constable, 1992).
Youngson, Peter	-	The Long Road - A Driver's Guide to Jura (The Dolphin Press, Glenrothes, 1987).

* Fiction.

Erratum: The book Scotland's Native Horse by Robert W Beck, which was included in the Library List on page 36 of PAS Journal 2 (Autumn 1992), is not held in the PAS Archive.

List of PAS Archive Files (Academic/Cultural)

Subject	Code	Subfile	Description
ARCHAEOLOGY	A		General
		A/C	Cemeteries/Graves
		A/S	Settlements/Forts
ART	AR		Art/Artists/Artwork
BIOGRAPHY	B		
CARDS	C	C/C	Commercial
		C/P	Postal
		C/S	Stoneline Designs
CELT/CELTIC	CE		
CONFERENCES	CO		
COUNCIL FOR SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGY	CSA		
CRAFTS	CR		General
		CR/F	Finlaystone
ETHNOLOGY/ETHNOGRAPHY	E		
EXHIBITIONS	EX		
FOLKLORE/LEGEND	F		
HISTORIOGRAPHY	H		General
		H/L	Historiography (litho)
HISTORIC SCOTLAND	HS		
INSCRIPTIONS/OGHAM	I		
IONA	IO		
IRELAND	IR		
LIBRARY	L		General
		L/B	Bibliography; lists; reviews
		L/BO	Book/booklet collection
		L/P	Pamphlet/leaflet collection
MANUSCRIPTS	M		
METALWORK	ME		
MUSEUMS	MU		General
		MU/G	Groam Hse, Rosemarkie
		MU/N	National, of Scotland
PAPERS	PA		Papers; lectures; reprints
PICTS/PICTISH	P		General
		P/A	Pictish animals
		P/C	Pictish cross-slabs
		P/S	Pictish symbols
PICTISH ARTS SOCIETY	PAS		General
		PAS/L	Lectures; transcripts
		PAS/M	Members interests
		PAS/N	Newsletters; Journals
		PAS/P	Publications

Subject	Code	Subfile	Description
PRESS CUTTINGS	PC		
PHOTOGRAPHS	PH		
PLACENAMES	PN		
ROMAN	R		
ROYAL COMMISSION	RC		
STONES	S		General
		S/P	Prehistory
		S/R	Rock carvings
		S/S	Specific
SCOTLAND/SCOTTISH	SC		
SLIDES	SL		General
		SL/T	Transparencies (held)
SOCIETIES	SO		General
		SO/A	Antiquaries of Scotland
VIKING	V		
WEMYSS CAVES	W		
WHITHORN	WH		

Ackergill.   J. Burt
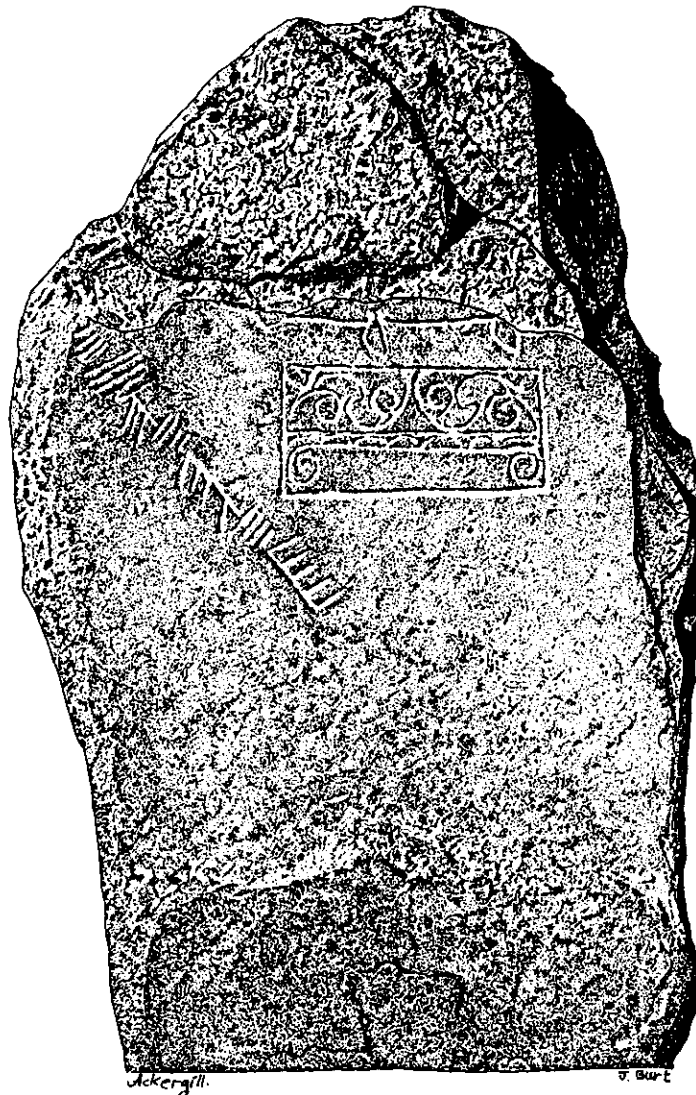
BOOK REVIEWS

The Picts and the Scots by Lloyd and Jenny Laing (Alan Sutton, 1993). HB; 172 ps.
£16.99.

This is the first to appear of a number of comprehensive studies of the Picts by various
well-known authorities which have for some time been rumoured to be in preparation. The
Laings are first into print, and it will be fascinating to see the different approaches and
emphases that Charles Thomas and Anna Ritchie bring to the subject when their books are
published. The Picts and the Scots is the first study that gives equal weight to the two of
Scotland's Dark Age peoples living north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus, and this is very much in
accordance with the way the ideas of archaeologists and art historians have been moving in
recent years. The relations between the two nations of the Picts and the Scots were long,
complex and close, though certainly often far from friendly; it is no longer possible or
desirable to treat both in isolation, and there is much in the book that serves to emphasise this
point.

The Introduction brings out the fact that only a few decades ago such a study as this,
tentative though many of its conclusions inevitably are, would have been unthinkable. A
glance at such past classics as The Problem of the Picts and Henderson's The Picts shows just
how blank the record was in many major areas of Scotland's Dark Age culture - settlements,
burials, everyday artefacts and other fields were truly dark until very recently. The
Introduction puts it succinctly: "The picture is still tantalizingly inadequate, but thanks to
research carried out in recent years it is at least possible to attempt the survey that this book
represents" (vii).

The Picts and the Scots is a synthesis of current knowledge, written for the general
reader, but just as useful to the specialist. If much that was unknown about the early historic
peoples is now at least beginning to come into focus, there remains an immense amount of
work to do, and the authors would be the first to admit that this book, excellent as it is as an
introduction to the current state of Pictish and Scottish studies, is a first sketch rather than a
completed portrait of the culture of our distant ancestors. It is this sort of synthesis, allowing
an overview of present knowledge, which shows how many questions remain to be answered,
and helps to point the way to future research.

After an Introduction which summarises the historical and archaeological backgrounds
of both peoples, the book is divided into four chapters dealing with the Picts, the Scots, and
the everyday life and the art of the two nations.

The chapter on the Picts takes the reader on a brisk tour of current knowledge, dealing
with the rise of antiquarian interest in them, their (violent) history, their language, and their
religions, Pagan and Christian. The authors have not fought shy of tackling the mystery of the
Newton Stone inscription, around which an air of Victorian eccentricity still hangs, nor of
speculating in a fascinating way on the clues to the Picts' pre-Christian beliefs and practices.

The Scots' chapter starts back in Ireland with Prehistoric links between the adjacent
parts of Scotland and Ireland, and proceeds through raids on Roman Britain and the
colonisation of the kingdom of Dál Riada to a study of the early Irish Church in both
countries, due weight being given to the pre-eminence, spiritual and cultural, of Iona, though
other monastic sites are touched on.

I would class the chapters on everyday life and art as the most valuable and original in
the book. In Celtic society "everyday life" included warfare, as well as trade, crafts, pastimes,
house types and so on, and these and other topics are all covered, with the evidence of the
carved stones being used to illuminate the picture to good effect. There is still far more

known about high status sites - forts, brochs, souterrains - than about the peasant dwellings of the average Pict or Scot, but some characteristic workaday artefacts can now be identified. Many were used equally by both peoples. Under forts, Dunadd is dealt with in detail. The Laings - in contrast to the Royal Commission - see no reason to ascribe the boar and Ogham carvings in the fort to the Picts, and are also prepared to suggest that they may be very early - C5th and C7th respectively.

The final chapter, on art, is my favourite, and is perhaps the one where the authors' enthusiasm shines out most clearly. The Introduction pulls no punches about the brilliance of our Early Mediaeval art: "The Picts and Scots between them were responsible for some of the greatest art to survive . ." from Dark Age Europe (x). Any study of Pictish art must start with the mystery of the symbols, and there is an enlightening discussion here about their possible origin, date and decline. The Laings favour an early origin date, and suggest this also for the Norrie's Law silverwork, about which there is continuing controversy. Pictish animals are dealt with in depth, and their possible precursors pursued over a wide area, while sculpture is also discussed in detail. Less space is devoted to the art of Dàl Riada, from which fewer outstanding works are recorded, but it is good to know that the Book of Kells, the Book of Durrow, and the Hunterston Brooch seem likely to have originated in the territory of the Scots, within which Columba's monastery of Iona served as the greatest cultural powerhouse in the Celtic world.

This book has aimed for high production values, but has not always hit the mark. Illustrations in black and white and colour are plentiful, but of curiously uneven quality. Many of the photographs are excellent - one might mention some by the PAS' own Tom E Gray - while others are small, dark and smudged-looking. The line drawings too are of variable quality, and some are frankly poor, especially those which, for no obvious reason, are redrawn from works published by other authors. It is good to see pictures of some of the lesser known Dark Age artefacts - the Ogham-inscribed knife handle that some wandering Pictish pilgrim dropped in Norfolk, for instance (Fig 12, 21), or the fine mount decorated with a wolf found with the Westness Brooch on Rousay (Fig 117, 144) - but the labelling of some of the pictures is at times careless. Fig 99, showing the Glamis Manse Stone, describes the incised mirror on the back as a "ring symbol" (130), while the colour plate 7, labelled as showing Ardestie Souterrain, in fact shows the line of small stone houses by the structure and misses it out almost completely.

A design touch I like is the use of two pages of the Book of Deer to decorate the inside front and back covers, but I suspect that a certain carelessness of approach (shown, for instance, by a fair number of spelling mistakes in the text), may suggest that The Picts and the Scots was rather rushed into print.

Despite these minor points, this book is well worthy of any Pictish enthusiast's attention, and I am certainly far from being so overwhelmed by a growing stream of publications on our period of interest as not to be grateful to the authors for presenting us with a most useful overview of the history, archaeology and art of the Picts and the Scots. Thanks too for the mention of the PAS on page 167.

Niall M Robertson.

The neighbours of the Picts: Angles, Britons and Scots at war and at home by Leslie Alcock (Groam House Museum Trust, 1993). PB; 48 ps. £3.95.

This booklet, Prof Leslie Alcock's Groam House Lecture for 1992, can be strongly recommended to anyone who is seriously interested in finding out about the historical context of the Picts. Those who have read Prof Alcock's previous work will know that he is at pains to de-exoticise the Picts, to rescue them from the freak-show of Early Mediaeval history. In his on-going attempt to overturn what he has labelled the "Foul Hordes Paradigm" he urges us not to focus too narrowly on the Picts, but instead to place them in the broader context of the other Barbarian nations of north-west Europe. This essay accomplishes just that by offering a comparison between the Picts and the peoples with whom they shared northern Britain: their fellow Celts - the indigenous Britons and the immigrant Scots - and the Germanic Angles of Northumbria. An exploration of the similarities and differences between these neighbours will, Prof Alcock maintains: ". . help us to understand better what it meant to be a Pict" (5).

The author admits that a comprehensive survey is a Herculean task, well beyond the scope of a public lecture. He limits himself, therefore, to the period after the mid C6th, by which time all the players were already on the scene, and avoids altogether the large and important topic of religion (hence no mention of sculpture), pointing out that the Church is an obvious choice for a future Groam House Lecture.

Although Prof Alcock's study incorporates some historical and linguistic material, the great bulk of his evidence is archaeological. His five chapters cover warfare and fortifications (Ch 2), settlement (Ch 3), and long-distance trade and luxury metalwork (Ch 4). Also included are a brief "outline history" of the period (Ch 1) and a closing section on the practices of kingship, which Alcock considers to be the key to understanding social organisation in North Britain. He leaves it to others to offer a similar treatment using art historical or documentary sources.

The author presents his arguments clearly and concisely, providing full documentation in footnotes for those who wish to pursue the material in greater detail. He covers a great deal of ground and gives the reader much to ponder. Sometimes it is the similarities in material cultures rather than the differences which are more striking. How significant was all this to the peoples concerned, who were clearly in no doubt as to their ethnic affiliation? The author is at times provocative - even if they ultimately come to reject his arguments about the massive silver chains, readers may well be given pause for thought by Alcock's assertion that: ". . a Pictish attribution seems unreasonable " (41).

This most professional-looking volume exhibits even higher production values than its two predecessors: a sharper typeface, foot- rather than end-notes, abundant line drawings and three pages of colour illustrations - and represents excellent value for £3.95. It is virtually free of misprints. One minor niggle is the occasional slight incongruity between captions and figures, the latter mostly reproduced from previous publications, eg the caption to Fig 15 does not seem to correspond to the relative position of the pictures. This, however, is a small point, and in each case it is easy enough to work out what is intended.

The author's contention that by focusing too closely on the Picts we are in danger of mistaking the wood for the trees is neatly illustrated by the book's cover. Readers might be forgiven for mistaking the panel, which depicts a mounted warrior in profile above a knot of zoomorphic interlace, for a long-lost Pictish slab. In fact, it is a stele from Thuringia in Germany. The Picts did not have the monopoly on this image but, if in chauvinistic mood, the Pictish enthusiast could claim that, on the basis of this example, the Picts were better at drawing horses!

Katherine Forsyth.

Neighbours of the Picts can be obtained from Elizabeth Marshall, Hon Curator, Groam House Museum, High Street, Rosemarkie, Ross-shire, IV10 8UF at £3.95 + 40p for p & p.

The ancient monuments of Shetland by Noel Fojut and Denys Pringle, edited by Chris Tabraham (HMSO, 1993). PB; 64 ps. £3.95.

Times have changed since the old days of the uniform blue Ancient Monument guidebook with dry text and four or five black and white photos; this popular introduction to The ancient monuments of Shetland, with its use of modern graphics and colour illustrations on nearly every page, is clearly designed to appeal to the modern tourist market. There is nothing wrong with that, of course, and many will find this kind of user-friendly but informative publication an asset in the field or on their bookshelf.

Shetland's Ancient Monuments are justly famous, but it is good to see sites not in the care of Historic Scotland covered here too; with discussion of the historical and environmental background to the visible remains, this book is an effective summary of the impact of human beings on these islands over some six millennia.

The photographs, many of which show the monuments in the spectacular landscapes so characteristic of Shetland, are generally of high quality. I am less happy with a number of plans, reconstructions, etc, drawn in coloured pencil, but one showing the original appearance of the Staneydale "Temple" gives a good impression of what must have been an awe-inspiring building. The accompanying discussion of what its function might have been is intriguing, though inevitably inconclusive. The fact that the "Temple" is a component of one of the well-preserved Prehistoric landscapes that stretch for miles on end over large parts of the islands is brought out, and this is probably the most remarkable feature of Shetland for the archaeologist. The "Temple" is perhaps the finest monument of the Neolithic or Bronze Ages to survive in Shetland - in interesting contrast to Orkney with its many chambered cairns and megaliths - but Shetland comes into its own with spectacular Iron Age fortifications such as the Brochs of Mousa and Clickhimin.

The interface between Iron Age times and the at least protohistoric Pictish centuries is as yet a mysterious one in Shetland, as elsewhere; the text states: ". . for the period around the end of the Iron Age and the start of the Dark Ages, about AD 500, it is hard to identify any houses, and only one burial [a square cairn found at Sandwick, Unst in 1978 - Ed] is known" (30). Pictish Shetland is dealt with in only two pages, and no monuments from these centuries - apart from some minor structures at Jarlshof - are in guardianship. The St Ninian's Isle hoard is, of course, mentioned and some of its pieces illustrated. There are important Early Christian carved stones from Shetland, not shown here, and the authors put forward the surely rather controversial suggestion that the church sites they were found at: ". . suggest a *parish structure* [my italics - Ed] established in the heart of the best farmland, and apparently serving the local people" (31-2). And this before the arrival of the Vikings.

The Scandinavian takeover of the islands, from what may have been a ". . demoralised or numerically much-reduced" (33) Pictish population, is undocumented, but seems to have been swift and comprehensive. Considering the pride that Shetlanders take in their Norse heritage, the fame of the settlement at Jarlshof should not blind one to the fact that surprisingly few Viking structures have been excavated on Shetland, and even fewer are still visible. Shetland was part of the Earldom of Orkney, and the Scandinavian impact on the islands is well covered here.

By the later Middle Ages, the Northern Isles were increasingly within the orbit of mainland Scotland, and came to be ruled by a notoriously tyrannical offshoot of the Scottish royal house. These Robber-Earls and their henchmen had a discriminating taste in architecture, however, and the castles of Scalloway and Muness - the latter the most northerly in the British Isles - survive as witness.

The final part of the book bring Shetland's story up to modern times, with chapters on the rise of Lerwick and on Fort Charlotte - a fine example of an C18th artillery fortification, now rather swamped by the buildings of the modern town, which has never yet seen a shot fired in anger.

Those visiting Shetland will find this book a helpful one to take along, and its combination of attractive presentation with interesting text make it a concise and valuable introduction to these islands - a format it might be hoped will be followed for other areas too.

Niall M Robertson.

LOGIE ELPHINSTONE 1   JACK BURT
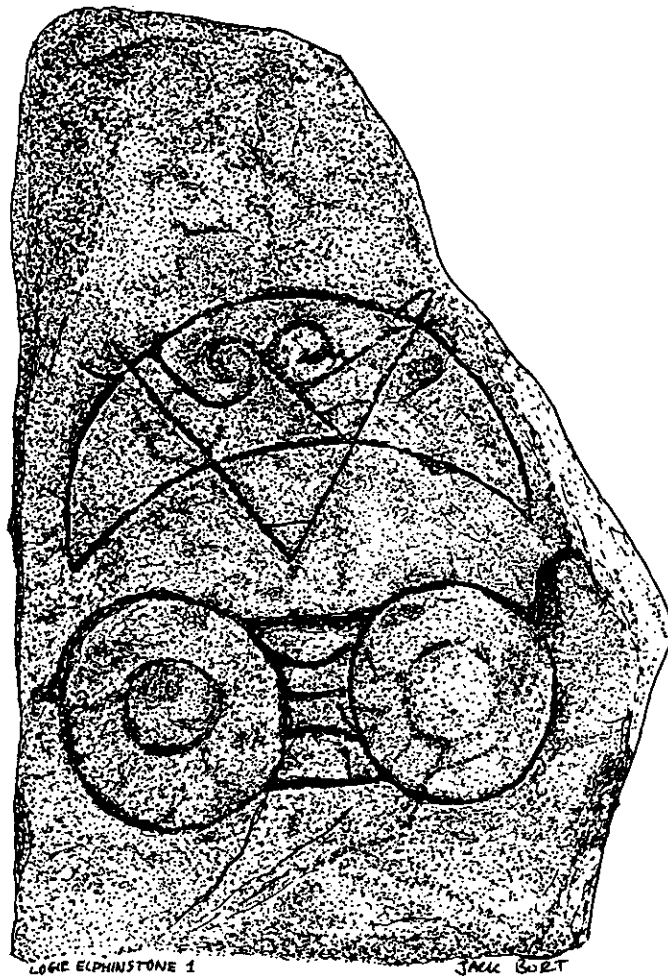
ECMS - A Facsimile Edition

All serious enthusiasts for Pictish culture are familiar with The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland by J Romilly Allen and Joseph Anderson, a mighty tome over four inches thick which, ninety years after its production, is still an indispensable reference source for students and scholars. The work was commissioned by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1890 and published in 1903 in a limited edition of 400 copies. Members may recall that Marianna Lines published a photocopy of a letter written by J R Allen to Joseph Anderson in PAS Newsletter 9, Winter 1991, 18-9, in which he suggested a photosurvey of sculptured stones. Marianna took the date of the letter to be 1901, but a close scrutiny and comparison of dates in edited out parts of the letter reveal that the date was in fact 1881, making the letter an even more significant part of the story of ECMS.

Now, a little more than one hundred years since the original commissioning, our member David Henry of Pinkfoot Press in Angus is producing a facsimile edition of ECMS. He tells me that because the original had generous margins and good-sized print he has been able to reduce the page size, and by splitting the contents into two volumes has produced a more compact easy-to-handle edition. The binding is such that the books will open flat, convenient for photocopying and carrying on field trips.

The new edition boasts a comprehensive introduction by that doyenne of Pictish scholars, Dr Isabel Henderson, whose book The Picts (published 1967) has, with more recent works, had such a tremendous influence on Pictish studies. Her wide-ranging critical appraisal examines the impact of ECMS, and interestingly explores the background and character of the two authors.

For this retired professional photographer, who has photographed more than two hundred of the stones, J Romilly Allen's story is fascinating. At one time I thought that he had done all the photography in ECMS, learning later that he co-ordinated the efforts of many professionals and amateurs around the country; indeed, he suggested that amateurs could play a major part in the project. He had some difficulty in finding photographers with the requisite skills, as he wrote in his report to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (PSAS XXVIII, 1893-94, 153) : "If it had been possible to find someone who combined a knowledge of archaeology with the skill of an accomplished photographer, and also was a man of resource in devising special expedients to meet each difficulty, he might have been entrusted to carry out the whole of the work". He continued wryly: "Unfortunately, however, such a person was not forthcoming . .". A century later I feel a little inadequate!

This publication of a facsimile edition of ECMS is a momentous event which has the blessing of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and merits the support of all serious students of Dark Age monuments, especially PAS members. David Henry is to be congratulated on his initiative in producing this edition, which is as meticulously produced as was the original. It will be launched in October, appropriately in the heartland of the Picts, at the Meffan Institute in Forfar, where Angus District Libraries and Museums Service will be putting on an exhibition based on the Angus stones, to coincide with the event.

Tom E Gray.

Letter

43 Raynham Street
Ashton-under-Lyne
Lancashire
OL6 9PB

11 August 1993

Sir,

In the Spring 1993 edition of the <u>PAS Journal</u>, Graeme Cruickshank raised a number of interesting points relating to my earlier article "The Gododdin and the Picts" (PASJ 2, 2-4). Graeme notes that Joseph Clancy's translation of <u>Y Gododdin</u> implies that Pictish forces had at some time fought alongside the Anglo-Saxons against the Britons, an implication which bears not only on my argument that there was a measure of amicability in Picto-British relations during the C6th, but which might seem rather incongruous in the light of Northumbria's aggression towards the Picts in the following century.

Clancy's translation is based on the so-called "B" text of <u>Y Gododdin</u>, which is regarded as being the older of the two extant versions; in my article I used Jarman's translation of the slightly later "A" text. However, both texts pose significant problems when the section highlighted by Graeme is reached. Prof Jarman notes that the "A" text at this point is "in an unsatisfactory state", that the "B" text "contains a number of obscurities", and that the latter's reference to Saxons, Irish and Picts apparently acting in alliance "does not relate easily to the main subject of <u>Y Gododdin</u>", which is, after all, a poem about the Britons fighting the Angles. On the other hand, I believe that we should allow for the possibility that the "B" text may here be referring to actual wars fought long before the C6th campaign described in the poem, in which case it need not be improbable that the Gododdin Britons had once fought the Picts, and that the latter had once been allies of the Anglo-Saxons. Indeed, although my article addressed the matter of friendly relations between the Picts and Britons, I think it inherently likely that their relationship was ever a volatile one. Both peoples functioned as typical heroic barbarian societies and, despite cultural links and temporary alliances, their political dealings must always have been conducted in an atmosphere of mutual distrust.

I agree with Graeme that the "B" text's reference to a possible Pictish-Northumbrian alliance has implications for the image of mutual antagonism which characterised the era of Dunnichen. How shall we reconcile these two apparently conflicting images? We could, perhaps, recall that the same two peoples had certainly fought as allies during the infamous "Barbarian Conspiracy" of AD 367, which hastened the end of Roman Britain. However, the Saxons on that occasion were still sea-raiders from mainland Germany and were not yet settled in northern Britain in significant numbers. For myself, I prefer to believe that the Picts shared with the Northumbrians the same volatile relationship that they had with the Britons. Thus, in the late C6th *some* Picts may have joined the Gododdin in their attack on Northumbria, while others may have welcomed the Britons' defeat. Similarly, various groups of "Saxons and Irish and Picts" may at times have combined in wars against Gododdin. Whether we should infer from the "B" text that this co-operation amounted to anything more formal than approximately simultaneous raids is another matter. Indeed, there may be no need to interpret the poem's grouping of these three peoples as an indication that they had in fact acted in unison: their conflicts with Gododdin may have occurred as separate events over a wide span of years. I tend to think of the C7th as an altogether different scenario, when fragmented polities began to coalesce into large ethnic kingdoms such as Germanic Northumbria and Scottish Dál Riada. It would then be easier to envisage that the Picts who

may have co-operated with the Angles in the C6th were a minority, perhaps a few autonomous warbands, whose dealings had already been forgotten by the nation which faced Ecgfrith in 685.

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erratum

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Page 9, line 20 -   *for* stone 23 *read* stone 24.