contents

editorial note

Apologies are due to all those who have long awaited the publication of Journal 7. Niall Robertson the PAS Journal Editor is still working in Germany and until such time as he returns, or we find someone equally capable to fills his shoes, we envisage delays in our forthcoming publications.

With the imminent publication of A Pictish Panorama, with an extensive cross-referenced Bibliography by Jack R F Burt, the committee have been busy promoting what we hope will be the first of many books to be published on behalf of the Society.

Until Niall returns contributions for Journal 8 should be sent to -

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ᴡhat is ᴅavid ᴅoing to a ʟion?

One of the most precious icons of early Christianity among the Picts and their Insular contemporaries is that of a man with the hands on, or between, the jaws of a lion (1). This is regularly described as David <u>rending</u> (sic) the jaws of <u>the</u> lion; and reference is made to the Old Testament (OT), I Samuel 17, 34-37. In fact, translations of OT (whether Authorised or more recent) provide no support for this precise phraseology (2). Moreover, it misrepresents the actual events as related in OT; and misunderstands the significance of David's actions for a Christian (as well as for a Jewish) audience.

In fact it was Samson, an Asiatic and Classical hero of the type of Hercules, who rends the jaws of the lion, itself a typical icon of evil power, in Judges 14, 5-6 (3). For David's actions we must turn to I Samuel 17. The overall context in verses 32-54 is that David had proposed to King Saul that he should fight Goliath, the giant champion of the Philistines. Saul rejected this because David was only a shepherd boy. David replies "Your servant used to look after his father's sheep, and whenever a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the midst of the flock, I used to follow him and strike him down, and rescue it form his mouth. Your servant has killed both lion and bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them.........Yahweh rescued me from the paws of lion and bear".

While the ultimate story here is about the triumph of good over evil, as demonstrated by David's slaying of Goliath, the immediate relevance of the lambs, lions and bears is to illustrate God's saving grace at two levels: Yahweh's rescue of David from the lion(s) or bear(s); and David's rescue of the lamb(s). It would appear form this that after David himself the most important iconographic element is the lamb, rather than the lion (or bear). In keeping with this a sheep is normally present on the Pictish sculptures as well as David and a lion; and indeed the presence of the sheep is the sure indicator that we are indeed seeing David and not Samson.

Before we consider the significance of the sheep, more must be said about David himself (4). In pre-Christian times, David was considered as a "type" of the expected Messiah, and indeed as progenitor of the family from which the Messiah would come. To Christians, therefore, David was foreteller of the true Messiah, who was born of David's line, and indeed in David's royal city. For both the New Testament and the Fathers the Davidic descent of Christ was taken for granted, and David was seen as a "type" of the Christ.

Turning now to the rescued lamb, sheep or indeed, an apparently fully mature ram on some carvings (e.g. the St Andrew's sarcophagus): such imagery immediately recalls Abraham's sacrifice of his son, for which Yahweh provided a ram in place of Issac, thereby sealing his promise of salvation to the Israelites. Symbolically, this ram in turn became the lamb which was sacrificed at the Jewish Passover; and in turn the Passover lamb was replaced for all time by Christ's self-sacrifice on the cross. At one level, therefore, the lamb in the David scenes represents Christ himself.

At another level, however, the lamb reminds us of the flock of sheep which stand around Christ in the vault of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, where Christ appears as the Good Shepherd who saves the souls of the faithful form death; or similar lines of sheep, but without the central Christ figure, in the lapidary garden at Hagia Sophia, Constantinople. The parallel between David the shepherd saving a lamb, and Christ the Good Shepherd saving Christian souls, is obvious.

Given the flexibility and fertility of the mentalities of the Early Christian Fathers and their Early Medieval successors, other parallels could doubtless be developed between David, the lion or bear, and the sheep on the one hand, and on the other, Christ saving Christian souls through God's grace. One will be sufficient in the present context. It was lambs of his father's flock which David rescued. Now the flock of God consists of the souls of the Christian faithful; and these are saved by the Good Shepherd, God the Son. Thus the acts of David the shepherd foretell for a Christian the relationship between God the Father and God the Son as members of the Holy Trinity.

Enough has been said here to illustrate the profound and subtle significance of David, a lion or bear and a lamb, initially for the Jewish faith and subsequently for that of the early Christians, including the Picts. Their sculptures must always be seen and understood in term of the Christian mentality.

This brief paper has deliberately concentrated on the religious significance of David imagery among the Picts. It must be recognised, however, that David was also a figure of secular significance in relation to Pictish kingship. Here the symbol is that David as a warrior king, who found favour in the eyes of the Lord. This has recently been discussed in the case off the Dupplin cross, and more obliquely, the St Andrews sarcophagus (5).   Leslie Alcock

References

(1).   For a descriptive catalogue of David iconography in Insular contexts:
Henderson, I   -   The 'David Cycle' in Pictish Art, in J Higgitt (ed) Early medieval sculpture in Britain and Ireland (Oxford, 1986) 87-123.

(2).   In writing this, paper I have, of course, made use of both Vulgate and the King James ('Authorised') versions of the Old Testament, but the cited translation is from:
Jones, A (ed)   -   The Jerusalem Bible, (London, 1966).

(3).   For Samson, see:
Reau, L   -   Inconographie de l'art chretien, II, iconographie de la bible, (Paris, 1956) 240-1, with pl18.
Romilly Allen had already noted the overlap and possible confusion between the iconography of David and Sampson in his 1885 Rhind Lectures:
Allen, J R   -   Early Christian symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland, (London, 1887) 203-8 (now reprinted by Llanerch Publishers 1992).

(4).   For the concepts of David, the Good Shepherd, the Lamb, and the Lion in the Old and New Testaments, the Early Fathers, and subsequent iconography, I have made much use of:
Hedlund, M A &   -   Atlas of the Early Christian world, (London & Edinburgh, 1959).
Rowley, H H (eds)
Cross, F L &   -   The Oxford dictionary of the Christian church, (2nd edn), (Oxford, 1974).
Livingstone, E A (eds)
Walford, A (trans)   -   Encyclopedia of the Early Church, (Cambridge, 1992).
For a detailed and accessible study of the iconography:
Reau, L   -   1956, note 3 above.

(5).   Dupplin cross:
Alcock, L &   -   Reconnaissance excavations.....at Forteviot, (PSAS 122, 1992) 238-40
Alcock, E A
St Andrews sarcophagus:
Henderson, I   -   The Insular and Continental context of the St Andrews sarcophagus, in Crawford B E (ed), Scotland in Dark Age Europe, (St Andrews, 1994) 71-102.

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Part II: The Hunt Continues

Catriona Black's proposed identification of a torc carried by the female rider on the Hilton of Cadboll slab (Black, 1993, 37-40; 1993, 43) and my subsequent article (Trench-Jellicoe, 1994, 1-7) claiming the presence of a hawk sitting on the "torc", using it as a portable perch (which I suggested might be paralleled on a much clearer depiction, albeit viewed from a different perspective, in the lion-hunting section of the main scene of the St Andrews Sarcophagus) seem, in the best tradition, to have raised as many problems as they proposed to answer.

In my article I admitted to owning little knowledge of the technicalities of hawking and I am fortunate to have received four very detailed and helpful communications on hawking from Althea Tyndale, a researcher in Wales at U.C.W. Aberystwyth, the use of which I acknowledge with gratitude (Tyndale pers coms 18.iii.1994, 25.iii.1994, 22.iv.1994, 2.v.1994). The use of a rectangular "cadge" or portable frame for carrying hawks is attested as an item of hawking furniture from the 17th century onwards (Cox, 1674; 1721, 136). It was suspended by leather straps from the shoulders of the man carrying it, who stood in the centre of the wooden frame. There also existed at an earlier date the "round perch" and the "bow perch" which were used to carry a single bird, either as a static perch in the field or during transportation. The bow perch, as in the St Andrews Sarcophagus scene, was formed from a suitable sapling of oak or ash, bent beyond a semi-circle and held in that position by wire attached at each end about 200mm (7-8in) from the points. The latter could be sharpened and even shod with iron to facilitate their being thrust into the ground. The hawk was attached by a leash fastened to a "varvel" (swivel ring) running freely along the perch (Freeman and Salvin, 1859, 221).

A smaller version of this bow-perch, apparently with ball-type terminals, can be seen carried by the "Hebogydd", Master of Hawks (Fig. 1), in an 11th-century manuscript of Cyfraith Hywel Dda, The Laws of Hywel Dda: Ms Peniarth 28, Fol.4R (Huws, 1988, Pl.2) preserved in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. Presumably this type with rounded ends protected the rider's thighs and also, it must be suspected, existed to ensure that the hawk did not slip off the perch whilst in transit. This "torc-like" shape could not have been used as a static perch but would have been intended only as a portable variety.

Fig.1 Hebogydd: Master of Hawks
(MS Peniarth 28, f 4R, Welsh Laws of Hywel Dda: Cyfraith Hywel Dda).

The appearance of hawking legislation in this early manuscript demonstrates *de facto* the widespread and longstanding popularity of hawking among both men and women of the upper classes and the need for its regulation at that date. Given the essentially conservative nature of hawking technology it seems reasonable to project the use of similar artefacts backwards in time and deduce their use amongst the Pictish aristocracy (Henderson, 1994, 79) who, as Cessford acknowledges of hunting (1994, 31), "undoubtedly" indulged in this "popular" pastime (1).

The round and bow perches were better suited to the short-winged types of hawk than the screen-perch (formed from two uprights joined by a traverse bar). Women tended to fly smaller, short-billed varieties of hawk, such as the kestrel or merlin. Men usually preferred the larger long-billed birds, the peregrine falcon or goshawk, which were harder to train and more difficult to handle. Hawks were carried hooded to the field (Freeman and Salvin, 1859, 81) which may explain the rather featureless faces and bulging eyes of hawks in some representations, including that at Hilton of Cadboll (Fig.2).

On the basis of a conservative hawking technology, it seems reasonably to assume that the representation at Hilton of Cadboll is an example of one of these smaller perches, used as an alternative form of transport to the more common, reinforced leather gauntlet for carrying hunting birds (as presumably on the Elgin slab (Allen and Anderson, 1903, III 135-6, Fig.365) and on a 10th-century Anglo-Scandinavian shaft fragment, Sockburn 3A, County Durham (Cramp, 1984, Il.710), where the leashes or "creances" (Freeman and Salvin, 1859, 83) are clearly visible hanging beneath the rider's wrist. From the published evidence it is also clear that cadges as well as perches were of wooden manufacture, probably wrapped on the outside with leather, tough cloth or carpet to give the birds adequate grip on the perch (Freeman and Salvin, 1859, 110). It is less likely although not impossible that they would have been fashioned in metal (Trench-Jellicoe, 1994, 4-5), a hard surface (though if hollow light to handle) which could have damaged a hawk's feet if not well protected. It is therefore unlikely that either of the Pictish carvings represents a "torc" which could be equated with literary evidence from Y Gododdin (Trench-Jellicoe, 1984, 6; Black, 1993a 43), but should be identified as types of small perch used to transport hawks while in the field. In the face of such compelling evidence Cessford's suggestion (1994, 31) that the object on the St Andrews monument "could well be part of a serpent that is being gripped in the bird's claws" may safely be dismissed (3).

To contextualize the discussion, the fine representation of a recognisably Pictish type of penannular brooch worn by a standing female figure carved on a slab from Monifieth (2C)(Fig.3), Angus, (Allen and Anderson, 1903, III 229-30, Fig.242B), illustrated and discussed by Nieke (1993, 129) and cited by Cessford (1994, 31), as a parallel for the Hilton "torc" is, in fact, a brooch-type well attested in the archaeological record and may in no way be equated or confused with the ball-terminal bow-perch recorded on the St Andrews Sarcophagus or the perch of the Hilton of Cadboll slab whose configuration represents a slightly different form and on which the elements, identified as possible ball-type terminals stand impossibly far apart to denote a brooch. As confirmation of this another, smaller example of a Pictish-type penannular brooch, is depicted on the east face of the damaged high cross at A' Chille, Isle of Canna. The brooch is worn by the Virgin, who carries the Christ-child in a scene of the Adoration of the Magi. While men tended to wear penannular brooches on their shoulders, women seem to have worn them over their chests as on the Monifieth and Canna representations and

also as portrayed on face "C" of a recently-recovered slab fragment from Wester Denoon (Fig.4), Glamis, Angus, where the design is clear but simplified (N M Robertson, pers com 7.v.1994; PAS Journal forthcoming).

Fig.2 - Hilton of Cadboll 1C
Female rider: detail of hawk perch.

Fig.3 - Monifieth 2C
Lower left panel: standing female
with brooch.

Niamh Whitfield (pers coms 20.iv.1994; 18.v.1994), to who I am most grateful for her comments and permission to quote them, confirms the presence of the fastening pin running across the Monifieth brooch, an assessment which makes sense of the configuration both visually and structurally. This feature is replicated on the worn Canna brooch and on the Wester Denoon, Glamis, slab where the brooch pin is prominent (4) but it is a feature absent at Hilton of Cadboll. Brooches of a type similar to that at Monifieth, on Canna and Wester Denoon, with a variety of forms of sub-triangular terminals, occur in the St Ninian's Isle hoard - Nos 17 and 18, for instance (Wilson, 1973, 67-9, Pls XXXI, XXXIIIc), and elsewhere, on Pictish brooches found near Clunie Castle by Dunkeld, Perthshire (Ibid. Pl.XLIII; Stevenson, 1985, 236), from near Abergeldie, Aberdeenshire (Ibid. Pl.XLIVc), Pierowall, Orkney (Ibid. Pl.XLVc) and on Mull (Ibid. Pl.Lb) and in a sketched design on stone from Dunadd, Argyll (Ibid. Pl.Lb)(5). The brooch pins with leaf-shaped or lentoid head (Wilson, 1973, 83)(6) are closely similar to the distinctive Pictish type and may also be paralleled amongst the St Ninian's Isle hoard, brooch nos 18-20, 23, 24 and on a brooch from Rogart, Sutherland (Ibid. Pls XXXII-XXXIV). The Wester Denoon brooch pin-head is perhaps of the simple wrap-around type rather than lentoid (Niamh Whitfield, pers com 2.vi.1994).

Fig.4 - Recently-recovered slab fragment from Wester Denoon, Glamis.
Standing female figure with prominent brooch.

It is to be noted that in the earlier paper it was stated: "it is exciting that a potential new catagory of Pictish artefact should be recognised, elements of which may eventually be identified and confirmed amongst the artefactual assemblage recovered by excavation" (Trench-Jellicoe, 1994, 5). Cessford (1994, 31) interpreted this as a suggestion that leather artefacts connected with hawking might survive. This is, of course, unlikely. However, it is at least to be hoped that if metal terminals and varvel rings were used, that they may some day be identified.

Further detailed study of the Hilton of Cadboll scene undertaken in the Royal Museum of Scotland, Queen Street, Edinburgh, has enhanced the case for accepting the presence of a hawk standing on a perch. The gallery illumination, under which the bird is visible, provides the optimum overall lighting for this subject, while naked eye and photographic studies using oblique lighting only, sacrifice the recessed area between the horse's neck and the rider to darkness in order to pick up faint highlighted details. The depth, variety and levels of carving and wear to the surface must always remain a balk to absolute recognition but if the argument presented above is accepted, then logically the potential presence of the hawk should be acknowledged.

The visible evidence accompanying the Hilton rider suggests, therefore, that she carries a type of portable perch: but how does she carry it? The splendid photograph of the hunting scene panel (credited to the Trustees of the National Museum of Scotland) which appears on the jacket of Lloyd and Jennifer Laing's book (1993), suggests that the oviform swellings, potentially identified as the bulbous terminals of a torc by Black (1993, 43), or envisaged tentatively as the terminals of a bow perch, in fact most probably represent the rider's hands, gripping the perch. The reins also lead towards these prominent features and it is known that mounted hawkers were skilled in jointly performing the tasks of controlling their horses while manipulating a hawk supported on a perch. The R.M.S. photograph (and my own detailed shots) indicate that the upper arc continues below the rider's hands, completing the ring with a now badly-worn, slightly irregular, tapering terminal on the lower edge. This lower block may originally have been decorated. Although I was aware of this feature in my original assessment, I initially considered that it was likely to represent a separate element, unattached to the arc above, and perhaps representing a fancy container (purse or comb holder?) or that it even formed part of a belt buckle system. The similarities in dimension, however, between the sections above and below the "hands" logically and visually make it almost certain that the lower arc continues the upper, permitting the complete object to be identified as a round rather than a bow perch. Such a recognition would not re-open the case for the artefact's identification as a brooch, as no case is known of a female figure holding her brooch (Trench-Jellicoe, forthcoming)(7).

My grateful thanks to Althea Tyndale, whose help saved me from many pitfalls in my attempts to understanding the intricacies of hawking and its related terminology, also to Niamh and Adrian Whitfield for their generous help. To Mike Spearman of R.M.S. for easing access and providing information and to Norman K Atkinson for kindly allowing me to examine and photograph the newly recovered Wester Denoon fragment currently preserved at the Meffan Institute, Forfar. To Jane Hawks for her comments and David Henry for his valued discussions and support.

<div align="right">Ross Trench-Jellicoe</div>

Notes

(1). Amongst the wedding guests in Chrétien Troyes, 12th-century poem <u>Erec and Enide</u> (Chrétien, 1990, 59 vv.1917-1932) are listed a contingent from Scotland followed by King Ban de Gomeret (or Gameret), accompanied by 200 young varlets (candidates for knighthood) "each bearing a hawk on his wrist":

> Deus canz an ot an sa mesniee;
> N'i ot nul d'ax, quiex que il fust,
> Qui faucon ou oisel n'eüst,
> Esmerillon ou esprevier,
> Ou riche ostor sor ou gruier. (vv.1928-32)

Although the names recall those of the Welsh Bran and of (Mont)gomery where hawks were indeed raised (see <u>Domesday Book</u> and the <u>Pipe Rolls</u>) it is significant that King Ban(s) is mentioned after King Aguisiez of Escoce (the area north of the Firth of Forth, ie Pictish territory).

(2). <u>Erec and Enide</u>, 18, vv.566-8, describes a sparrowhawk's perch as being of silver but this probably indicates a perch of special status:

> iert sor <u>une perch d'argent</u>
> uns espreviers(*) molt biax assis
> ou de cinc mües ou de sis (**)

(*)   *esprevier* (modern French *epervier*) - a sparrowhawk.

(**)   a fully adult, trained bird.

Andreas Capellanus in his <u>Art of Courtly Love</u> (J J Parry (Ed), New York, 1941, 183) describes a hawk on a "beautifully fashioned <u>golden perch</u>" but this too is probably symbolic.

(3). Wittkower (1987, 18-44) dedicates a chapter to a discussion of the eagle and serpent motif. He notes that Christianity borrowed the motif (Ibid 31) of the eagle, standing alone which became integrated and identified with Christ and also the sun. That motif appears on the 4th or 5th century Antioch chalice and elsewhere (Ibid 31-2) echoing the resurrection and salvational aspects of Psalm 103,5: "thy youth is renewed like the eagle's". The devouring of the serpent by the eagle became a metaphor for Christ overcoming Satan (evil) but the motif occurs rarely in Christian theological literature. The symbol only became current in the 7th century and then only in the eastern Mediterranean area and was not popular there until after the 10th century. In nearly all cases the motif is portrayed as a conflict in which an eagle can be seen to attack an object that is clearly depicted as a serpentine form (Ibid, Ills. 40-7), unlike the St Andrews representation (for a parallel Insular instance see Anglo-Scandinavian examples of the hart and serpent motif). "The eagle and snake motif also exists in connection with St John" and his Gospel (Ibid 39) and in this context an example appears as early as the 7th century in the <u>Gospels of St Valerianus</u> (Ibid 39). Nowhere is the snake linked with probable Davidic imagery, such as that appearing on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, nor with imperial lion-hunting iconography (Henderson, 1994, 79), Pictish or otherwise. As Tyndale comments "the snake is not a prey associated with a hawk except perhaps symbolically" and it would, therefore, have been inappropriate in this realistically portrayed, contextualised scene.

(4). The brooch on the Wester Denoon, Glamis, slab fragment is large and ostentatious.

(5). Niamh Whitfield has pointed out that there is considerable variety in the form of the sub-triangular terminals amongst the the Pictish brooch series. That from Monifieth has generously proportioned terminals as has the Canna brooch, while the Wester Denoon, Glamis, terminals are rather lean.

(6). Wilson (1973, 83) offers a useful technical description of this type of brooch pin.

(7). In her refreshing reappraisal of the Picts, Elizabeth Sutherland (Marshall) discusses the Female Rider panel on Hilton of Cadboll (1994, 185-7) and, acknowledging my 1994 article, reiterates Prof Leslie Alcock's suggestion that this scene should be viewed in a Christian context, as a representation of the "Flight into Egypt" (Ibid 187). However Elizabeth offers only the vaguest indication of what

might be expected. "I see her hallowing a small round object in her hands which could <u>just as easily be an infant head representing the Christ-child as a brooch</u>"(sic)(my underlining). It is difficult to reconcile these views with the evidence available in the scene. Firstly the lady is unmistakably contextualized within a hunting scene above and below. Secondly she appears within the high status context of two musicians (not angels) announcing her from the upper right corner of the panel. Thirdly, the only near-contemporary Insular example of the Flight into Egypt (probably dated to a bracket half to three-quarters of a century earlier than Hilton of Cadboll's creation) appears in a low panel of the original west face, of the Ruthwell Cross, (Allen and Anderson, 1903, III Fig 468B). This shows the Virgin accompanied now by an extensively damaged but clearly completely portrayed Christ-child, travelling on an ass, not a splendid hunting mount. Iconographically it is most unlikely that the evidence could be reconciled with the notion that a "Flight" scene was depicted at Hilton.

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govan stones

In April 1994 members of the PAS travelled to Paisley to join members of Renfrewshire Local History Forum in a day devoted to the study of some examples of what is now called the Govan School of Sculpture. Compared to the magnificent craftsmanship and original symbolism of the true Pictish stones what we have in Govan and the surrounding area is late, derivative and much of it inferior in execution. The stones of the Govan School come towards the end of a long tradition in sculpture, rather than at the beginning. They are never the less very intriguing, and well worth a visit. Though some of them may lack the delicacy and intricacy of earlier work, the interlace patterns are simple and bold. The animal carving is vigorous and attractively "chunky". In Romilly Allen and Joseph Anderson's classic work (now, of course reprinted by PAS member David Henry) the stones were simply designated as Class III (1903 and 1993). There are, however, stylistic similarities within a fairly well defined geographical area which justifies the use of the term "school" (Fig.5).
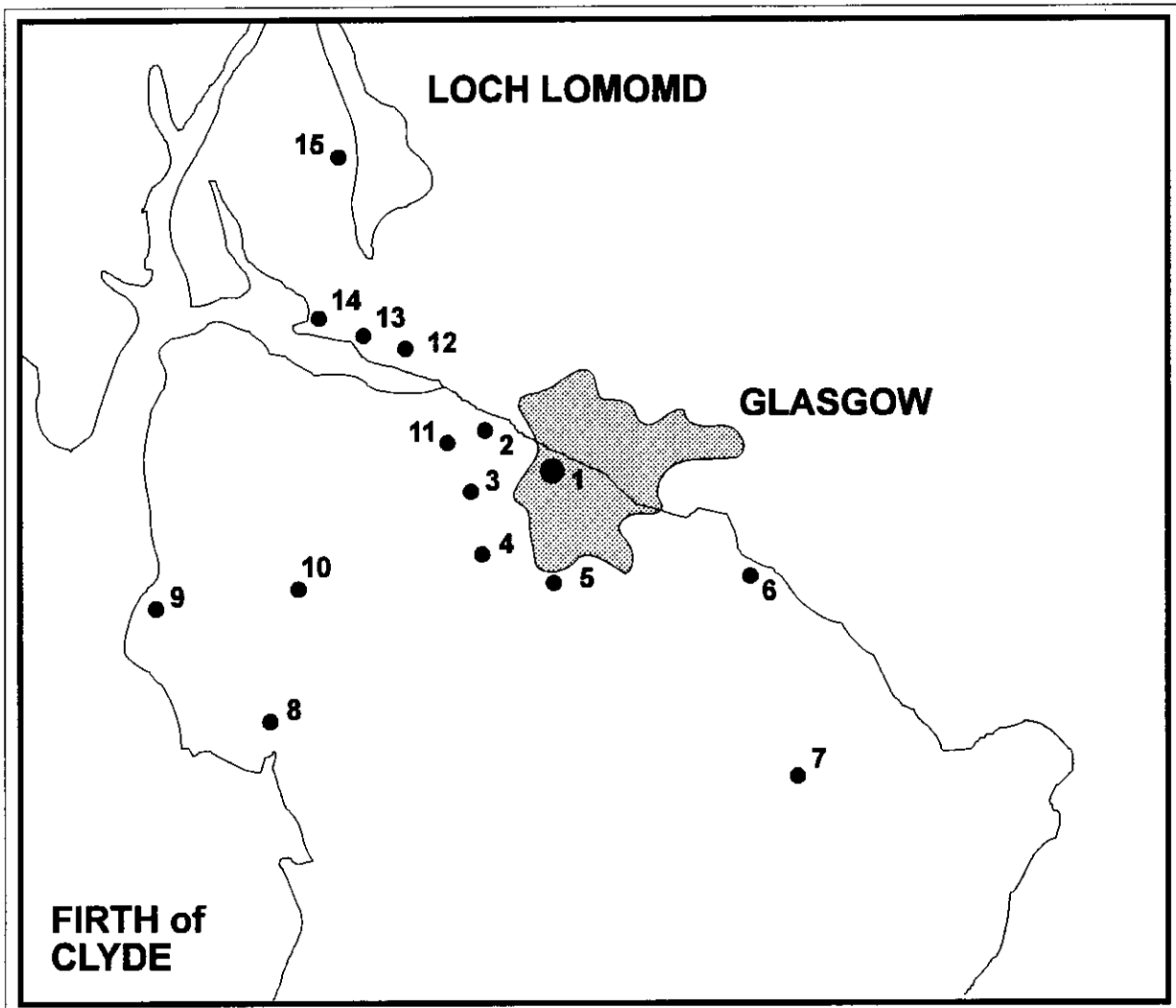
1 - Govan	5 - Capelrig	9 - Farlie	13 - Dumbarton
2 - Inchinnan	6 - Netherton	10 - Lochwinnoch	14 - Kilmahew
3 - Stanely	7 - Lesmahagow	11 - Barochan	15 - Luss
4 - Arthurlie	8 - Kilwinning	12 - Mountblow	

Fig.5 - Distribution of Govan School Stones.

Historically they are rather puzzling. There is a large number of stones - more than 50 altogether - with a concentration of over 30 at a single site, namely Govan Old Parish Church which is absolutely and totally absent from historical records. Probably because of that, the collection has received rather less scholarly attention than other groups of stones, and has been virtually ignored by cultural tourists who make pilgrimages to Aberlemno, Meigle and St Vigeans. In the last few years Tom Davidson Kelly, the minister at Govan Old has really worked hard promoting Govan. It was largely through his efforts that a major conference was held there in May 1992. The very distinguished speakers took a fresh look at the historical context, the art historical background and the artistic achievement of the Govan School. The papers from the Conference, copiously illustrated with newly commissioned photographs were published in November 1994. This may serve as a short introduction.

It is generally agreed that the Govan Stones were produced in the 9th, 10th and early 11th centuries, and that they are characterised by a fusion of artistic styles.

The mounted warrior or huntsman is a motif frequently found on Class II Pictish stones and occurs on a great many Class III stones. Horsemen are depicted on some of the Govan stones too, in poses that are reminiscent of Pictish sculpture. There is a hunting scene on the Govan sarcophagus that is similar to Pictish hunting scenes. The horses on the Inchinnan sarcophagus lid are much cruder, but they have the vigour that is associated with Pictish animal sculpture.

There are several cross shafts of the Govan School. The Arthurlie Cross (Fig.6), for example, has lost its head, but there is enough left to show that its head was similar in shape to that of the complete Barochan Cross (Fig.7). It has a ring within circular armpits, a feature associated with West Highland crosses in the Hiberno-Scottish style.

The cross head from Lesmahagow is circular with the arms of the cross carved within the circle, reminiscent of crosses from the Whithorn area. Similarities to Anglican stones can be seen in the ring twist and double beaded interlace techniques.

Then there are the Hogback stones. They are supposed to show Scandinavian influence, in fact, they are not found in Scandinavia but are associated with peoples of Scandinavian or Hiberno-Norse ancestry in Britain.

The big question is "How did all these influences come to be exerted in North Strathclyde - an area, which in ethnic terms was supposedly British in the 9th and 10th centuries when the stones were produced?" One would expect to find some sort of answer to that at Govan Old Parish Church which, with its big collection of stones must have been a major cult centre at that time. Unfortunately, the origins of the foundation at Govan are obscure (MacFarlane, 1965). According to tradition it was founded in the 6th century, which would make it roughly contemporaneous with other local foundations - St Kentigern or Mungo's foundation at Glasgow, St Mirin's at Paisley and St Conval's at Inchinnan. St Mungo and St Mirin were British saints. St Conval was reputedly a Scot from Ireland; about the only thing we know about him for sure is that he died in 612 at Inchinnan. There are other local dedications to him in the Levern valley and at Irvine.

According to Fordun's Chronicle, which is a medieval compilation, a monastic establishment was founded at Govan in 565 by Constantine, a king of Cornwall, who abdicated and took up the religious life after a wild youth. It is not impossible. There is the ethnic link. But there is also a possible

confusion between the Dumnonii of Cornwall and the Damnonii of Strathclyde in Fordun's sources (if, indeed he had access to now lost primary source material and was not simply repeating the traditional version of events).

An even earlier foundation date for Govan has been postulated putting it into the Ninian era, but really the first hard evidence of a Christian presence at Govan is the stones themselves. These have been located and unearthed in piecemeal fashion. There has been no comprehensive excavation in the precincts but a small scale excavation in August 1994 revealed traces of a pre-medieval building and the vallum of an early monastic foundation.
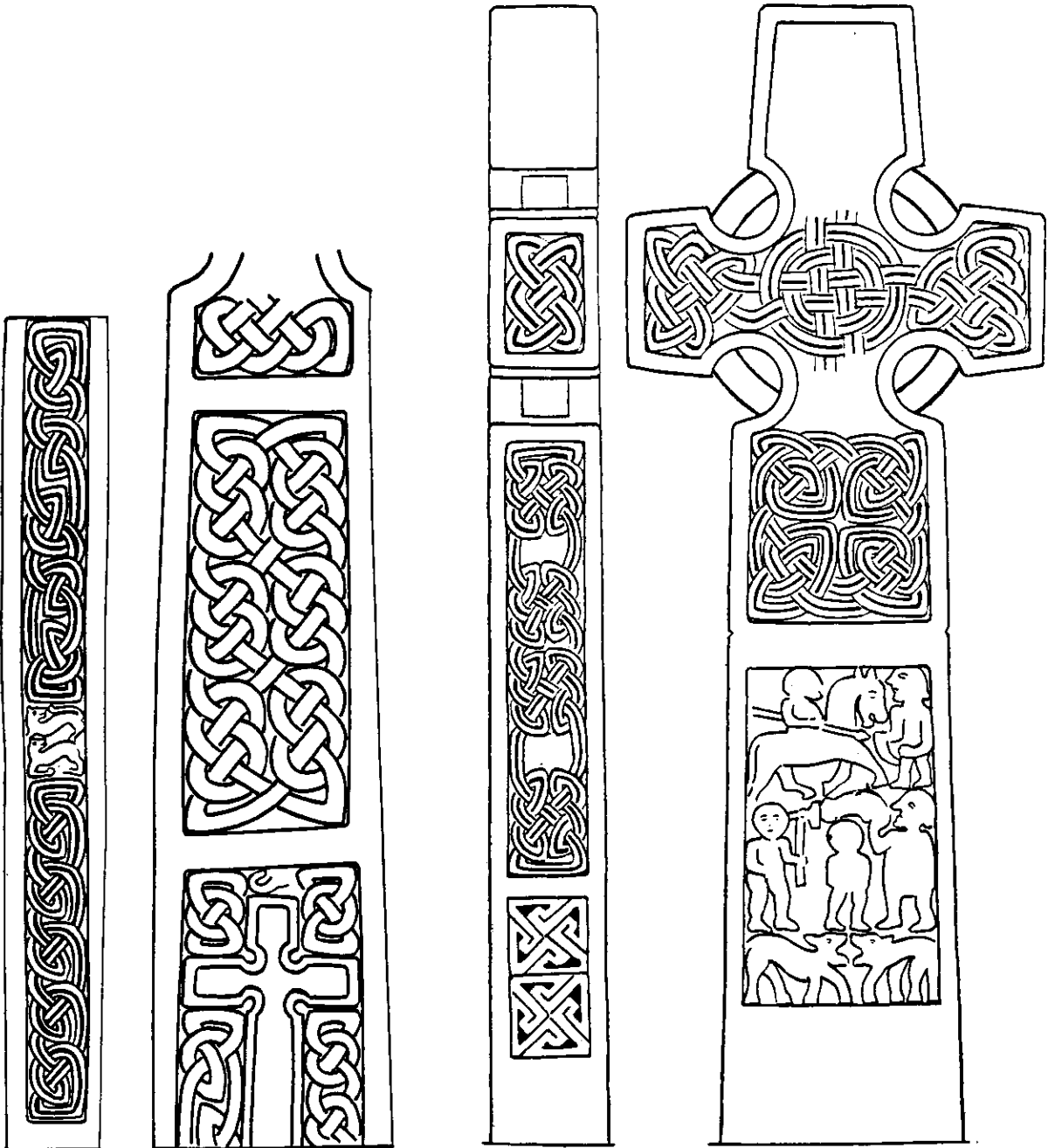
Fig.6 - The Arthurlie Cross
(Reproduced from Allen & Andrson's ECMS).

Fig.7 - The Barochan Cross
(Reproduced from Allen & Andrson's ECMS).

The earliest of the stones is thought to be the sarcophagus which is dated, on stylistic grounds, to the second half of the 9th century. There was a Constantine who loomed large at that time, Constantine mac Kenneth (the Kenneth in question being Kenneth mac Alpin). Constantine succeeded his uncle Donald as king of the combined Picto-Scottish Kingdom in 862.

Alan Macquarrie, of Glasgow University, has put forward a theory that explains the link between Govan and Constantine, and the sudden flowering of sculpture in the 9th century where there was no previous sculptural tradition (1990).

In 870 Olaf and Ivar, kings of the Norse colony in Dublin, besieged the British stronghold at Dumbarton for 4 months, eventually reducing it by cutting off the water supply (Professor and Mrs Alcock found evidence of the siege when they excavated at Dumbarton). The British king of Strathclyde, Arthgal map Dyfnwal was one of many prisoners taken back to Dublin. In the following year he was a executed "by counsel of Constantine mac Kenneth, king of Scots". Arthgal's son Rhun, who was married to Constantins's sister, became king of Strathclyde - perhaps, as Macquarrie suggests, having accepted Constantine as overlord and making Strathclyde a client kingdom.

There was a well documented exodus of disaffected Strathclyde aristocracy to Wales in the 890's. They may have left because they were unhappy with Scottish dominance in Strathclyde politics. They established the cult of St Kentigern in Wales at a time when his cult centre in Glasgow was eclipsed by the emergence of Govan as a major cult centre dedicated to a St Constantine. It would have been politically excpedient to focus attention on Govan, making it a symbol of Scottish cultural and religious domination of Strathclyde. If there was not already a St Constantine connection at Govan, there was a Scottish St Constantine martyred by the Vikings in Kintyre, who could have been dug up and translated to Govan, because the name fitted. There was a precedent for this in Kenneth mac Alpin's removal of some relics of St Columba from Iona to Dunkeld, ostensibly to keep them safe from further Viking raids, but really making a Scottish saint the centre of religious attention in the very heart of Pictland.

The huge collection of stones at Govan show that it was a major sanctuary from the 9th to the 11th century. Professor Cowan described it as a minster church. It controlled a large area (Last century's reorganisation of the parish saw the formation of 33 quod sacra churches). Its influence as witnessed by the presence of Govan School stones extended northwards to Loch Lomond, south-eastwards to Hamilton and Lesmahagow in Lanarkshire, and westwards to Kilwinning and to Fairlie on the Ayrshire coast. It could not have achieved that status without lay patronage. The church and the secular authority must have been rubbing along very nicely together, the church giving spiritual backing to the secular powers and providing burial places for the aristocracy, and in return being provided with lands and wealth. What we seem to have at Govan is the prestigious burial ground for Strathclyde's nobility, which, like the stones carved for them, was of mixed decent.

Inchinnan may have had a similar function on a smaller scale, a burial place and a cult centre for, a Scottish saint in British territory, overshadowing, for a time, the local British saint, St Mirin and his cult centre in Paisley.

It is generally agreed that the earliest surviving sculpture of the Govan School is the Govan sarcophagus (Fig.8), which was found in 1855 when a grave was being dug in the kirkyard. It is a magnificent piece of work, decorated on all its vertical faces with panels of interlace and animal sculpture; clearly not something that was originally intended to be buried. It has been suggested that it could have enclosed the long dead remains of some Constantine or other (there several possible candidates) placed in a prominent position within a 9th century chapel. It is made of sand stone and it does not show signs of having stood in the open for centuries. It does have though, a drainage hole in the base which would seem to indicate that it was intended to receive a newly dead occupant. The status of such an occupant can be guessed at by the richness of the sculpture. It must have been someone with wealth enough to commission it and with prestige enough for his sarcophagus to be accorded a prominent position in an existing building. One of the sculptured panels depicts a rider following a stag. As Professor Cramp emphasised at this year's Dalrymple lectures, hunting is associated with royalty and the aristocracy. It is likely that the sarcophagus was made for one of Strathclyde's 9th century ruling elite.
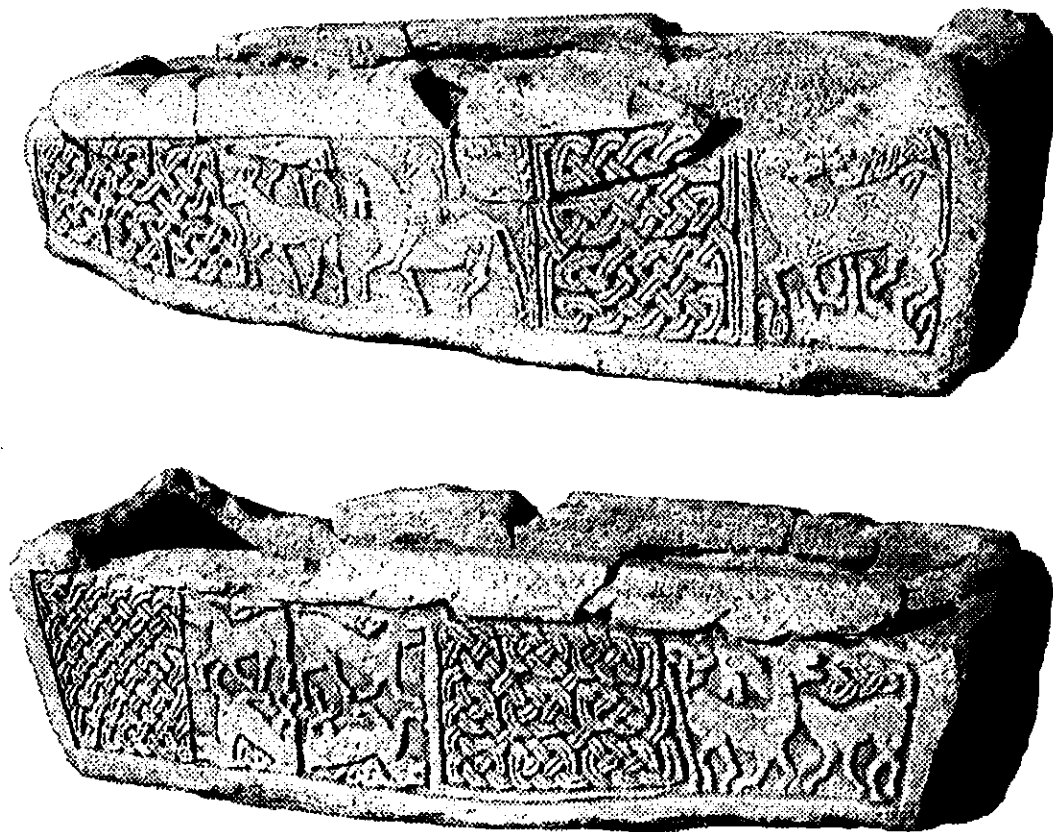
Fig.8 - The Govan Sarcophagus.
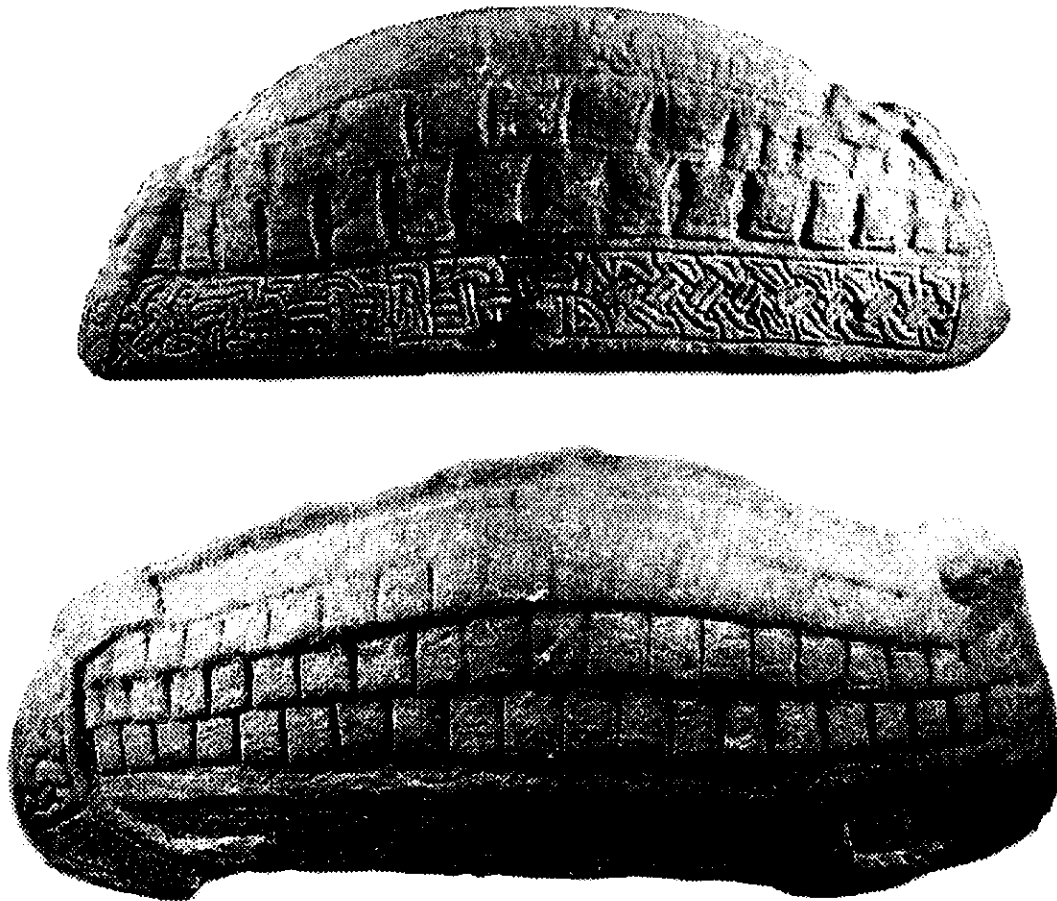(Illustration courtesy of the Friends of Govan Old Parish Church).

The Govan sarcophagus has no lid: at Inchinnan there is a lid with no sarcophagus. It is richly decorated but it is crudely carved in comparison. A line of little animals parades along each side. There is a chunky figure of eight at the foot and an equally chunky four chord plait at the head. On the top there is a small, plain circular armpit cross with three pairs of confronted animals and a fourth pair flanking a figure, that is most likely Daniel in the lions' den. The corners of this tapering lid are cylindrical as if the complete work had been modelled on a corner post shrine. The lid may in turn have been the model for several of the Govan grave slabs, which have carved discs at the corners. Grave slabs are the most numerous form within the Govan School. At Govan itself many of them have been reused in the 17th century when they had initials, names and dates cut into them. There is a recumbent grave slab and a headless cross shaft at Inchinnan as well as the sarcophagus lid. All three were found in the kirkyard of Inchinnan Parish Kirk. When it was razed to the ground to make way for Glasgow Airport, they were moved to an open, but covered area at the entrance to the new Parish Kirk. At the moment they look a bit vulnerable to the house building that is going on very near the church. They have been mounted flat on brick plinths at a height that makes them ideal as picnic tables.

It is highly dubious whether any of the Govan School stones are in their original positions. Of the several examples of stone crosses, the Capelrig cross and the Mountblow cross are in store in the Kelvingrove Museum. The shaft of the Kilwinning cross, which has somehow acquired a coat of blue paint, is in Saltcoats Museum store. The broken pieces of the Stanely cross have recently been moved to a storage shed at Stanley reservoir. The Netherton Cross, which is late, with debased sun and fish motifs on it, is now in front of the Adam designed church at Hamilton. The Arthurlie cross, now headless, rescued last century from use as a bridge across a burn, now stands surrounded by roses and a railing, at the edge of a housing scheme. The Barochan cross has been moved to Paisley Abbey. Their archaeological contexts cannot now be explored. A plausible explanation for their existence is that they were set up to hallow places where people were in the habit of meeting for various purposes. It is not thought that they were individual grave marker's.

The most exciting of the stones at Govan Old Parish Church are undoubtedly the hogbacks (Fig.9). There five of them and they are all different, though at first sight they look like five giant tortoise shells. They have been moved from their original positions too, but in their case it does seem likely that were individual grave markers. They are like tiled or shingled roofs over houses for the dead. Weird animals clasp the gables, and in one example straddle the ridge. As Anna Ritchie has emphasised they have no forerunners in Scandinavia. They seem to have developed first in Cumbria amongst people of Scandinavian descent, - "a unique response to local tastes, influenced by contemporary architecture, by existing Christian traditions of house-shaped shrines to hold the relics of saints and a love of animal ornament that was common to both the Scandinavians and the peoples of the British Isles" (Ritchie, 1993). It shouldn't surprise us that there were wealthy aristocrats of ultimately Scandinavian origin requiring burial in Strathclyde at that time (Smyth, 1984). The mac Alpin dynasty included some very astute kings who had influence in Strathclyde, if not actual power. They were good at playing off their neighbours against each other; the Angles with their stronghold in Bamburgh; the Dublin Norse; the Danes based in York and the Saxons to the south. They would side with the Angles to keep the Danes in check, but combine with the Danes when the Saxon looked like becoming too

powerful. It was much better for Picto-Scotland if the Dublin Norse and the York Danes were kept at each others' throats. The doomsday scenario would have been a united Scandinavian presence in the north of England and in Ireland ready to push north and link up with the Scandinavian rulers of Sutherland and the Western Isles. By allowing the Danes and Norse passage through the central lowlands of Scotland, the momentum for hostile action, which might otherwise have petered out with the difficulties of crossing the Pennines, was maintained and the doomsday scenario was avoided. The mac Alpin dynasty flourished and laid the foundations for the emergence of Scotland as a mediaeval state.   Irene Hughson

Fig.9 - Two of the elaborately decorated hogback stones from Govan.
(Illustration courtesy of the Friends of Govan Old Parish Church).

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conservation and
the sueno's stone

*"Transitoriness is a simple word used to describe something that is a
common feature of material objects in all natural processes". Bjorn Linn (1)*

It could be said that the stone conservator's task is easy; stone is, after all, a highly durable material. However, many of our highly prized sculptures are expected to suffer the vagaries of the Scottish climate, and, for the last two centuries, the cruel effects of our industrial pollutants. As a result, Pictish sculptures which have stood for a thousand years now require urgent attention, their irreplaceable carvings disappearing as we watch in horror.

But are we helpless? There are certainly many cases in which remedies are attempted, but no solution is as yet entirely risk-free; decay prevention, the protection of a stone by means of a change in its environment, is fast becoming the top priority. This paper will outline methods of preventative conservation, specifically with reference to the controversial Sueno's Stone, boxed recently by Historic Scotland. Finally it will be made clear that most urgent of all is the need for further research, and of course funding.

Conservators have learnt through trial and error that trial breeds error, and is unacceptable. Now that most have admitted that their knowledge so far is inadequate, the concept of preventative conservation has come to the fore. This entails removing external sources of harm from around the stone, thus stabilizing its environment until sufficient evidence is produced to justify further action. In this field there are three main camps: first, there are those who wish to remove the stones to an indoor environment, leaving a replica on the original site. There are those who would leave the stone in its original location, but cover it with a glass box to keep the weather out. Finally some believe that even these measures are too dangerous or drastic, and that we would be best doing nothing at all while our knowledge is so poor.

The first option is that favoured by Richard Welander, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, and Stephen Gordon, Senior Conservator, both of Historic Scotland (an important point to bear in mind with regard to Sueno's Stone, discussed below); Historic Scotland "sticks doggedly to the idea" (2) of keeping artefacts in their area of origin, (3) but both men advocate the use of nearby buildings as local museums. Stones in St Vigeans and Meigle were removed in the 1930's, and gathered in such buildings where they remain today, on view to the visitor. The Ruthwell Cross in Dumfries takes pride of place in a purpose-built church extension funded by locals of the last century. Of Pictish stones Gordon says without hesitation "if possible we would move them all inside" (4) citing the fast delamination of the Aberlemno stones as proof enough of urgency. Both Gordon and Welander show discomfort with the idea of casting a replica, however, as the process risks the loss of any flaking areas of stone (5).

Replicas are also largely disliked by members of the public, who feel deceived and deprived of their true heritage. However leaving a site bare would negate an important aspect of the sculpture; its relationship with the landscape. The size and site of a Pictish stone can be very impressive, and this ancient yet enduring facet of its character is instantly lost in a museum. This drastic solution is irreversible, and thus contrary to modern ethics, and furthermore it is important to step back and take an overview. Giorgio Torraca of the International Centre for conservation in Rome has done exactly that, and his reaction is somewhat bemused:

> ".....a generalised application of this principle would lead to dismantling a large number of monuments that somehow have survived up to the present moment" (6).

The second option available to the conservator is that of "boxing" the stone; what is essentially an air-conditioned green-house is built around the monument, in principle arresting further deterioration of the sculpture. This concept has given rise to probably the most controversial act of conservation involving Pictish sculpture: the boxing of the Sueno's Stone.

The Sueno's Stone, a huge 6.5metres tall, was found buried in Forres in the 18th Century and re-erected. Thus it was returned from a stable underground environment to its original, vulnerable position at the head of Findhorn Bay, where it was battered by salty winds from the sea, and abrasive sand-laden winds from the fields. Its natural bedding planes run vertically, encouraging rising damp, and a natural fissure runs down from the top, which was gathering water from above. Welander adds that research in Germany demonstrates the negative effect of agrichemicals on stone, which would seem to compound the evils thrown up by the adjacent fields. Under such circumstances it is no wonder that the north-west face was eroding rapidly.

The stone was in the care of Historic Scotland's predecessor, Historic Buildings and Monuments (HBM), which identified the three options outlined above (moving, encasing, or doing nothing). If the stone was to be removed, the obvious destination was the nearby Falconer Museum, but a stone of that magnitude would scarcely have fitted. Another consideration was the terrible risk of snapping the 7.5 tonne monument, whose structure was already unstable. The move was seen to be irreversible and detrimental to the stone's integral value as part of the landscape.

Encasing the stone was also deemed to be far from ideal, but David Connelly, then Director of HBM, was faced with a dilemma: "the decision is a finely balanced one with no obvious course of action recommending itself and yet the only thing that is clear is that one cannot do nothing" (7).

It was therefore decided that a competition would determine the design of a protective box for the stone, and ninety-two entries were received. The winning design, a rectangular glass and steel structure, was originally estimated at £75,000 but it transpired that vital ventilation requirements had been neglected and were subsequently included. After fifteen years of procrastination, action had been taken.

But was this action beneficial to the health of the stone? The great worry is that a green-house environment will encourage rising damp (no longer deterred by a downward flow of rainwater) which will deposit salts as before. Now, however, the risk of extreme temperature fluctuations created by the enclosed space would increase the action of the salts within the stone. Much literature written before the event of the Forres box supports this theory; an architect in Kincardine and Deeside District Council dismissed the idea, when suggested for other stones, with this explanation:

> "to enclose the stones would cause fluctuations of temperature, resulting in condensation in the cases and possibly causing more damage to the stones than any acid rain that might fall on them in their present condition" (8).

Torraca wrote in 1975:

> "The creation of a glass case to protect important stone work is not such a simple proposition as it might appear at first glance. If the inner space is not conditioned drastic changes of temperature and relative humidity must be expected and their effect on weathered stone is known to be damaging... On the other hand artificial conditioning is quite expensive and unreliable" (9).

Edith Bowman of Heriot Watt University (and of course PAS), who is currently undertaking research in the conservation of stone, warns that boxing the stone means taking risks; she emphasises that not enough research has been done, and that "many modern techniques actually accelerate erosion" (10).

Welander, who was not involved in the affair at the time, regrets that the stone was not moved. He agrees that the monument is likely to act like a wick, drawing moisture up through the ground and creating condensation. He feels that to put such a structure around the stone destroys its profile in the landscape; when the stone thus "loses the purpose and intent of the original design," it might as well be removed. "There comes a point when you should treat them as exhibits," (11) he says of rotting stones, and other conservators have reluctantly agreed, acknowledging the stones' value as part of the land , but taking into account their own responsibility as conservators (12).

Deborah Mays, Inspector of Historic Buildings for Historic Scotland, suspects that the main criterion for choosing the box was financial (although costs were doubled in the end), and is unhappy about the risks involved (13).

However, along with all the above reservations, there is some good news. It is Gordon's task to monitor the progress of the stone, and he is perfectly satisfied so far. With poultices of de-ionised water he checks for salts, and air temperature and humidity inside the case are measured. He has observed no salt activity or adverse conditions, and believes that the case is "certainly in the stone's best interest" (14). The frost damage and delamination which had previously been major problems are now allayed, and all appears to be well.

It is my fear that ground salts may be working their way slowly into the monument, and are not yet apparent on the surface. Gordon is optimistic, however, that the cup base underneath the monument will act as a suitable barrier (15).

Dr Isabel Henderson expressed disappointment that as an enclosing structure was thought necessary, the design was not exploited to facilitate viewing of the stone. She had hoped for a staircase and gallery system which would enable the viewer to see more than was ever possible before, and that opportunity is now lost (16). A similar box put over the Shandwick Stone had never provided that option because funded by locals, all that was possible was an adapted structure inherited from the Glasgow Garden Festival. That box was too short, requiring the base of the stone to be sunk and obscured, and its small capacity will mean fast temperature fluctuations.

Aesthetically, all but one are agreed. Rachel Woods in her thesis on the boxing of the stone, struggles to provide a glowing art-historical analysis of the structure's calculated relationship with the monument within, (17) but to all else there is absolutely no doubt; the box is ugly.

To conclude, we are beginning now to understand the causes of stone deterioration, and learning slowly how to diagnose them. Yet we are far from confident in our ability to solve these problems safely and effectively. We continue to flounder around, applying experimental techniques while writing policy documents condemning them. An international co-ordination of knowledge, in all fields, is vital and urgent. Without money, this may never happen, and if it does not, our precious heritage may be lost forever.

Catriona Black

Post Script

This article was completed in November 1993; since then there have been encouraging developments in the area of stone conservation, the details of which John Higgitt has kindly provided.

Historic Scotland, as part of a wider programme of research into the decay of carved stones, has set up the National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland. The Committee's aims are to increase public awareness of the problems faced by the stones, to act as an advisory body where required, and to ensure that care of our monuments is carried out in as responsible a manner as possible. Of particular interest in the present context is the Committee's stated preference as regards the most exposed stones: "this would probably involve moving them under cover or providing them with some form of sheltered environment".

Another recently formed body is the Glasgow University Sculptured Stones Initiative, an inter-disciplinary group whose project is the scientific study of the mechanisms of stone decay.

C B, February 1995

Notes

(1). Linn, p 3

(2). Interview with Richard Welander, 2.11.93

(3). This policy combined with inadequate funding, results sometimes in the creation of "stone dumps" as at Jedburgh Abbey, where piles of architectural features gather moss and mould on site, because it is considered unethical to remove them to a centralised warehouse.

(4). Interview with Stephen Gordon, 10.11.93

(5). The National Museums of Scotland have had a longstanding programme of casting their monuments, but Historic Scotland follows a policy of minimal casting of stones in its care.

(6). Torraca, 311

(7). Woods, 20

(8). PAS Journal 3, 47

(9). Torraca, 311

(10). Interview with Edith Bowman, 3.11.93

(11). Interview with Richard Welander, 2.11.93

(12). Graciella Ainsworth & Stephen Gordon

(13). Interview with Deborah Mays, 6.11.93

(14). Interview with Stephen Gordon, 10.11.93

(15). One technique sometimes applied is laying down a membrane underneath the stone (often during excavation), and in fact a whole temple in Angkor was deconstructed in order to lay a damp proof course! However, in order to do so in the case of Sueno's stone, the whole monument would have to be lifted, thus running the risks deliberately avoided by leaving it where it is.

(16). PAS Journal 2, 39

(17). Woods, 30

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# of pictish helmets and other objects

One of the many admirable qualities of the PAS journal is that, while always striving to maintain a high academic standard, its thrice-yearly appearance allows the development of genuine debate - a thrust and riposte which the more established annual journals cannot hope to emulate. In this, there has been no more vigorous participant than Craig Cessford, who merits our congratulations all the more in that he operates from the far south of England.

In the spring 1994 issue, I posed the question "Did the Picts wear helmets?" and came to the resounding conclusion that they did not. There is no archaeological evidence, there is no historical evidence, and for artistic evidence, only one Pictish stone clearly shows helmets (that at Kirkton of Aberlemno) and those who wear them can be demonstrated to be Northumbrians.

On the subject of the stone at Aberlemno kirkyard (Fig.10), I was stunned to see that the drawing of the battle-scene by Ross Trench-Jellicoe, which appeared in the same issue on page 6, including a torc in the top-left corner. His text speaks of the "possible presence" of a torc, and of a "torc-like object". Having gazed upon this stone on dozens of occasions, including the area containing the little-noted element in the top-left corner "identified by Anna Ritchie as a possible scabbard", I have noted nothing else, torc-like or otherwise.

The sketch does contain a few "inventions", such as the restored cranium of the second pictish inventory man, the spear-head which has materialised at the lower end of the incised (or accidentally scratched) line extending from the knee of the leading Pictish inventory men of the helmet of the falling Northumbrian men, and the long spear complete with head wielded by the Pictish rider in the lower-left corner, which should be much shorter and pointed but unflanged (ie. a javelin). My inclination is to regard the supposed torc in the same light.

Returning to the question of helmets, I did consider another stone, that from Balblair, but dismissed it as being too uncertain. In his response to my claim that the Aberlemno example stands alone among Pictish stones illustrating helmets, which appears in the Autumn 1994 issue, Craig Cessford asks that three more stones should be taken into consideration - Benvie (Fig.11), Dupplin (Fig.12), and Congash 2 (Fig.13). He shrewdly calls them "Pictish" or "Picto-Scottish" (I prefer the term " Picto-Scottic"), for indeed the first two do not appear to be purely Pictish. For a start, they lack Pictish symbols, but more perplexingly, the men carved on them do not look Pictish. The principle element of discord is that warriors on both stones sport very full, droopy moustaches - popular in the wider Celtic world, but not evident at all among the many Picts with pointed beards who appear on a wide range of symbol-bearing stones.

It is somewhat ironic that the front cover of the Picts in Tayside (Dundee Museum, 1985) by Alan Small and Lisbeth Thoms bears an illustration of the Benvie stone, when the likelihood is that the men depicted on it are not Picts. Their droopy moustaches are very evident. If I knew the Pictish for *mea culpa*, I would shout it now for I included both of these armed warriors on a page of drawings

which I carefully entitled "Picts at war" (used to illustrate the first version of my study of the Battle of Dunnichen - see Cruickshank, 1985, 12). Compounding the misdemeanour, the other four probably do not show the Picts at war either, the more likely activities being hunting, dwelling, and parading. In fairness, my purpose in reproducing them was to illustrate the weaponry of the period, since we do not have any actual Pictish weapons, though a self-taught lesson was quickly learned, and none of the above illustrations, appeared in the subsequent version of the booklet.


Fig.10 - Kirkton of Aberlemno (Battlescene).
(Reproduced from The Battle of Dunnichen , Pinkfoot Press, from original photograph by Dr J D Burgess)

My objections of Benvie apply also to Dupplin, the more so because it is a free-standing cross and so surely cannot be claimed to be Pictish. Of the seven warriors that appear on it, the lone rider and the pair of foot soldiers have just the same full, droopy moustaches as appear at Benvie. Most authorities place the Dupplin cross in the C10th; I would argue that the Benvie stone, on the basis of the above comparison, belongs there also, which pushed both of them beyond the period of the historical Picts.

If chronology alone is not enough, I would dismiss both of the stones from the debate on the grounds that neither shows men wearing helmets - not even to my eye, at least. The upper man at Benvie has curly locks, and although the top portion of his head is now missing, there is no indication whatever of a helmet. The lower Benvie man certainly has a differently-rendered head, but whether this portrays an exaggerated (or stylised) hairstyle, a form of sloppy headgear, or a helmet, is not possible to determine because of the worn nature of the stone. The helmet theory is not strengthened by the line which appears to extend form the top of his head to well below his knee. I reckon that a more likely explanation is that he is wearing a cowled robe.
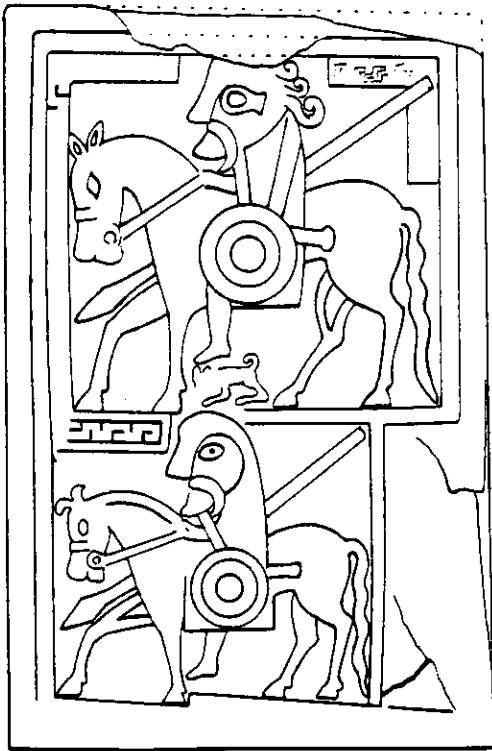
Fig.11 - The Benvie Stone.
(Reproduced from Allen & Anderson's ECMS)
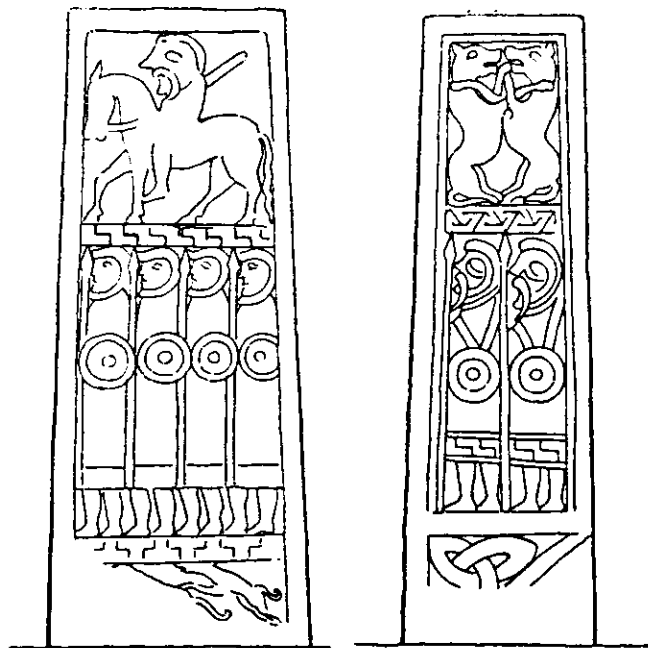
Fig.12 - Detail of The Dupplin Cross
(Reproduced from Allen & Anderson's ECMS)

The single Dupplin rider would seem to be bare-headed, while the six foot-soldiers are represented as having a continuous sweep of hair running from their foreheads round the back of their heads and terminating under their chins. This treatment may be seen as indicating headgear of some sort, but it falls way short of what can be claimed with any degree of certainty as a depiction of helmets. Thus neither the Benvie Stone nor the Dupplin Cross show identifiable helmets, and both are probably too late in date to be considered properly Pictish.

Turning to Congash 2, this presents a very different picture. There is no doubting its essential Pictishness: a pure Class I symbol stone, bearing two symbols - the familiar double-disc and Z-rod, and another which is quite unfamiliar. (I hesitate to say "unique" - though I am sure to have said so in such situations in the past - because of the implication that there was only ever the one. From the surviving evidence, it would seem that certain symbols were used more frequently than others by the Picts, but in cases where we only have one now, I prefer to see it as being rare, with only a single example known to have survived. The stereotyped nature of symbol forms, and their usage to convey conventionalised messages, does not lend itself to the notion of one-off productions).

The symbol under discussion here was described by Romilly Allan as "a figure resembling a helmet transfixed by an arrow" (Allen and Anderson, 1903, 111, 97), though in the next paragraph he wrote "arrows", without explanation or justification. At first glance, the design might be thought to look a little like a helmet of the type worn by German troops in the First World War (if the bottom half of the arrow is omitted), but an alternative explanation seems preferable. Joseph Anderson, in his classified list of symbols, referred to it as a "Bow and Arrow" (Allen and Anderson, 1903,11,63, No. 127). This is the way I have always read it, but some others have not been convinced. In his weighty work "The Interpretation of the Pictish Symbols", Charles Thomas declined to include this symbol under the heading "Symbols identifiable as real objects", relegating it instead to his list of "Miscellaneous Symbols", commenting resignedly: "It seems impossible to see what it can represent" (Thomas, 1964, 62).
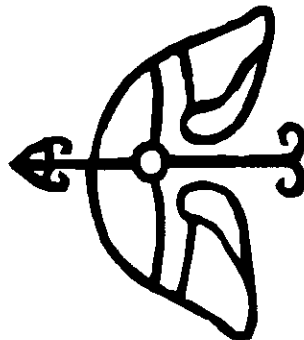
Fig.13 - "Bow and Arrow" symbol from Congash 2.

I reckon that this under-rated symbol deserves more attention that it has been accorded. Firstly, to assist in its recognition as a bow and arrow, it should be turned, preferably but not necessarily counter-clockwise, through a right-angle, as shown above (though why the Pictish sculptor did not orientate it his way is somewhat puzzling; perhaps it had already lost its literal meaning in favour of the symbolism which it represented, and the sculptor elected to execute the design according to is most visually appealing orientation).

I see this symbol as completing a quartet of weapons which have been broken, doubtless deliberately. The others are the spear, the arrow, and the sword. It has long been recognised that various societies indulged in the breaking of objects as a funerary rite (for details of which see the bibliography given in Thomas, 1964, 50, note 2), and it is quite possible that such a practice was followed by the Picts and/or by their immediate proto-historic ancestors. Weapons are particularly appropriate objects to break in these situations, especially as it is probable that Pictish society encompassed a warrior aristocracy, and of course death renders impotent even the fiercest of warriors.

Thus the Z-rod may be regarded as a twice-broken spear, and the V-rod as a once-broken arrow. The fact that they are qualifiers - adjectives in the Pictish system of grammar - lends credence to this theory, the Z-rod overlying the double-disc (and occasionally the notched rectangle and the snake as well), and the V-rod overlying the crescent (the V-rod overlying the hinged collar at Migvie - if that is what it is - is exceptional). Seldom do the main symbols appear alone, without their qualifiers; never do the Z-rod and V-rod appear alone, without a main symbol to qualify.

The situation with the broken sword is rather different. Essentially, it is a main symbol in its own right, not a qualifier. Unlike the broken spear and arrow, it is rare (made rarer still if it is segregated from a variant form which may represent a fastening-pin). The cause has not been helped by ill-considered misidentification of what the object represents, which has led to labels such as "curling tongs" and "tuning forks" being attached to it (which I regard as being just as ludicrous as calling the grotesque dolphin a "swimming elephant"). That said, there is not universal agreement that this symbol does represent a sword, the main problem being with the grip (or lack of it in the case of the pin-like examples), and the fact that it always lacks cross-guards, through actual swords from other Dark Age cultures can look remarkably similar (e.g. the example from Hod Hill in Dorset). A sword is by far the most likely explanation. I see the bow and arrow symbol in broadly similar terms: a representation of a broken weapon, acting as a main symbol, rare, and frequently misread - in this instance, as a helmet.

It is worth examining the points of breakage in the four symbols which constitute this group, for they are always emphasised. The angles formed by the breaks in the spear and the arrow, two and one respectively, almost invariably contain a concave arc, the enclosed area usually enhanced by decorative motifs which may range from a simple dot to quite complex pattern. The sword, once more, is different, for in this case the object is not merely fractured but broken in half and the lower portion discarded. Thus the break is emphasised to the fullest extent by the fact that half of the object is missing. The point is also made graphically, though it is not what is added which provides the emphasis of the break, but what is omitted. The line which signifies the break does not extend across the full width of the blade; the section through the fuller is left open, thereby giving it the appearance which has led to its misnamings. (This applies to all six examples where the fuller is rendered as a double line; it cannot appear, of course, on the lone example where the fuller is represented by a single line, which in any case is somewhat dubious).

The bow and arrow symbol, on the other hand, has more in common with the two broken qualifying symbols. The arrow is broken, graphically at least, by having an open circle placed halfway along the shaft, though this could have more to do with the lines which run from it at approximate right angles. It is true that both before and after this circular interruption, the shaft continues in the same alignment without any angle being created, but to do otherwise would destroy the symmetrical balance of the design, something which the break in the V-rod conspicuously avoids. The curve of the bow itself is intact, but an emphatic break occurs in the bow-string. Not only is this severed, leaving a yawning gap, but the broken ends terminate in large lobes which give visual emphasis to the break.

There remains the problem of accounting for the internal lines. It is worth remembering that Pictish bows, as illustrated in use on Class II stones, are (as far as can be discerned) cross-bows and not long-bows. These lines may therefore represent a degenerate form of the firing mechanism, albeit

moved through a right-angle from its expected positioning. It may be relevant that the pair of lines which touch the circle also reach the bow, while the other pair only extend from the bow to the lobes - perhaps illustrating another example of a break.

Alternatively, these lines could simply be internal decoration. The Z-rod and the V-rod are decorative in themselves and the main symbols which they overlie are usually extensively decorated. Likewise, the pommel of the half-sword is also decorative (where it has survived: on only two of the six examples, the beautiful Dunrobin specimen being the only complete one). There is even an instance of decoration being applied to the blade of a half-sword, at Abernethy. Both the bow and the bow-string being linear, any internal decoration would need to be placed in the space which they encompass. All this may still add up to something less than conclusive proof that this symbol is indeed a bow and arrow, but it is surely a preferable solution to that which suggests it could be a helmet.

Thus, having considered the artwork on the stones from Benvie, Dupplin, and Congash 2, we are still no nearer to establishing that the Picts wore helmets. Craig Cessford based his list on the writings of the Laings (1984, 280), who, quite unjustifiably, claim with categorical assurance that these stones depict helmets. The only concession they make is to allow that the Congash symbol may alternatively be a bow and arrow, but of the rest they are quite positive, seeing not just helmets, but helmets with nose-guards. They even include one more stone, which Craig wisely omitted, ie. Aberlemno 3, the great cross-slab at Crosston of Aberlemno. It is a mystery where they can perceive even the vestige of a helmet on this stone.

Two other forms of evidence are mentioned by Craig Cessford, one archaeological, the other poetic. Firstly, it is suggested that fragments of bronze found in Dumfriesshire might possibly have formed the decoration on a ceremonial helmet. Secondly, a passage in Y Gododdin could suggest, depending not on translation so much as interpretive derivation, that the Gododdin warriors had "red crests", implying that they wore plumed helmets. While I am all in favour of giving consideration to every scrap of evidence, I can see nothing here which assists in the enquiry, in neither instance is there any direct connection with the Picts, both locations lying outwith Pictland, and both forms of evidence are so vague, uncertain, and problematical, that their contribution is too slight to have any real significance.

I admire Craig's effort to widen the discussion concerning the possibilities of the Picts having helmets, but I adhere firmly to the opinion which I held previously: helmets were rare in Dark Age Britain and unknown in Pictland, save when they came on the heads of invading Northumbrians - and they met their *nemesis* at the Battle of Dunnichen, the testimony to which may be seen on the unique battle-scene at Kirkton of Aberlemno.   Graeme Cruickshank

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Meigle 2 (© J R F Burt 1992).

pícts ín peRthshíRe?

Until quite recently I found so many conflicts between current theories about the Picts (exemplified by The Problem of the Picts) and the archaeology and clan traditions of NW Perthshire that I found it difficult to believe the Picts had existed at all! However the Pictish Arts Society has changed all that, and I owe it a considerable debt for resolving many of the problems.

There can be no doubt that the Highlands of NW Perthshire were part of the Pictish kingdom, since Atholl was one of its seven traditional components, but its "Picts" do not seem to fit the orthodox modern view. At the end of a paper given to the PAS by David B Taylor, on the circular homesteads of NW Perthshire, which he dates very provisionally to the Pictish period, the general opinion of the meeting was that, even if this date is confirmed, these remote cattle-herders were not Picts, but there seems to be no doubt that they were, and that our view of the Picts needs to take them into consideration. In NW Perthshire there are, so far, no symbol stones, but, perhaps surprisingly, there are quite a number of Pit settlements.

The only truly fortified site in the general area is Dundurn in Strathearn, which is mentioned in contemporary chronicles and so accepted as Pictish, but Aldclune at Blair Atholl also probably relates to the Pictish period. However, seen against its Perthshire background, Dundurn is quite anomalous, and seems to have been a prestigious, but inconvenient, home or refuge, used over a short period by some unusually ambitious or vulnerable person or individual family. This view appears to be confirmed by excavation which shows its origins in C7th and occupancy for a mere two hundred years (Alcock et al, 1989), in contrast to the probable two thousand years of continuous occupancy clocked up by Neish's Island in nearby Lochearn. This site is typical of others in the area in that its history depends on clan traditions and folk history. However, the overlap found between archaeological sites, local history, and settlement legends points to a remarkable degree of continuity in this area from c.800 BC almost to the present day. The Pictish period occupies only a few centuries of this long continuum, and there is nothing apart from Dundurn and, probably, Aldclune, to suggest that the "Picts" of NW Perthshire were anything other than its native inhabitants during the "Pictish" period, although the emergence of the Pictish state from at least Caithness to at least Fife, and possibly from Shetland to Lothian, must reflect some novel social, ethnic, cultural, administrative, dynastic or agricultural development in that area.

The evidence of continuity also allows us and indeed forces us to postulate that the historic clans of Highland Perthshire represent descendants of the same native population. Among these clans, there is good reason to suspect that Clan Gregor - the Gregorach - represent the oldest and most undifferenced layer. At one time they occupied all the lands of the Perthshire Highlands to the west of the Garry/Tummel corridor by right of sword only, with prominent families in Glenlyon, Rannoch, Lochtayside, and Balquhidder, and also further west into Argyll in Glenstrae and Glenorchy. A bardic name for one of the Glenorchy chiefs was the "Lion of Loch Awe" which suggests that Loch Awe, Argyll, was also part of their homeland. The further back one traces this tribal grouping, the more widespread they become. They do not fit into the standard view of a Highland clan as a localised and related family unit, which fits such Perthshire clans as the MacLarens and the Robertsons, who one

might see emerging at a later date from the same population. Even later clans originated around feudal land-owning families, such as Campbell, Menzies, Murray, and Stewart, whose origins are matter of recorded history and whose tenants often assumed the same surname. By contrast, Clan Gregor have no traditions concerning their own origins, not even the identity of "Gregor". However, in local Gaelic lore, "ills and hills and the Ailpeanach" were co-eval. Their name Ailpeanach or "people of Alba", also found as MacAlpine, Clanalpin and Siol Alpin, is worth noting.

Various tribal traditions link Clan Gregor with crannogs, which provide the obvious and indeed the only possible settlement sites for this population. However, before the development of underwater archaeology, they were generally given a Roman or even medieval date. Then the publication of Landscape with Lake Dwellings by Ian Morrison gave construction dates for crannogs in Loch Tay of c.600-c.500 BC, the oldest so far found in Scotland, and provided ample settlement sites of a suitable date. Nineteen have now been found in Loch Tay alone, representing a large proportion of the twenty-three which local tradition says were still in use in the time of Alexander I, and logic, folk tradition, and the absence of any alternative settlement sites, suggests that these offshore islands represent the homes of at least some of the ancestors of the Gregorach and other native clans.

Possible continuity of their associated land divisions provides another line of proof. Linking prehistory and the present, Ian Morrison (map, 79) notes that the eight or ten crannogs strung out along the north side of Loch Tay are in a one-to-one relationship with township divisions incorporating low-lying land on the lochside and high grazing, which survived to 1769. This suggestion of Dr Morrison is plausible, though the idea that land divisions, population and consequently language and even placenames, may have survived unchanged for 2300 years in Highland Scotland is perhaps rather novel.

This picture of continuity was troubled, for a while, by the problem of the circular "forts" which are peculiar to NW Perthshire, though outliers (or coincidental look-alikes) are found in Angus and as far away as Galloway. These massive stone enclosures are sited both on low-lying sites and on high grazing, often clustered, with isolated examples on through routes or on passes, a distribution which is very different from that of the crannogs strung out along the sheltered loch shores. They were assumed to be military or at least defensive, though it was stressed by informed writers who had taken the trouble to visit them that they were not on defensive sites. If they represented invasion or conflict, this had left no trace in folk tradition, though the forts of Glenlyon were associated with the mythical Fionn and his Feinn, and any such invasion or military presence in the area was difficult to reconcile with the use, at the same period, of undefended crannogs as occupation sites.

The problem was resolved by David B Taylor, who demonstrated that these are not military features but cattle pens, and he proposed a tentative date in the Dark Ages, in other words, the Pictish period. This use is compatible with some kind of super-culture based on the crannog culture of the same area, perhaps over a relatively limited period. As a pure hypothesis, their building may relate to political disruptions similar to those which also led to the building of Dundurn (which is little more than a glorified cattle-pen, despite its mention in Annals).

A link with Clan Gregor emerged also. It is not unexpected to find homestead sites in the clan areas of Rannoch, Glen Lyon, Lochtayside etc, since homesteads and Clan Gregor share a distribution

in NW Perthshire, but there are two homesteads at what is now Castles Farm in Glenstrae, in Argyll. This specific place was the home of the Chief of Clan Gregor until the early C14th century and there seems no reason to doubt that they were used by this family.

The homesteads are the most demonstrable sign of long-established communal stock management by a cattle-herding culture and they appear against the background of a crannog-based community which both predates and outlasts them in Highland Perthshire. This long-lived tribal culture depended on the exploitation of the good pastures of Highland Perthshire, supplemented by hunting, and there is no evidence for major population movement during the period from 600 BC to modern times.   Sheila McGregor

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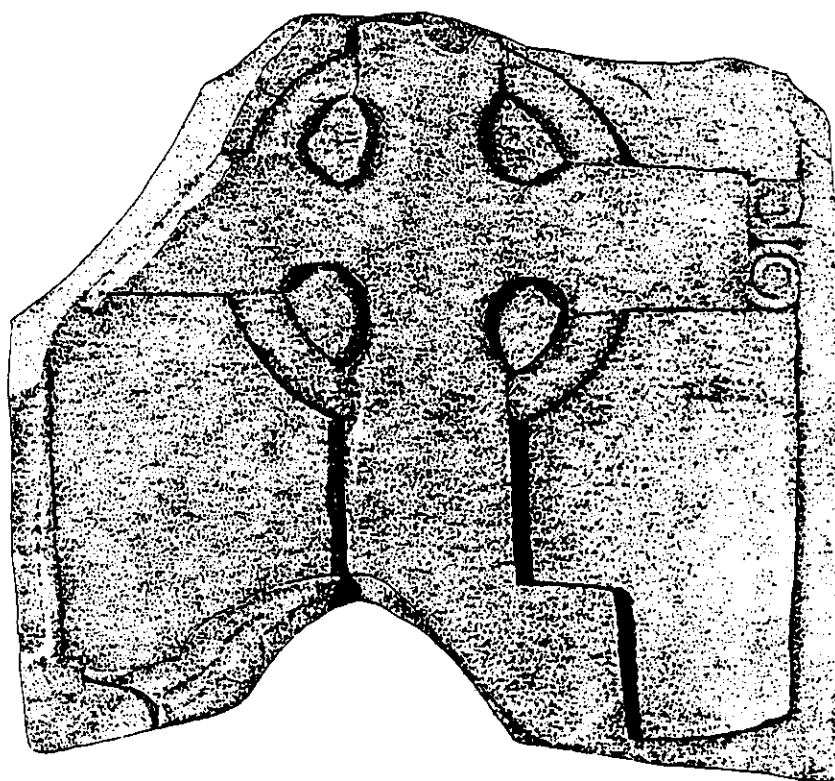
Rosemarkie ROMGH.1992.9 (drawn by J R F Burt).

pictish folk art from afar

*Class I and Pennsylvania German Folk Arts*
May be Pre-Celtic

As a retired college professor with a hobby of research of early local settlers (c 1730-1776), largely south-western Germans and so called Scotch-Irish, with fewer Irish and English, the contrasting behaviours, traditions and folk arts of these groups have been pondered. My visits to European museums in 1951-1984 convinced me that folk arts are unique in providing insights into early peoples where written records and archaeology have given inadequate disclosures. The idea that Pictish genetics might account for differences between the Scotch-Irish and the Irish settlers in America drew my attention to Pictish art. With the help of my friend Stuart McArthur of Edinburgh I have been able to study literature on Pictish art including the recent PAS Journals and to compare with the fractur art of the PA Germans.

Rather than definite conclusions I offer here some ideas for discussion relating to the possible origins and meanings of Pictish and Pennsylvania (PA) German folk arts. The flowering of Pictish art after Roman times and that of the PA Germans may be revivals from prehistoric times. The simple animal art of both may have descended from early nomads of the Eurasian Steppes. The geometric art of the Picts with emphasis upon crescents and broken sceptres is certainly unique in Europe, in contrast with the circular geometric art of the PA Germans (and of the Iron Age in Europe). Survivals of the latter, along with animal and flower designs can be found not only in South-western Germany, but also in alpine valleys from Southern France to southern Poland. I have found scattered traces of "Alpine Folk Art" further north such as rare circular folk arts in Wales, Hants, and Scotland, also the many confronting bird pairs on the borders of the Bayeux tapestry. The confronting birds seem to be folk symbols of many Indo-European groups from Western Europe to India. That this symbol is lacking in Pictish Art gives support to the idea that the Picts were non -Indo- European. It has been suggested that the Picts were a sea-faring people who spoke a non-Indo-European language before the arrival of the Celts (Ritchie, 1981). I am told that Prof William Potts of Lancaster University has shown by blood group frequencies that the ancestry of the Scots is about 75% "Old People" (Stone Age to Early Bronze Age). He found a cline increasing from Kent to Scotland. New methods of characterising DNA may show that very early genetic types are still strong in Europe and in descendants in America. I believe that historians have tended to exaggerate the effects of conquerors such as the Celts and Germans upon the genetics and culture of indigenous peoples.

We have very little Scotch-Irish or Irish folk art surviving in our area. Among the early Scotch-Irish gravestones near Gettysburg there is one decorated with a drawing of a balance or scales and inscribed "The weights and measures of Scotland". A McPherson gravestone has a carved coat-of-arms including a cat. Apparently the troubles of the Scotch-Irish who emigrated from Ulster to PA had erased any memories of Pictish art. In contrast, the folk art of the PA Germans (often misnamed PA Dutch) flourished in southern PA even into the early 19th century on gravestones, in books, also on baptismal and marriage certificates. Much of the so called fractur art, emphasising birds, flowers

and circular geometric designs have been treasured in American museums and in handsomely illustrated books (Weiser and Heaney, 1976). My tentative conclusion is that Pictish Class I and PA German folk arts have some similarities and that both are Pre-Celtic in origin.

The Pre-Celtic folk arts emphasise peaceful, humble subjects such as domestic animals birds and plants presented with simple realism, uncrowded and with little embellishment such as interlacing. Celtic, Viking and North German folk arts, in contrast, usually are crowded, unrealistic, highly embellished, often grotesque with emphasis on warfare and fierce animals. Pictish Class II shows the arrival of the Celtic Warriors, but the art is not yet so crowded and unrealistic as in the Books of Darrow and Kells. The Celtic imagination could not tolerate unused space or simplicity. Celtic and Northern German arts and coats-of arms emphasise eagles, lions, dragons and other fierce aggressive beasts. In contrast to PA German folk art, Pictish Class I art seldom represents flowers or circular designs. I have seen only one Scottish carving in stone resembling the circular PA German barn signs. Class I animals show realism yet with a delight in curvilinear effects. In this respect it resembles some of the art of the Scythians. The origin of the conventional Pictish Beast may have been dolphins which occurred in the Black and Caspian Seas as well as in the North Atlantic. The animal folk art of the Eurasian Steppes may have been brought to Scotland by the Scythians. However, examples of this art are known from long before the era of the Scyths. A silver vase from the barrow at Maikop in the Kuban area of the north-western Caucasus (Fig.14), dated in the third millennium BC. shows such animal art including a primitive horse of the Steppes (Vernadsky, 1943), (Rice, 1957). Some of the first copper and silver industries began in the Caucasus. Not until the seventh century BC did the Scythians penetrate the Caucasus apparently founding in Palestine the city of Scythopolis near Nazareth. The example shown here, however, does not show as much delight in curved lines as characteristic of Pictish animal art. Perhaps this love of curves was carried over from the Pictish affection for geometric art. Much of the Scythian art is different also in showing aggressive animals attacking each other and humans.
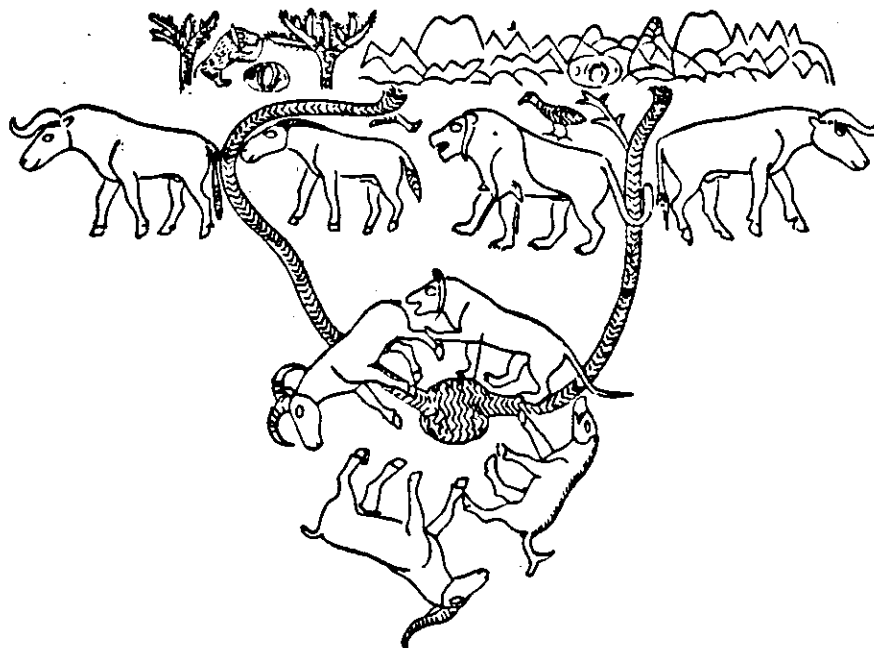
Fig.14 - Design from one of the silver vases found in the Barrow of Maikop, Caucasus, from the third millenium BC.

Of the Pictish geometric art almost all of the crescents are horizontally oriented as if they might represent the rising sun in the east, the direction from which the Picts came to Scotland. The associated broken sceptres may represent freedom in a new land. Broken sceptres occur in old literature, for example in Isaiah 14, 5 "The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked and the sceptre of the rulers". Of 56 broken V and Z rods, in Allen and Anderson's ECMS, 33 have side appendages, which some people have called the leaves of flowers; but broken flowers, even thistles, seem to make little sense. Such appendages would never have been attached to arrows or spears, other identities considered. I hope that readers may help to find in literature examples of sceptres decorated with appendages such as ribbons. Regarding the influence of the Celts some archaeological research in Germany is of interest. Excavations at the enormous "Celtic" industrial town around the later village of Manching near Ingolstadt, Germany, have revealed some details of life there around 500 to 100 BC (Noelle, 1974). Remains of three types of people were identified: (1) A ruling minority of Celts, (2) Alpines with more rounded skulls and (3) Dinarics (or Adriatics). Dinaric features with v-shaped faces and prominent noses have been associated with the Pre-Celtic Illyrians, also modern people of the Swiss Alps to the Dinaric Alps of Yugoslavia and the PA Germans including myself (Schildknecht, 1985). The geometric art of the PA Germans resembles that of the Hallstadt Period of the Iron Age which was followed by the spread of the warlike Celts about 500 BC. Helena, the Christian mother of Constantine, was an Illyrian as was Diocletian and several other late Roman Emperors. I agree with Davin Watson Hood in PAS Journal 3 (p30) that folk art symbolism "may be a response to the threat of loss of cultural heritage". The Pictish culture was threatened by the Celtic overlords (portrayed as mounted warriors in Class II) and also by the Christian religion. The PA German culture was threatened by a ruling English-speaking majority. The culture of the Britons was threatened by the Celts and after 1066 by the Normans. When the ladies of Canterbury were compelled to make the Bayeux Tapestry glorifying the Norman Conquest, perhaps as a protest they included in the margins so many symbols of confronting birds from the old culture of the Britons. Folk art may reinforce ethnic identity in periods of social stress. How did the Picts make the pictures on their bodies? Tattooing was practised by people from the Stone Age (recently discovered Ice Man) to the Bronze Age and later (frozen bodies of the Altai). Julius Caesar was told that the Britons painted their bodies with the blue dye woad. Imaginary paintings of three decorated unclad Picts were made by John White (of America's Lost Colony). Quite spectacular is the drawing of the Daughter of the Picts in the Morgan Library in New York City. The blue decoration of Pictish bodies was suggested as an early use of dyes in a recent publication (Saltzman, 1992). "The Picti had a custom of using stones to pierce their skin and then rubbed the wounds with the woad plant, Isatis tinctoria. Sap from the plant seeped into the wounds leaving blue tattoos". Woad with yellow blossoms in May now grows wild in mountains of Virginia and also in my garden.

<div align="right">Calvin E Schildknecht</div>

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Rosemarkie ROMGH.1992.7 (drawn by J R F Burt).

a note on a carved stone fragment from kilrenny, fife

The carved stone fragment found at Kilrenny several years ago is a small part of a cross slab, carved in relief on one face. The dark red sandstone has split vertically along the bedding planes of the sandstone at some recent date; the reverse is fresh and uneven and cannot have been the original surface of the stone. The stone was found on the beach at Kilrenny (find spot NO 580 043) by Mr Glen Jones who was looking for interesting stones for his rockery; it was some time before it was reported in 1993 to Edwina Proudfoot by Paul Bibire, who had recognised carvings on the stone (Proudfoot 1993).

No other fragments were found at the time or on a later inspection of the find spot, which was not far from the village of Kilrenny. It seems entirely probable that a large cross slab from the vicinity of the church had been broken up many years ago for use as building stone; other fragments might still be built into local cottages. The present fragment had been deposited on the beach with rubble and other building debris, but the source could not be determined because of the long period between deposit, discovery and reporting. The carving is crisp, showing only slight traces of weathering, suggesting it had not been long exposed to the sea.

Fig.15 - Fragment from Kilrenny, North-east Fife. (© E V W Proudfoot)
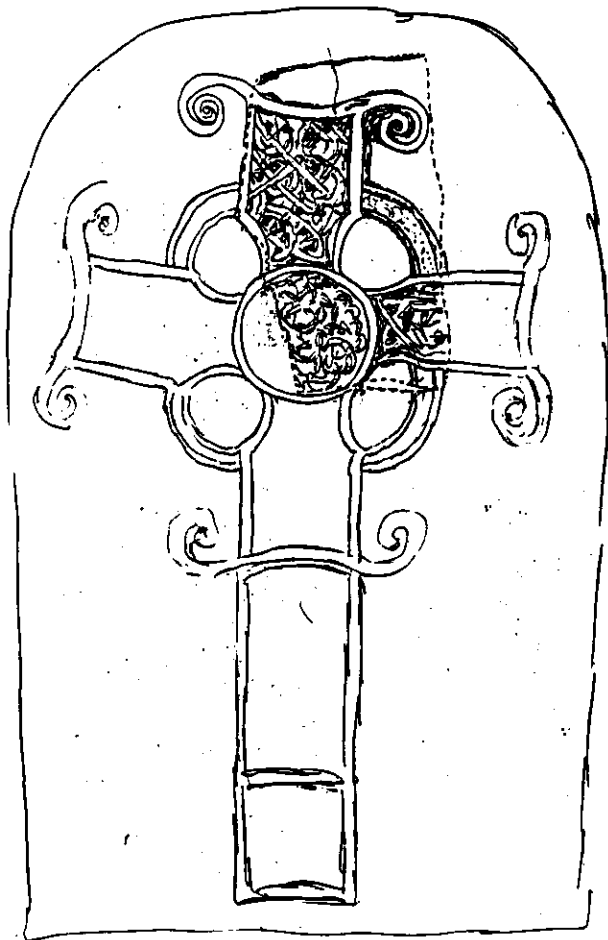
Fig.16 - Reconstruction of Kilrenny stone with surviving elements indicated by hatched line. ((© E V W Proudfoot)

The fragment of stone from Kilrenny now measures 553mm by 324mm by 95mm. The surviving elements comprise the upper arm, with spiral terminal, part of the right arm, one complete arc of the connecting ring, a small section of another and part of the central roundel. The roundel and cross arms are filled with interlace, while the connecting ring has a double groove with traces of interlace (Fig. 15).

Because of the fragmentary state there is no certainty about this identification, but after turning the fragment in all directions, and comparing the design elements with those on other stones it is my view that the fragment formed the upper right portion of a cross carved in relief on a large slab (Fig. 15). My tentative reconstruction (Fig. 16) shows the fragment as part of a slab with the surviving spiral at the upper right. In my view the proportions of the ring harmonise best this way. However, I am grateful to Jack Burt who has drawn the stone from a photograph and has also offered a well-argued case for his view that the stone should be turned through 90° with the spiral on one of the side arms (pers comm). This should make the stone even larger than I have suggested. Although there is no means of establishing which interpretation might be correct it can be seen that the stone was extremely fine. Another possible reconstruction is shown in figure 17. Although there is no evidence for carvings on the slab, other than the cross, a majority of cross-slabs do have such background elements.

Spirals are integral to many Pictish symbols and may be construed as a Pictish design-element. They are found on many stones, for example, on the hind at Strathmiglo, Fife, (Ritchie and Stevenson 1993) and Dunachton, Inverness (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 103) and on the Norrie's Law, Fife, plaques (Allen and Anderson, fig 387) as well as on many of the "elephant" symbols, such as Brodie, Aberdeen (Allen and Anderson, fig 136A).

Spirals occur extensively in wider Celtic art and it is not surprising to find them both incised and in relief on Pictish carvings. They sometimes complete a design, such as the muscles on the many deer and bull carvings, including Eassie, Angus (Sutherland, 141). They infill the designs on others, such as the rectangular symbol at Ackergill, Caithness (Sutherland, 112), while on the stone from Abernethy, Perth, the tuning fork, the V-rod and the pelta all boast spirals (Allen and Anderson, fig 299).

However, many cross slabs include spirals in their designs, both as part of the decoration and as exuberant terminal twirls at the ends of arms, including St Andrews No 30 (Allen and Anderson, fig 378A). The Kinnord Cross, near Aboyne provides a comparison for the Kilrenny stone, with spirals on all terminals but no other decoration on the slab (Allen and Anderson, fig 210). Dyce No 2, Aberdeen, (Allen and Anderson, fig 206) has similar spirals, a central roundel and only a hint of a connecting ring, but it does have several symbols. Glamis No 1, Angus, includes a single spiral terminal on the right of the bottom arm of the cross (Allen and Anderson, fig 233A), while St Vigeans No 7, Angus, is resplendent with spirals within the cross and sprouting from the arms (Allen and Anderson, fig 278).

Surprisingly, perhaps, central roundels and connecting rings are not a common combination, although they are found together on Aberlemno No 2, Angus, (Allen and Anderson, fig 227A), faintly on Meigle No 1, Perth (Allen and Anderson, fig 310A) and partially on Glamis No 2, Angus (Allen and Anderson, fig 234A).

Although the evidence is slight, because of the terminal spiral, the general character of the design and its layout as a slab cross, this stone has been identified as a Class II Pictish Stone. No traces of other Pictish designs are now present on the Kilrenny fragment, which must represent only a small part of the original cross-slab. However, from the estimated size of the slab it is probable that other carvings would have filled the space around the cross, although these need not have been Pictish designs, as some of the examples quoted earlier indicate.

The Kilrenny fragment has no exact comparisons, although Kinnord, Dyce No 2, Logierait (Allen and Anderson, fig 308A) and Tullibole (Allen and Anderson, fig 391) all have strong similarities. Of these only Kinnord has terminal spirals at all corners. There is no central roundel, however, and there are no associated symbols or other carvings. Dyce No 2 has spirals on the ends of the side arms, but not on the base of the shaft; the top is broken and so there is no evidence for the finish there. Logierait has a strong central roundel, only an incipient connecting ring and has rather awkward spirals at the base of the shaft, while Tullibole is so weathered the only visible spiral is on the right arm. While all these terminal spirals are of interest none has the force or quality of the Kilrenny fragment.

The Kilrenny cross head is of type 102 or 102A (Allen and Anderson, part II, 52) and appears similar to St Andrews No 7, Fife, (Allen and Anderson, part III, fig 368) with interlace between two grooves on the wide ring.
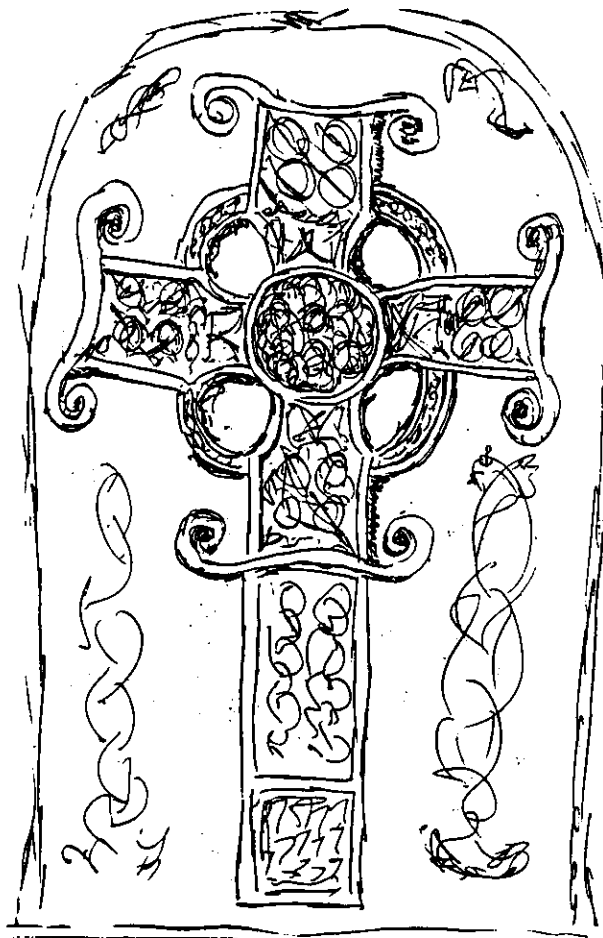
Fig.17 - Kilrenny stone: possible reconstruction.
(© E V W Proudfoot)

Many of the stones have well-defined proportions and I am indebted to Jack Burt for his advice on this subject. He points out, for example, that a useful model might be Dyce No 2, where the shaft is twice the length of the upper arm. Although too little of the Kilrenny stone remains to be certain about measurements this comparison is helpful, except that the upper arm of the Dyce stone seems to be incomplete. On this basis I have estimated the overall height of the Kilrenny cross as approximately 1350mm by some 700mm wide. The complete slab would have been somewhat taller and wider, perhaps comparable to Aberlemno No 2. Although the interlace looks crisp and well-cut the design is not well worked out and the roundel is off-centre; the carving could have been the work of a stone carver who was not fully familiar with interlace work, but retained the exuberance of the Pictish carvers.

Comparisons and dating can only be tentative, since the Kilrenny stone is such a small fragment of what was once an extremely large stone. It is unfortunate that no other fragments of the stone survive to show whether there had been additional carvings, although in view of the estimated size of the stone this would be probable. As a Class II stone it would belong to the eighth century, and in the writer's view its probable size, its character and liveliness are more suggestive of this Class than the otherwise plausible Class III attribution.

The stone has been declared Treasure Trove. It has been allocated to North-east Fife District Museums Service which has lodged the stone with Crail Museum.

Edwina Proudfoot.

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I am grateful to Edwina Proudfoot not only for letting me see the Kilrenny stone when it was being recorded by Fife Archaeological Index (Proudfoot 1993), but also for giving me a preliminary view of her note. As she mentions, I have suggested that the fragment represents one of the side arms of a large cross slab (Fig. 18), rather than the upper arm.
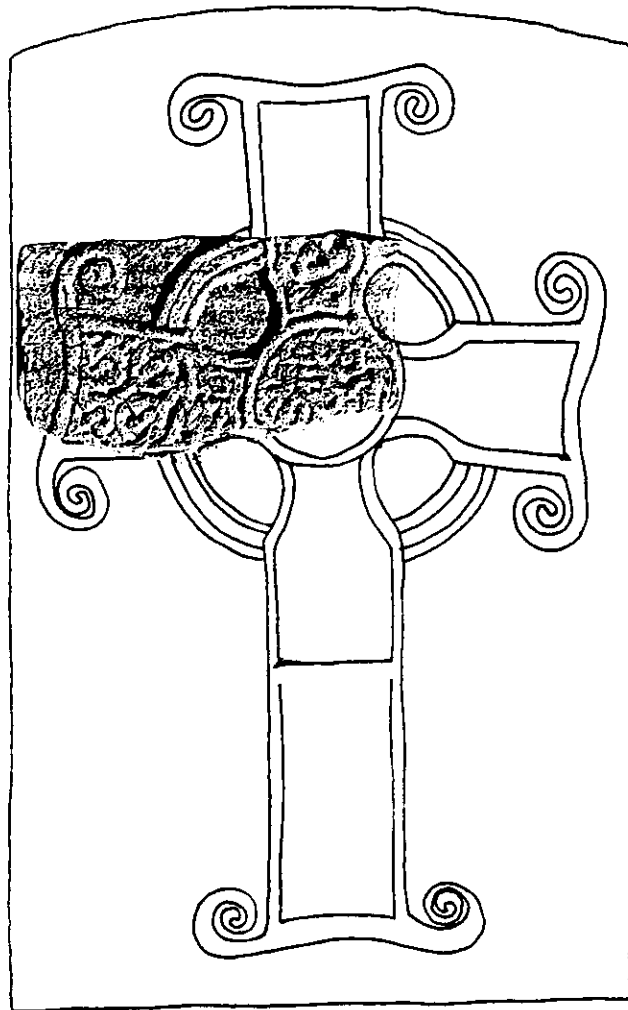
Fig.18 - A tentative reconstruction of the Kilrenny cross slab showing the surviving fragment (© J R F Burt).

Mrs Proudfoot has already indicated two types of cross slab that we may compare the Kilrenny stone with; (1) cross slabs with terminal spirals at the end of their arms, and (2) cross slabs which have central roundels and connecting rings.

In the first group she gives seven examples; St Andrews 30, Kinnord, Dyce 2, Glamis 1, St Vigeans 7, Logierait and Tullibole. Looking at these:

St Andrews 30 has very small spirals arising not only from the terminals of the arms but also from the arcs of the round hollow angles infilling the hollows themselves. This slab also has vine scroll ornament on its right side and shows Northumbrian influence of 9th century date. It is quite unlike the Kilrenny fragment.

The **Kinnord** cross slab has spirals on all terminals. The upper arm is approximately one and a half times the length of each side arm, but the size of the spirals on the upper arm is the same as those on the side arms.

Dyce 2 has spirals very similar to our Kilrenny example on the ends of the side arms and upper arm, but not the base of the shaft. I question Mrs Proudfoot's comment that "the top is broken and so there is no evidence for the finish there". The photograph in Early Christian Monuments of Scotland is rather dark and not ideal, but for a better illustration see Exploring Scotland's Heritage: Grampian (Shepherd 1986, 124). Dyce 2 has a central roundel, but no connecting ring. The upper arm is approximately one and a third times larger than each side arm whereas the size of the spiral scrolls is the same whether extending from the upper or a side arm.

The **Glamis 1** stone does not, in my view, have a spiral terminal on the right of the bottom arm of the cross. The carving is worn but I think the "spiral" here is in fact part of the symbols to the right of the shaft.

St Vigeans 7 has spirals extending from the side arms and from the top of the cross-shaft. The top of this cross has been mutilated and most of the upper arm is missing.

The spirals on the **Logierait** cross are inward turning, arise from the base of the shaft only, and are of a completely different style to the Kilrenny stone.

The **Tullibole** stone really is too weathered to make a useful comparison.

Another cross slab with terminal spirals is St Vigeans 11, Angus (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 282A) which has double spirals at the ends of the surviving arms and also a connecting ring, but the top of this stone is missing. The cross slab at Kettings, Angus may have had terminal spirals - an inturning one is indicated in E.C.M.S. (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 236).
However, of this group Loch Kinnord, Dyce 2 and St Vigeans 7 are the most useful for making our comparisons.

In the second category, cross slabs which have central roundels and connecting rings, Mrs Proudfoot has given three examples; Aberlemno 2, Meigle 1 and Glamis 2. To this list we should add Eassie, Angus (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 231A) and Rossie Priory, Perthshire (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 322A). There is a markedly constant ratio between the length of the upper arm and the length of a side arm for the first four of these crosses at approximately 1.32 : 1. The exception to the rule is the Rossie Priory cross slab where the ratio is 1 : 1, but this particular stone is an exception to many rules having another cross without a connecting ring on its other face with a mounted horseman within the lower cross arm. Other stones which may be considered in this group, but which I have not measured, are those at Reay, Caithness (Allen and Anderson 1903, part III, fig 32), and at Edderton churchyard (Allen and Anderson 1903, fig 82a). The drawings in ECMS give a ratio of 1.5 : 1 and 1.2 : 1 respectively.

| Stone	Class	Spirals side arms	Spiral upper arms	Central roundel and connecting ring	Ratio length upper arm/ side arm	Ratio size upper/ side spirals
St Vigeans 7	III	✓	?	✗	?	?
Dyce 2	II	✓	✓	✗	1.3 : 1	1 : 1
Kinnord	III	✓	✓	✗	1.5 : 1	1 : 1
Aberlemno 2	II	✗	✗	✓	1.32 : 1	-
Meigle 1	II	✗	✗	✓	1.32 : 1	-
Eassie	II	✗	✗	✓	1.32 : 1	-
Glamis 2	II	✗	✗	✓	1.32 : 1	-
Rossie Priory	II	✗	✗	✓	1 : 1	-

My argument for the Kilrenny fragment representing a side arm rather than an upper arm is based on these figures, summarised in the table above, and the fact that whereas there can be a difference between the lengths of upper and side arms, the size of the terminal spirals remains the same on any cross slab. The sample size is small and this is all tentative speculation until the next piece of the jigsaw is found.

I therefore propose that if the Kilrenny fragment represents a side arm, then the upper arm of the cross will be at least 1.3 times the length of the side arm. Figure 18, an illustration of a possible reconstruction, is based on these measurements.

The converse, that if this is the upper arm then each side arm will be three quarters its length, looks less likely when drawn out, if these side arms have equivalent spirals - they just about touch the connecting ring (Fig. 19). It is of course possible that if the Kilrenny fragment represents the upper arm, then the side arms had no spirals. Or, it may have been an equal armed cross. We may never know.

Whatever the "correct" reconstruction is, there is no doubt that the Kilrenny cross slab must have been an impressive monument. The flamboyant style of its terminal spirals is remarkable.

Jack R F Burt.
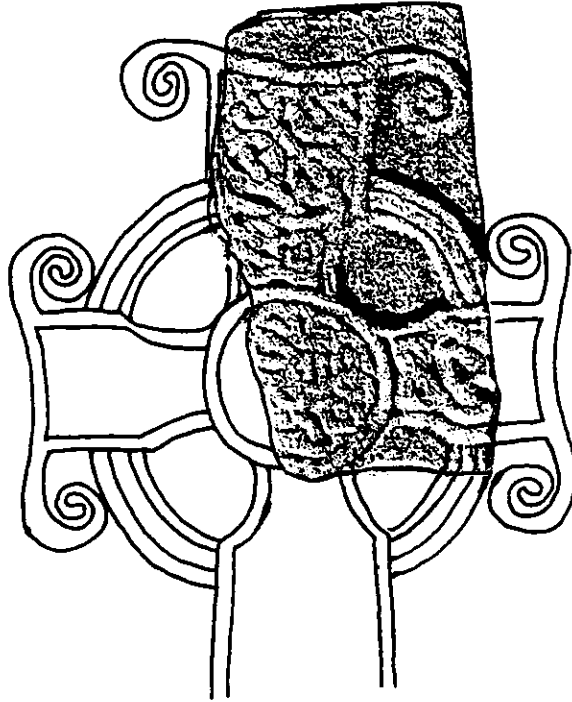
Fig.19 - The rejected reconstruction of the Kilrenny stone showing the surviving fragment as an upper arm (© J R F Burt).

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Book Reviews

Manx Crosses by P M C Kermode with an introduction by David M Wilson.
(The Pinkfoot Press, Balgavies, Angus, 1994, a facsimile reprint of the 1907 original).
HB. £54, PB. £42 (incl. p&p)(20% discount to PAS members if purchased from publisher).

This handsome re-issue is, in the hardback version, almost the same as Kermode's 1907 Bemrose and Sons version, except that it is now only 26mm thick instead of 60, and has a useful and sensitive forward by (Sir) David Wilson - an appreciation of the work, 90 years on, which rightly concludes that it has stood the test of time and that Kermode's visual records are essential because of subsequent loss or decay.

I bought my Kermode years ago when I was a student, for £7, a week's food-and-beer money, and have used it constantly. What makes me happy about these very welcome re-issues is that they will bring such heavyweight classics, the asking prices for which can easily top several hundred pounds at auction, into the reach of another generation of workers.

The Pinkfoot Press have already given us a handy-size re-issue of Allen and Anderson; Langdon's *Old Cornish Crosses* which re-appeared in 1988 from Wheatons of Exeter, and Westwood's *Lapidarum Walliae* (Redesmere Press) in 1993. To the waverers I would say: buy these, if you haven't got them.

A facsimile republication is never going to be a commercial bonanza for any firm, there is an element of real service to scholarship in such undertakings, and those who do it deserve the widest support. And don't for one moment imagine that such books are "out of date" - in the field of early Insular Art, these authors were giants. Well done indeed Pinkfoot Press. Some of us will wonder if Stuart's Sculptured Stones, or Drummond's Monuments, could command a fresh subscription-list now, inside and outwith Scotland . . .

Charles Thomas

In Search of the Picts. A Celtic Dark Age Nation by Elizabeth Sutherland.
(Constable, London, 1994). HB; 263pp. £16.95.

This new book by Elizabeth Sutherland (or Marshall, as most of us know her from her days as curator of Groam House) has been written for a general readership with the aim of "making the Picts more accessible or a little less fantastical". It ambitiously tries to cover a very wide range of aspects of Pictish life and culture in an attempt, in the author's words, to "give the Pictish world the value it deserves". Sutherland uses a multi-disciplinary approach, not only including the usual disciplines - archaeology, art-history, history, philology and onomastics - but also folklore and Celtic mythology. The book is illustrated throughout with black and white plates, mainly taken by Tom E Gray.

In Search of the Picts starts with Pictish Roots, tracing the ancestry of the Picts through the prehistory of Scotland using examples from Mesolithic camps, through Neolithic dwellings and burial cairns, cup-and ring marked stones, to Iron Age forts, homes, crannogs, farmsteads and souterrains. Pictish domestic architecture is shown to be a continuation of Iron Age styles, e.g. the Pictish-phase dwelling at Buckquoy is demonstrated to follow the wheelhouse tradition (16).

The idea of a possible link between Pictish animal symbols and particular animal remains found in some of the neolithic tombs of Orkney is aired, e.g. dog-skulls have been found at Cuween Hill and sea-eagle carcasses at Isbister, discovered in 1958, "one of the most exciting of recent finds" (6). Certainly the deposition of white-tailed sea-eagles at Isbister is unusual and suggests totemic ritual. I am surprised that the author did not bring animal masks into the discussion, e.g. the bird-headed men on the Papil stone (Allen and Anderson 1903, III, 10-15) or the dog-masked figure on the Mail stone (Robertson 1992). The connection between neolithic animal depositions and Pictish animal symbols is of course pure speculation, and is recognised as such.

The Pictish Kingdom, opens by looking at the name "Pict" and the king-list. A short history of Pictland from the 7th century follows, with notes about each king recorded in the annals. If Pictland was a truly matrilinear society why is no king's mother mentioned, only his father?

The names and loci of some settlement sites and fortifications are looked at. One of these is the Brough of Birsay. Here we learn that a "stone carved with what would seem to be the symbols of kingship was found" (65). This is the symbol stone with three warriors, a mirror-case, a crescent and V-rod, a Pictish beast and an eagle symbol (Ritchie 1994, 20-21, 32, fig 3.1, Pl 10). There is no discussion as to why these "would seem to be the symbols of kingship". Another site mentioned is Forteviot where "recent aerial photography has shown extensive evidence of a ritual nature including graves around the area together with class II and class III (sic) carved stones" (67). Clever aerial photography indeed, and can we have more details of these Class II stones?

Then follows a brief examination of *pit*-place-names. Here the author tells us that "much of Pictland seems to have been loosely divided into farmsteads, small parcels of land or settlements easily identified by the toponym "pit" or "pett", which means a share or portion of land" (67). I would disagree that "pit" or "pett" are toponyms in themselves, but rather place-name elements. To me, *toponym* means at least a place-name, if not a place-name with topographic features reflected in that name, e.g. Pittenweem, "share of the cave" (Watson 1926, 412), or Pittendreich, "share on the slope" (Watson 1926, 413; Whittington 1975, 104).

The First Symbol Stones summarises some of the ideas of their origin and purpose. The author concludes that the Class I stones tell us that the Picts relied on a powerful and probably ancient system of mass communication (83-84); that if they practised matriliny, then the stones were an intelligent method of explanation; and that the stones may indicate a powerful respect for the élite dead. I tend to question her statement "very few class I stones have been found close to or in Christian graveyards" (83) as actually over forty Class I stones have.

Various symbols are studied individually. There is a great deal of folklore in this section. We are told that the salmon faces to the right in "Celtic sunwise tradition" (88). Turn back four pages for Tom Gray's photograph of the Edderton stone - the fish faces *left* here! That on the back of the Golspie

cross-slab also faces left, but we are told, without details of the actual reference, that Close-Brooks suggests that this is not a Pictish symbol but the "Fish of Christ" (199). Also a photograph of a salmon in Jonathan's Cave, East Wemyss, has been rotated 90° from vertical to face left on page 231!

The author gives figures for appearances of each symbol. There are an astonishing number of errors here. For example, "Two geese appear on class I stones" (98) - which two of Easterton of Roseisle, Peterhead Farm and Tillytarmont 1 does she refer to? "The crescent and V-rod . . . appears incised about thirty-five times on class I stones" (105) - it appears over sixty times. The Congash enigmatic symbol is rotated 90°, presumably to enhance its interpretation as "The Bow and Arrow" (118). This may be misleading to those who do not know the stone.

Christianity and the Stones begins by suggesting reasons why the Picts used cross-slabs rather than outline crosses - a way of proclaiming a reformed Pictish Church; a better medium for messages; or to avoid carving figures within the cross itself. By way of dating we are told that the cross-slabs did not appear until after Nechtan's historic invitation to Ceolfrid c 710 (126). It would be interesting to learn the author's reasons behind this statement. The bringing of Christianity to Pictland is touched on. The author still has the church at Restenneth as the original "stone church built in the Roman fashion" ordered by Nechtan (138) although modern opinion prefers a late 11th-century date for the earliest masonry at Restenneth, the chamber at the base of the tower (Fernie 1986, 397-400).

The importance of cross-slabs as a place of worship, as a place where things happened, and an object that made things happen, is recognised. "They symbolized the spiritual centre of the communities they graced" (139). The ornamentation on the cross-slabs was also of symbolic importance.

The author then examines, in a reasonably detailed way, various examples of Biblical scenes on the slabs; including Adam and Eve, Samson and Delilah, David, Daniel, Jonah and the Whale, the Virgin and Child, the Desert Fathers and figures from the Bestiary. Here too there are one or two surprises. David the warrior/hunter on the St Andrews Sarcophagus is described as "clearly a Scot rather than a Pict" (149), presumably because he wears a "plaid over his shoulder and his tunic would almost appear to be kilted". Henderson sees this dress as a short toga (1994, 77). David rending the jaws of a lion to the right is obviously in classical dress. This type of dress, worn by David, appears on many Insular manuscripts, for example the Vespasian Psalter (fol. 31) or the Durham Cassiodorus (fol. 172v), and surely the sarcophagus sculptor was operating in an Insular context.

Of Jonah and the Whale; "two cross slabs bear the Jonah image - Dunfallandy (possibly) and here (thought to be the earlier of the two) at Fowlis Wester church" (150). Both of these stones actually bear two Jonah images and I would add some other possible representations:- Woodrae (formerly Woodwray), the panel top-right above the cross-arm (Allen and Anderson 1903, Part III, 243); Bressay, two "monsters" with a human figure between. Here the swallowing and disgorging are shown in one scene by a human form extended between the mouths of two monsters that outline the top of the slab (Allen and Anderson 1903, Part III, 6-7; Curle 1940, 79); and the Bore Stone of Gask, with a probable but worn example on the back to the right of the cross-shaft (Stuart 1856, Pl CIV). Jonah is used of course as a symbol of the Resurrection. Carola Hicks has noted that when this subject appears in Pictish art, the monsters tend to be quadrupeds rather than fish (1993, 172). To put it into context, "monster" was the word used in the account of Jonah in the "Old Latin Version", the translation of the Bible thought to have been brought to Ireland by St Patrick, but in the *Vulgate* version, in use in Northumbria by 700, St Jerome used the word "fish" (Curle 1940, 79n).

In Important Pictish People, we look at images on the stones to learn about the way of life of the élite. An interpretation of the Aberlemno kirkyard battle-scene is included and hunting scenes discussed. The Hilton of Cadboll image is interpreted as "Mary in the Flight into Egypt", the female rider's large penannular brooch is here seen as an infant head (187).

This part of the book also discusses clerics. The author mentions liturgical fans, which in the caption to St Vigeans 11 (appearing as "St Vigean's II") she calls "flabellums" *(sic)* (190). The book has a very good photograph of the Raasay House stone (246). Sutherland misses the opportunity to

mention this rare depiction of a *flabellum* on a Pictish sculptured stone, comparable to similar examples on Irish crosses such as those at Carndonagh, Fahan Mura, Reask or Innismurray (Richardson 1993, 31).

PAS Editor Niall Robertson's unpublished reading of the Dunfallandy stone with his idea that symbols were personal and that one inherited one's upper symbol from one's father and one's lower symbol from one's mother is touched upon (195).

Pictish Language and the Arts, starts by following Kenneth Jackson's ideas on language (1955). The author mentions that Jackson once suggested the inscription on the Newton of Garioch stone may be an 18th-century forgery (203, 205). She does not however mention Gordon's investigations to determine the authenticity of this particular inscription, that found it to be genuine (Gordon 1956). In her discussion of ogham she states "It is thought that the alphabet was first introduced to the Picts by the Dal Riatic Scots" (206). There are very few examples of ogham in Argyll. Ogham was invented in Ireland and widely used in Pictland.

The Arts are covered with a short section on "Music and the Harp", and another on "Treasures". The music section is mainly concerned with depictions of harps on the stones but also gives mention to trumpets, and to the triple-pipe and barrel-drum on the Lethendy stone (Fisher and Greenhill 1972). The carnyx, perhaps rightly, does not appear in this musical section, but there is a photograph of a replica carnyx earlier in the book (178), unfortunately labelled as a "carynx".

Daily Life in a Pictish Settlement, purports to examine certain aspects of the common Pict, as opposed to the warrior élite. There are sections on "Wives and Marriage" (223-5), "Children" (225-9), "A Farmer's Life" (229-30) and "Cave-dwellers" (231-2). In the last of these sections, the caves discussed are those at East Wemyss and the Sculptor's Cave, Covesea. I am not aware of any evidence that Covesea was ever used as a dwelling - rather, that in Pictish times, it was used as a revered ritual/ religious site and that archaeological evidence has confirmed quite clearly that it was not a settlement site. This book ends with a look at Sueno's Stone. Anthony Jackson's theories are accepted too readily (1984; 1993).

The Bibliography (248-53) contains many errors and inconsistencies. Sometimes we are given a publisher, sometimes a place of publication, and even sometimes both. Page numbers are not given. Authors have their names spelt wrong, e.g. "Graham Cruikshank" (251) for Graeme Cruickshank. The author has made eclectic use of various specialists' opinions throughout the book. It is a pity that their relevant publications do not always appear in the bibliography. E.g., Colin Renfrew is quoted in the early part of the book (3, 9, 25), yet no work by him is contained in the bibliography.

The bibliography is really an epitome of the whole book. Although "one should never judge a book by its cover", the alarm bells began to ring when I saw Tom Gray's name as "Tom E Grey" on the dust-cover. One wonders if this book was put together with such haste that no-one actually read the proofs. Apart from those named above others to have misspellings of their names include St Columba (xvii), Abbot Ceolfrid (58), and king Oengus (67). Places also suffer, for example, Tigernach (xvii), Traprain (19), and Dunnottar(56). Both St Andrews and St Vigeans are interchanged at random with St Andrew's and St Vigean's respectively. Even the Pictish Arts Society is given as "Pictish Art Society" (xiii) with a George Street address!

Although there are a number of very good photographs there are also a number which have been reproduced with poor contrast and others whose scale has been reduced so much as to render them unhelpful. I am sure that Tom E Gray must be bitterly disappointed at the way his photographs have been reproduced. At a conservative estimate about 30% are sub-standard. The backgrounds of most of his photographs of stones have been cropped which is not to their best advantage.

There are an enormous number of other details that I could mention, but I think the point has already been made that there are an inordinate amount of factual and typographical errors in this book. It has been an ambitious undertaking and has not been adequately read before going to press.

For the beginner In Search of the Picts must appear exciting. Imagine if one had never heard of the Picts and one came across this book. It contains a good number of images of Pictish sculpture with

apparent interpretations of the symbols and a discussion of the everyday life of the Picts. Any book which increases awareness of the Picts to a wider audience should be welcome. However parts of Elizabeth Sutherland's book are misleading. For a general introduction to the Picts one would be better advised to consult Anna Ritchie's <u>Picts</u> (1989), which is both excellent and exceptional value for money. <u>In Search of the Picts</u> is not intended to be an academic book, and I do not think that Elizabeth Sutherland sees herself as an expert. However, for anyone with a moderate knowledge of the Picts this book will be a disappointment. Its aims and objectives are good, but regrettably, to me at least, it does not fulfil its potential.

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J R F Burt

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Ritchie, A	-	Picts (Edinburgh, 1989).
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Whittington, G	-	"Placenames and the settlement pattern of dark-age Scotland" (PSAS 106, 1975) 99-110.

Book Reviews in Brief

The Book of Kells. Proceedings of a conference at Trinity College Dublin 6-9 September 1992.
Edited by Felicity O'Mahony (Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1994)
HB, 617pp, 146 B&W plates, 45 colour plates. £75.

A special conference was held in Trinity College, Dublin in 1992 as part of the quatercentenary celebrations of its foundation. It was an adjunct to the series of international conferences on Insular art and was devoted entirely to the Book of Kells. The analysis of this great gospel book has demanded a multidisciplinary approach and this is very much evident from the depth and range of papers in this volume.

This is an academic book. In all there are twenty-seven papers from archaeologists, art historians, biblical scholars, calligraphers, medieval historians and scientists. Topics covered range from the historic and cultural background of the Book of Kells (Donnchadh Ó Corráin) to an examination of colour material, painting technique (Robert Fuchs/Doris Oltrogge) and ornamental techniques (Mark Van Stone). Comparisons are made with stone sculpture (Roger Stalley and Peter Harbison) and metalwork (Michael Ryan). Máire Herbert examines charter material while Carol Farr investigates the textual structure, decoration and interpretive images.

There are many other erudite contributions. Two, which may be of particular interest to members of the Pictish Arts Society, are Ian Fisher's "The monastery of Iona in the eighth century" and John Higgitt's "The display script of the Book of Kells". In the former, Ian Fisher confirms his view that Picts introduced the technique of stone carving to Iona. Artistic links suggest that snake-boss motif was associated with Columba himself. However, its diffusion into Pictland may have been through pilgrims rather than stone-carvers. John Higgitt, in his paper, shows how the Kells insular decorative capitals relate to those in other insular manuscripts and in insular inscriptions. He draws epigraphic parallels which include the Lethnot and Tarbat inscriptions in Pictland.

This lavishly illustrated Conference Proceedings brings together a treasury of information, ideas and concepts covering the latest research not just on the Book of Kells itself, but also on the whole spectrum of Insular art.
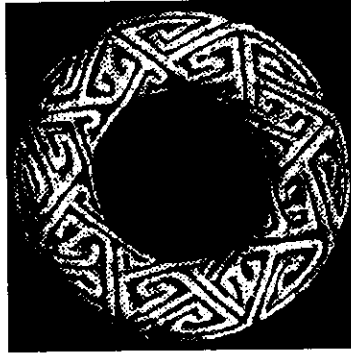
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