A Fragmented Masterpiece

Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-Slab

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Chapter 5

The art–historical context of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab

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5.1 Introduction

As a result of the recovery of its lower portion, with all four sides preserved, and of a high proportion of fragments of carving from its front face, the Pictish slab from Hilton of Cadboll has become in effect a new monument. The new evidence is not something to add on to the familiar truncated and defaced monument on display in Edinburgh, but is sufficient to restore its context within its original conception. The cross-slab can now contribute to the better understanding of Pictish sculpture locally, nationally, and within the totality of the corpus, in all media, of Insular art.

The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is broadly typical of the tall, ambitious monuments which employ the full range of the Insular decorative repertoire in a carving style that exploits different levels of relief. These tall slabs, like Hilton, also display the distinctive Pictish symbols, figural scenes and animal motifs. This homogeneity of repertoire has allowed Pictish cross-slabs in general to be treated as one class of monument, obscuring the extent to which each is a unique work of art. For example, the shape of the cross and its scheme of decoration is never repeated in a total of around one hundred cross-slabs or fragments of cross-slabs, something true even of the allegedly, mechanical mass-produced small slabs in the collection at St Andrews.[1] This artistic phenomenon of difference within a defined programme and repertoire is exactly paralleled in the decorative scheme for Insular Gospel-books.[2] The scope for adaptation and assimilation is one of the glories of the Insular art style in all media. There is no way of discerning, 'the genius of the sculptor', to borrow a phrase of Françoise Henry, without detailed description. Aspiring to the level of detail provided in the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, catalogue style descriptions of the carving on all four faces of the monument are provided after an account of the method of cataloguing used by the project (Chapter 4). They provide the evidence for this and future assessments of the art-historical context of the slab.

5.2 The whole monument

5.2.1 The sculptor's brief for the quarry-men

Very little is known about the mechanisms of patronage or of the practicalities of procuring stone for ambitious early medieval monuments. The discovery that the stone for St Martin's Cross and the exceptionally wide-spanned St John's Cross on Iona came from a quarry on the mainland of Argyll is however a clear indication that stone could be chosen and imported from quarries distant from the intended place of erection.[3] It seems that there was a quarry source in Easter Ross which provided stone for some at least of its monuments (Chapter 7.2.1).The presence of ambitious monuments is sometimes explained by the availability of stone suitable for carving, but in itself the presence of good cutting stone cannot produce a school of sculpture, although it might contribute to its development. Nor can patrons have included considerations of stone type when they set up their administrative centres. Patrons were unlikely to be aware of all the artistic possibilities for the monuments they commissioned, although their travels and their treasuries will have given them an idea of what they wanted from the sculptor.[4] On such matters the sculptor would have had a clear idea of what he wanted to achieve and what type of stone he required. In the case of Hilton of Cadboll both patron and sculptor were obviously committed to producing an exceptionally large monument. The sculptor's concept will almost certainly have been driven by his plans for the cross-shape, something wholly unknown prior to the recovery of the lower portion. The width of the slab was always known to be exceptional, but the projections flanking the cross-base add another 100mm giving it a known width of 1420mm. On the other hand, the Hilton slab is narrower than the widest dressed slab of all, the early Glamis no 2 (Angus), which has a maximum width of 1680mm. The design lay-out of Glamis no 2 is obviously much less ambitious than that of the Hilton slab, but it has always to be remembered that the Picts had a great deal of experience in the

handling of large pieces of stone. The widest symbol stone from Knocknagael (Inverness) is 2180mm. Even so, the erection of the Hilton of Cadboll cross–slab was obviously at the extreme end of the technology in so far as we now know that the height of the carved area of the front face was around 3300mm. When complete the slab with its tenon and projection on the upper edge will have been significantly larger. The scale tells us something about the function of the slab: it was obviously a major project for both the patron and the sculptor.

5.2.2 Planning for the lay-out of the front and the back

Viewers of the lower portion frequently remark that the carving on the front face goes further down the slab than the carving on the reverse. This discrepancy and the planning lines in the uncarved area on the reverse have led to the suggestion that carving originally planned for below the horizontal border of vine-scroll has been abandoned (illus 5.1). It has also been suggested that the carving on the reverse is inferior to that of the front and that two sculptors, one a master and the other with inferior skills, worked on the slab. First it must be said that discrepancy is an integral part of the art of the early medieval period. The Book of Kells has been described as the 'work of an angel' but this does not mean that it is perfect; it is full of errors textual and visual. Discrepancy in sculpture is also common. For example, the Kildalton Cross on Islay has side-arms of different sizes. It is the combination of the achievement of extreme intricacy of design with such 'mistakes' which makes the modern observer begin to think in terms of a master and an apprentice. In fact, the more brilliant the execution the more probable that mistakes will occur, either as a result of the confident use of free-style or of indifference to minor discrepancies unimportant to the overall effect. Pictish sculpture has many instances where parts of the surface have not been dressed off, where patterns have simply gone wrong, or there have been false starts which remain incomplete. Even the superlative carving of the St Andrews Sarcophagus has a number of irregularities.[5] Some discrepancies are mistakes or oversights but

discrepancy between the levels of carving on the two broad faces is a matter of choice. There are at least twenty examples of this type of discrepancy; two well-known examples are the cross-slab at Aberlemno no 2 (Angus), where the levels of the cross on the front and the battle-scene on the reverse are different, and Meigle no 5 (Perthshire), where a complex cross design on the front is carved much lower on the slab than the rider on the reverse.[6] Both monuments are of exceptional design quality. There are good reasons why the carving on the reverse of Hilton of Cadboll stops where it does. Not only would carving in the blank area have distracted from the frame with its carefully balanced three panels but the projections, as the wandering horizontal guideline demonstrates, would have meant that additional sculpture, presumably panelled, could not have been aligned with them. Nor is the front of the slab free of what the modern eye regards as 'mistakes', for the second steps of the stepped base are of different breadths, as are the flanking blank panels. These particular discrepancies, obvious to the eye when they are pointed out, are probably due to the necessary accommodation of the strict geometrical requirements of the internal decoration of the base, which had to be laid out so that the units of key pattern expressing the raised bosses occurred in the right places, together with a degree of discrepancy that must inevitably occur in the transference of a design to a slab. In general, where something about a monument looks wrong to modern eyes, recourse to explanations involving inferior sculptors or abandoned plans must be arguments of last resort.

If, however, it is believed that the breaking of the tenon and the consequent resetting of the slab took place before the carving of face C had begun, then a case can be made for arguing that the carving on face C was located further up the slab in order to make the sculptor's work on the lowest reaches of his design somewhat easier (see Chapter 3.5). The fact that there has yet to be a systematic study of how Pictish cross-slabs were carved and erected means that there is no adequate context to aid understanding of what happened at Hilton. Indeed for Insular sculpture generally, it is not known whether, normally, carving was done at the quarry, or at the site selected for erection, or whether it was done with the monument lying flat or erected. It is often asserted that if Pictish slabs were carved before being erected then the reverses would have been carved first because of their lower, and therefore less vulnerable, relief. There is a considerable amount of information on the logistics of the erection of large slabs available

for interpretations a result of the excavations at Hilton. What might have happened there will no doubt inform future work. For the present, the perceptible rationale for placing the lower edge of the vine-scroll frame clear of the projections, the internal balance of the three panels within the frame, and the many instances of discrepancy of the levels of carving between the fronts and reverses of other Pictish slabs, do not support the view that accidental damage might have caused changes to be made to the lay-out of face C.

As we have seen, early writers on the slab in Edinburgh were full of admiration for the balance of its design, even in its incomplete state. The frame admirably controls the depiction of the symbols, the hunting scene and the square of spirals, each within its own panel, but with unifying circular elements within the frame, the symbol panel and the spiral panel. This is a different approach from the one used for the reverse of Aberlemno no 3, where the symbols and riders occupy the same space (in spite of an aborted lower margin) and two small panels of oddly diverse imagery are placed at the lower edge (see illus 5.46). Both the designer of Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll realised that a frame would help them to organise the large space on the back of the slab. For the carving within his frame the Nigg sculptor opted for the traditionally Pictish aesthetic principle of tiered motifs called by Curle and Henry 'floating composition', an art which Henry later described as 'of infinite skill' capable of producing 'perfectly balanced compositions' (illus 5.2).[7] This method of composition is also found in classical art, notably in low-relief ivory carving, but for Pictish sculptors it ultimately conformed to the tiered presentation of symbols on the symbol stones.[8] The Hilton of Cadboll sculptor chose to frame his subject-matter, retaining the floating composition of the hunting scene within bounds. This radical decision led Cecil Curle to suggest, not altogether convincingly, that the Hilton sculptor had a new model for such scenes.

Vine-scroll in a frame, is found on early medieval ivories and it is probable that knowledge of framed ivories inspired the Hilton of Cadboll sculptor, just as manuscript lay-out inspired the frame on the reverse of the Nigg cross-slab.[9] The subject-matter within the frames remained essentially Pictish. There is evidence

among the fragments of carving from the front of the Hilton slab for the use of panels to aid lay-out, both on the cross-shape and the background of the cross. But there was no panel margin dividing the animals in the lower portion from the figure sculpture in the mid-portion, and it has to be decided whether this is an example of floating composition or depicts related parts of a narrative. On the front of the slab different types of ornament were merged, but whether this represented an abandonment of a dividing margin, or came from a single panel with merged ornament cannot be determined. Certainly the sculptor was not obsessed with the constraints of edges, for he was quite happy, as were many Insular sculptors, to allow limbs of animals to overstep a margin. Some of the ornament, particularly key pattern, was set on a higher pad or platform of relief with the dressed surface beyond the edges of the design dropping to a lower level.This device defined and gave prominence to a pattern without recourse to a moulding. Something similar is found defining a cruciform shape in recession on the broad face of a corner slab (stone 6) of the St Andrews Sarcophagus, and on the multi-levelled cross on the back of the tall Rosemarkie symbol-bearing cross-slab, but is difficult to parallel exactly.[10] Pictish sculpture of this period produced many of its most brilliant effects by exploiting different levels of relief. The cross-shape on the Hilton slab was probably on a higher level than the ornament in the background, which like other Pictish sculpture used recessed panels, cutting into the stone, to get the height of relief required.[11] The Nigg cross-slab is the best known exponent of this device which is enhanced by keeping the decoration of its cross uniformly flat. From the treatment of the decoration of the cross-base on the Hilton slab we know that there were high-relief elements on the cross-shape. Although the depth of the relief spirals on the base is only slightly greater than the perimeter mouldings (measured by the best surviving surfaces), they do require a level of relief above that of the cross surface and the evidence of the fragments suggests, although this is not certain, that there were other bosses on the cross-head. Like most other Pictish slabs the cross-bearing side of the slab is carved in higher relief than the back, but it is possible that in terms of planning for different levels of relief the Hilton sculptor showed exceptional ingenuity. Like the Nigg sculptor he could achieve any effect he wanted. Such preoccupation with surface levels, perhaps a compensation for lack of three-dimensional carving, is also found on Irish sculpture.[12]

Illustration 5.2
Nigg, Ross and Cromarty: the lay-out of the reverse of the cross-slab before restoration (Crown copyright RCAHMS)

Another general trait of the Hilton design is what Stevenson described in respect of the reverse, as its 'uncramped' feel. He was thinking, most probably, of the clear presentation of the symbols and the orderly nature of the panels. This perception is fully borne out in the carving on both faces of the lower portion, most obviously in the spacious treatment of the growing point in the lower horizontal border of the vine-scroll frame. The trait is evident also on a number of the fragments of the mid- and upper portion of the front face where there is sometimes a surprising amount of uncarved dressed surface between the relief forms. In this trait the sculptor is markedly different from the Nigg sculptor in whose work only the simplicity of the spiral panel at the bottom right of the front of the slab gives some relief from the density of the ornament. Even more densely decorated is the tall slab at Rosemarkie where the carving on the front face gives the impression of a closely embroidered textile thrown over the slab with only the background of the cross being cut back and decorated with key patterns running into spirals carved in low relief.

To exploit the value of uncarved surfaces is also indicative of a move away from floating composition which depends on the exact interlocking of animals and figures so as to fill the space, in the manner, for example, of the panel with hunting scenes on the reverse of the Shandwick cross-slab. Finally, the decision, now revealed, to employ a single animal style on both faces, but on different scales, gives a unity to the monument paralleled only on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, where ornamental animals on corner slabs are given traits matching the naturalistic animals depicted on the David panel.

In summary, the design lay-out of the whole monument shows a distinctive combination of traditional and more classical lay-outs together with a marked capacity to plan ahead for projections from the edges of the slab and varying heights of relief. The reverse of the slab provided ample evidence for the Hilton sculptor's capacity to design a balanced lay-out, but the new evidence reveals his ingenuity in that most Pictish of skills, the manipulation of heights of relief to give special effects to the presentation and decoration of the cross and its background. More unusual is his setting of relief against the value of blank dressed surface, as is his decision to match rather than contrast the ornament used for both sides. A full study of all the sculptural fragments from Portmahomack, Tarbat, may provide parallels for some of these traits. Among the earlier finds from that site it can be seen that the

lay-out of the serpent panel on Tarbat no 2 is markedly less cramped than the serpent panels on Nigg, and that the sculptured wreaths, Tarbat nos 5 and 6, have a similar openness of design.[13]

5.2.3 Style of carving

The specialist study in this volume of contemporary tooling observable on the Hilton slab (Chapter 7.2.2), in the interests of objective assessment, and in order to make comparisons with other monuments possible, is not concerned with the style of its free-hand carved elements. It is those elements which to a large extent give a carving its individual character and value. The reverse of the slab, as is usual, is carved in low relief. A style of flat relief was already present in some of the incised symbol stones where the incision is so deep as to isolate the symbol on its own plane, or the background has been cut away.[14] From the examination made for this project it appears that the Hilton sculptor remained faithful to a type of tool used by the symbol cutters. To that extent the craft tradition remained undisturbed just as the use of the lobed scroll convention for body marking of animals continued unbroken from the time of symbol cutting to that of the Nigg cross-slab and other mainstream sculpture. The traditional tool, known as a punch, was obviously capable of pre-eminent work in high relief, and we must assume that a master sculptor had a wide range of punches of different sizes to be ground to specified degrees of sharpness, a personal tool-kit built up from training and experience.

Stevenson drew attention to the rounded nature of the relief used on the Hilton reverse. This round profile was produced after the initial cutting away and it creates a soft, flexible appearance which allows for the expression of drapery styles for the figural art, supple interlace, and a degree of dimensional swelling and recession for the triple spirals. The pattern in the circular field at the crossing of the arms of the cross-slab at Tullylease (Co Cork) is similar to that used to fill the two discs in the Hilton symbol panel, but the two sculptors have chosen to carve the strands in different styles. The Tullylease interlace is carefully chosen to match the height of relief of the surrounding key pattern. At Hilton the rounded, pliant, interlace gives the two disc symbols their own surface interest and carrying power. The figures in the hunting scene have modelled hair and drapery and the floating composition of riders and animals is skilfully achieved. The interesting but not always successful attempts at expressing perspective

may be due to lack of space, the penalty for confining the hunt in a frame. Although the frontal female rider has an impressively ovoid head and complex drapery, the figure style on the front face appears more robust in the case of the tuniced figure to the right of the shaft, and more expressive in the robed figure to the left, which shares the same tapered hemline, but has the recessed clinging drapery between the lower limbs evident in the treatment of Paul and Antony on the Nigg cross-slab (illus 5.25). The careful carving in low relief of curvilinear ornament, presumably to indicate embroidery, on the tunic of the figure to the right is the most ambitious of a number of renderings of textile patterning in Pictish sculpture. In its delicacy it recalls the spread of branches over the maned shoulders of the lion emerging from a tree to attack the horse of the hunter on the long panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus (illus 5.49).[15] The remarkable embroidery on the surface of the garment would probably not have survived had the lower portion been exposed to the elements as long as was the reverse. Also amazingly preserved is the articulation of muscles and the depiction of body hair and scales on the surface of the non-naturalistic animals on the front face of the lower portion.

In comparison with the style of relief carving used for the panels on the reverse, the vine-scroll within the frame appears, as Stevenson remarked, 'somewhat wiry'. To some extent this is due to surface wear. The condition of the surfaces of the carving on the lower portion provides an unparalleled opportunity to appreciate what the Hilton of Cadboll vine-scroll must have looked like when it was newly carved. The extent of the surface detail preserved on the animals flanking the growing point of the vine-scrolls in the lower border of the frame puts it into the same category as the carved surfaces of the panels, also disinterred, of the St Andrews Sarcophagus. The crisp quality of detail and texture on that monument give it an unfamiliar look sufficient indeed to render some commentators sceptical of its having been the work of Pictish sculptors. What we see at Hilton is the attention given to the anatomy of the animals: haunches are contoured; manes are expressed; wings are carved in relief significantly higher than the body to which they are attached, covert feathers delineated as rounded pellets, differentiated from the pinnate feathers; the craniums of animals are carved in well-rounded relief, separated from the snout and jaws by a curved cheek line and their lower height of relief. The bodies and limbs, at stretch or elegantly bent, are reduced to mere strands, streamlined to suggest darting motion. Appendages,

such as ears and tails, are carved to resemble leaves and coiling tendrils. The style of carving is kept light except in the areas of well-rounded chests, necks and heads, which give emphasis to the essential action, the eating of the sustaining fruit.

Some of the most technically remarkable, well-preserved Pictish sculpture is found among the small fragments from Tarbat recorded by Allen, in particular, the astonishingly deeply cut spiral work of Tarbat no 7 and the virtually three-dimensional key pattern of Tarbat no 8.[16] First the choice of pattern had to be made but there followed the choice of carving style in order that it would work for some larger vision held in the mind of the sculptor.

Some of the new fragments of sculpture found during the excavations by the University of York on the site of what is now recognised as the monastery at Portmahomack, Tarbat Ness, are of the same quality and condition as the earlier pieces.[17] In its local context the Hilton lower portion should be examined alongside these other mint condition fragments in order to get the full impact of Pictish sculpture, at the point of production, in Easter Ross. The clean cut surfaces of the raised triple spirals at Hilton and on a number of similarly pristine fragments of spiral ornament from Portmahomack can now be in the mind's eye when looking at the Shandwick cross-slab, for its cross had just such raised spiral bosses, some fifty-four of them, covering the entire surface of the cross, only now all their surface detail has gone. A similar mental transference can aid our appreciation of the carving on major cross-slabs in the south, such as the battered Meigle no 2 and the badly worn Aberlemno no 3.

5.3 Reading the message of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-face

5.3.1 The cross-base (see Chapter 4.5.1)

The loss of the front of the slab deprived the monument of the fundamental visual statement of Pictish slabs, the depiction of the Cross of Salvation. The variety of cross-shapes used by the sculptors on the slabs demonstrates access to a range of sources of designs and individual creativity. The recovery of the lower portion of the cross-face revealed a unique variant, a deep two-stepped cross-base flanked by blank side panels which projected from the edges of the slab. On the upper edge of the base are tiny vestiges of the lateral mouldings of what must certainly be the cross-shaft (illus 5.3). Had the design followed that of some

carpet pages in contemporary Gospel-books, where the form of the 'base' is replicated as terminals for the other arms of the cross, the juncture would have been much narrower.[18] The return up the right-hand side of the shaft is just perceptible. That on the left became detached at the time of conservation and is fragment .3030. This fragment joins with fragment .2998 which preserves an indication of the depth of surface within the shaft mouldings and a trace of carved surface.

Setting the shaft of the cross on a base is a design feature of a number of the taller Pictish cross-slabs. The feature has been attributed to a desire on the part of Pictish sculptors to make their cross-bearing monuments more like the free-standing crosses of their neighbours in England and Ireland.[19] There may be an element of truth in this, always remembering, however, that if the Picts had wanted to produce free-standing crosses they could easily have done so, and indeed there are a significant number of such crosses in the Pictish regions which were in all probability carved by Picts. The Dupplin cross (Perthshire) is a notable example.[20] For the Picts the slab format was more flexible, giving space for a variety of functions and more ambitious designs.

The bases given to the cross-designs on the slabs vary in shape from a narrow rectangular plinth occupying the full breadth of the slab as on 'Sueno's Stone' at Forres (Moray) and on the symbol-bearing cross-slab in the grounds of Elgin Cathedral, to an approximately square block as on both sides of Skinnet (Caithness) and St Vigeans no 7 (Angus). The tall slab at Cossans (Angus), one of the most beautiful and complex of the Pictish cross-designs, has an elegant pyramidal base.[21] Cross-slabs often get damaged on their lower edges, Hilton of Cadboll is a case in point, and we do not know how many bases have been lost. We do not know, for example, how the shaft of the intricate cross on the Nigg slab ended. It seems, however, that stepped bases of the Hilton type are not a common feature. There is a trace of a stepped base on the small but sophisticated slab Kirriemuir 2 (Angus) (illus 5.4).[22] Until very recently the only formal analogy in Pictish sculpture for the Hilton cross-base was an incised cross-slab at Rosemarkie (illus 5.5a). The slab survives in three fragments and is thought to have been discovered while digging a grave in the churchyard. Like all sculpture produced at Rosemarkie the slab

Illustration 5.4
Kirriemuir no 2, Angus: the front of the cross-slab showing the damaged stepped base (© Tom and Sybil Gray Collection, RCAHMS)

Illustration 5.3
Hilton of Cadboll: the front of the lower portion as excavated

is finely dressed and well carved. It is incised with a contoured shafted cross having widely curved hollows at the arms. The surviving transverse arm ends with an inward facing curve but the top arm is straight. An area around the armpits has been cut away to give emphasis to the centre of the cross, a device used by the Nigg sculptor. This carefully crafted cross has a complex stepped base. It is a cruciform stepped shape within which a recessed panel follows its contours. The narrowed section of the base on the lower edge, which has something of the appearance of a tenon, is

set on a series of sloping lines giving the impression of a mound. The tall symbol-bearing slab at Rosemarkie has a small equal-armed cross on both front and back. That on the back is within a panel deeply bordered by key pattern (illus 5.6). The cross is set in a bed of interlace. It has a square at the centre and stepped terminals similar to the shape of the base on the cross-incised slab. This cross has been convincingly associated with the design of a cross carpet-page in the Book of Durrow, Dublin, Trinity College Library 57, and it testifies to the venerable nature of the church at Rosemarkie.[23] Its format suggests that it could have been copied from a precious piece of metalwork in the Rosemarkie treasury. No other cross on a Pictish cross-slab has cruciform stepped terminals.

In the summer of 2004, when the tall cross-slab in the churchyard at Edderton (Ross and Cromarty),

Illustration 5.5a
Rosemarkie, Ross and Cromarty: slab incised with 'Golgotha' stepped base, set on a stylised hillock from which flow the rivers of Paradise
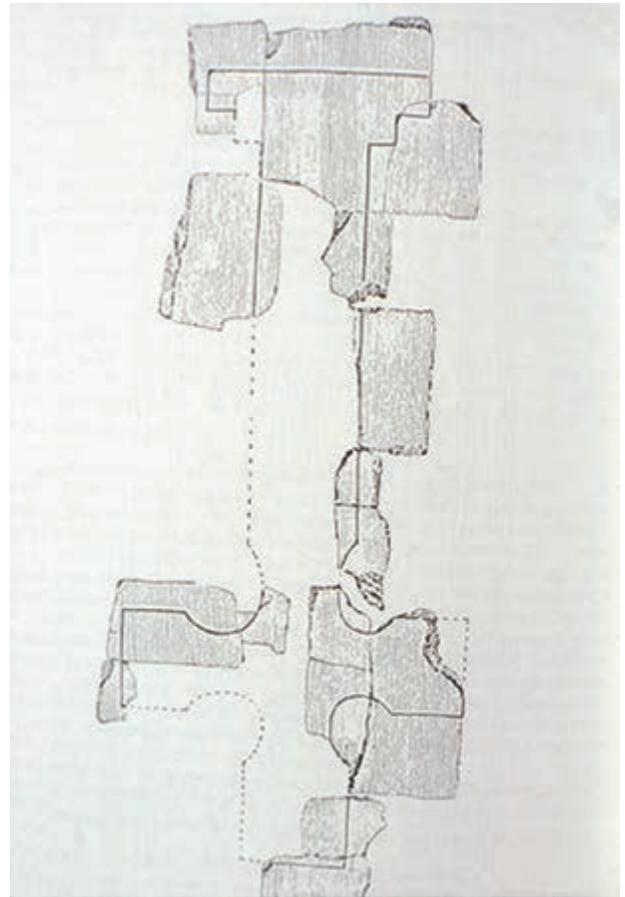(© Susan Seright, and Jon Bailey, Groam House Museum)

Illustration 5.5b
St Cuthbert's Coffin: the internal incised board
(after Haverfield & Greenwell 1899)

Illustration 5.6
Rosemarkie, Ross and Cromarty, cross-slab: the lower half of the reverse showing an equal-armed cross with stepped terminals (Crown copyright RCAHMS)

publication of exhaustive research into the material culture associated with the relics of Saint Cuthbert, the board with the stepped base was regarded as problematic. Ernst Kitzinger pointed out that crosses with stepped bases were not a feature of free-standing pre-Norman sculpture. Such bases were, however, compatible with a 12th-century date, the date of the second coffin of St Cuthbert. Kitzinger concluded 'To reach a definite conclusion on the date and function of the cross panel seems impossible at this time.' [26] Two

some 17km from Hilton, was lifted for straightening, it was discovered that the well-proportioned Latin ringed cross on its front face was set on a base with six narrow steps expressed by contoured relief (with loss of surface on the left side) leading up to the shaft (illus 5.7).[24] The unexpected total of three shafted crosses with stepped bases, and one equal-armed cross with stepped terminals, north of the Moray Firth, and geographically proximate, requires explanation.

An analogy in sculpture south of the Grampians is found on one of the corner slabs, Stone 6, of the St Andrews Sarcophagus (Fife) (illus 5.27b).[25] Here a reserved stepped cross-shape, consisting of two cruciform units, sits on a base which is also reserved. The recessed area is decorated with key pattern. This design bears a close resemblance to the reserved cruciform shape on the base of the incised cross-slab at Rosemarkie, described above, and to the equal armed crosses on both the front and back of the Rosemarkie tall cross-slab.

Outside the corpus of Pictish sculpture a close parallel to the cross-incised slab at Rosemarkie is found on an inner board of St Cuthbert's Coffin Reliquary of AD 698 (illus 5.5b). Here an outline Latin cross is set on a two-stepped base. At the time of the

Illustration 5.7
Edderton, Ross and Cromarty: the front face of the cross-slab showing the stepped base revealed in 2004 (© Ian Fisher)

Illustration 5.8
The Book of Kells, Dublin, Trinity College MS 58 detail of f.34r,
the Christi autem initial (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin)

arm-pits, is Columban, and it would be wrong to see the appearance of a stepped base and vine-scroll pattern on the Hilton slab as a single Northumbrian cultural package.[29] The stepped base appeared in Northumbria some time in the seventh century, the vine-scroll in the eighth. By the time that the Hilton of Cadboll sculptor was at work both designs had been around for a long time. However, any lingering suspicion that the appearance of stepped bases is a sign of lateness is now dispelled.

Given the many specific connections between Pictish sculpture and the art of the Book of Kells, Dublin (Trinity College Library MS 58), it would be reasonable to look to the decoration of that Gospel-book for a shared use of the stepped base. Stepped

papers given independently at a conference in 1987 to mark the 1300th anniversary of the death of Cuthbert demonstrated that this was no longer the case. Richard Bailey, from an art-historical perspective, emphasised the extent of the use of crosses with stepped bases on coins of the seventh century, known to have been circulating in England in significant numbers. The cross on the inner board could therefore belong to the earlier coffin. He further claimed that, despite the fact that none has survived, the stepped bases on the coinage and the cross-incised board implied that 'free-standing crosses of this shape were familiar objects in late seventh-century Northumbria'.[27] Scientific evidence supported this date for the cross-panel. The second paper, by Cronyn and Horie, reported that dendrochronological analysis had shown that that the board had indeed belonged to the same period as the coffin of 698.[28] The cultural context of the cross-head on the inner board, with its straight arms and rounded

Illustration 5.9
The Book of Kells, Dublin, Trinity College MS 58 detail of f.7v, the
Virgin and Child with angels (© The Board of
Trinity College Dublin)

fields are in evidence at focal points in a number of the figurative pages of the Book of Kells. The great Chi-Rho, the XPI monogram on folio 34r, which announces the birth of Christ, amidst the spinning spiral ornament, has a prominently positioned stepped cruciform shape, outlined in yellow, at the base of the P (illus 5.8). The P terminates in a face which has been convincingly interpreted as that of the youthful Christ.[30] On folio 7v, the throne on which the Virgin sits holding the Christ Child is decorated with four stepped shapes within each of which is a circle (illus 5.9). This stepping creates similar stepped shapes at the margins and the whole design creates an illusion of an equal-armed cross with rounded armpits.[31] The Temptation of Christ on folio 202v has a framework made up of stepped shapes, some cruciform. Stepped fields are located on the bottom edge, flanking the witnesses on earth, and on either side of Christ's head. A four-stepped canopy on the upper edge defines the heavenly region occupied by the angelic host.[32] On folio 114r the bases of the columns, that support the arch within which Christ is arrested, have five steps.[33] The portrait of St John, on folio 291v, is framed by four equal-armed crosses, one on each of the four sides. The four corner pieces, outlined in yellow, are stepped. The portrait of John has the strange feature of being superimposed, as it were, on a figure of the crucified Christ. Only His head hands and feet are shown outside the frame.[34] On folio 27v the Evangelists' symbols occupy the angles of an equal-armed cross. At the crossing of the arms is a cruciform stepped shape (illus 5.10).[35] In this location, in a similarly composed four-Evangelists page on folio 1v, the Trier Gospel book (Trier Domschatz, Cod. 61), has a portrait of Christ.[36] In another four-symbols page in the Book of Kells, folio 290v, preceding the portrait of St John, there is a lozenge-shape. This shape has been recognised as a symbol of Christ.[37] The stepped cruciform shape clearly could take on the same meaning.

Is it then that the Hilton of Cadboll sculptor chose to design his cross with a stepped base in order to evoke the person of Christ not otherwise represented on it? A general awareness of its Christological symbolism in manuscript art, which had been inspirational in other ways, could have been all that he needed to know. A

Illustration 5.10
The Book of Kells, Dublin, Trinity College MS 58 detail of f.27v, cruciform stepped shape (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin)

stepped base has, however, a deeper Christological resonance.

Early in the fifth century the Emperor Theodosius II had erected a uniquely splendid cross encased with gold and studded with gems on Golgotha Hill outside Jerusalem, the site of the crucifixion. The commemorative cross, the '*crux gemmata*', became a focus for pilgrimage, and its appearance is fully documented. The cross was approached by a flight of steps with curtains on either side and above it a canopy. The Golgotha Cross was portrayed in all media: in the great apse mosaics in Rome and Ravenna; in *opus sectile* in St Sophia in Constantinople; on grand portable objects such as a glass chalice, and more humbly, impressed with terracotta stamps, on the loaves of bread handed out at the services for pilgrims.[38] It was an image in wide circulation well before the image of Christ on the cross began to appear. A cross sitting on a base comprising a flight of steps was instantly recognisable as the historical Calvary cross on which Christ died in order to bring Salvation to mankind. The pyramidal bases of the Irish High Crosses have long been accepted as symbolic of this cross of Salvation and the stepped bases supporting St Martin's Cross and St Matthew's Cross on Iona will have had the same association. The four rivers of Paradise flowed from the Golgotha mound. An ivory book cover, now in Milan Cathedral Treasury, dating to the late fifth century, shows a central panel with the jewelled Golgotha Cross and the flowing rivers (illus 5.11). It is surrounded by scenes from the life of Christ and portraits and symbols of the Evangelists.[39] A bread stamp shows the rivers as wavy lines descending the mound. The likelihood is that the cross-incised slab at Rosemarkie with its cross set on a mound from which random seeming diagonal lines descend displays this Golgotha imagery. To its depiction of a cross-shape associated with the Book of Durrow, Rosemarkie can therefore add a specific depiction of a Golgotha Cross with an iconographic detail not evident on Ionan or Northumbrian sculpture. Another cross at Rosemarkie could be claimed as part of this iconography. It takes the form of an equal-armed cross carved on a boulder, a well-defined format and design found on Iona and in Aberdeenshire.[40] Uniquely, however, it has a recessed circular recession on each arm and a deeply cut hole
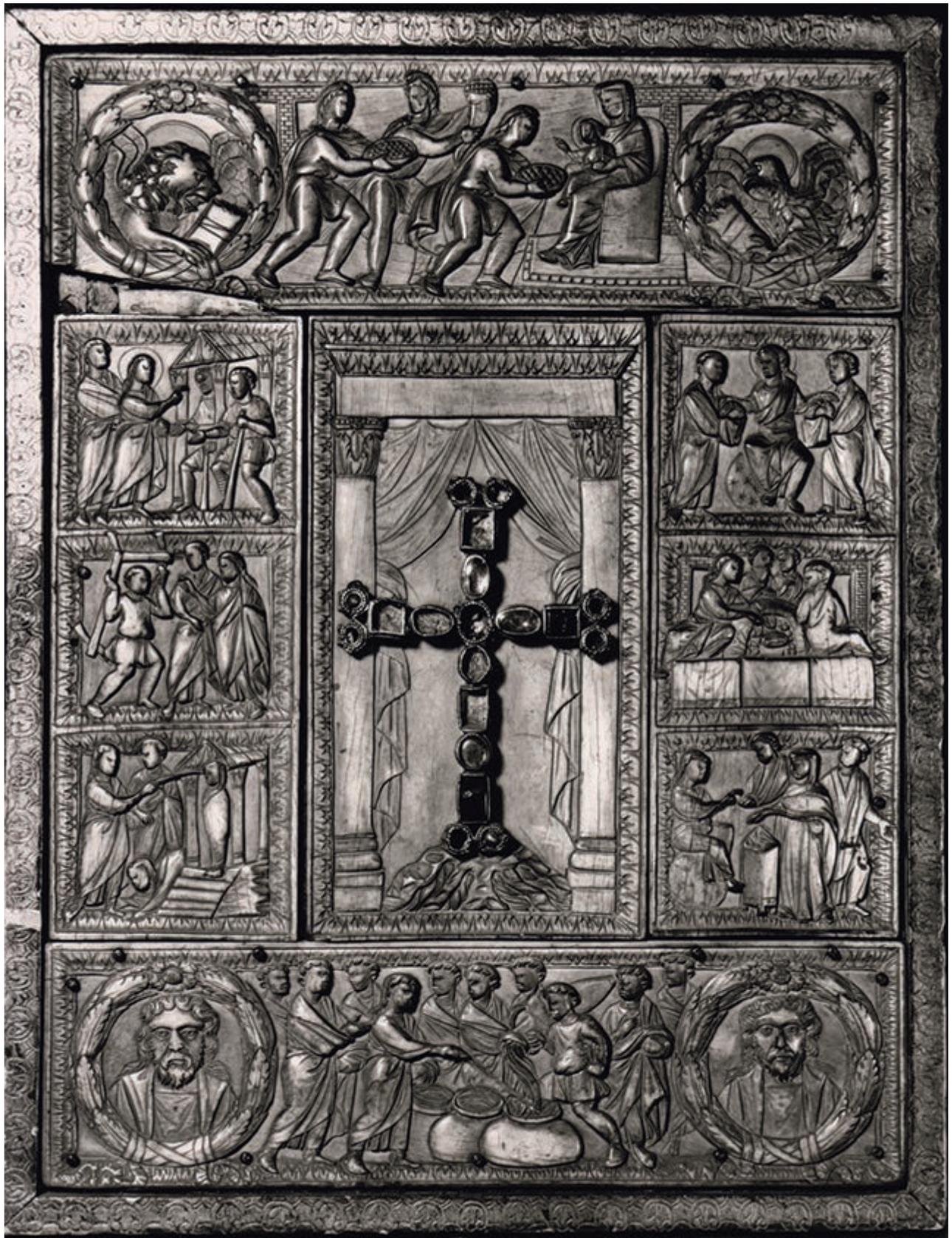
Illustration 5.11
Ivory book cover, fifth century, showing a jewelled cross standing on Golgotha Hill surrounded by scenes from the life of Christ and portraits and symbols of the Evangelists (Milan Cathedral Treasury: photographed by Hirmer Verlag München)

with a diameter of 20mm, surrounded by a moulding at the crossing. These recessions must have been made for settings in some other media. This then was a jewelled cross. The cross on the top half of the front face of the Shandwick cross-slab undoubtedly represents the 'crux gemmata' on the Hill of Calvary (see illus 5.21). When the sun shone on its newly carved ornament, consisting entirely of raised spiral bosses, it could have taken its place with the great Italian visualisations of this theme.

Not so very remote from the time of the production of the Shandwick and Hilton cross-slabs are the Golgotha crosses, on the gold solidus of Heraclius (613–32) embedded in the Anglo-Saxon Wilton Cross, the gold 'shilling' of 640 in the collections of the Ashmolean, Oxford, and the gold solidus of around the same period in the collection of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.[41] Such portable, high-status artefacts would have attracted the attention of patrons and sculptors looking for models. Literary accounts of the Holy Places were also circulating in the seventh and eighth centuries, with versions compiled by Adomnán of Iona and Bede of Jarrow.[42] These accounts will have been known in the monasteries at Rosemarkie and Portmahomack, and by the clerics of Nigg, who knew so well Jerome's Life of Paul the Hermit and benefited spiritually from the overtly Eucharistic presentation of his story on the front of their cross-slab (illus 5.25). The Hilton of Cadboll cross-base fits without difficulty into this intellectual world, one that embraced Northumbrian visual and literary culture, sought out by the Picts themselves, and the art and literature of Iona.

The reason why the sculptor of the Hilton of Cadboll designed his base with steps, and with an arrangement of bosses set within it, is surely that he intended to evoke the Golgotha Cross. The Edderton sculptor presumably knew the Hilton monument and was motivated by it. Rosemarkie it seems had its own store of models which may have played their part in the sculptor's decision. The same is true of the monastery at St Andrews which had such a rich treasury and such close connections with the sculptors of Easter Ross. Knowledge of crosses in Northumbria and Iona will also have been readily at his disposal. Anyone, so to speak, in the business of designing crosses, will have known about the Golgotha cross-type and what it stood for.

The internal decoration of the base consisted of key pattern with a variety of terminals given to the bars, which included pairs of linked spirals which created

the raised bosses. Again the most fruitful starting point when considering the choice of key pattern is the decoration of the Book of Kells. Françoise Henry, that most discerning of historians of Insular art, when reviewing the decorative repertoire of Kells, wrote of the role of key pattern: 'The key-pattern is especially common in the decoration of the Book of Kells and in the canon tables it shares popularity with spirals, interlacing and animal or human interlacing … This is all the more surprising as it is a monotonous, tedious ornament, not much susceptible to change or inventions, being the most inert of the whole range of ornament in the manuscript, its almost complete absence from the most intricate pages such as the Chi-Rho [page] … is not surprising.'[43] We have seen above that in the Chi-Rho page there is, if not strictly key pattern, a stepped cruciform panel within the XPI monogram, a point of essentially 'inert' focus, a necessary resting place for the eye, from the turbulent spiralwork and elusive iconography filling the rest of the page. The small panel is filled with finely spun interlace, much worn perhaps by devotional touching. The virtually identical shape at the centre of the four-symbols page on folio 27v is filled with key pattern, but while the significance of the shape can be claimed as Christological it would be far fetched to associate key pattern, as such, with Christ.

Key pattern was chosen by the Hilton of Cadboll sculptor because the units of the pattern can fit neatly into the corners of the steps, and because of its 'inert' quality which adds to the stable architectural nature of the design of the base. The details of the Hilton key pattern are described in Chapter 4. The scale of the unit is large enough to be emphatic, and the terminals of the bars are innovative in so far as they go beyond the usual hooked and Z-shapes. Both factors were important in getting the terminals with raised spirals to be of a diameter which allowed them to be positioned correctly within the base.

Key pattern with spiraliform features is common in Pictish sculpture and in manuscript art. However, this pattern on the Hilton base, because of its breadth of layout, and the height and surviving surface detail of the spiraliform bosses, is a uniquely impressive survival in Insular sculpture. For an example of key pattern with double spirals, not raised, but bordering an important piece of iconography, we can compare the underside of the ring of Muiredach's Cross at Monasterboice (Co Louth).[44]

There can be little doubt that the emphatically placed raised spirals on the Hilton lower portion have

Illustration 5.12
Dunfallandy, Perthshire: the front of the cross-slab with raised bosses on the cross head
(©Tom and Sybil Gray Collection, RCAHMS)

work on the upper and lower arms, and three from key pattern on the transverse arms (illus 5.12). It is accepted that such carefully placed and differentiated bosses on Irish and Anglo-Saxon sculpture are likely to carry symbolic significance. At Dunfallandy a distinction may be being made between the five wounds of Christ and the three persons of the Trinity. A puzzling feature of the bosses on the Hilton lower portion is their arrangement. Insular artists do not tier bosses in such a way that they finish on a straight line. The rhythms of Insular art favour alternation. Bosses may be paired in a rectangular panel, but if the number of bosses is uneven, or the arrangement in rows of differing lengths, then they are arranged symmetrically in mirror image. One would expect therefore rows of respectively, three, two and five bosses, to be followed by further rows of three and two. Cruciform arrangements of bosses are also common. To end with a straight line of bosses is a 'classical' mode. The lower edge of the slab has not been recovered and it is possible that the base was deeper, and allowed for the two rows beneath the five. However, enough of the terminals below the row of five bosses survives to show that another row of raised spiral bosses did not occur immediately. It seems an almost inescapable conclusion that the sculptor had the confidence to arrange his ten bosses on the base in this unconventional way in order to give the base a strong horizontal feature at its lower edge. There is no difficulty in finding a symbolic numerological significance in the number ten which symbolised the Law of God, the 'never-to-be-forgotten "decalogue" of St Augustine'. The central bosses at Hilton also collect together in a lozenge shape which, as has been mentioned above, is a symbol for Christ.[45] There is one precedent for the classical arrangement of circles set in a framework of geometric ornament in the bases of the supporting columns of an arch set over the opening words of the Gospel of St Luke in an early-ninth-century Gospel-book produced in the south of England, BL Royal MS 1.E.VI.[46] The bases are rectangular, in proportions more like cross-bases

more than decorative significance. At the very least, as argued above, these represent the gems studding the Golgotha Cross. In general appearance they closely resemble the cross on the slab at Dunfallandy (Perthshire) where five bosses rise out of a bed of spiral

than the bases of columns. They are decorated with a pattern made up of stepped cruciform shapes of the kind described above on the throne of the Virgin in the Book of Kells. Within each unit is a circle making up an arrangement of three rows of circles of respectively one circle followed by two, and ending, at the lower edge of the base, in a straight line of three circles. This southern manuscript in page size and decoration merits the description 'sumptuous' for it has classically inspired purple pages and lettering in gold and silver. The artist, like the sculptor of Hilton of Cadboll, was clearly free of slavish conformity to the Insular design

Illustration 5.13
Meigle 2, Perthshire: the front of the cross-slab. Detail of animal ornament on the cross-shaft

conventions. Some indications of visual responses shared by Pictish sculpture and the manuscript art of south of the Humber have long been recognised, and to these this distinctive arrangement of circular points of emphasis can be added.[47]

5.3.2 The cross-shaft

The majority of Pictish cross-slabs display the cross as an equal-armed cross set on a long shaft. The differentiation between the cross-head and the shaft is made either by notches on the sides of the shaft or by a

change of pattern. At the point where it joins the base the Hilton shaft is just under 400mm wide. If the now truncated projections near the top of the narrow faces B and D belonged to transverse arms, as seems likely, then the arms were 360mm high. It is probable that the lower arm of the equal-armed cross head would have similar dimensions and would be 360mm wide. The difference in measurement between the lower arm and the bottom of the shaft is small but suggests that the shaft had a slight taper. Though scarcely significant, the difference reinforces the near certain view that the shaft met the lower arm of an equal-armed cross. How the differentiation was marked is unknown, but since there is some evidence for panelling on the shaft there may have been a margin marking the extent of the lower arm, as for example, on the crosses on the front and back of the Edderton slab (illus 5.7 & 5.45). An alternative would be for the pattern on the lower arm to merge with a different pattern at the top of the shaft with no margin separating them off. From the reconstruction of the front of the mid-portion we know that there was animal ornament on the shaft at the level of the tuniced figure. Decorating the cross with animal ornament is unusual. It is generally an indicator of ambitious sculpture. The Nigg cross-head is unique in this respect with its arrangements of deceptively symmetrical animal ornament on the cross-head which can be associated with the corner slabs with animal ornament on a larger scale on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, and with the smaller scale animal ornament on silver objects in the St Ninian's Isle Treasure.[48] The shaft of the cross on the Meigle no 2 slab is entirely decorated with animal ornament more loosely related to the St Andrews type. The large Meigle animals consist of three tiered pairs alternately confronted and addorsed (illus 5.19). The large animals are entangled with much smaller animals and this trait is part of the St Andrews/Nigg style (illus 5.13). It was of great interest therefore when two small fragments joined to form a pair of small addorsed animal heads which were subsequently found to belong to the surface of a large fragment showing

the forequarters of two large confronted animals (illus 5.14). This then is a quite distinctive motif found in major Pictish centres of sculpture. The placing of the motif at this point on the shaft is not what one would have predicted, for there is a plethora of similar large animals in the adjacent background of the cross. The scale of the shaft's large animals is somewhat smaller than the animals that flank the base, but an animal of much the same scale and pose approaches the tuniced figure on his left (illus 5.35c). The small addorsed animals are interesting because of a general lack of evidence for symmetrically arranged animal ornament on the front of the lower portion and among the fragments. Their small heads are worn but they seem to replicate the head type found elsewhere on both the front and back of the slab: a rounded cranium, snub-nose, and wide-open fanged jaws with the tongue passing between them. Similarly confronted small-scale decorative animals in a more linear style can be seen at the very top of the upper arm of the Nigg cross (illus 5.24).

There is another fragment of animal ornament, .320, which has recently been shown to be locatable on the cross-shaft. It shows what may be a serpent head in high relief, coiled round and seen from above. It is within a border which drops to a different level of dressed surface and so may well have been part of the ornament on the cross. It has a superficial resemblance in curvature to relief forms on a fragment, .8, which conjoins with both the large animal fragment on the shaft and the fragment with the tuniced figure, but without more context it is difficult to imagine how it featured on the shaft. It could possibly be a lone survivor from a panel of serpent ornament. If the bottom of the shaft was decorated with animal ornament consisting of smaller animals inhabiting, as it were, larger animals, it has to be asked what kind of ornament would have followed it further up the shaft. The small slab Kirriemuir no 2 (Angus) with the cross with a stepped base, has a rare example of a panel of animal ornament at the bottom of the cross-shaft and a cross-head entirely covered with key pattern (illus 5.4). The resumption of key pattern, after the animal ornament on the cross-shaft, balancing the key pattern on the base would be a reasonable possibility. However, there is evidence among the fragments of face A for what may be another kind of animal ornament consisting of animals in a structure of foliage, perhaps a bush-scroll. Nothing can be ruled out for the way in which Pictish cross-slabs are decorated, but this kind of foliate ornament is not very suitable for the

Illustration 5.14
Hilton of Cadboll, Ross and Cromarty: conjoined fragments of animal ornament on the cross-shaft (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

decoration of the background of a cross. It is the type of foliate ornament that should be placed centrally. It is therefore a candidate for the decoration of the shaft where a structure consisting entirely of animals of different scales might be followed by one of animals and foliate forms. The style of these animals is also of interest. All the surviving heads have some of the features of animal ornament elsewhere in the slab, the gaping jaws with pendulant tongues ending in a lobe, and a cheek line that separates off the blunt muzzle from the rounded cranium with its extended ear or crest. The neck, where it survives, is long and tubular (illus 5.15a). The feel of these gaping heads set atop scrawny necks is markedly similar to the array of heads which, like so many screaming war-trumpets, edge the sword pommel from Beckley in Oxfordshire (illus 5.15b). A similar line of protective heads edge the St Ninian's Isle chape no 15 (illus 5.15c). These heads from the far north have the same separation of the rounded skull from the blunt muzzle, here achieved by an incised line. None of these fragments of animal heads from Hilton is eating fruit, hence the prominence of their pendulant tongues. This style is one that falls naturally into the predominant animal style of Insular art of the eighth century.[49]

5.3.3 The cross-head

The only trace of the cross-head left on the truncated and defaced slab exhibited in Edinburgh are the scars

Illustration 5.15a
(a) Hilton of Cadboll, Ross and Cromarty: fragment.269, belonging to the front face of the cross-slab showing an animal head adjacent to a curved strip of relief (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland); (b) Beckley area, Oxfordshire: sword pommel (© Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.); (c) St Ninian's Isle treasure, Shetland: no 15, scabbard chape (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

near the top of the narrow edges, which suggested that projections had at some point been removed. Their position made it probable that the projections represented the ends of the transverse arms of the cross. Such projections occur on the tall cross–slab at Fowlis Wester (Perthshire) (illus 5.16). It is possible, of course, that these upper projections had no relationship to the cross–head as at Meigle no 2 (illus 5.19). During an examination of the Edinburgh slab for this project the opportunity was taken to examine its top edge which in antiquarian drawings and early photographs consistently showed signs of damage at its centre point. Observers reported that the damage was consistent with the removal of a projection in the centre of the top edge towards the front of the slab. It seems therefore that the cross–head was planned so that both its upper and transverse arms projected beyond the edges of the slab. The aim of the sculptor was clearly to design a cross that had a physical presence commensurate with the stepped, bossed base and its flanking panels and projections. There is no doubt therefore that the image of the cross was of paramount importance for the function of the monument.

Given the large number of fragments of face A surviving, it seemed highly likely that some would provide factual information about the shape of the

5.15b

5.15c

cross-head. Regrettably, as yet, this has not been forthcoming, and all that can be done is to produce hypotheses against which the information implicit in the fragments can be tested. Since the base was so unexpected in its physical presence, it is hard to imagine any profitable speculation about the shape of the cross-head. The difficulties experienced determining the exact shape of the cross-head of the Apostles' cross-slab at Portmahomack, where a large fragment of the cross-head has survived, is an object lesson in this respect (illus 5.23). From the point of view of the art-historian the basic probabilities are that the Hilton cross took the form of cross with a square field at the crossing, creating what Allen described as double-square hollow angles in the armpits. This is a type of cross-head found on many Pictish slabs including the cross on the Nigg slab and a very finely carved low relief cross-marked slab found in 1997 in the wall of the crypt of Tarbat Church.[50] This design would match the angularities of the design of the base. On the other hand, the other very common type of cross-head had rounded armpits, and this design would conform to the other crosses in the district, notably Edderton, that had stepped bases. The cross on the front of the Edderton slab is indeed so majestic that it is tempting to accept it as an echo not only of Hilton's stepped base, but of its cross-head also (illus 5.7). The Rosemarkie incised cross with the fullest iconography of the Golgotha Cross also has rounded arm-pits. The cross incised on the inner board of St Cuthbert's Coffin had, as described above, a stepped base, and it too had rounded arm-pits. It has been argued that the cross with rounded armpits had a historical association with the Columban origins of Christianity, shared by Northumbria and Pictland, and thus it was always an important cross-type symbolically. The Edderton sculptor chose a cross with a square field at the crossing for the reverse of his slab, a difference which falls naturally into a general Pictish tendency towards variety (illus 5.45).

In looking for associated imagery and design practice for the Hilton slab, the tall cross-slab Aberlemno no 3 has always been exploited. The long perceived connection of aspects of its hunting scene on the reverse with the hunting scene on the Hilton slab bonds them art-historically. The Aberlemno cross-head is another unique production. Set on a long narrow shaft, the cross-head has rounded armpits, completed to form circles within the arms, and a circular field at the crossing. A ring passes under the arms of the cross. This is also the cross-head type on the front face of Edderton.

Illustration 5.16
Fowlis Wester no 2, Perthshire: the front of the cross-slab showing projecting transverse arms (© Courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Perth & Kinross Council)

For a cross with double squares in the armpits, one might have expected some trace of the angles of the mouldings to have survived among the fragments, but so far there have been no conjunctions of this type to meet this expectation. What has emerged instead is the discovery that a cross of this type is at the centre of the spiral panel on the reverse of the slab. It has always been known that there was a circular motif at the centre of the spiral design and as the reconstruction of the mid-portion continued it became evident that it had encircled an outline equal-armed cross. This was exciting and it is possible to establish the art-historical context for such a presentation of a cross (see below). When the reconstruction of this area was complete and the fragments bonded together it was clear that the cross was not merely outlined but was the typical square-angled cross of the Nigg type. The resonances of such a cross are quite different from a mere outline cross. In a very real sense the defaced slab on display in Edinburgh has always been a cross-slab.

The question arises whether the cross-type is repeated on the cross-face complete with the encircling ring. It certainly provides some further justification for the view that the angled base of the cross on the front face should be matched by an angled cross-head. However, the stepped base, as now witnessed by Edderton, brings with it rounded arm-pits, and it could be argued that if the Picts had a cross on both sides of their slabs they might, like Edderton, want to vary the design. Cross-slabs like Rossie (Angus) and Gask (Perthshire) with full-length crosses on both sides, employ the same shape of cross for front and back. Dunfallandy (Perthshire) has a rounded arm-pit cross with a square field at the crossing on the front, and a small rounded arm-pit cross set on a base on the reverse. Obviously speculation base on likelihood cannot get one very far, and there is no direct evidence one way or another. At least the cross-head in the spiral panel is evidence for a cross-head of this type having been used by the Hilton sculptor on the back of the slab, and to speculate that perhaps he used it also on the front, complete with encircling ring, is at present perhaps the best guess, in spite of a lingering feeling that the two crosses on the slab would have been differentiated.

If one suspects that predicting the nature of the shape cross-head is at present a largely vain pursuit, there is one strong determining factor in proposing an element in the decoration of the cross-head. The location somewhere on the rest of the cross of raised bosses of the same height as those on the base seems inevitable.

It seems highly unlikely that the strong but somewhat stark ornamentation of the base, which entailed the cutting back of much of the slab, would not have been balanced elsewhere on the cross design, to do the work of highlighting the cross, setting it off from the sculpture in the background. In contrast with the free-standing crosses of their neighbours, crosses on Pictish cross-slabs do not regularly feature the emphasising of the arms of the cross-head and the crossing with high relief sculpture. There are, of course, notable exceptions in the bosses on the Dunfallandy cross-head and the heavy rectangular forms on the arms of Aberlemno no 3, although both have the crossing carved in relatively low relief (illus 5.12; illus 5.17). The equal-armed cross with double-square hollow angles on an end panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus (stone 2) has a boss at its crossing itself embellished with raised spiral bosses (illus 5.18). In contrast, the Nigg slab keeps its bossed high relief forms in the background of the cross. The Pictish free-standing cross from Dupplin (Perthshire) has bosses at the crossing of both front and back, but low relief decoration on the cross-arms. The cross on the Crieff slab has a central boss.[51] There are candidates among the Portmahomack fragments for central or arm bosses and the reconstruction of the sculpture from that site, when it is fully published, will have to be taken into account in this matter and many others.[52] If there is a strong presumption that there were bosses on the cross-head at Hilton, and the evidence of the fragments of raised bosses from face A are taken into account, then the least speculative suggestion is that bosses on the slab resembled, in size or location, the small spiral bosses such as are found on the Shandwick cross, the Dunfallandy cross-head and on the arms and ring on Meigle no 2. To which might be added the arrangements of small bosses at the crossings of St Madoes and Fowlis Wester (illus 5.16).

Since we have evidence for a considerable number of small raised bosses decorating face A, the hypotheses might be confined to designs that arranged small bosses on the cross-head and/or shaft to maximum effect, that is on the arms and, centrally placed, on the shaft. Another determining factor might be that the cross was decorated with a repertoire that plays a minor part on face C. For example, the frame on the reverse of the Nigg cross-slab is decorated exclusively with panels of interlace and key pattern. On the front of the slab there is no interlace, except in the interlacing bodies which make up the snake-bosses, and a single panel of key pattern. The reverse of Hilton has no raised spiral bosses, comparatively little key pattern and interlace,

Illustration 5.17
Aberlemno no 3, Angus: the front of the cross-slab (Crown copyright RCAHMS)

and its spiral panel is carved in low relief. There is a significantly large number of face A fragments with key pattern. There is less interlace, although the face A fragments of interlace would require more surface area than the interlace-filled discs on face C. One of the conjunctions of interlace appears slightly domed, reminiscent of the shallow domed relief in the arm-pits of the cross on the front of the Edderton slab and

Illustration 5.18
St Andrews Sarcophagus, Fife: the complete end panel, stone 2

spiral ornament and key pattern (illus 5.12). Before one becomes too enamoured of the idea of a cross-head like that of Meigle no 2, being set on a shaft with

similarly located interlace-covered domed forms on the Aberlemno no 3 cross-head. This could have been a feature of the Hilton cross-head, but, since there is only evidence for one interlace covered boss, a location on the crossing is perhaps more likely. It is the number of spiral bosses of different diameters surviving among the fragments which supports the view that there were bosses somewhere on the cross-shape.

Of the cross-heads on Pictish monuments listed above there is no doubt that if we are looking for the cross-head with most impact then the choice must fall on that of Meigle no 2 (illus 5.19). It exploits its rounded top in such a way that the upper quadrants of the ring form the outer edge of the slab. However, its cross-head with its angled armpits, with its small bosses at each corner of the arms set on a background of key pattern, and an arrangement of bosses of three sizes at the centre would match the Hilton base admirably and conform with the evidence of the fragments from face A. Leaving the ring aside, this design would require 29 small raised bosses, and 73 fragments carved with raised bosses have been identified among the fragments. Only a few of these fragments with bosses rise from a bed of spirals and none has evidence of rising from key pattern in the manner of the bosses on the base. The reason for this may well be that the tops of the bosses have been knocked off destroying all clues to the nature of the bed of ornament from which they rose. The bosses on the Dunfallandy slab rise from both

Illustration 5.19
Meigle no 2, Perthshire: the front of the cross slab

a base like that at Hilton of Cadboll, it must be stressed that there is no physical evidence for this suggestion. That said, that there were bosses of the type found on the base somewhere on the cross-head seems to the present writer incontrovertible. Their location on the cross-head is likely to have highlighted the significant parts of the cross design. The bosses could have been confined to a cluster at the crossing as at St Madoes and Fowlis Wester, and possibly at Portmahomack, but, given the spacious arrangement of the bosses on the base, the location of points of emphasis on the arms also seems probable. That the symbolism of the Golgotha Cross required a studded cross-head reinforces these speculations.

Sufficient bosses have survived as fragments to locate this type of decoration not only on the cross-head, but within fields on the shaft. A raised boss is only a small part of the area of surface covered by its surrounding bed of curvilinear pattern. This location would also meet the requirements of the symbolism of the jewelled cross. Spiral-work on shafts of crosses on Pictish cross-slabs is relatively uncommon. Shandwick alone has a cross entirely covered with raised spirals. The shaft of the cross on Woodrae which supports an equal-armed cross is decorated with spiral running into key pattern which runs into interlace. The shaft of St Vigeans no 7 is entirely covered with spiral patterns, but they are of a type unrelated to raised bosses. St Vigeans no 2 has a passage of spiral work at the bottom of the shaft. The regrettably worn handsome ringed cross set on a base, now in the parish church at Largo, Fife, has traces of spiral pattern on its shaft.[53] If it is argued that there were spiral bosses on the Hilton shaft, they would have to be accommodated above the animal ornament known to be located low on the shaft.

Returning to the shape of the cross-head, it was suggested above that the ring encircling the cross embedded in the spiral panel on the reverse might match the cross-head on the front of the slab. Given the breadth of the slab one might have expected the cross to be ringed in order to divide up the area to be carved at the top of the slab. The triumphal symbolism of the ring would also well suit the Calvary base and there are bosses sufficient to stud it in the paten-like manner of Meigle no 2, where the ring employs eight bosses.

As has been pointed out in connection with the decoration of the cross-shaft (Chapter 5.3.2) there are a significant number of fragments carved with animal ornament associated with curved strands which were located somewhere on face A of the upper portion,

and it is just possible that sections of a ring filled with animal ornament might be reconstructed if the arcs of these curves were assembled and measured. While at present there is no evidence to support this among the fragments, there is precedent for such decoration of architectural features in the Book of Kells and on Irish sculpture, where arches or rings are filled with linked decorative animals in procession. An example in Irish sculpture is the treatment of the ring on the cross at Durrow (Co Offaly) where the ring on the east face is filled with animal ornament, and quadrants of the west face are decorated, alternately, with raised bosses and animal ornament.[54] It is the apparently loosely constructed nature of the animal ornament as presently perceived on the face A fragments that might prove difficult to build into this hypothesis.

5.3.4 The background of the cross

The background of the cross on either side of the base, the cross-shaft, and the cross-head represents a very large area of carved surface and many of the fragments must belong to it. The work of reconstruction has succeeded in joining the top of the lower portion to the bottom of the mid-portion with the result that we now know that in addition to the blank panels and the animal ornament that flank the base, figural ornament was carved on either side of the lower part of the shaft. While this is a small proportion of the whole background area it has been enormously informative, the animal ornament providing a firm stylistic context for the cross-slab and the figural ornament correcting the inevitable concentration by commentators on the hunting scene on the reverse. The carving style is heavy plastic relief, in strong contrast with the admired delicacy of the rounded shallow relief used for the reverse of the slab. The mental adjustment necessary for the reassessment of the work of the Hilton sculptor, based hitherto only on the reverse, is considerable, but once made it removes the monument from the artificial isolation of Stevenson's 'Cadboll style' and allows it to be part of Pictish sculpture of this period with all its manifestations of assimilation combined with individual intellect and talent.

5.3.4.1 The background of the cross: the local and national
Pictish context of the animal ornament

If the choice of a two-stepped base for the cross and its decoration with groupings of spiral bosses rising from a bed of key pattern was unusual, the locating of animal

a   *b*

Illustration 5.20
Hilton of Cadboll: the front face of the lower portion: (a) detail of animals to the left of the cross-base, (b) detail of animals to the right of the cross-base (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland). For the additions from the mid-portion, see illus 5.33a & b

ornament on either side of it within the background of the cross was standard practice. That said, the nature of the animal ornament in this area of cross-slabs varied enormously, from seemingly purely decorative animal ornament, to animal motifs suggestive of protection or menace. Much of the decorative animal ornament in Pictish sculpture betrays origins in Insular art in other media. Only the single portraits of animals, or motifs of animal combats, or of animals attacking naked men, call for more specific explanation. The immediately local sculptural context for the animals on either side of the Hilton base is not immediately perceptible. Primarily it presents itself as large in scale, carved in well-modelled high relief, with a loose structural composition neither truly, nor deceptively, symmetrical. The composition of ornament is to some extent, of course, dictated by the nature of the space to be filled. The very broad Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab had a lot of background to fill and to employ a larger than usual scale of motif was understandable. There was the further difficulty

of arranging the ornament round the steps of the base. The individual fields, to left and right, were unsuited to the kind of symmetrical animal ornament used to fill regular, rectangular spaces.

The animal ornament on face A of the lower portion is described in detail in Chapter 4.5.1. Its basic characteristics comprise animals looped together asymmetrically. Those on the left are arranged in an approximately diagonal composition, with heads towards the top and hindquarters below, set respectively on the top step of the cross, and to the left of the riser of the second step above the blank panel (illus 5.20a). The animals have extended tubular bodies with high groins. The back legs are sharply bent at the hock. The animal on the left margin of the slab has only one foreleg shown. It has a pear-shaped shoulder set on a pad of relief and appears to hang limply, short and stick-like. The heads of the animals are markedly different. The one on the left has a profile dog-head, with a blunt muzzle, rounded forehead and circular

Illustration 5.21
Shandwick, Ross and Cromarty: the front of the cross-slab (Crown copyright RCAHMS)

eye. It has pricked up ears, open fanged jaws, and an extended tongue. The head of the animal to the right is seen from above. It has a segmented head and ears flung forward. Only one foreleg is present. One would expect that the forelegs of this animal would also be seen from above arranged in a lizard-like position, but there is no surviving evidence for this. It bites a tail which most probably belongs to a third animal. Its body loops round the animal on the margin in a strangle hold. Both animals have body texturing: the active aggressor with clearly defined scales, the seemingly passive victim, with a mane of twisted hair expressed in parallel mouldings. The tongue of the victim extends towards a mat of median-incised interlace. To the right of the base two creatures with similar dog-heads have their bodies looped to form a figure-of-eight. One sits awkwardly on the second step of the base and, after looping through the body of the animal to the right, rests its forelegs on the first step. The hindquarters of both animals are at the bottom of the composition. The larger hindquarters lie along the right margin of the slab, with the hocks extended, resting on the on the margin above the blank panel (illus 5.20b). The tail of the larger creature loops round to fetter the smaller legs in a manner that could account for their drooping pose. The tail of the smaller creature passes through its own legs to form a passage of interlace comparable to the interlacing forms on the left side of the base. Both animals have stick-like forelimbs which clasp each other's body. The heads have extended lobed tongues that loop round each other's body. The head to the right looks back over its shoulder in the direction of the cross. The one on the left also looks back, but the head is raised so as to look upwards. On both sides of the base the animals' limbs are shown in the so called 'Anglian lock' where the offside leg is brought forward over an interlacing strand and the nearside leg tucked back under the strand.

In local sculpture the animal ornament most comparable in scale and modelling is the dog-headed snake-bosses positioned under the cross on the Shandwick slab (illus 5.21). Other less gigantesque animal motifs on this slab, which have gone virtually unremarked, provide a further glimpse of local animal repertoires and deserve detailed description. To the right of the shaft is a symmetrical unpanelled motif of interlinked fish-tailed snakes with heads meeting at the mid-point of the lateral margins and tails at the mid-point of the top and bottom. The motif on the left, also symmetrical and unpanelled, consists of two animals set vertically; their snouts meet at the centre
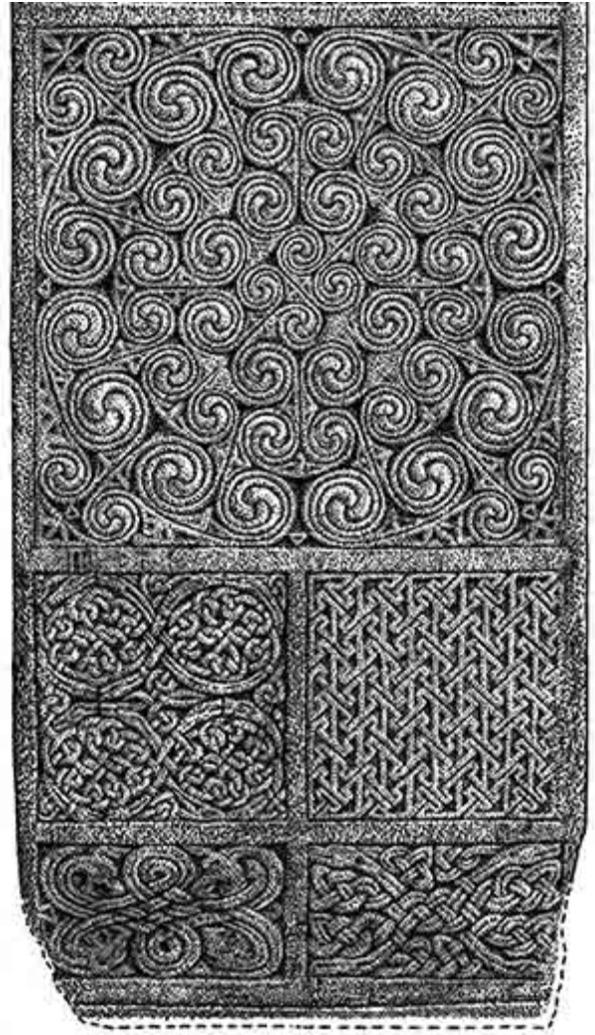

Illustration 5.22
Shandwick, Ross and Cromarty: detail of the reverse of the cross-slab (Crown copyright RCAHMS, drawn by Ian G Scott)

of the motif and above them their short tails link, but otherwise they are not entangled with each other. Both necks and hindquarters are rolled. The offside foreleg passes over the body and then under it to link with the nearside leg which loops round the neck. The hindlegs have a similar arrangement in order that all four limbs create V-shapes with angles at each corner of the panel. Three of the four small half panels, two square and two rectangular, on the reverse of the Shandwick slab have animal motifs (illus 5.22). At the top left, there is a small-scale version of the massive dog-headed snake-bosses, but here arranged as flat circular interlace not raised into bosses, providing a good example of how

the same motif could be treated entirely differently. The bottom right motif has four dog-headed snakes whose bodies consist of median-incised interlace and whose heads reach out into the corners of the panel. Most interesting is the panel to the bottom left. Here the dog-head is developed into a raptor with fanged jaws opened wide and with a pointed ear thrown forward. The four heads face into the centre of the panel. In spite of their fierce jaws these animals appear not to be biting either parts of themselves or other creatures. They may be fish-tailed, and two may be median incised. Nevertheless the head type relates to the Hilton animals on face A of the lower portion.

The other local large-scale fierce animal is on the fragment of a cross-slab recently found at Portmahomack (illus 5.23). For a time it gave a popular name, 'the Dragon stone', to the fragment. Single animals placed to the right and left of the upper arm of a cross are exceedingly common in Pictish sculpture. The Portmahomack animal is clearly intended as a powerful force rendered doubly so by the serpent head on the end of its tail. The sculptor at Portmahomack, like the sculptor at Hilton, had a difficult space to fill and he does it successfully. Whether the kneeling posture was intended to represent an animal at rest, and therefore in nature beneficent and protective, or was simply imposed by the shape is uncertain. The animal could also be interpreted as malevolence kept at bay by the cross. What concerns us here is the heavy head with the fanged jaws and extended tongue. The Portmahomack single hybrid beast replicates well the contained force of the Hilton beasts.

The most intricate animal ornament to be found locally is on the Nigg cross-head. It consists of snake-bosses and arrangements of quadrupeds. The snake-bosses are located immediately under the transverse arms of the cross on either side of the shaft. The quadrupeds fill the four arms of the cross. The shaft is filled with key pattern and interlace, creating by means of change of decoration the typically Pictish equal-armed cross set on a shaft.

The animal ornament on the Nigg cross-head has been fully analysed elsewhere (illus 5.24).[55] Its principal characteristic is the use of a delicate, fine style of carving to express animals with elongated tubular bodies forming disciplined structures set on a bed of interlacing, stick-like limbs and extended tongues and tails. The animals that flank the Hilton base also have, but to a lesser degree, their bodies set in an interlace of body extensions. On the Nigg slab the animal heads are largely reptilian, having jaws but no ears. The one

Illustration 5.23
Portmahomack, Tarbat, Ross and Cromarty: fragment of the top of the front of a cross-slab (© Tom and Sybil Gray Collection, RCAHMS)

exception is the pair on the top corners of the upper arm which have naturalistic profile dogheads with pricked ears, open fanged jaws and blunt muzzles. The one to the left has the extended tail of another creature in its mouth. The one to the right has an extended tail looped round its neck. These heads are designed in the same way as the profile animals on the lower portion of the front of the Hilton slab. The dog-headed animals on the Nigg upper arm have their necks thrown back to form a wide V-shape in a posture comparable to the pair to the right of the Hilton base.

Rolled and looped haunches are typical of the Nigg animal ornament but there are also examples of extended haunches. In either case forequarters and

hindquarters are widely separated from each other by tubular bodies. There is a variety of poses for forelimbs, some stretched out, others bent at the elbow and held up 'akimbo'. On the right transverse arm the forequarters of all four animals are designed as if seen from above, their forelegs stretched out in a lizard-like position. It is not certain how the scaly creature at Hilton whose head and neck is seen from above held its forelegs. Indeed it may be that like its victim only one forelimb was shown At Nigg these quadrupeds with lizard-like poses have profile heads presumably to create an illusion of symmetry with the four heads on the left transverse arm. The easy interchange at Nigg between profile and plan viewpoint compares well to the pairs of animals on the Hilton lower portion.

The snake bodies emerging from the snake-bosses in the background of the Nigg cross-shaft are median-incised but there is no surviving evidence for bodymarking on the decorative animals on the cross-head. The crouching lions on either side of the liturgical vessel in the pediment have manes, and contouring of the shoulder muscles directly comparable to the marking of the haunches on the Hilton animals (illus 5.25). Such details were obviously part of a common stock of artistic conventions. The Nigg snakes have been characterised as 'peaceable', content to confront each other snout to snout in the manner of the dog-heads emerging from the massive bosses on the front of the Shandwick slab, but in fact many of them have their jaws clamped on to the necks of other snakes. On the fragments of a cross-slab from Portmahomack, Tarbat no 2, where there has been rather looser snake ornament in the background of the cross, one of the surviving snakes has the biting fanged head of the Hilton animals. It is not necessary to labour here the abundant comparisons that can be made between the ornamental quadrupeds of Hilton and the repertoires of such art on monuments at Nigg, Shandwick and Portmahomack. It will be apparent that much of the animal ornament on these local monuments share to a considerable degree conventions which were used by their sculptors at will. However, none of the motifs used elsewhere on the Easter Ross peninsula displays the same heavily modelled style for quadrupeds, coupled with the lack of structural constraint, and consequent free movement, which give the animal motifs on the Hilton of Cadboll lower portion such impact.

For comparable heavy relief modelling of animals we have to look to the south, to the two corner-slabs which frame the figurative panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus, now in the St Andrews Cathedral Museum, Fife.[56] Here decorative quadrupeds are carved in high relief, with ungainly, undulating, elongated bodies, stick-like limbs, and heads either in profile or seen from above. The surviving heads on the panel to the left (stone 4) are those of deer, while
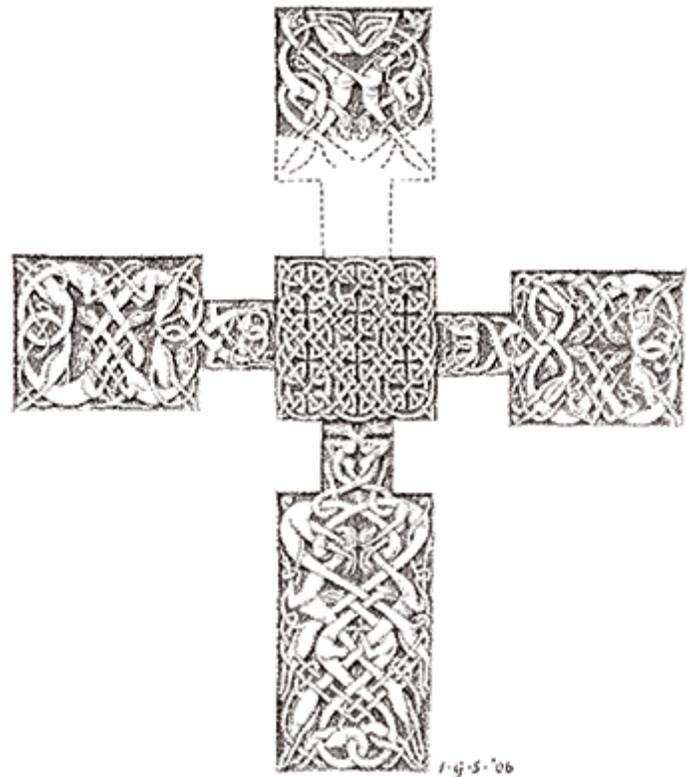

Illustration 5.24
Nigg, Ross and Cromarty: drawing of the animal ornament on the cross-head (scale 1:10) (Crown copyright RCAHMS, drawn by Ian G Scott). The drawing includes details at the crossing, now worn away but present in the cast in the Victoria and Albert Museum

those on the right are quadrupeds with shaggy lion-like manes (stone 5) (illus 5.26a & b). In spite of the difference in scale, and the naturalistic features, the underlying disciplined structures of the motifs created by the tubular bodies of the animals can be seen to be a heavily modelled version of the Nigg style. The delicate, versatile, style of the Nigg cross-head is likely to stand closer to the ultimate model for this kind of

Illustration 5.25
Nigg, Ross and Cromarty: the front of the cross-slab
(Crown copyright RCAHMS)

quadruped ornament on Pictish sculpture, but there can be no doubt that the quadruped ornament on the St Andrews Sarcophagus is directly related to it. It is easy to imagine the fine Nigg style being rendered in the more plastic style of the Sarcophagus. The 'fine' style is also seen at Portmahomack, on Tarbat no 2. Shandwick, in spite of its bold gigantism for the snake-bosses, was also creating animal motifs for discrete units of ornament in a heavier style, but one still in

touch with the miniature origins of Nigg. The Hilton semi-naturalistic animals carved in high relief on the lower portion of face A, with their naturalistic heads, tubular bodies and prominent body texturing are evidence that the St Andrews heavily modelled version of this animal style was represented in Easter Ross.

The quality of the Nigg cross-head animal style inevitably suggests knowledge of metalwork styles. It has long been compared to that of the decorated silverware of St Ninian's Isle, Shetland. Particularly close is the ornament on the cone-shaped mounts (nos 12 & 13) and the sword pommel. These pieces are decorated with quadrupeds with naturalistic hindquarters, long-reaching necks, and elongated coiled bodies. As at Nigg, heads and hindquarters are widely separated, some heads are reptilian others are dog-like with blunt muzzles, and anatomical extensions create a background of interlace. The animals on mount no 12 grow from an onion-like layering of hindquarters in precisely the manner of the animals on the lower arm of the Nigg cross-head. Other arrangements on this mount, such as the swing back of the necks of creatures confronted chest to chest are also paralleled on the cross-head, and now, as we have seen, at Hilton.[57]

5.3.4.2 The Insular context of the animal ornament

The animal ornament on the front of the lower portion at Hilton suggests that another style, additional to but compatible with the Nigg style, was known in Easter Ross. It will be argued that this style is exemplified in the art of the Anglo-Saxon Gandersheim Casket, a whalebone house-shaped casket carved exclusively with animal motifs including the inhabited bush-scroll. The Casket is now in the collections of the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Brunswick, and in 1999 the Museum held an international colloquium to consider every aspect of a work of art that has always been recognised as of consummate craftsmanship and design. The stylistic affiliations and iconographical aspects of the ornament were the subjects of papers by Richard Bailey, Carol Farr and Leslie Webster, who between them covered its analogues in sculpture, manuscripts, ivory, bone and metalwork. It was agreed, though not without some reservations, that the Casket belonged to the cultural milieu of eastern Mercia and was most probably the work of a craftsmen based in Peterborough, around the year AD 800. These conclusions were not surprising, but the detailed discussion of the evidence was unprecedented and must now be regarded as definitive.[58]

Illustration 5.26a
The St Andrews Sarcophagus, Fife:
deer-heads' corner-slab, stone 4

Illustration 5.26b
'lions'-manes corner-slab, stone 5

That there is a link between the art productions of the Picts and those of Mercia is not a new suggestion. One of the principal lines of thought in Henderson's chapter on Pictish art in *The Picts*, written in 1967, was to play down the degree of dependence on eastern models proposed by Mrs Curle for the art of both the Hilton of Cadboll slab and the St Andrews Sarcophagus. It was argued that the characteristics of much of this art could be paralleled not exclusively in orientalising sources, and an ill-defined Northumbrian context, but in the two principal monuments of Mercian culture at Fletton (Peterborough) and

Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leicestershire). The Mercian connections were well-received, but more recently Steven Plunkett has strengthened and re-defined their nature, in a subtle and wide-ranging chapter entitled 'The Mercian Perspective' in the monograph on the St Andrews Sarcophagus published in 1998.[59] Here he identifies a shared 'accommodation between Insular and oriental ornamental sources' present in both the Sarcophagus and the Breedon sculptures. Plunkett sees the relationship not only in terms of direct influence but in terms of process, the means whereby a master craftsman interprets, synthesises

and makes his own the 'varied ornamental and figural materials at his disposal'. Such materials are made available to the craftsmen by their patrons, and it is this aspect of process that gives regions and centres their distinctiveness and establishes their productions as truly individual works of art. Patrons take part in cultural exchange of artefacts which in the hands and minds of their artists are transformed. So, for Plunkett, 'The St Andrews Sarcophagus is in no way a product of this [Mercian] atelier, but embodies a comparable

initiative, in a context where there is stylistic evidence for cultural exchange between the two regions'. This analysis provides an appropriately complex mechanism for participation in the creation of the Insular art style without loss of regional identity.

Intensive studies of some of the major artefacts of the second half of the eighth century, the York Coppergate Helmet, the Rothbury Cross, the St Ninian's Isle Treasure, the St Andrews Sarcophagus, and now the Gandersheim Casket, have abundantly revealed the extent of this cultural exchange. To some degree all this art shares 'materials', to use Plunkett's word. In addition, all have resonances with the Southumbrian group of illuminated manuscripts, which includes the Vespasian Psalter, the St Petersburg Gospels, and the Barberini Gospels.[60] To this one can add the art of

Illustration 5.27a
The St Andrews Sarcophagus, Fife: corner-slab, stone 6

Illustration 5.27b
Corner-slab edge, stone 5

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the Book of Kells.[61] It is not intended to go over this ground yet again for the purpose of the elucidation of the cultural context of the Hilton of Cadboll animal ornament, but in this new Pictish material we have further evidence that Pictish sculpture shows a comparable initiative within a context of cultural exchange, which enriched thought, and elicited an innovatory artistic response which was met with technical virtuosity. Without the technical quality of Pictish sculpture such assertions of relationships would, of course, be vacuous. Shared features founded on such cultural exchange and productive of such monuments cannot be accounted for in the simplistic terms of 'Northumbrian', or indeed 'Mercian' influence.

Two examples taken from Plunkett's paper demonstrate the effects of this change of viewpoint. The first concerns the well-known matter of cruciform breaks in interlace and the creation, within interlace, of reserved cruciform spaces to contain cross-shapes. It was Allen who first pointed out the striking parallel in the use of the latter device in on the edge of a corner-slab (stone 5) of the St Andrews Sarcophagus and its pervasive use in the St Petersburg Gospels, a manuscript of the late-eighth century which, appropriately, has been attributed variously to both the north and south of the Humber. Plunkett pursues the background to this analogy further, noting a fundamental resemblance between the construction and decoration of the reserved cross-shape on the low relief corner slab (stone 6) and the carpet pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library, Cotton Nero D IV (illus 5.27a & b). On this basis he proposes 'that the interlace with inset crosses is a Celto-Saxon invention, at home on the Sarcophagus, which is picked up by the artist of the St Petersburg Gospels – rather than vice-versa'. The probability that Pictish sculptors had a hand at an early stage in the evolution of this particular device is strengthened by their acknowledged superiority in the intricacy and variety of their interlace patterns. Related motifs are found on cross-slabs from Portmahomack and at Rosemarkie.[62]

The second example of probable north to south transmission relates to a unique motif on the Gandersheim Casket. In their papers in the proceedings of the Casket symposium both Richard Bailey and Leslie Webster are at a loss to find sufficiently exact analogies for the spiral motif in the central panel of the lower tier of panels on the back of the Casket. It consists of a roundel of spirals, six triple spirals arranged around a central triple spiral (illus 5.28). The grouping of six spirals around a central spiral at the

crossing of Irish and Pictish crosses has been studied in an important paper by Liam de Paor in the *Festschrift* for Helen Roe.[63] Although de Paor's account of the Pictish examples is flawed, what he calls the 'seven-bossed disc on the crossing' does seem to have the status of a specific decorative device possibly carrying some numeric significance. A good Pictish example is at the crossing of the cross on Aberlemno no 2.

What makes the Gandersheim Casket motif distinctive is that from its perimeter four creatures

Illustration 5.28
The Gandersheim Casket, Brunswick: detail of the back showing a seven-spiral roundel (© Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig, photographed by B P Keiser)

with forelimbs extended in a lizard-like pose, emerge to move towards the corners of the panel. At a merely decorative level such a motif could be regarded as just another example of what Françoise Henry called the interpenetration of decorative motifs, whereby ornamental patterns run into each other: interlace can run into spiral pattern; spiral into key pattern; interlace and spirals can be animalised; and animals develop foliate features. However, for creatures to emerge from a seven-spiral roundel undoubtedly gives the motif more symbolic weight than the animal-headed interlace and animal-headed single spirals which

abound in the manuscript art of the late eighth century and are represented on Pictish and Irish sculpture. The snake-bosses of the Nigg slab and the St Andrews Sarcophagus, where snakes emerge from a boss made up of their interlaced bodies, certainly convey more than just the interpenetration of motifs. Plunkett considers that the 'boss of spirals … with lizards emerging' on the Casket is related to the Pictish snake-boss and its metalwork analogues.[64] He further suggests that the comparatively rare examples of Mercian spiralwork show knowledge of these northern manifestations, thus providing another instance of influences between the art of the Peterborough region and Pictish St Andrews running in both directions. Webster accepts

Illustration 5.29
The Kildalton Cross, Islay, Argyll: oblique view of detail of the central boss on the eastern face (Crown copyright RCAHMS, drawn by Ian G Scott)

that the Pictish snake-bosses are visually similar, and carry the kind of symbolism required for the Casket motif in the context of its overall iconographical programme, but points out that the Casket creatures are not snakes and that their bodies are not made up of running spiral pattern.[65] Whether it is justifiable to set store on such distinctions must be doubtful. Are we to claim that the creatures with lizard-like forelimbs and fanged canine-heads emerging from the bosses set in a cruciform arrangement of spirals on the lowest panel of the east face of the St John's Cross are not wholly made up of snakes and represent an introduction of a distinct motif resulting in a kind of hybridisation of the snake-boss?[66] At the very least the Iona lizards emerging from the snakeboss into the corners of a panel bring the Gandersheim motif and the Ionan/

Pictish decorative world somewhat closer. The visual similarity is significant.

Spiral patterns are a feature of Pictish sculpture, particularly in Easter Ross sculpture, at Portmahomack, Shandwick and Hilton of Cadboll. Pictish pre-eminence in stone in this ornament is similar to its pre-eminence in interlace. In later sculpture, on the Crieff (Perthshire) and Ardchattan Priory (Argyll) cross-slabs, there are examples of spiral pattern at the crossing running out into the cross-arms to produce ribbon-bodied creatures with dog-like heads and fanged jaws. Both of these monuments are committed to the interpenetration of motifs. Crieff conflates animals with vine-scroll, and at Ardchattan a human figure holding a book has extended legs intertwining to engage with spiral pattern.[67] The Gandersheim motif surely shows an artist combining motifs in precisely the way that the sculptor of the Kildalton Cross (Islay), another Ionan monument, puts at the crossing of the east face four splayed creatures moving into a bossed form in a manner very similar to the four stylised lions moving up the Steeple Bumpstead (Essex) boss (illus 5.29).[68] Richard Bailey's sculptural parallel at Fletton for Gandersheim's inhabited spiral roundel shares with these far flung analogies an approach by lizard-like bipeds towards a circular shape. His second Mercian parallel, South Kyme (Lincolnshire), lies in the occurrence of evidence there, among the *disjecta membra* of a stone shrine, for the use, on one monument, of both spiral ornament, a rare motif in English sculpture, and zoomorphic ornament of the Gandersheim type.[69]

While spiral ornament of diverse complexity is exceedingly common in Pictish sculpture, bipeds with tails developing into interlace, an important motif south of the Humber, have so far not been recognised as a feature of Pictish animal ornament. The sculptor of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab will have had access to the visual sources used by the sculptors (possibly sculptor) of the Nigg cross-slab and the St Andrews Sarcophagus. In all the art-historical discussions of the St Andrews Sarcophagus, and indeed of the Gandersheim Casket, the Hell panel from the Northumbrian Rothbury Cross has always featured, for it displays fleshy quadrupeds and lizard-like creatures with textured bodies seen from above (illus 5.30). The links with Pictish sculpture have been focused on the Sarcophagus without reference to the animal ornament of the Nigg cross-head, in spite of their close relationship. This is understandable for while the Nigg menagerie includes creatures with lizard forelimbs the carving is infinitely delicate, quite

Illustration 5.30
The Rothbury Cross, Northumberland: the fragment showing the
'Hell' scene on the base of the cross-shaft (© Corpus of Ango-Saxon
Sculpture, photographed by Tom Middlemass)

points to this unusual view of these monsters with their 'bodies seen partially from the side and the heads from above', a feature which she considers to be a distinctive trait of eighth-century Insular zoomorphic art.[70] This arrangement is exactly paralleled on some of the Gandersheim creatures (illus 5.31a & b).[71]

With this background in mind it is time to return to the animal ornament on the lower and mid-portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and in particular to the pair of animals to the left of the stepped base. Both have well-preserved body texturing, and the pair create an animal motif set on a mat of interlace made up of a tail extension, fettering hindlegs, and a tongue intertwined with limbs and an ambiguous median-incised strand. The modelling and sinuousity of the animal whose head lies along the left margin of the slab instantly recalls the bodies of the creatures in the St Andrews Sarcophagus 'deer-heads' corner-slab, but it is the mane that evokes the animal art of the Gandersheim Casket. This is expressed not by the curls on the St Andrews 'lions'-manes' corner-slab but by twisted ridges exactly paralleled on the Casket and on the animal fragment at South Kyme (illus 5.32). The maned beast at South Kyme has a fanged dog-head and a pointed raised wing. In lay-out and art style the now fragmented shrine at South Kyme is dated to the late eighth or early ninth century with particular reference not only to the Gandersheim casket, but also to the familiar related suite of major art works of that period which includes the Hedda Shrine at Peterborough, the Witham pins from Lincolnshire, and the St Petersburg Gospels.[72]

In May 2005 it was possible to fit fragment X.IB 355.1 on to the broken upper surface of face A of the lower portion (illus 5.33a). This fragment shows the neck and head of an animal with its ears thrown forward seen from above, biting a tail that passes between animal haunches. Its neck has scales which match those on the body of the animal on the lower portion that has the neck of the maned animal pinned down in a strangle hold. The conjunction shows that the scaly animal with its short forelimb, only that on the near side shown, held forward, has its head seen from above. The body texturing and pose places it firmly in the general context of creatures on the Rothbury 'Hell' panel and the Gandersheim Casket. Creatures with heads seen from above, as we have seen, are also found on the Nigg cross-head and the St Andrews Sarcophagus. There are two other features of this scaly animal which recall the art of the Gandersheim Casket, one certainly present, the other as yet speculative. The first is the treatment of

different from the plasticity of the heavy modelling at Rothbury and St Andrews. However, an important shared connection between all three monuments is in terms of structure, in the use of tiered, or mirror image, animal motifs composed of sinuous S- and heart-shapes constructed by their bodies.

The Rothbury analogy has further importance in that, while the confronted creatures at the bottom of the panel are quadrupeds, further up the design these are replaced by bipeds with long tails. All six creatures have their heads and shoulders seen from above, but the hindquarters of the quadrupeds are shown in profile. In a full study of the Rothbury Cross Jane Hawkes

Illustration 5.31a
The Gandersheim Casket, Brunswick: right-hand end with foliate scrolls inhabited by winged creatures (© Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig)

Illustration 5.31b
The Gandersheim Casket, Brunswick: left-hand end with foliate scrolls inhabited by bipeds, including a pair with forelegs seen from above (© Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig)

the head. The miniature scale of the Casket creatures seen from above, conveniently drawn and collected together by Webster, show a consistent treatment of the heads.[73] The snout tapers, the circular eyes appear protuberant and the curved eyebrows are extended to the end of the snout creating an inverted Y-shaped segmentation of the head reminiscent of an animal wearing a muzzle. All these distinctive features appear on the animal head on fragment X.IB 355.1. One has simply to remove the thrust forward ears to create a facsimile of the Gandersheim heads, for texturing, sinuosity and head type are all there. Here too, the head seen from above combined with a single forelimb

shown in profile is paralleled in the creatures within the lower foliate scrolls on the right-hand end panel of the Casket (illus 5.31a). The head type, notably the circular eyes and segmented head, can be discerned in a detail from a disc-headed pin from Brandon, Suffolk, also illustrated in a drawing by Webster,[74] and on the splayed quadruped on one of the Witham pins.[75] It also appears on brooch no 17 of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure[76] where four animal masks with snouts segmented by a ridge and round eyes move away from the circular setting on the terminals. A similar head appears on the crest of the St Ninian's Isle inscribed chape.[77] Wilson pointed out that other zoomorphic features in this brooch,

including heads with long ears, parallel the heads on the metal mounts of the Gandersheim Casket.[78] These animals with the long ears and extended tongues are described by Webster as 'a recurrent motif in all media'. Lizards with heads seen from above on the hoop of the larger penannular brooch from Clunie (Perthshire) have the same long snouts, and circular, drilled, eyes.[79] The new scaly beast on the cross-face of the Hilton of Cadboll slab is a more fully realised, in the sense of being a fractionally more naturalistic, version of a pervasive animal type in all art productions of the late eighth century.

In one important aspect the Pictish animals on either side of the stepped base would seem to differ from the Mercian types represented, not only on the Gandersheim Casket, but on the roof of the 'Hedda' shrine and on the animal motifs ornamenting the Coppergate Helmet. Pictish sculptors it seems did not find a use for the bipedal animal whose body tailed away into interlace. On the Nigg cross-head, with one exception, and on the St Andrews corner-slabs, all the animals, however reptilian in body, are quadrupeds. The exception at Nigg is a pair of confronted bipeds within the constriction of the lower arm of the cross-head (illus 5.24). They have naturalistic dog-heads, show one forelimb, and have tapering serpentine bodies that loop round the necks of the quadrupeds in the lower arm to return into the constriction to end in a blunt tail. As we have seen the animal repertoire of both the Rothbury fragment and the Gandersheim Casket also shows coexistence of the biped and the quadruped, but examples of the typical biped body developing into interlace have not so far been identified in Pictish sculpture. It is significant that, similarly, there are no examples of bipeds in the animal ornament decorating the silverware of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure. Like Pictish sculpture generally, this *de luxe* metalwork is committed to the quadruped. However, the scaly beast to the left of the Hilton base may be such a biped. Fragments have not yet been identified that would explain exactly how the snaky creature's body ended. An obvious reconstruction

Illustration 5.32
South Kyme, Lincolnshire: fragments of relief-sculptured panels (© Paul Everson and David Stocker)

a

Illustration 5.33
Hilton of Cadboll: the front of the lower portion with additions belonging to the mid-portion.
Ian G Scott can be seen in the background
(© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

b

would entail the creature with the ears flung forward biting the tail of its own hindquarters. The difficulty is accommodating the fragments of figural art that are conjoined to X.IB 355.1, which would seem to make it necessary for the animal tangle to end, horizontally, at the height of the hindquarters. Reconstructing a body to meet this requirement means ignoring other indications, notably the trace of a hanging limb which passes under the scaly body between the forelimbs of the other two animals. This limb must come from a

third animal which has also to be fitted into the space available. The median-incised interlace has also to be accounted for. At first this was thought to be a filler snake whose body had been usefully distinguished by median-incision from the other creatures. We know that the strand passed under the snaky body and that it had a blunt end. It could be interpreted as an extended tongue falling from the jaws of the largely missing third animal, but it could equally well be the end of the body of the scaly creature finishing with the blunt

Illustration 5.34
The Corbie Psalter, Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 18, f.109r, initial to Psalm 126 (© Bildarchive Foto Marburg)

tail of the Nigg bipeds. In any event that so markedly scaly a creature should be a quadruped seems unlikely. It may be then that it qualifies as a rare example of the Mercian type of reptilian biped with a body developing into interlace.

A feature of the maned animal on the left margin of the slab is the apparently limp hang of its short nearside forelimb. The position is ambiguous: the animal may be intended to be prone pinned by the weight of the scaly creature, or it may be being pulled up so that its head droops ineffectually. The latter is the more effective pose and is the initial impression given to the viewer. It is perhaps significant that there is a dramatic, almost narrative, feel to the positioning of the animals one with the other, which calls for a spatial narrative interpretation usually inappropriate for animal ornament. Intertwined decorative animals are rarely thought of as stranglers and victims, with the possible significant exception of the animal ornament in the Book of Kells.

While traits belonging to the delicate animal art of the south, and Mercia in particular, are clearly to be seen in the animals on either side of the Hilton cross-base, other influences have also been at work. These traits belong to animals of a more naturalistic sort, even a more gross sort such as is seen on the 'lions' manes corner-slab' of the St Andrews Sarcophagus. We have to look at other visual resources such as the art of the Book of Kells and related manuscripts. For example, the pose of the maned animal at Hilton recalls that of the considerably livelier single animal in the group of three quadrupeds in the Corbie Psalter, Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 18, on folio 109r, at Psalm 126 (AV 127), which shows a profile animal with its head looking backwards, its weak forelimb hanging in to its flank and its tongue enmeshed with that of another whose head is turned to confront it (illus 5.34). The decorative naturalism of this animal art could have some relevance to the development of the animal ornament at Hilton, even though it is still recognisably in touch with the world of ornamental fantastic animals and lumpy shapeless monsters.[80] Animal ornament in the Book of Kells fills frames and underpins symmetrical structures required by the scale of the Gospel incipits, but there are also clutches of smaller decorated letters as, for example, on folio 250v, which have at least a naturalistic tendency, and indeed are sometimes fully naturalistic.[81] This moving in and out of ornament and naturalism even to express the same imagery is typical of Pictish animal art. The Corbie Psalter has not abandoned animals as ornament,

but a bias towards naturalism gives it a slightly different appearance. Recent work by Bernard Meehan has begun to explore the subtleties of the relationship between the Psalter and the art of the Book of Kells signalled earlier by Françoise Henry. Extended tongues are a feature of the new animal ornament found on fragments of face A. Looping tongues ending in volutes are part of the typical head type of fanged open jaws, blunt muzzles, rounded brows and prominent ears. The fitting of fragment X.IB 355.5 on to the top of the right-hand side of the lower portion partially completed the pair of animals, one, on the right margin of the slab being shown to have this type of head. The missing pricked ear was identified on a separate fragment. The fitting of a further fragment, X. lB 355.265, showing a head of compatible scale, on to the lower portion, completed the pair of intertwined animals to the right of the base (illus 5.33b). This animal has the back of its head close to the cross-shaft. The pair are arranged more or less symmetrically with hindquarters at the bottom, bodies in a figure of eight in the middle and heads at the top, but not confronted, for as we have seen the animal adjacent to the cross-shaft looks upwards not across to its companion. The tongues are extended and loop round each other's bodies to end in a volute. This head type on a smaller scale appears on the upper portion of face A, and it has been suggested above that some of it might have been used to decorate the shaft (Chapter 5.3.2).

Animals with prominent ears, open jaws (but fang-less) and pendulant tongues ending in volutes appear also on the Gandersheim Casket. Webster cites abundant close analogies, some with fangs, in sculpture and metalwork of the late eighth century.[82] We can now recognise that this 'widespread style' had clearly spread to Easter Ross.

It might be that the extended pendulant tongue should be regarded as merely a decorative adjunct which can contribute to the background of interlace which is part of this style. For example, on the Casket the lolling tongue hooks as it were into a loop of the interlaced body neatly engaging with it. Another motif keeps the tongues free of interlace. Here lappet extensions create an intricate mat of interlace between the wings and tails of addorsed bipeds with animal heads. Among the fragments from Hilton there are examples of heads with both unengaged lolling tongues, and tongues which are caught up in other strands of animal extensions or curved foliate stems. Animal heads with gaping jaws and an extended pendulant tongue carved in a variety of scales and heights of relief are a distinctive feature

of the animal style displayed on face A of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab.

Meehan in his work on the role of decoration in the Corbie Psalter has drawn attention to the extent to which tongues are emphasised in both the Psalter and the Book of Kells, particularly so in the case of lion-like creatures. He considers this feature of animal design to be a device, the significance of which is uncertain, but which he tentatively suggests might reflect 'the last words of Christ's ancestor David, "The Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me and his work by my tongue", 2 Kings 23.2, the lion symbol of the house of Judah representing David in this context'.[83] This, of course, could be an example of the literal illustration of the scriptures which characterises the Utrecht Psalter, Utrecht University Library MS 32, folios 1–92, and which could be present in the predominant lion imagery of the St Andrews Sarcophagus.[84] It would certainly not be inappropriate to give the extended tongue of the fierce Pictish lion/dragon on the Apostles' Stone fragment at Portmahomack some such symbolic weight. I do not think that the semi-reptilian creatures on face A of the lower portion could be interpreted in this way, although, as we shall see, the difficulty of interpreting the surviving figurative iconography of face A makes it necessary to keep the mind open. The lively, delicate creatures with their tongues extended, carved on the upper portion of face A, may be purely decorative but it is possible that they too have some general significance related to the work of creation. For the Gandersheim Casket, Leslie Webster has demonstrated convincingly that what appears to be simply panels of finely carved highly decorative animals in a style found in contemporary works of art in many media have in fact each been subtly designed to express, individually, creatures of the air, earth or water, and symmetrically ordered so as to convey a symbolic programme. This extension of the decorative animal into symbolic, and even illustrative, contexts has been demonstrated as occurring in the art of the Book of Kells and the Rothbury Cross. It is probable that all ornament in Insular art conveys a degree of symbolism whether in the construction of ornamental but meaningful shapes, or in the case of animal ornament, referring to the abundance of creation, something early identified by Stevenson on the Hunterston Brooch, or to what Meehan identified in the Book of Kells as the conjunction of Christological symbols.[85]

Writing in the St Andrews Sarcophagus monograph, Henderson pointed out that the corner-slab with the deer-headed quadrupeds was sited to the left of the side panel, adjacent to the deer-hunt on foot, and that the panel to the right with quadrupeds with lions' manes was next to the image of David rending the lion's jaws. This she thought was an example of how a master sculptor gave his work of art coherence, tying his decorative repertoire to the figurative art. Elsewhere in the same volume, Douglas Mac Lean more perceptively suggested that these seemingly decorative animals on the corner-slabs flanking the David panel could have carried the meaning of beneficence (the deer) and malevolence (the lions) (illus 5.26a & b).[86] It may be that what we are seeing in masterpieces of the late eighth century, when artists in all media were at the height of their powers technically and conceptually, is a new emphasis on the exploitation of ornament as a means of reinforcing or indeed of conveying meaning. We might therefore expect that the animals on either side of the Hilton cross-base, itself charged with allusive symbolism, were conceived in symbolic mode. However, these large-scale decorative animals, so useful in establishing a stylistic context, pose a difficult iconographic problem.

5.3.4.3 The figurative art on the background of the cross in the mid-portion

When it was found that the fragment with the head of an animal seen from above was conjoined on its upper edge to fragment X.IB 355.268, which itself was conjoined to fragments .294 and .21, it became apparent that immediately above the animal motif was narrative art consisting of three figures whose lower limbs alone survived (illus 5.35a & b). The best-preserved figure is adjacent to the cross-shaft. It wears an ankle-length robe with feet in profile facing to the left. The drapery of the robe is well expressed, shown clinging to the legs. The left side of the hemline (the right does not survive) dips to a point, and above it hangs a separate form, possibly close to the body, which is also pointed. This form could be a wing, but no surface treatment survives to confirm this identification. Immediately in front of the robed figure, and also facing left, are the unclad legs of another figure. This figure faces a third figure, over a considerable uncarved space, whose feet only, facing to the right, have survived. There was no possibility of a formal division, either by a horizontal margin or a passage of ornament, of this interactive figurative scene from the tangle of animals immediately below.

On the other side of the shaft within the mid-portion, on a very slightly higher level with the

Illustration 5.35
Hilton of Cadboll: (a) the mid-portion of the front face under reconstruction, general view, (b) the group of three truncated figures, (c) the truncated figure with an embroidered tunic flanked by animals (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

narrative scene described above, five fragments have been joined running from the right edge of the slab into the space occupied by the cross-shaft. Although severely damaged there are vestiges on two of these fragments of animals of the type and scale of the animals flanking the base. One, fragment X.IB 355.6, which preserves part of face B, the right edge of the slab, shows the forequarters of a thick tubular body with raised forelimbs. The other, fragment X.IB 355.9 is a battered fragment with carving preserved only on its top edge, from within the cross-shaft. The carving appears to be, as already described, the forequarters of a pair of large affronted animals with their forelimbs meeting in an inverted V-shape, within which there are the heads of two much smaller scale addorsed dog-headed animals with fangs and extended tongues

(illus 5.14). Joined to the fragment of the large animal on the right edge of the slab is a remarkable piece of figurative carving. Fragment X.IB 355.7 shows the lower half of a figure wearing, under drapery bunched at the waist, a stiff undraped knee-length tunic which is decorated with an all-over pattern of scrolls (illus 5.35c). Fragments 355.22, .23 and .36 join to show that this figure had well-shaped unclad legs and that his feet are in profile pointing to the right. To his left, on 355.7, is the rounded haunch of an animal with a naturalistic pelt, and a short tufted tail hanging down straight. The large-scale 'decorative' animal appears to be interacting with the figure so grandly dressed, its forelimbs lying close to his left side. It appears, therefore, to have some narrative significance, possibly transferable to the animals of the same

species at the bottom of the cross-slab. No carving has as yet been identified among the fragments to indicate his relationship with the smaller, seemingly more naturalistic creature, at his back. This creature with its curly pelt, rounded haunch and tufted tail looks like a lion. Lion imagery introduces many iconographic possibilities but the conjunction of .11 with .7 lengthened the haunch and gave it a hook-like appendage which could be interpreted as a large dew claw. The conjunction does nothing to clarify the imagery and it may be that the naturalistic features of this creature are misleading and that when complete it had a much more monstrous appearance. This would get round the difficulty of a man flanked by two different genres of animal on different scales, one naturalistic and more or less appropriate to the scale of the man, and the other much larger and fantastic. Unfortunately there is no indication of the nature of the relationship between the two creatures and the man in their midst. One assumes that it is combative but this is only an assumption. The confronted large creatures overarching a smaller pair of animals on the Hilton cross-shaft may, as we have seen, echo the motif found on the St Andrews corner-slabs and on the Nigg cross-head lower arm, but it is closer to the decoration of the shaft of Meigle no 2 where the entire shaft is decorated by three tiers of large static confronted or addorsed animals with smaller decorative animals of a different type set between them. Clearly the Hilton of Cadboll lower and mid-portion presented a formidable array of animal art on the cross and in its background, with figurative art if not embedded within it, closely associated with it. The conjunction of fragment .265 and .5 to the lower portion and to the mid-portion fragments .11, .7 and .6 confirmed that there was no panel division between the tuniced man flanked by animals and the animal motif below. The animal head to the left is indeed 'looking up' at the action centred on the man, and there seems no reason for this pose other than some involvement with it.

In early medieval art men interacting with monsters or fierce beasts occur in heroic, scriptural or theological contexts. Pictish sculpture includes representations of the exploits of David, Daniel and Jonah in the form of the 'abbreviated representations' common to Early Christian art.[87] Non-scriptural heroic struggles between men and beasts have not so far been identified in Pictish sculpture, although a possible exception is on the lost Meigle panel where early drawings suggest that the man confronting a bear was defending himself with a knife.[88]

The full-length figure wearing a tunic at Fletton, struggling with the extended bodies of bipeds, in spite of the tilt of his shoulders, appears not to be a hero mastering the animals which flank him.[89] A naked figure, of similar proportions and pose, grasps a scroll-stem within an inhabited vine-scroll at Breedon.[90] The meaning of the imagery of these Mercian figures seems to embrace man's struggle in the natural world but is significantly less intense than the image of a naked half-length figure grasping the hindlegs of quadrupeds at the bottom of the Rothbury panel. This panel is generally accepted as illustrating a scene in Hell, where the vulnerably naked figure is being menaced by fierce beasts.[91] Two of the Pictish tall cross-slabs which share other visual resources with the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab have Hell iconography. Aberlemno no 3 has a typically abbreviated Hell motif in the background of the cross to the right of the bottom of the cross-shaft (illus 5.17). Here a naturalistic quadruped has hindquarters shown in profile and forelimbs stretched out on either side of its head, which is seen from above. The animal is intent on gnawing the head of a man whose well-formed legs emerge from what appears to be the hem-line of a garment. In Pictish sculpture figures in such motifs are normally shown naked, but this admittedly very damaged figure may be an instance of a clothed figure under attack by a beast of Hell. Higher up the background of the cross are angels, and it looks as though there is some locational appropriateness in the placing of a Hell motif at the very bottom of the slab. It may also be noted that the figures trapped between the letters of the opening to St Luke's Gospel, folio 188r of the Book of Kells, which has also been interpreted as a Hell scene, are mostly partially clothed. The two figures at the bottom right are quite elaborately dresssed. One wears flounced garments of some complexity and the other an undertunic with a wavy hemline.[92]

Earlier it was proposed that the bossed cross-head of Meigle no 2 would have admirably suited the bossed base of the Hilton of Cadboll cross and the similarity of the animal ornament on the shafts of both crosses has been pointed out. On the left-hand side of the shaft of Meigle no 2 is a dramatic Hell scene expressed more explicitly than an abbreviated man and monster motif (illus 5.19). Here in the constricted space between the broad cross-shaft and the edge of the slab a naked figure, with his head flung back, is about to be snatched by one leg (the other is raised up) into the jaws of a monstrous animal. However, help is at hand in the form of the strong arm of another figure

securely positioned within the left volute at the top of the cross-shaft. Fierce animals move up the right hand of the shaft, one with its head lodged in the right volute, its jaws held closed. The scene then is more a representation of redemption, than damnation, of purgatory rather than Hell.[93]

On the grounds of other iconography on Pictish tall cross-slabs it could be reasonably argued that the animals at the bottom of the slab, on either side of the Hilton cross-base, are the inimical, dire beasts of Hell and that two of their kind are confronting a tuniced figure at a mid-point between the right-hand edge of the slab side and the right-hand moulding of the cross-shaft. That there was some conflict being enacted farther up the background of the cross could account for the animal to the right of the shaft looking upwards, away from the cross. The only evidence for that conflict, however, is the position of the man confined between differentiated fierce animals.

More problematic are the dramatically presented animals to the left of the base, for immediately above them is a peaceable narrative. The status of the robed figure, next to the cross-shaft, possibly an angel, is clearly superior to that of the unrobed figures who are presumably of equal status. The robed figure appears to be either a witness or a detached controller of a situation. Another possible interpretation of the spacing and relationship of the three figures is that the robed figure is presenting the figure that is in front of him to the figure on the left. Some light might be shed on the interpretation of the three figures by attempting a more specific interpretation of the scene to the right. Unfortunately here also the lack of visual clues makes for uncertainty. Iconographically the best clue is undoubtedly the nature of the man's garment. A handsomely decorated short tunic belongs to a wealthy, secular person. On that basis, the figure has been interpreted as Dives, of the parable of Dives and Lazarus in Luke 16, where Dives, the rich man, goes irredeemably to Hell while Lazarus, the poor man, goes to Heaven.[94] As we have seen, that the figure is clothed is not an insurmountable difficulty. On the other hand, depictions of the damned are usually shown under stress, physically contorted. The Hilton robed figure appears to be standing firm holding his ground. Again perhaps the robe provides the answer. In order that this essential attribute of a rich man on earth can be displayed the figure has to be static. Accounting for the naturalistic lion on the figure's right is not easy. However, Pictish beasts of Hell can be either naturalistic or decorative, and in a notable

representation of the Hell motif on the front of the cross-slab at Rossie Priory (Perthshire) two different styles of animals are pulling a naked human being apart. One is a fiercely clawed lion that has the man's head in its jaws wrenching it back, and the other a fish-tailed reptile that hauls up and bites at a raised leg. On the large cross-slab at Fowlis Wester a larger than life size lion-like monster snatches at a naked figure with his head well back in the animal's throat. If the tuniced figure is on his way to Hell then one could predict that his as yet unidentified shoulders might be thrust back, his head already within the lion's mouth. To date no fragments have been identified with carving that would confirm this hypothesis. But here, on what is the left side (facing right) of the cross of the crucifixion, is potentially, a Hell scene, expressed not just in the usual Hell motif but one which might have illustrated a specific parable of Hell in the New Testament.

Returning to the figures on the left, suggestions as to their interaction have been made above. The most obvious interpretation would be that the figures facing each other are Adam and Eve with a Holy Person remonstrating with them after the Fall, the first sin that could lead to the damnation figured below in the pit of writhing beasts. The extent of the carved space between the figures is, however, difficult to account for. If the Temptation was the subject then there was plenty of room for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. If the subject is Remonstrance then one would have to resort to explaining the composition as a sophisticated spatial recognition that after the Fall Adam and Eve were separated from God, she to be the bearer of children, he to be the tiller of the soil. The Fall narrative in the frontispiece to Genesis in the Grandval Bible, British Library, Add MS 10 546, an early illustrated Carolingian Bible of the first half of the ninth century, includes scenes of God's Remonstrance with the fallen pair, and the angel escorting them to their future life of toil (illus 5.36). The Fall narrative in this cycle in four registers is entirely made up of three-figure compositions, and another possibility, which allows better for the space between the two confronted figures, would be God's introduction of Adam and Eve into the Garden of Eden before the Fall.[95]

What should be taken into account is that there may well have been a fourth figure in the scene, or indeed a group of figures. There could have been a robed figure behind the figure facing to the right making a symmetrical group. If so this could be a Harrowing of Hell with angels leading Adam and Eve out of Hell figured below.[96] If there were a group of unrobed
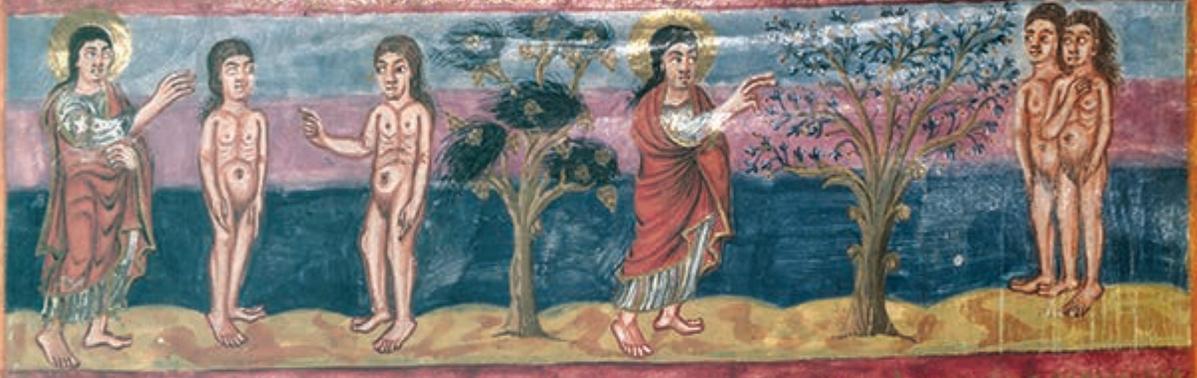
Illustration 5.37
Ivory of the Last Judgement, London, Victoria & Albert Museum
(© Victoria & Albert Museum, London)

figures seen in depth behind the figure facing to the right then the scene could be the redemption of Adam and Eve, and others, presided over, as is usual in later medieval art, by two angels, or by Christ accompanied by a single angel. The Redeemed are usually clothed, but not always, and in any case we do not know whether the confronted figures were clothed or not. On an Anglo-Saxon ivory panel of the late eighth century a scene of the Last Judgement shows at the bottom left, a group of the Just with short tunics and bare legs

Illustration 5.36
The Grandval Bible, London, British Library, Add MS 10 546, f5v, the frontispiece to Genesis (© British Library Board)

being ushered into Heaven by an angel. Adjacent, at the bottom right, the mouth of Hell is represented by the jaws of a monstrous beast snatching the head of the first of a group of the naked wicked (illus 5.37). The composition, particularly of the group with the angel to the left, is a good analogy for what survives of the Hilton iconography on either side of the cross-shaft. There are other unconjoined fragments with carving which show human heads, legs and feet, but where they are located on face A is as yet unknown. They do show, however, that there was other figural art on the front face.

A provisional suggestion therefore for the iconography of face A of the lower portion, including the conjoined fragments from the mid-portion, is that it represents at the bottom of the slab on either side of the cross-base the monstrous beasts of Hell: to the left (facing right) of the Cross of the Crucifixion an illustration of Dives snatched by a lion-like beast and about to be dragged down by a monstrous beast into Hell; and to the right of the Cross of Crucifixion a redemptive scene of the Harrowing of Hell. More generally, it appears to be concerned with the Last Judgement.

Such an interpretation is consonant with the vivid images of Hell in Pictish sculpture, and their extension at Meigle no 2 which shows redemption, and with the pastoral messages concerning the difficulties of another Rich Man depicted on Meigle no 27 (James 2.3), and the need, generally, to take up the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit in order to extinguish the devil (Ephesians 6) near the top of a cross–shaft of St Andrews no 19.[97] The latter sculpture also has a Hell scene at the bottom of the slab directly comparable to the scene in the Book of Kells incipit to Luke, where monsters latch on to the crowns of the heads of the damned. This Hell miniature also includes a lion crunching a human head on the top margin.[98] The style in which the animals in Hell are expressed has been shown to be related to that used in art of all media to the north, and particularly south of the Humber, including identifiable stylistic traits which suggest cultural sharing with the art of the Gandersheim Casket. That the style appears to be to some degree coarsened is the natural consequence of its role in the narrative.

5.3.5 The message of the original face A

The message of the cross face proposed above is that of the Salvation of Mankind as a result of Christ's death on the cross raised on Golgotha Mount leading to

the remission of sins and the promise of Eternal Life. Christ's obedience to God's will undid the disobedience of Adam, and thus the interpretation of the scene on the cross's right side as a depiction of that disobedience would be appropriate. The vivid depiction on the cross's left side of the fate of the wicked, no matter how powerful and wealthy, to be cast into Hell would, however, be better matched by the Harrowing of Hell where the redeemed, including Adam and Eve, are led into Heaven. The other figural imagery, represented by the surviving frontal heads, could obviously have extended the pictorial representation of these fundamental tenets of the Christian faith, possibly forming part of a more ambitious Last Judgement. The decoration of the cross and its background included a large proportion of animal ornament, sufficient to suggest that it was symbolic of God's Creation.

5.3.6 An impression of what the original face A might have looked like when complete

It will be obvious that the work of reconstruction has not provided many key elements in the appearance of the original face A which would undoubtedly have enriched or modified its message, particularly in the light of current views on the symbolic use of the ornamental repertoire. For what it is worth, a hypothesis is offered here of what the complete original face A might have looked like, one which is entirely personal to the writer and which other members of the reconstruction team and future interrogators of the database may, for good reasons, want to argue against. The hypothesis may usefully focus criticism and elicit more evidential description. One unsatisfactory aspect of the hypothesis to be acknowledged is that it relies too much on symmetry for the decoration of the background of the cross.

With these provisos in mind it is suggested that the cross-face consisted of a ringed equal-armed cross with square terminals and double squares in the arm-pits. Its upper and transverse arms projected from the slab edges. The ring was decorated with spiral bosses. The arms of the cross-head were decorated with spiraliform key pattern and curvilinear ornament both of which had elements raised to create bosses, in order to represent the jewelled cross of Golgotha. A circular interlace-covered boss was placed at the centre of the square field at the crossing. The ornament was carved on platforms of relief which added emphasis to the cross-shape. The cross-head was set on a shaft decorated with panelled animal ornament of various types: loosely constructed serpent ornament; animals within a leafless and fruitless bush- or medallion-scroll; and a panel consisting of large animals containing smaller animals. These panels were also set on raised platforms of relief. The base consisted of a two-stepped base filled with spiraliform key pattern some of which was raised to form bosses arranged in three lines of three, two and five bosses. The appearance of these bosses evoked both the jewelled cross of Salvation and their number, ten, had the numerological significance of the fundamental body of the Law, the Decalogue. The architectural emphasis on the base was created by undecorated panels which projected beyond the edges of the slab. The background of the cross, starting from the base, contained animal ornament on both sides representative of the beasts of Hell. To the left from the point of view of the viewer, not that of Christ crucified, was the reward of the faithful and to the right, the punishment of the wicked. Above these narratives, on either side, were passages of purely decorative loose interlace running into key pattern, and above that again, more figural art, expressive of Redemption, involving frontal-facing figures. Animal motifs surrounded the ring, below and above. The selection of decoration for such a monument was in the main committed to reinforcing its known message concerning man's sojourn in God's terrestrial creation of plants and animals, and his choice of disobedience to the Law and subsequent damnation, or of obedience, bringing with it the Redemption and Eternal Life made possible by Christ's death on the Cross.

5.4 Text becomes commentary: reappraising the Hilton of Cadboll reverse face

(For detailed descriptions see the catalogue-style entries in Chapter 4.)

The composition of the carving on the back of the slab has been much praised for its balance. The discipline of the format of a framed vertical triptych certainly contrasts with the looser, sometimes to the point of chaotic, compositions of the backs of early cross-slabs such as Meigle no 1 (illus 5.47) and Eassie (Angus).[99] As we have seen, the sculptor of what is regarded as Hilton's closest analogy, the back of the Aberlemno Roadside cross-slab (no 3), was defeated in his attempt to achieve a similar control over his subject-matter. He found that he had to be content with a partial panel division, separating the right-hand side of the

double disc from the trumpeters, but letting the Z-rod stray into the hunting scene. The Shandwick sculptor, possibly emulating the Hilton sculptor, panelled all his subject-matter on the reverse. His double-disc has no straggling Z-rod appendages and is kept separate from the numinous, albeit key-patterned, Pictish beast with its unique hint of contextual relevance concerning the protection of the flock from the lion. The largest panel on Shandwick is given to a circular burst of spiral pattern consisting of fifty-two triple spirals of varying sizes arranged in three concentric circles (illus 5.22). The upper four panels on the back of Shandwick run from edge to edge of the slab. The Hilton sculptor opted for a frame to contain his panels. This was almost inevitable, given the breadth of his slab, but, unlike the Nigg sculptor who had surrounded his imagery on the reverse with an arched frame, he planned, in addition, for internal division into three panels. The three internal panels taper to accommodate the slight taper of the slab. The lowest panel when complete may have been fractionally larger, a touch of classical proportion which is presumably accidental but nonetheless steadies the column of panels. However, it should be emphasised that the lower part of the spiral panel falls into the fragmented mid-portion, and further work on the reconstruction might modify this description. Although the spiral panel had to be planned to fit exactly between the inner margins of the frame, some flexibility, often imperceptible, had to be exercised in the execution of even ostensibly geometric gridded patterns.

5.4.1 The spiral panel

The Hilton spiral panel is more confined than the spiral panel on the Shandwick slab. According to Allen, when complete, the Hilton design would have contained 32 triple spirals and eight smaller double spirals arranged round 'a central boss' . There is no evidence for a raised boss, although the presence of a circular element at this central point has long been recognised. We now know that embedded in the spiral pattern at its centre point was a ringed equal-armed cross with double squares in the arm-pits creating a square at the crossing of the arms (illus 5.38). The cross is imposed on the ring which passes under the arms. The design, apart from its enclosing moulding, is a miniature version of Meigle no 2. This eye-catching feature adds to the array of balanced circular fields on the reverse of the slab, relates to the upward thrust of the central growing-point of the vine-scroll in the lower border of the frame, and
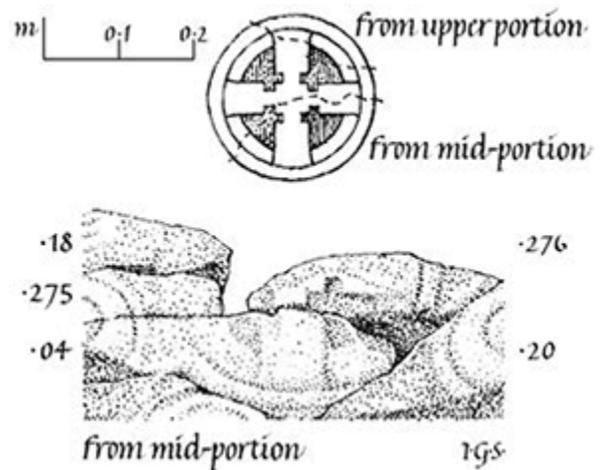

Illustration 5.38

Hilton of Cadboll: the reverse of the upper portion and lower portion of the cross-slab, with the cross at the centre of the spiral panel reconstructed from fragments belonging to the mid-portion (Crown copyright RCAHMS; drawn by Ian G Scott)

is surrounded by a glory of spirals. The cross provides an incontrovertible link between the back of the slab and the Christian message of the front. The recovery of this cross alone creates a shift in perception of the design of the back of the slab. The impulse to display a cross on both sides of the monument, so evident in the case of the symbol-bearing slabs at Rosemarkie and Edderton, was also felt in monuments to the north at Skinnet and Thurso in Caithness and in the south on the iconographically rich monuments in Perthshire at Gask and Rossie Priory. But the appearance on the Hilton slab of a second cross on the reverse, of a distinctive design, is new for the tall cross-slabs of the Tarbat peninsula.

The organisation of the spiral pattern at Hilton so as to create a central field compares well with the arrangement of spirals on the little-studied cross-slab at Glenferness (Nairn) on the opposite shore of the Moray Firth (illus 5.39). Although, as Allen noted, the spiral-work on the cross face fills an H-shaped field, it centres on a rectangular space with concave sides. In his description Allen noted the similarity of this spiral-work to that in the Book of Durrow and other 'Irish' manuscripts, and conjectured that the rectangular space on the slab might have contained ornament now defaced.[100] Similar spaces are created in panels of spiral ornament in the Book of Kells. In reproduction, some appear to be blank, but, for example, in the portrait of Christ on folio 32v, which is naturally replete with

Illustration 5.39
Glenferness, by Nairn: the front of the cross-slab (Stuart 1856,
pl XXIIII, 6; photographed by RCAHMS)

Christological symbolism, the shapes with concave sides within the square fields supporting the arch within which Christ stands can be seen to be divided by two diagonals with a cross-shape created at their crossing point.[101] Conservation of the Glenferness slab may yet reveal such a cruciform shape in this prominent position immediately above the framed Old Testament image of an appearance of God on earth in the form of the 'angel of the Lord', with whom Jacob wrestled successfully. The cruciform shape at the centre of the spiral panel on the Hilton slab can be regarded as a ringed cross carrying the full weight of the triumphant Christian symbol. Within the composition of the back of the slab as a whole, the cross and its halo of spirals provides a focus for the Eucharistic symbolism of the encompassing frame decorated with inhabited vine-scroll.

A similarly encircled straight-armed Greek cross is set between the first set of lateral scrolls within an inhabited tree-scroll on a gilded bronze plaque from Cumbria dated to the late eighth century (illus 5.40). The cross itself and its context have also been linked to the portrait of Christ in the Book of Kells and its specifically Eucharistic symbolism.[102] The Hilton cross within a spiral panel framed in vine-scroll is not the looked for 'precise parallel' for this unique cross set within the vine itself on the Cumbrian plaque, but the symbolism, including the relationship to the point of growth of the vine, is clearly of the same order.

5.4.2 The symbols panel

Spiral pattern appears again in the decoration of two of the five symbols carved on the back of the cross-slab. The uppermost panel contains a crescent symbol with a V-shaped rod that stretches out to fit neatly into the upper corners of the panel. The horns of the crescent and the point of the V-shape are decorated with spiral pattern as are the two discs of the double-disc symbol and Z-shaped rod located outside the panel within the upper edge of the frame. The complex constructions of both symbols are described in detail in the catalogue description for the upper portion of face C (Chapter 4.5.3). The role of curvilinear ornament in the decoration of the crescent symbol on both incised and relief monuments was fully analysed by Robert Stevenson. He established the nature of the pelta patterns used in incision on the symbol stones, and pointed to the analogous curvilinear decoration of letters in the Irish Psalter known as the Cathach, Royal Irish Academy s.n., which dates to the early seventh century.[103] On the symbol stones curvilinear ornament, such as S-shaped scrolls, were also used in addition to simpler circular devices for the decoration of the double-disc symbol. In relief sculpture, arrangements of spirals, often raised into bosses, were used widely, to great effect, to decorate the double-disc symbol: notable examples are at Shandwick,

Illustration 5.40
Asby Winderwath Common, Cumbria: bronze plaque showing an encircled equal-armed cross
supported by the growing point of an inhabited vine-scroll
(© Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.)

For the decoration of suitably shaped symbols in relief Pictish sculptors used the full range of the decorative repertoire of Insular art with great ingenuity. On Hilton, for example, an underlying interest in wreath-like structures has been noted above and in the catalogue description. To decorate the two examples on Hilton of the rare single disc symbol with interlace was clearly an aesthetic choice, for more spiral-work would have been a mistake, but the interlace design is not a unit of the usual circular knotwork, but formed of two dense concentric circles centred on a stud.

From the point of view of display, the clarity of the basic shapes of the abstract symbols was important for they functioned as information on public monuments. The line, balance, and overall design of the individual symbol shapes are important manifestations of distinctively Pictish art.[104] The shapes of the Hilton symbols show how the sculptor could give his double-disc proportions and decoration that could blend with his vine-scroll patterns. The roundness of the crescent outline and the overarching effect created by the volutes on its horns connects it to the circular shapes below. The floriations of the rods are treated as tendrils, which in their turn connect to the vine-scroll. It is subtle interplay of this sort which justifies the description of the reverse as in its own right 'a genuine work of art'.

Rosemarkie and St Vigeans no 6. It may well be that the deep-rooted convention of using curvilinear ornament on two of the commonest symbols accounts, at least in part, for the Picts enduring interest in spiral-work which resulted in such *tours de force* as the spiral panels at Shandwick and Hilton, the deeply cut spirals characteristic of sculpture at Portmahomack, and the unsurpassed virtuosity of the spiral designs on the front of the Nigg cross-slab.

The volutes on the horns of the Hilton crescent also appear on the crescent and V-rod carved on the right-hand narrow edge of the lower portion of a fragment of a slab from Portmahomack. They are omitted by Allen in his drawing but are recorded by Ian G Scott (illus 5.41). This is the slab with the section of framed vine-scroll so similar to the Hilton vine-scroll. Such volutes are found only on the crescents of these two Easter Ross-slabs. The floriation of the surviving left

end of the V-rod and the Z-rod of the serpent symbol at Portmahomack also resembles the treatment of the rod ends at Hilton. The suite of symbols on the Portmahomack fragment are interesting in that the tuning fork, one of the less common symbols, predominates north of the Grampians, with two examples at nearby Dunrobin and Kintradwell. This distribution matches the northern distribution of the rare single disc symbol, one of which comes from the farm of Ardjachie by Tain, Ross-shire. That these two slabs, related in their use of the inhabited vine-scroll, should both display rare symbols of regional significance is a salutary reminder that the symbolism even on sophisticated monuments of this date, the second half of the eighth century, still had specific messages to convey.

The fifth symbol is the symbol pair made up of a mirror and comb. As is usual, it is placed lowest in the tier of symbols, within the top left corner of the hunting scene. It is just possible that the pair has been displaced from the main panel of symbols in the manner of the double-disc and Z-rod. Its miniature scale is paralleled on the Rosemarkie symbol-bearing slab where the comb is set within the double-disc symbol design, and two mirrors on either side of the point of the V-rod of the lowest crescent symbol. The alternative, generally favoured, is that the Hilton symbol is being used attributively and refers to the adjacent female rider. Some writers believe that all mirror and comb symbols are attributive in some way to the female sex. Others see such an interpretation as inappropriately stereotypical.[105] The small scale of the Hilton mirror and comb has to be taken into account. On the Rosemarkie slab, where there is no figurative sculpture, the symbol pair plus an additional mirror-like object are like Hilton markedly smaller than the other symbols. Whether this change of scale reflects something about their meaning will be discussed below. Certainly the mirror symbol became less important on the relief slabs and to this extent the small versions on Rosemarkie and

Illustration 5.41
Portmahomack, Tarbat no 1: the Pictish symbols on the narrow edge of the slab fragment which has part of an inhabited vine-scroll border on its surviving broad face (© Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

Hilton may be a localised response carrying its own meaning.[106]

5.4.3 The hunting scene (Chapter 4.5.3)

The unique characteristic of the hunting scene on the reverse of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is that it is presented in a four-sided panel. Unlike the many other hunting scenes on Pictish monuments, it is, as it were, a framed picture, such as would be appropriate for a panel in an ivory casket or a miniature in a manuscript. It has therefore a sobriety, to the point of sedateness, very different, for example, from the wandering, undisciplined hunting scene on Meigle no 1, and from the compositional ambiguities of the hunt on the reverse of the Nigg slab (illus 5.47 & 5.2). In its controlled lay-out it ranks with the set piece of the battle-scene on Aberlemno no 2 and the heavily symbolic side panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus.

By the time of the carving of Hilton of Cadboll the hunting-scene composition was well established, designed around the basic unit of the deer being brought down by the hounds. Usually there are two hounds, one latching on to the animal's forequarters and the other grabbing at its hindquarters or leaping on to its back. This arrangement for the depiction of hounds bringing down a deer is a standard one in late classical art. The Picts must have had a model for it which included the turning of the neck of the front hound into space in order to bite at the throat of the deer. Although the depictions of profile incised animals on symbol stones are brilliantly expressive of the essential stance of a variety of animals, such turning into space is not an aspect of that art and it is most unlikely to have been drawn from the life. In a more assimilated version of the hounds bringing down the deer, such as is seen on the fragment of a shrine panel at Burghead (Moray), the front hound is transformed into a profile, backwards looking beast with its necked locked between the forelegs of the deer in the standard decorative convention of the offside leg of the deer being brought forward. The hound's
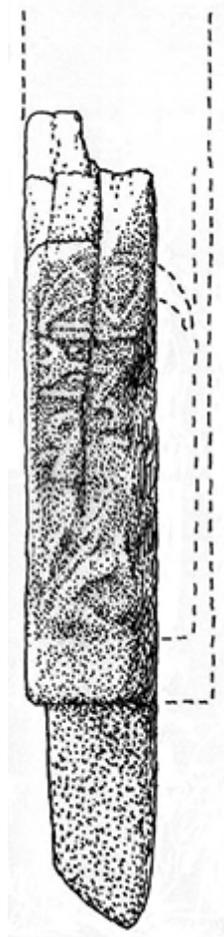
Illustration 5.42
Burghead, Moray: fragment of a shrine panel showing a stag being brought down by hounds (Crown copyright RCAHMS)

have created a depiction of the action, but it is probable that he has, uniquely, preserved evidence that the Picts were indeed aware of the image of the cavalryman, as exemplified on the commemorative slab at Bridgeness at the eastern end of the Antonine Wall, where a rider is shown at the moment of flinging a spear at a barbarian that he is running down.[110] He might also have been aware of the Roman iconography where the leader of the hunt raises his right arm at the moment of the kill in conscious imitation of the victorious emperor.[111] The Kirriemuir abbreviated hunting scene,

generously tufted tail is similarly decoratively locked in its own hindlegs (illus 5.42). For all its linear power of expression the Burghead version of the motif has opted for the decorative.[107] In contrast, the Hilton version is true to its naturalistic origins. Both hounds are in full cry, and like the deer, at full stretch. The front hound turns into the deer's flanks and the hound on the haunch is taut with effort. The deer has its mouth open with its tongue hanging out. The spear in its back has done its work. Such an explicit depiction of the death of the deer is rare. The prostrate stag on the front of the small but sophisticated slab, Kirriemuir no 2, has a similarly lolling tongue and a bird of prey at its neck reinforces the fact of the kill (illus 5.4).[108]

The ultimate origin of the motif of the rider, the man on horseback, also lies in Roman art and we must suppose that the mass-produced image of the Roman cavalryman running down a barbarian played its part in helping the Pictish sculptor to achieve this difficult image. For the Picts there was no difficulty with the horse, but getting a man into the saddle will have needed a model. It is instructive to compare the abbreviated hunting scene on the back of Kirriemuir no 2, to a similar scene on a sarcophagus at Arles, which will have drawn on similar Roman sources.[109] On Kirriemuir no 2, the hunter is running down the deer with his horse and has his arm raised to fling his spear (illus 5.43). The Angus sculptor could himself

Illustration 5.43
Kirriemuir no 2, Angus: the reverse of the cross-slab
(© Tom and Sybil Gray Collection, RCAHMS)

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Illustration 5.44
Meigle no 2, Perthshire: the reverse of the cross–slab
(Crown copyright RCAHMS)

like its Gallo-Roman analogue, moves to the right, but the majority of the more developed Pictish hunting scenes, such as on the Hilton slab, move to the left, with the riders set diagonally, and the deer and hounds motif neatly tucked under the leading horseman. This compact design admirably suited the Hilton sculptor's square format. The diagonal arrangement of the riders achieves a sense of progression and this may have been a Pictish innovation. As at Hilton, there is usually a degree of hierarchy in scale among the hunters, with an emphasis on the uppermost rider. The reverse of the cross-slab, Meigle no 4, provides, a good example of how marked this differentiation could be.[112]

At Hilton, the representation of a female rider at the top tier of the composition goes beyond these conventions. The rider is seated frontally on her mount, which is larger in scale than those of the horsemen lower down. She has a companion riding abreast whose horse is indicated largely by doubling the contours of her mount. Only the nearside hindlegs of the horses are drawn with any degree of independence. The depiction of three riders abreast in this manner is seen on the cavalcade accompanying a single horseman at the top of Meigle no 2 (illus 5.44) and more ambitiously, on the side of the heavily decorated recumbent Meigle no 26.[113] It is also used on the very worn tall slab at Fowlis Wester. This method of conveying riders in depth again ultimately comes from a model, in this case most probably a coin, commemorative medal or perhaps a cameo.

At Meigle, the riders are all seen in profile and there is no difficulty in using the convention of outlining to convey the heads of the riders. At Hilton the frontal figure in the foreground created a problem for which it seems there was no model at hand. The solution found, generally described by modern writers as 'awkward' or as suggestive of an 'afterthought', in fact is quite ingenious. A recessed space is cut into the surface of the slab to contain both the frontal and profile face. Only the male profile face needed this special treatment but the recession continues to the right of the head of the female rider. The device serves to unite the two figures in a recessed panel and gives added prominence to the frontal head. Attention is drawn to the recessed space by a hound leaping towards it, and by the trumpets being blown by a pair of figures at the top right corner of the frame. This technique for depicting space is well paralleled on the reverse of the Nigg cross-slab where the sculptor cut into the surface in order to achieve the rare viewpoint of the offside left arm of a shield-bearer, seen within the shield grip as he moves to the right.

Pictish sculptors in relief regularly utilised incision and different levels of relief to convey spatial effects. For example, the flutter of drapery at the left elbow of the hunter on foot on the side panel of the St Andrews Sarcophagus is carved in relief just raised above the dressed surface, whereas the rest of the figure and his drapery are in rounded relief.[114]

The depiction of frontal figures is unusual on the tall cross-slabs. The frontal depictions of Daniel and, on a miniature scale, of David on Meigle no 2 belong to models of abbreviated motifs of Daniel in the Lions' Den and David breaking the jaws of the lion. Frontality in art usually raises the status of a figure to that of the iconic whereas a profile figure belongs to the depiction of narrative action. The corpus of frontal sacred figures has been notably added to by the recovery at Portmahomack of a substantial fragment of a slab showing a range of Apostles, very probably part of the slab which included the inscribed fragment. The presence of a woman shown frontally on the Hilton slab (she is not sitting side-saddle as is often said) raises the much discussed matter of whether the concept of portraiture, something between iconic and narrative art, existed at this period. Also debated is whether the acknowledged secular nature of much Pictish figurative art represents contemporary indigenous social life and artefacts, or is based on models used either as practical aids to draughtsmanship, or as a means of finding imagery to convey ideas outwith contemporary day to day experience.

To try to answer these questions, or at least to consider the options available, it is necessary to look briefly at the logic of Pictish representations of the rider and of the hunt. Why did the Picts carve so many images of riders and hunters on horseback? The simplest reason must be that the Picts, like many other societies, saw in hunting the essence of social cohesion, a powerful metaphor for authority and leadership outwith the battle-field.[115] Where the Picts are distinctive is the extent to which they regarded hunting scenes as suitable for display on Christian cross-slabs. In appreciating the social metaphor of the hunt they were no different from anybody else in western Europe, but depicting it so regularly in a Christian context is less usual.

We must, however, dismiss the view of one modern writer, who, writing from the standpoint of a later period, regarded Pictish hunting scenes as 'uninhibitedly representational' of an indigenous sport, carrying none of the symbolic overtones of stag-hunts on Early Christian monuments.[116] Given the evident awareness of Early Christian imagery in

Illustration 5.45
Edderton, Ross and Cromarty: the reverse of the cross-slab
(© Ian Fisher)

Pictish sculpture this is an unjustifiable assumption. Joseph Anderson, rightly, had no difficulty in accepting the chase on Pictish sculpture as a Christian symbol-picture for conversion, which at the same time conveyed information about contemporary aristocratic ideals and contemporary artefacts. This view accords with recent acceptance of the presence of multiple meanings in Insular art generally, and to a degree answers the question of why the hunt appeared so often of Pictish cross-slabs.

The female rider at Hilton has always evoked the response that here was a representation of either the

person commemorated in a memorial monument, or celebrated as a person of local social consequence, perhaps even a bride bringing dynastic advantage.[117] If every slab with riders or hunters on horseback referred to a specific individual, and also every set of symbols, as some would have it, Pictish monumental sculpture would be exceptional to a degree wholly incompatible with its known conformity, in other aspects of its art, with contemporary practice in Europe. The Picts who raised monuments in the seventh and eighth centuries were after all literate, certainly with a degree of literacy that must have extended to expressing their names in letters. To avoid specific identification on a memorial stone might be appropriate to a member of a confined religious order, but a secular leader would have had no such scruples.

Nonetheless, it is hard to dismiss altogether the view that representations of single riders on slabs such as Meigle no 5, and of dominant riders such as the rider shown in high relief on the back of the slab at Edderton, might refer to historical individuals, even although, of course, no question of 'likeness' is involved (illus 5.45). Into a different category of visual meaning might come the undifferentiated huntsmen of Aberlemno no 3, and the strikingly dominant rider accompanied by his hounds and a phalanx of men at the top of the reverse of Meigle no 2. This latter image could certainly be interpreted as a *topos* for the victorious leader, with the classical Victory at his head reinforcing the symbolism of a monument raised to extol the idea of such leadership, rather than to depict a known historical leader such as the single rider on the Dupplin Cross who is identified by an inscription.[118] Similarly, the dominant hunter with his hawks and his retinue on the Elgin slab could serve as a *topos* for the hunt as symbolic of authority.[119] That there is a possible relationship between the meaning of the symbols and the depiction of hunting scenes on Christian monuments symbolic both of authority and responsibility has been argued recently elsewhere.[120]

It is time to reassess the comparison between the version of the hunt on Hilton of Cadboll and that on Aberlemno no 3 (illus 5.46). How similar are they in fact? Aberlemno shares two of Hilton's five symbols and their decoration, if not identical (there is nothing like the complexity of the Hilton crescent and V-rod at Aberlemno), is similar. The same, however, could be said of the decoration of these same symbols on the Rosemarkie cross-slab. There can be no question, as has been suggested, that the two disc symbols at Hilton are a misunderstood version of the double-disc

at Aberlemno.[121] After all, Hilton has a perfectly good design for the double-disc and Z-rod within the top border of the vine-scroll frame. There are no single discs or the mirror and comb symbol pair at Aberlemno.

Illustration 5.46
Aberlemno no 3, Angus: the reverse of the cross-slab
(Crown copyright RCAHMS)

Both scenes utilise the convention of the diagonal lay out of the hunters. There is no foot-hunter carrying a rectangular shield at Hilton. The hunt at Aberlemno is a much larger affair for three deer are being pursued: one is beset by hounds in much the same way as is the single Hilton deer; another image varies the pose of the surviving hound at the rear; the third is a different image of a deer with its head still up but its legs bent underneath its body. This latter pose is used for distressed animals on a number of Pictish monuments, and possibly, as at Hilton, a kill is indicated.

The only really close similarities between Hilton and Aberlemno no 3 are the trumpeters, in both monuments located at the top right of the composition, and the stray small animal leaping up at the female rider at Hilton, which is placed between two horses at the centre of the hunt at Aberlemno. It has been suggested that this stray animal is a small lion.[122] The recent photography of the Edinburgh slab for the Hilton project shows that it is a fierce animal with a curly pelt, a tufted end to a 'heraldic' tail, and possibly a fanged jaw. If this small animal is indeed a lion, then it could be an extract from the same Psalter model that provided the trumpeters on Hilton and Aberlemno no 3, and the image of David rending the lion's jaws on Aberlemno no 3. The alternative view is that the Picts did not need to borrow models for leaping profile hounds. The hound could be of the mastiff type represented on the fragment of the shrine at Burghead.[123]

The trumpeters motif has long been associated with the iconography of David and his musicians on folio 30v in the Canterbury Psalter, British Library Cotton Vespasian A. 1.[124] Certainly the Picts had access to a source of David iconography and there are stylistic similarities to support a connection with this manuscript. On the matter of priority there have been differing views, but all would agree that the Hilton sculptor shows a capacity to express the motif of the trumpeters more skilfully for he places them one beyond the other with their feet on different ground lines whereas the Aberlemno trumpeters stand one in front of the other on the same ground line. If, as has been argued, the Hilton sculptor was such a skilful refashioner that he could improve on the simpler spatial arrangement he found in his model, then it seems surprising that he could not achieve a more satisfactory spatial representation of the riders abreast.

Of course both sculptors may have been constrained by the amount of space available to them. The Hilton sculptor wanted to save space within the confines of his panel, while the Aberlemno sculptor may have wanted to extend the hunt imagery by placing the trumpeters side by side, reducing the element of a relationship in depth to the overlapping of the rear trumpet. Like all the riders on these slabs, the Hilton trumpeters wear a semblance of classical dress with tunics with pleated skirts worn under a cloak-like upper garment. At Aberlemno the trumpeters appear to have straight tunics, like the soldiers in the Aberlemno no 2 battle scene, and over-garments like shirts with inverted V-shaped slits at the side. Did the Aberlemno sculptor modify his model in order that there was a clear social distinction in dress between them and the hunters who wore classical dress, or did the Hilton sculptor himself upgrade their style of dress, as well as the depiction of their stance, rather than simply copy the grand style of dress present in the model? The latter seems more probable. On balance the view that the Hilton sculptor stands closer to the model, which of course was not necessarily the Vespasian Psalter itself, must prevail. But where does the argument for the use of a Psalter model leave the view that the Picts may not have needed a model at all for their trumpeters? Certainly if the evidence of Aberlemno no 3 was all that had survived a case could be made for a native representation of a native ceremonial custom of a fanfare either accompanying, or taking part, in a hunt. But if, as seems more probable, there was a model, and the prevalence of David iconography in Pictish sculpture strongly supports this view, then the motif of the trumpeters at Hilton indicates, as one would expect, that the framed hunting scene incorporates imagery additional to the fully assimilated version of the hunting scene.

The frontal female rider at Hilton, although not taking part in the hunt certainly comes into the category of the dominant rider in the context of a hunting scene. Is she then presented as a symbol of female authority or more mundanely, as a 'portrait' of a local aristocratic woman? There is no doubt that the image of a woman sitting frontally on horseback is a potent one. The question is whether this was a norm for Pictish female riders in certain social contexts, or that a rare exotic pose was being exploited at Hilton for the purpose of heightening the image. Sitting frontally, in contrast to sitting side saddle, would not be suitable for taking part in a hunt and it could be argued that this fact is a sufficient reason for the failure of women to be included more frequently, even as followers of the hunt, in Pictish hunting scenes. There is, however, one instructive exception. On the reverse of Meigle

1 under an array of symbols including a large-scale salmon, serpent and Z-rod, and mirror and comb, are five riders, two in miniature, set on a steep diagonal line (illus 5.47). One, leading the second register, has been identified as a female rider sitting frontally.[125] The figure is very worn but the there seems little doubt that a robed female figure is sitting frontally on her mount. In contrast to the Hilton female rider she appears to have an elaborate hairstyle, or to be wearing a crown-like head-dress. The only indication of the chase is the hound that leaps up at her shoulder paralleling exactly the relationship of the stray leaping animal to the female rider at Hilton, and to one of the riders at Aberlemno. In the case of Aberlemno no 3 the hound could be regarded as a space-filler, but its presence alongside the frontal female rider at Meigle and Hilton cannot be a coincidence. Somewhere there was a model for a frontal female rider accompanied by a hound. It should also be noted that in front of the female rider on Meigle no 1 is a winged figure, based on an image of an eastern god,[126] of the classical personification of Victory, which, as we have seen, is used attributively for the dominant rider walking his hounds on Meigle no 2, accompanied by riders shown abreast. Clearly the female rider on Meigle no 1 for all her miniature scale has the same dominant status. The layout of the reverse of Meigle no 1 is extraordinary, for its changes of scale and accumulation of seemingly heterogeneous imagery, some of it of the most exotic kind, make it the antithesis of the panelled discipline of the Hilton reverse. However, in its gathering in of disparate motifs it included this frontal female rider with a hound, demonstrating a connection between sculpture at Meigle and Hilton which to some degree supports the case for the non-specific nature of the Hilton female rider.

The insignia of female authority is not so distinctive as that available, largely from classical sources, for her male equivalent. One might expect a general sumptuousness of dress and personal adornment, a diadem or a specific hairstyle. The Hilton female rider has pleated garments, a heavy shoulder-length hairstyle and may be wearing a brooch. The basic insignia are therefore present, and, if the brooch is indeed a penannular one, the image has an element taken from indigenous material culture.

But if there was a model, as the image on Meigle no 1 suggests, what was its nature? If images of Roman cavalrymen were an aid to formulating the Pictish man on horseback then it is perhaps justifiable to re-visit the visual similarity between the Hilton figure and

Illustration 5.47
Meigle no 1 Perthshire: the reverse of the cross-slab
(Crown copyright RCAHMS)

portrayals in a variety of portable media, as well as in stone sculpture, of the Gallic horse-goddess Epona.[127] The many representations of the goddess have been fully studied, and the widespread nature of her cult fostered by her importance for the mobile mounted infantry of the Empire is fully attested.[128] The depictions show varying degrees of Romanisation. One from Agassac, Haute Garonne, is uncannily like the reverse of Meigle no 1, where the doll-like goddess is perched frontally on her galloping mount between groupings of geometrical symbols and a range of fantastic animals which include a large fish and a sea-cow. Other images show the goddess elegantly clad in Roman dress, and with a Roman hairstyle, seated on a heavy mare designed along the lines of a Roman war-horse, its off-

side foreleg raised in the typically Pictish manner used for the horses of the female rider and her companion at Hilton.[129] Flanking foals were a usual attribute for Epona, appropriate for her role as goddess of the stables, and she is also portrayed with a dog.[130] The hounds, which are adjacent to the frontal female riders at both Hilton and Meigle, and not associated with the action of the hunt, could therefore belong to an image of Epona. Epona was invoked on the Antonine Wall and there is no great difficulty in supposing that images of her were available in the north over a long period. Françoise Henry was prepared, even if perhaps wrongly, to interpret a very worn figure seated between horses on the eighth- or ninth-century cross at Kilree (Co Kilkenny) as Epona, another way in which the goddess is represented.[131] The hypothetical model which lies behind the female rider sitting frontally accompanied by a dog could then relate to knowledge of the iconography of Epona acquired from the 'dead' but influential art of the Romans in north Britain.

There is, of course, another figure of devotion who rides frontally. The Virgin Mary is depicted on the Ruthwell Cross sitting frontally travelling on a donkey into, or returning from, Egypt (illus 5.48). The Christ child is on her lap.[132] There is only one certain representation of the Flight into Egypt on Irish sculpture, that on the cross at Moone (Co Kildare). The Moone Cross shares subject-matter with Pictish sculpture, but the style is very different from the figurative art of Hilton, and the sculptor at Moone is content to represent the frontality of the rider schematically.[133] It is disconcerting that Epona may also have been shown holding a baby, a rarity explained with reference to her connection with fertility and her pervasively maternal nature.[134] The Ruthwell image is interesting because of its depiction of the back hemline of a saddle- or back-cloth. The Virgin sits comfortably between two well-rounded features which could be the edges of the cloth, or some kind of structure related to a foot-rest. The Hilton mount has a back-cloth and, possibly, a crupper, but there appears to be no indication on the Hilton image of any aspect of the horse-gear required for sitting frontally. This is surprising given the Pictish attention to detail in these matters. If sitting frontally was a contemporary mode of riding then one would have expected the addition of at least a footrest, in addition to the cloth, to be included in the image. The feet of the female rider at Hilton are unsupported, hanging to one side in a more graceful position than the feet outwards pose of the Agassac Epona. It seems more probable that Pictish

Illustration 5.48
The Ruthwell Cross, Dumfries: the north side showing the Flight into or out of Egypt

women normally rode astride, and indeed both Epona and the Virgin are sometimes depicted riding in this way. It is of interest that the female rider on Meigle no 1 appears to have an elaborate hairstyle reminiscent of that of the Mother goddesses of classical art, but also present in female Pictish representations of the Virgin,[135] and that it is possible, though not at all certain, that her mount has a broader cloth perhaps of a sort more functional for the frontal pose. The shoulder-length hairstyle of the Hilton female rider is closely paralled on representations of Epona.[136]

In recent literature the figure at Hilton has been interpreted as an image of the Virgin Mary in the Flight into Egypt. This attractive view of a slab located in a locality of later devotion to the Virgin merits consideration. That the identification was made locally during the later life of the slab seems inevitable. One proponent of the interpretation has seen in the worn carving at the centre of the figure the head of a child cradled in her hands.[137] Allen thought that the figure was 'holding something in her hands'. Stevenson, with no mention of hands, tentatively suggested that she was wearing a penannular brooch. Others have claimed that she is wearing a torc or holding a hawk on

a supporting perch.[138] It has to be said that in different lights and in different photographic reproductions all these interpretations are defensible. Clearly, to decide whether we are dealing with the Virgin or a secular powerful woman, whether historical or conceptual, is important. It seems unsatisfactory to look to multivalency, the bearing of multiple meanings, to accommodate both a Holy and a secular figure, particularly if the figure is regarded as showing a historical secular individual.[139] Certainly the sources for the visual imagery of the female rider and her context appear to be composite. The sculptor had on hand the conventional imagery of the hunt to which he added a rarely used but recognisably potent image

of the frontal rider (one associated with the Celtic goddess Epona and the Virgin), accompanied by a dog (present in the iconography of Epona), and a trumpeter motif with origins in Psalter iconography. The form of the brooch, if the figure is indeed wearing a brooch, belongs to contemporary native dress but its prominent display could equally owe something to knowledge of artistic and literary conventions, as well as to contemporary social high-status conventions. Literary influences could account for a figure being shown wearing a brooch. For example, if the sculptor's aim was to depict a powerful woman then a classical allusion to the wearing of a rich jewel by Dido while taking part in a fateful hunt that had consequences for

Illustration 5.49
St Andrews Sarcophagus, Fife: the surviving long side panel, stone 1, detail showing the lion hunt

the destiny of Rome would serve his purpose.[140] The unusual emphasis on the death of the prey described above might suggest that the powerful woman was a specific deceased person. If we discount such a human extension of the significance of the distressed deer then the possibility remains that the female rider is non-specific, that is, not a representation of a contemporary woman. Certainly her presentation on the slab could be non-specific in the way that the motif of the lion-killer on horseback on the St Andrews Sarcophagus is a symbol of kingship in itself, which could have been intended to be read with or without reference to an individual king. It would be wrong to think that that image on the Sarcophagus is known, as a fact, to refer even indirectly to a specific eighth-century Pictish king (illus 5.49). It might do so, but the interpretation remains a hypothesis. The same is true of the identification of the rider figure on a fragment from Repton (Derbyshire). The Repton rider is without question a symbol of authority posed and accoutered at the top of a cross-shaft in terms which amount to a transferable Imperial metaphor. However, that the figure is a portrait of Aethelbald of Mercia remains only a strongly argued speculation and the possibility that a 'soldier for Christ', specific or generalised, is portrayed, is allowed, if only to be set aside, in the discussion.[141] Unfortunately there is little scope for speculative specific attribution of the representation of the Hilton female rider to a historical powerful woman, but the image as such can be lifted out of the genre of the depiction of a contemporary individual, alive or dead, into the company of grander composite images of status such as are represented at Repton and St Andrews. Such female symbolism could then more appropriately conflate with the Virgin Mary, as the unique iconography of the 'Virgo Militans' on a Carolingian ivory shows. The ivory is a striking example of multiple resonances, where the Virgin, without the Child, sits on an Imperial throne, with her spindles, but wearing identifiable traces of the dress of a Roman general, a protectress as well as the Mother of God, in terms ultimately relatable to the pagan war-goddess, Athena.[142]

Specific powerful women were rarely 'portrayed' in this period. The coinage with portraits of Cynethryth, wife of Offa of Mercia, issued in the last decade of the eighth century, is a well-known exception (illus 5.50). Although the classical bust dictates the profile image of Cynethryth, her flowing locks, depicted on one of two issues, has an echo at Hilton.[143] In reviewing the evidence for continental equivalents for the St Andrews Sarcophagus, Edward James was able to point to a unique example from the eighth century of a sarcophagus where the lid bears a representation of the deceased accompanied by an identifying inscription. It memorialises Chrodoara (Oda) the founder of the nunnery at Amay, on the Meuse near Liège, who lived in the early seventh century. The inscription as translated by James reads '+Saint Chrodoara, an illustrious and noble woman, has endowed numerous sanctuaries'.[144] The female rider at Hilton, even if a depiction of a specific individual, need not have been of an individual contemporary with the carving of

Illustration 5.50
Penny of Cynethryth, wife of Offa of Mercia (757–96)
(© Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.)

the cross-slab. In fact it is highly improbable on a monument of the pretensions of the Hilton cross-slab that she is simply 'a Pictish aristocratic lady', honoured in her lifetime or later memorialised. Rather she personifies an ideal of female nobility and power in timeless terms conveyed by a careful choice and combination of imagery. We should be able to accept that female virtue, wisdom and perspicacity, could be visually idealised as a symbol of authority, just as male virtue, which contributed to social order and cohesion,

was represented in the majority of the hunting scenes. The Hilton female rider may have been inspired by a historically effective figure, but she has become a personification of the virtuous female.

Returning to the important matter of the brooch worn by the rider. As part of the Hilton project the reverse of the upper portion of the slab was re-examined for photography, measurement, inspection of the upper edge, and close scrutiny of the female rider, particularly of those forms interpreted by Stevenson, as a penannular brooch. The surfaces in the 'brooch' area are worn and full consideration was given to other interpretations but the conclusion was that a large-scale brooch is indeed represented. The description of the brooch can never be definitive because of the worn nature of the carving and the problem, even close at hand, that lighting can create different forms which are suggestive of different interpretations.

The description that follows is the current view of Ian G Scott. While he regards further modification of the description to be probable, the basic identification as a penannular brooch can stand. Except where indicated, 'left' and 'right' refer to the viewpoint when facing the slab, not to the anatomical left and right sides of the female rider. The hoop of the penannular brooch ends in rounded terminals. The pin is positioned on the brooch horizontally with perhaps a slight rise to the left. A slight expansion suggests that the loop of the pin is on the right side of the hoop. There is no surviving trace of the point of the pin. It may be that the brooch is being worn with the point inserted in the cloth. Between the pin and the upper arc of the hoop are two bands of drapery, which expand to three bands between the terminals. At this point, the rider's left hand, with four fingers, clearly shown in a photograph taken by Scott, lies in front of the gatherings of drapery. Below the hand the drapery opens to reveal the draped skirt of a robe worn under the mantle. The mantle is draped over the shoulders. Drapery from the left shoulder sweeps over the left forearm and wrist of the hand to drape over the back-cloth, an arrangement which recalls the classical flutter of drapery over the left forearm of David on both the St Andrews Sarcophagus and on the fragment from Kinneddar, now in Elgin Museum. Three bead-like forms lie in a row along the left edge of the hoop, recalling the two baubles on the knotted drawstring at the neck of David's garment, depicted at St Andrews, and partially at Kinneddar.[145] The three baubles also recall the three tassels of the Imperial brooch. However, what this arc of bead-like forms depicts is not certain. This description of the

area of carving round the brooch shows that the dress of the frontal figure at Hilton stands quite close to the model for David that lies behind the representations on the Sarcophagus and the Kinneddar fragment, something not appreciated until the recent inspection. No explanation can be offered for a further rounded form located on, or adjacent to, the top of the hoop of the brooch.

This identification of a contemporary type of brooch does not mean that the identification of the rider as a portrait of a contemporary woman is confirmed. Recent wide-ranging research by Niamh Whitfield makes it clear that the wearing of brooches in Ireland, and as depicted on sculpture, is not a simple matter. She points out that on Irish sculpture penannular brooches are shown being worn by high-ranking ecclesiastic figures, although not contemporary ones.[146] That brooches were valuable assets in social negotiations, including bride-price, among many other social contracts, is evident from the literary sources. But, as is well known, Christ in the Arrest of Christ carved on the Muiredach Cross at Monasterboice (Co Louth) is wearing a penannular, or possibly a pseudo-penannular brooch. A frontally shown St Antony wears such a brooch on a panel of the Market Cross at Kells (Co Meath). Whitfield points to the wearing of a brooch by the Virgin Mary in what may be a representation of the flight of the Holy family into Egypt on the cross at Durrow (Co Offaly). An alternative interpretation for this group is that it represents the story of Hagar, the slave-girl, and her son Ishmael from whom a great nation sprang (Genesis 21, 14). All this is very far away from contemporary laws controlling the use of brooches. Further, it has also been carefully argued by Ross Trench-Jellicoe that there are other representations of Mary wearing a penannular brooch on early medieval sculpture in Scotland.[147]

The combination of a figure wearing a prominently depicted brooch adjacent to the symbol pair of a mirror and comb cannot be ignored in trying to interpret the significance of the Hilton rider although for the reasons given above the temptation to see the symbol pair and the brooch as indicative of a contractual rendering of bride-price should be resisted. The powerful nature of the message on the front of the cross must modify perceptions of its reverse. The message on the front of the cross-slab is not appropriate to a monument raised to mark a social contract, however politically important that contract might be. The woman with her brooch, watching a hunt and accompanied by musicians could epitomise the wealth which was the

undoing of the man with the embroidered tunic on the front, but if she does, then her image is positive, one which embodies the opportunities given to the powerful to exercise social virtue. Framed in the Eucharistic vine and captioned by the encircled cross in a blaze of spirals she clearly represents a high order of female virtue.

We can never tell for certain whether an image or even a resonance of the Virgin Mary was intended from the start, or that the later local veneration for Mary extended itself to the image at Hilton. However the fact that the pose may have had its ultimate origin in the imagery of the goddess Epona, which we know, in other contexts transferred itself to Mary, and that Mary can be associated with the wearing of a penannular brooch in Insular sculpture, allows for the recognition of a symbolic relationship between the two women.

The discussion began with the aim of discussing the options available for the interpretation of the female rider. The only unacceptable option, in the present writer's opinion, is that she is simply a portrayal of a specific contemporary Pictish woman enjoying the hunt. On the other hand the image could be that of a venerable woman from the past. The recent suggestion that the whole monument, like others of the period, is concerned with a new politically motivated ideology, where the boundaries between church and state are being redefined by persons of political power, possibly by such patrons as the female rider, has the merit of recognising that the intellectual processes that lie behind the choice of imagery are complex, and that the female rider was party to them.[148] But now that we have access to the message on the front of the slab it has to be recognised that the whole concept behind this exceptionally large monument, was to convey in shape, design and ornamentation, a recognisable visualisation of the Cross of Calvary, symbolic of the fundamental historical event of Christianity. The reverse of the slab is best interpreted as a theological commentary on the consequences of that event, its imagery consciously contained within a framework expressive of man's Salvation in the Eucharist, and including a vision of a glorified cross. The iconographic programme of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is that of a wholly Christian monument, and the context of the unique panel on the reverse, with its central potent image of a women sitting frontally on her mount and wearing a brooch on her breast, overlooking a hunt, justifies its interpretation as an image of the Virgin embedded in a Christian conversion allegory and enhanced by imagery adapted

from a Psalter. For some, the accompanying male rider makes it difficult to accept the image of the female rider as a representation of Mary. In the iconography of the Flight into or out of Egypt Joseph does not ride alongside Mary. He is always shown on foot leading her mount. The male rider has been interpreted either as a surprisingly self-effacing husband or a groom keeping control of the female rider's horse. The presence of the mirror and comb symbol pair has also to be accounted for. It was important to the subject-matter of the hunting-scene panel. It could have been tucked between the two discs, in the manner of their counterparts on the Rosemarkie symbol-bearing slab. Had they not been in the panel the rider abreast could have been expressed more clearly. The symbol pair was important and could well refer to both riders, rather than exclusively to the female one. However, if the form of the brooch cannot be assumed to indicate that the wearer is a secular Pictish woman, contemporary with the raising of the monument, there is equally no reason to assume that the miniature mirror and comb symbol pair (whether or not gender specific) has a restricted contemporary relevance.

The acceptable alternative to a Christian allegory for the hunting-scene panel is that in the figure of the female rider and her consort, and in the hunt, we have a metaphor for the virtuous life which the Hilton sculptor and his patron recognised as necessarily inclusive of both sexes. His knowledge of models that would allow him to bring the female rider into the foreground resulted in the creation of a unique symbol-picture, albeit based on the traditional hunting scene. Such an interpretation of the hunt, overlooked by the female rider and her consort, would certainly conform to Pictish thought, as expressed in art, which habitually turned to animal metaphor to define the social condition. That the hunting scenes and 'the man/woman on horseback' were metaphors relevant to ethically compatible secular ideologies, as possibly were the Pictish symbols, is one explanation for their prominence on the ambitious, highly finished, Christian monuments of the Picts.

5.4.4 The three-sided frame filled with vine-scroll

(Detailed descriptions of the vine-scroll and its inhabiting creatures are given in Chapter 4.5.3)

The frame which contains the three panels is in fact a conventional four-sided frame with inhabited vine-scroll in the lower and lateral borders. The upper border

contains the Pictish symbol known as the double-disc and Z-rod. That particular symbol could have had a significance which made it particularly suited to keep company with the inhabited vine-scroll, perhaps to represent a climax for its growth, itself being treated as, in some sense, an 'inhabitant'. On the other hand, Insular manuscript art of the eighth century is full of three-sided frames. The sculptor had to solve the problem of finishing off the differentiated lateral vine-scrolls. His instinctive confidence as a draughtsman took the simple step of using the upper horizontal border of the frame to convey whatever information was implicit in the double-disc symbol while retaining the effectiveness of the framed layout, even though, ornamentally, in a three-sided form. The symbol with its zig-zag rod, leaf-like terminal embellishments, and open work cross-bar is admirably designed to match the zig-zag of the stem in the left border, and the complexities of scroll, tendril and leaf present in the

vine-scroll generally. This remarkable combination of native Pictish symbol and east Mediterranean Eucharistic symbolism is a fine example of syncretism in Insular art.

A more mundane disregard for the conventions of framing occurs on the section of the frame now visible on the recovered lower portion of the slab. Here to the puzzlement of some modern observers the lower horizontal edge of the frame does not have a moulding. Only the recessed background surface defines the edge. In this we can contrast the slab fragment from Portmahomack, Tarbat no 1, now on display in Edinburgh (illus 5.51). Here the lower border of a similar frame has been preserved, in this case enclosing a figurative scene. The outer lateral mouldings of the frame overshoot into the lower border space. The outer horizontal moulding was carved to abut these side mouldings. The cutting back of the slab to create the tenon cut through the

Illustration 5.51
Portmahomack, Tarbat: fragment of a slab with part of an inhabited vine-scroll border (© Ross Trench-Jellicoe)

extended lateral mouldings, but this, of course, need not imply that there had been an aborted decorative panel beneath the frame. The question arises why this procedure was not followed on the reverse of the Hilton slab. The answer may lie in the evidence of the draughting line (a similar line is just discernible on the Portmahomack fragment) which runs from the top of the right-hand projection on the narrow edge face D, moving upwards as it approaches the left-hand projection on face B. The projections were, at the design stage, carefully aligned to achieve the bold geometry of the cross-base on the front of the slab. On face C the lower horizontal border of the vine-scroll frame had to be set straight, and this was a difficulty, for as the draughting line reveals, the projections, from the viewpoint of the reverse, appear out of alignment. The misaligned projections on either side of the lower border would have looked very untidy. No doubt the juxtaposition could have been fudged, but a much safer option was to start the frame further up the slab well clear of the projections. The tidying up of the area of stone left bare beneath the frame may not have been necessary, if in the end, an enclosing margin for the frame was supplied by heaped, supporting earth, or by some stone packing. That the sculptor would be satisfied with such a closure for his frame would be entirely in accord with the lack of a lower moulding on other Pictish sculpture.

The sculptor of the Nigg cross-slab filled the frame on the reverse of his slab with subtly varied panels of abstract ornament. None of it was spiral-work, for curvilinear forms dominated the decoration of the front of the slab. Hilton's frame was designed to enclose, in addition to the figural scene, two panels decorated with abstract ornament in such a way that the choice of foliate ornament for the decoration of the frame was in line with Pictish aesthetic principles of balance and diversity. The prime motivation for the choice of inhabited vine-scroll to fill three sides of the frame was, however, no doubt, to exploit this widely recognised symbol of Christ as a source of sustenance, whose body and blood, present in the Eucharist, led to the Salvation of mankind. This sacrament is more overtly displayed in the explicitly Eucharistic scene on the pediment of the Nigg cross-slab, placed immediately above the cross. The sculpture on the carved narrow face of Nigg is very worn, but the uppermost panel may have been filled with vine-scroll. Knowledge of the symbol of the Eucharistic vine was not limited in Easter Ross to the 'Cadboll school' consisting of Hilton and the Tarbat fragment. There were plenty of other models for vine-scroll circulating in Pictland. In the immediate vicinity there is a vestige of an inhabited tree-scroll at Kincardine (Sutherland), an uninhabited tree-scroll at Rosemarkie and a variety of scrolls, some of which were inhabited, on the narrow faces of 'Sueno's Stone' across the Moray Firth, at Forres. Whatever the date of the erection of 'Sueno's Stone', its vine-scrolls are likely to have come from existing stocks of models. Its novelties belong to other areas of the monument.

The origins of vine-scroll have been much discussed. The intensive work of those involved in the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, led by Rosemary Cramp, has not disturbed the belief that the ultimate origin of the insular vine-scrolls is East Christian, but of late there has been a recognition that to some extent Rome was an intermediary, not only by providing access to the Byzantine models, but adding some of its own late antique and Early Christian forms.[149] That Northumbrian sculptors played a dominant role in the reception and dispersal of the motif is also agreed. However, it is no longer acceptable to simply assign the label Northumbrian to all examples of the vine-scroll wherever located. Even the vine-scrolls of Northumbria have their own particular character which merit analysis. This is not a case of an exotic import which thereafter fossilises and deteriorates through misunderstandings. As Cramp puts it, 'the fashion for inhabited scrolls could have been differently explored at the same time in various centres and the York school could have been unrelated stylistically, but nevertheless contemporary with the Bernician school of Jarrow'.[150] If the label 'Northumbrian vine-scroll' continues to be applied to the Hilton design then further information must follow as to which of the many Northumbrian vine-scrolls is in mind.

The close analysis by Richard Jewell of the inhabited vine-scrolls in the eighth-century frieze at Mercian Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leicestershire) also reveals a complex evolution. He suggests that the Breedon inhabited scroll 'depends for its animal style mainly on small-scale models, particularly ivories and textiles from the Christian East, of fifth- to sixth-century date; although, despite the variety and inventiveness of its sub-classical inhabitants, it uses for their setting an insular conventional vine-scroll . . .'.[151] It is possible therefore to separate the models used for the inhabiting creatures from their Insular foliate setting, and it will be proposed here that a similar selection was made by the Hilton sculptor for the designs of the scroll and its inhabitants.

Illustration 5.52
Hilton of Cadboll: the reverse of the cross-slab. Interpretative draft
analysis of the creatures inhabiting the vine-scroll
(drawn by Ian G Scott)

It is highly improbable that the Hilton of Cadboll sculptor was copying a single Insular model for his inhabited vine-scroll. There was a model for a framed inhabited vine-scroll in Easter Ross evident in the Portmahomack fragment (illus 5.51). The design has a comparatively standard arrangement taken from a portable model such as an ivory, a manuscript or a textile. On the lower edge, confronted animals eat from a centralised plant. They are flanked by two other inhabited scrolls, making a design of four animals for the lower edge. The undulating stem, with scrolls containing birds, continues up the lateral edges. It is unlikely that this design was an extract from face C of the Hilton lower portion. Nonetheless, both vine-scrolls may well have been designed by the same sculptor. The important difference between the two designs is that although the Hilton slab is considerably broader than the Portmahomack slab, it has only two animals in the lower edge. This allowed emphasis to be concentrated on a burgeoning growing point, with elegantly spacious over-arching stems, and a focus on an idiosyncratic departure from the symmetrical motif of animals feeding on either side of the growing point. Here the centralised animals are placed with their backs to the growing point with their heads facing in the same direction to the left.

The two very different types of scrolls for the right and left of the frame on the Hilton slab cannot have been taken from a single model (illus 5.52). The simple undulating scroll on the right side was used for both sides of the frame at Tarbat, but the zig-zag scroll on the left side of the Hilton frame had to come from a different source. It has a parallel in the Book of Kells, as do so many art motifs in Easter Ross sculpture. In terms of scroll organisation nothing need be said of the undulating scroll in the right lateral edge except to note that, particularly in its lower reaches, it is comparatively leafy. The scroll on the left may be indirectly derived from the tree-scroll, for its presentation of the stem in diagonal sections crossed by hook-like scrolls does not give the same scope for leafiness. These differences cannot be related to systems of 'deterioration' of vine-scrolls in terms of the presence or absence of leafage.

The design of the gracefully arching side growth on the bottom edge of the frame with its elaboration of interlacing shoots emerging from a plinth is to a large extent the original work of a master designer, a brilliant expansion of the model available for the Tarbat fragment and one that was designed to lead the eye to the panel immediately above with its encircled cross set in a halo of spirals There are, however, some

points of St Paul's date palms on the Nigg slab. Ridges are used for growth points on the highly decorative Ormside Bowl, found in Westmorland, which has tree-scrolls with spurts of foliage at the central division of the side scrolls, markedly similar to Hilton's fecundity at this point in the design (illus 5.54). In one quadrant of the bowl there is a version of the lobed leaf, decorated with two lines at the tips, producing a form that pervades, to the point of characterising, the foliate forms in the Book of Kells. Examples can be seen throughout the book. For example, the name, Zacharias, that introduces the Summary of Luke's Gospel, on folio 19v, has inhabited vine-scroll with leaves of this type growing among its letters, a suitable choice of decorative motif for his priestly ministry.[153] The lobed leaves at Hilton are surprising. Like the odd arrangement of the winged animals round the growing point and the arrangement of the ten bosses on the stepped base on face A, they immediately catch the eye of those familiar with Insular art, and this small detail alerts one to a sculptor of unusual independence of mind. The possible sources cited for the lobed leaves

indications of borrowings from other sources both for the plinth and the rounded lobed leaves which spring from it. These rounded leaves are distinctive and belong, to the decoration of the eighth-century manuscript of Bede's Ecclesiastical History, St Petersburg State Public Library Q.v.I.18, and to the Book of Kells. The decorated initial B on folio 3v of the St Petersburg Bede has been fully analysed by Meyer Schapiro (illus 5.53).[152] The lower bowl of the letter contains a flower with the distinctive lobed leaves found on Hilton. In the upper bowl, a tree-scroll with trefoil terminations to its shoots, has pointed leaves with circular basal leaves, or berries, set a little back from the base of the pointed leaf. This is the combination of leaf and berry forms found in the central section of the lower portion at Hilton. The substitution of a plinth for Tarbat's root ball, or rounded pot, for the growth point, is unlikely to have been an invention, although it could be read as a derivation from the ridged growth

Illustration 5.54
The Ormside Bowl, The Yorkshire Museum, York
(© The Yorkshire Museum, YORYM : 1990.35)

are far flung. For the Hilton plinth, closer to hand, although later in date, are the brick-like plinths from which emerge the two vines which spread across the front face of the Dupplin free-standing cross. These have been discussed in the context of Northumbrian slabs and the plinth has its best parallel on a fragment from Hulne Priory (Northumberland) where a plant scroll grows out of a stepped base.[154] Clearly the Hilton sculptor had access to a range of models for his strongly architectural vine-scroll growth point.

The choice of different designs for the lateral edges is typical of the Pictish predilection for concealed assymetry, as paralleled in the use of different but similar animal ornament on transverse arms of the Nigg cross-slab. The reconstruction of the fragmented mid-portion has shown that when the slab was complete there was a different number of scrolls on either side of the frame, something which had already been noted on the truncated slab. The reason for this discrepancy can now be seen on the lower portion where the complicated change to the zig-zag scroll involved elongating the stem. The levels of the scrolls on either side are discrepant, and there seems to have been no intention of observing a regular progression of bird, followed by beast. The carving of the sides, which will have started from the bottom, gives the impression of being free-hand, often slightly out of control on the upper reaches, particularly on the left. One is reminded of the dense irregularity of the scrolled animal ornament in the frame which surrounds the portrait of Matthew on folio 28v of the Book of Kells, very obviously brought under control for the similar frame round the portrait of Christ on folio 32v.[155] The virtuousity of the Pictish sculptor allowed for free-hand carving, but he had to have in mind, of course, not only the foliate setting, but the insertion of creatures into it. Some degree of planning must have been necessary. The discrepant nature of the designs for the two sides are obvious when they are pointed out, but it has to be said that they often go unnoticed by observers, and thus the Pictish sculptor's aim of using deceptively similar designs seems to work.

Reference has been made above to the possibility that the structure of the vine-scroll should be separated from the nature of the animals inhabiting it. It is frequently asserted that general development of the inhabited vine-scroll motif can be traced from the naturalistic to the decorative, and finally to frankly conflated versions of plant and animal ornament, ranging from the occasional leafy tail for a beast, to the extreme reduction of the animal to a head on the termination

of a foliage scroll. The Hilton of Cadboll inhabited vine-scrolls have been correctly located within the middle, decorative, phase of this development. The most distinctive aspect of the creatures that inhabit the Hilton vine-scroll is that they are all winged. There is no example of a wingless quadruped or biped. The interest in winged creatures with beast heads is shared by the designer of the Gandersheim Casket, and at one level can be explained by the decorative aspects of hybridisation. The fact however that there was in Easter Ross a model which showed winged quadrupeds feeding from the growth of a central plant gives the Pictish interest in this type of hybrid new importance. The impact of the design on the Portmahomack fragment is marred by the damage to one of the flanking animals. The elegance and boldness of the Hilton adaptation coupled with its splendid state of preservation calls for a reappraisal of its significance for Pictish art and Insular art generally.

Griffins (part-quadruped, part-bird) placed on either side of plant forms is a classical motif, present, most dramatically, as Jewell points out, in his detailed analysis of the Breedon examples, on the frieze on the entablature of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina in the Roman Forum.[156] The mechanism of the transmission of a version of the motif in time and space to Mercia was a problem for Jewell and is now a problem for the Pictish art-historian. Either there was a lost Northumbrian version, within a frame or frieze, the sole trace of which are the winged creatures on part of the cross-shaft at Croft on Tees, North Yorkshire, or we have here yet another example of the well-attested connection between Mercian and Pictish art.

The Eucharistic significance of ultimately classical griffins which lies behind the decoration of Irish liturgical metalwork has recently been discussed by Ryan. He points to the relation of the motif of griffins flanking a plant to the Tree of Life motif which also has relevance for the inhabited tree-scroll. He draws attention to the frequency of the motif, and its variants, in eighth-century Lombardic sculpture. Situated on the route to Rome Insular artists and their patrons would have the opportunity to see its frequent use on funerary slabs, baptisteries and other church furniture.[157] Given the surprisingly accurate representations of a number

Illustration 5.56
The Church of St Mary and St Hardulph, Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire: inhabited scroll block belonging to the broad frieze, now over the western column of the south arcade (© Conway Library, The Courtauld)

of classical hybrids in Pictish sculpture, including the winged and beaked griffin[158] there must be a possibility that Pictish sculptors had direct access, as a result of Italian journeys, to classical art, or perhaps less speculatively, to an early Christian ivory containing the image of griffins on either side of a plant within its lower edge. The appearance of the motif as the growing point of an inhabited vine-scroll, itself of Eucharistic significance, is an example of iconographical synthesis. We must conclude that inspired by the ancient Italo–Byzantine motif, and aware that the winged beast was part of the Insular decorative repertoire, the Hilton sculptor opted for winged beasts to appear alongside birds in his vine-scroll.

The best analogy for the structure of the vine-scroll in the left border of the frame was, as we have seen, found in the Book of Kells on folio 8r where a horizontally positioned angular medallion scroll rises from a chalice.[159] An inhabited vine-scroll fills all four sides of the frame on folio 285r where quadrupeds with extended tubular bodies, some with only nearside legs shown, but others with three or four legs, chase each other through vine-scroll (illus 5.55).[160] Growing points for the scrolls take the form of chalices, set at the midpoint of each side of the frame, from which two main stems emerge. Confronted quadrupeds feed from a central berried stem. The motif is best seen on the left-hand side of the frame where creatures with long necks, raised front legs, and hindquarters

at stretch, present a good parallel for the Hilton motif of paired animals on either side of a plant. The difference, of course, is that these feeding quadrupeds are not winged and so have not the resonance of the ancient griffin motif so evident at Hilton. Except for winged Evangelist Symbols the winged quadruped, to this writer's recollection, is not a feature of the decorative repertoire of the Book of Kells. On the other hand winged bipedal animals are common in the decoration of a south English book, the Barberini or Rome Gospels, Vatican, Bibl. Apostolica, Barberini Lat .570, on folio 1r, folio 11v, and on the Chi-Rho page, folio 18r, where, within a tree-scroll to the left of the monogram, a sole winged quadruped occupies the lozenge-shaped field at the centre of X.[161]

Confronted quadrupeds in foliate settings in the broad frieze at Breedon take a great variety of forms. The stately heraldic lions on the broad frieze have no stylistic connection with the Hilton creatures.[162] Some of the Breedon beasts are winged, for example, the somewhat static confronted pair of beasts adjacent to a small figure trapped within a scroll. There are also livelier winged creatures in a mannered, springy, style reminiscent of the often droll animal ornament of the Rome Gospels (illus 5.56).[163] Although naturalistically conceived, stylistically, the powerful hounds, also part of the broad frieze, placed on either side of a generously bushy plant motif have both the vigour and elegance of the Hilton creatures, framed so effectively

issues a long tongue, median–incised with a volute tip. The snout is heavy. The wing is folded and identical with those of the birds above. The legs are extended forwards and interlace with the tails of the companion beast in an "Anglian lock". The body tapers sharply into a fleshy scroll with a pointed leaf terminal.... Below, in the same disposition, is a pair of canine quadrupeds. Their heads have small pricked ears, a line curving on the jowl and a pendant tongue identical with those of the paired bipeds above. The slender legs are striding.

by the arching stems of the scrolls on the lower portion at Hilton (illus 5.57).[164] Although there is no exact parallel, the preoccupation with winged beasts, and with confronted animals on either side of foliate features, evident in the Hilton vine-scroll, is amply paralleled at Breedon.

In considering the style of the winged beasts and birds the analogy with the ornament on part of a shaft at Croft on Tees remains relevant, if only partially. The other long-standing comparison with the broad face of part of a shaft at St Leonard's Place, York, is unsatisfactory in a number of respects, the most important being that the scroll is leafless and that none of the surviving animals is winged. In general, the York creatures do not have the hard, wiry quality evident at Hilton (illus 5.58).[165] Croft remains the better of these two traditional analogies given that its animal ornament is exceedingly varied.[166] In the upper panel of the less discussed front face, the surviving lower section of tree-scroll, inhabited by birds, is structured in the manner of the tree-scrolls on the Ormside Bowl, and on the right-hand end panel of the Gandersheim Casket, where the diagonal shoots are inhabited by winged bipeds, with twisted manes and segmented heads (illus 5.59).[167] The central stem on Croft has the same downwards turning scrolls followed by an upwards reaching heart-shaped growth. Two birds face each other, feeding on berried shoots from the central stem. There is an elaborate leafy development in the lower corners. The lower panel on the front of Croft is an unusual composition. The description in the *Corpus* entry cannot be bettered: 'Within the lower panel is a group of four profile animals, arranged symmetrically as two pairs; the left-hand animal of each pair is upright, whilst the right-hand beasts are on their backs. The upper pair are winged bipeds with round heads, drilled eyes and open jaws from which

Illustration 5.58
St Leonard's Place 2, York: front face of part of a cross-shaft showing a section of inhabited vine-scroll (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture, photographed by Tom Middlemass)

The chest and haunches are modelled and the waist is tapered.' [168] Although not part of an inhabited vine-scroll, and therefore ignored in the earlier discussions of the analogies for Hilton, we shall see in the ensuing discussion how relevant to Hilton animal ornament is this eccentric display.

There is no doubt, of course that the tree-scroll on the reverse of the Croft shaft is also relevant, particularly in the way in which the haunches of three of the quadrupeds, two of which are winged, hang out of the scrolls (illus 5.60). The vertical position of a fourth quadruped, whose feet as a consequence lie against the panel edge, recalls the treatment of creatures in the lower panel of the front of the shaft, and also finds a parallel on the Hilton vine-scrolls. In general the Croft

Illustration 5.60
The Church of St Peter, Croft on Tees, North Yorkshire: the reverse of part of a shaft showing a panel of inhabited vine-scroll (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture, photographed by Tom Middlemass)

Illustration 5.59
The Church of St Peter, Croft on Tees, Northern Yorkshire: the front face of part of a shaft with one complete panel of animal ornament and part of an inhabited vine-scroll (© English Heritage, National Monuments Record)

quadrupeds with their pricked ears, blunt muzzles, defined jaws, thickened chests, high groins, slender haunches and voluted tails closely resemble the Hilton quadrupeds. Where Croft and Hilton share winged quadrupeds, the wings, whether sharply everted or closed, engage with the body of the creature and its scroll setting, in a similar fashion, regularly employing the device of the 'Anglian lock'. On the other hand, the distinctive birds on both broad faces of Croft, with their proud breasts, short splayed tails and exaggeratedly large claws, are entirely different from the birds in the Hilton vine-scroll, and thus the analogy between the two is by no means perfect. Nor has Croft the status of a unique and influential monument. Its traits are found on other English sculpture[169] The Hilton vine-scroll has not only the unique motif, in sculpture, of winged quadrupeds on either side of a central plant, but has developed winged ornament that allows for the display

of two wings. Nor, of course, is Croft fully analagous in that it is part of tree-scroll design, not a continuous scroll which ascends a vertical frame. Here, however, it must be stressed that it is knowledge of tree- and bush-scroll designs, so popular in the sculpture and other art of southern England, that seems to have opened up possibilities for the Hilton sculptor, and much

less so, the art of the simple undulating scroll.[170] The impression given, even while giving full weight to the specific similarities with Croft, is that the Hilton sculptor had under his hand or in his head a whole variety of options and ideas. For example, a distinctive type, not represented at Croft, is the bird with the extended body ending in a hooked or fish tail (see illus 5.52). This kind of extension of the body was already found to be useful in enmeshing birds within scrolls on both the Bewcastle and Ruthwell crosses (illus 5.61).[171] On the other hand, the crested birds in the Hilton scrolls, which create ambiguities with beasts with pricked ears, may be a unique feature of Hilton.

There is a further significant feature of the designs of wings of both birds and quadrupeds that the crisp state of the carving on the lower portion of the Hilton slab allows us to appreciate. The wings of the quadrupeds on either side of the growing point on the lower edge of the frame show clearly that the covert feathers, at the base of the wing, were expressed by an arrangement of small bosses (illus 5.1). Bailey has identified this feature as a design trait both of sculpture at Castor, 8km from Peterborough, and of the Gandersheim Casket.[172] The covert feathers of the creatures on the Croft shaft, in contrast, are depicted by irregularly-cut diamond shapes set in a roughly tiled formation. The bossed covert feathers of the Hilton bird design suggests that the Hilton sculptor was familiar with sources not used by Croft but found in Mercian works of art. The Hilton vine-scroll then is by no means dependent on Croft. It goes its own way, as a result of knowledge of other models, but also, to some degree, due to the sculptor's ingenuity and facility for free-style invention. As writers on Insular art have frequently remarked, there is always an element of creativity in animal ornament.

An important new addition to the understanding of the vine-scroll in the lateral edges of the frame on face C is the discovery among the fragments of face A evidence for other small-scale animal ornament which shares many of the physical characteristics of the animals that inhabit the vine-scrolls (see above, Chapter 5.3.2). This evidence consists largely of animal heads which closely resemble those of the animals in the frame. As we have seen they include heads with lolling tongues such as are described above as occurring on the Gandersheim Casket and on the lower panel of the front of the Croft shaft fragment. These particular animals, in some instances, relate to bands which curve in a stem-like fashion (illus 5.15a). They are not part of a berried vine-scroll for they are obviously not feeding. Other animal head fragments have strands

entering their throats which could represent biting at a strand of foliage. This occurs in the Hilton vine-scroll, for example, within the scroll at the top left corner of the frame. The heads, of differing scale, all have one feature not found on either the creatures on Croft or the face C scrolls on Hilton. This is the portrayal of not just widely opened jaws, but fanged jaws. These fanged heads on face A are miniature versions of the three profile heads of animals on either side of the cross-base. A fanged animal head gives a special coherence to all the animal ornament on face A but the similarities between the delineation of the animal heads and the bodily characteristics of the animal ornament on both faces of the cross-slab are striking. This reflects a clear capacity on the part of the sculptor to override the eclecticism of his sources, by thorough assimilation, and invention, thereby creating his own animal style.

The ease with which features of the style can be, as it were unscrambled, makes the matter of dating the animal ornament on the slab comparatively easy. The analogous traits are those which have appeared in recent literature largely concerned with masterworks of the late eighth century such as the Breedon friezes, the Coppergate Helmet, and the Gandersheim Casket. The relationship of the animal ornament on the St Andrews Sarcophagus to the Nigg cross-head, and the Nigg cross-head to the art of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure, is based on a shared disciplined attitude to structure, but there are indications that the seemingly looser style of the carving at Hilton was also an element in the St Ninian's Isle animal ornament: the notably quirky animal ornament on the pommel and the loosely constructed animal ornament of some of the bowls. The emphasis in the Hilton animal style on the fanged mouth is dramatically present on the chapes, and, as we have seen, makes a modest appearance on the surviving corners of the upper arm of the Nigg cross and on a surviving snake in the background of the fragment of a cross-slab at Portmahomack, Tarbat no 2. Fanged heads are a feature of snakes on the St John's Cross at Iona, on the animal on the South Kyme panel (although very worn), and dominate the design on the related metalwork finials now in the museum at St Germain-en-Laye.[173] Powerful individual studies of animals with fangs appear on Meigle no 22, a section of a lintel or frieze, and on the St Andrews Sarcophagus. Pictish acquaintance with the art conventions now evident in the Book of Kells, but no doubt present in other lost Gospel-books some of which could well have been Pictish, would in itself have made available a wide range of fanged lion-like animal designs. Examples

of fiercely fanged animals transfixing fruit in a vine-scroll are not readily come by, but it is interesting that on the Crieff slab, where the blending of animal and foliate characteristics is well underway, the animal head employed has also a marked fang.[174]

Finally, there is one aspect of English vine-scrolls which is perhaps worth reflecting on in connection with the acknowledged 'Pictish masterpiece in the vine-scroll tradition'.[175] The combination of vine-scrolls and inscriptions on Anglo-Saxon sculpture has been noticed by both Bailey and Cramp.[176] As it happens, the Dupplin Cross with its vine-scroll spreading over the front of the cross-head, St Vigeans no 1 with its vine-scroll on a narrow edge, and Crieff with its late version of a vine-scroll on its cross-face, all have accompanying inscriptions. A fragment of a monument with inhabited vine-scroll, and unrelated fragments of another with an inscription, have been found at the monastery of Portmahomack. The now blank panels flanking the cross-base on the front of the slab may simply have been designed to accommodate the projections, which figuratively and literally, added 'weight' to the already architecturally impressive cross-base, itself presumably matched at the top of the shaft, by an equally impressive cross-head. That they may have been planned for inscriptions is given just a scintilla of support from the accompanying vine-scroll.

5.5 Summary and conclusions: placing the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab in its local, national, and Insular art-historical context

The reconstruction of what has been recovered of the lost carving on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is amply sufficient to change radically perceptions of the monument. First, the slab itself is now seen to have had projections on its upper and lateral edges expressive of the shape of the cross of the crucifixion. This alone, on such a large slab, will have given it a physical impact at least matching the Shandwick slab with its entirely bossed cross set high above eye-level. The undamaged lower portion reveals a uniquely architectural stepped and bossed base, flanked by large-scale motifs of animal ornament carved in high relief. Nothing on the reverse gave any hint of the likely presence on the front face of carving of this weight and plasticity. One had assumed a higher grade of relief, but what emerged from the ground is totally different in character from anything that has survived on the truncated reverse. The partial reconstruction of figurative art on the cross-face was

also a surprise. The grouping of three interactive figures to the left of the slab is rare in Pictish sculpture, and the theme to the right, of a man menaced by animals is unusual both in respect of the frontality and scale of the figure with the richly decorated tunic, and of the discrepant genre of the animals which approach him. On the reverse of the lower portion the composition within the lower edge of the frame, of addorsed winged creatures, facing in the same direction, on either side of a fountain-like growth of foliage, and under widely spread stems, is markedly original, adding, well beyond expectation, to what was already known about the diversity of the scrolls in the lateral edges. The fragments of animal ornament which came from the upper portion of the front face cannot be fully assessed because the structures within which they functioned are not yet fully understood. There is evidence that one such structure, on the cross-shaft, was made up of large animals containing within their bodies smaller animals, and another, less certain, may have been a form of vine-scroll, possibly a medallion scroll. These smaller creatures on face A seem not to be feeding from the plant, but nonetheless share with the inhabitants of the vine-scroll on the reverse a lively fluttering style quite different from the heavy animals flanking the base and appearing on the shaft. The spiral panel on the reverse can now be perceived in a significantly more complete form. The reconstruction of an encircled equal-armed cross, of a typically Pictish design, at its centre is a major discovery. This veritable Constantinian vision of a cross shining in the rays of the noonday sun[177] alters at a stroke the hitherto predominantly secular feel of the reverse of the slab. Placed on the line of the growth point of the inhabited vine-scroll, it signals in a quite new way the full significance of the decoration of the frame with the symbol of the Eucharist.

The Hilton cross-slab, with its two crosses, the one on the reverse associated with Conversion, and the one on the front symbolic of the mount of Golgotha, must now be regarded as a massive, profoundly Christian monument, very different from the secular resonances of the main features of the carving on the truncated reverse – the Pictish symbols and the hunting scene. Inevitably some changes in the slab's relationship with the other tall slabs of Easter Ross have to be accommodated. It now takes its place alongside the other monuments of the Tarbat peninsula, whether viewed as sentinels of the monastic estate of the monastery of Portmahomack, as argued by Martin Carver, or as the Hendersons propose belonging to a coherent liturgical landscape. There is no longer any need to see the Hilton slab as somehow a more private, more secular monument.[178] Inspection for this project supports the view that the female rider is wearing a penannular brooch. It is argued here that the brooch is not to be regarded as an attribute of a contemporary aristocrat, but rather, as in other Insular sculpture, indicates the Holy, venerable, or timeless nature of the wearer. Most of the differences in style and subject-matter revealed by the reconstruction are obvious to the viewer when the monument is seen as a whole. The new cross-slab speaks for itself. Indeed its new status as a complex masterpiece of Pictish sculpture can readily be appreciated without specialist knowledge of comparative material.

Of particular interest is the figurative art on the cross-face. The corpus of such art in the area has been expanding. To the angels of Shandwick, and the brilliant encapsulation, on two levels of meaning, of the Life of Paul the Hermit by Jerome at Nigg, can now be added the Hilton figures to the right and left of the shaft. To this one can also legitimately add, although not on the cross-face, the newly recovered range of frontal figures at Portmahomack, probably showing Christ and His Apostles. With the David iconography at Nigg and nearby Kincardine, we now have a considerable range of figurative art in this area which goes beyond the hunting and pastoral scenes, also represented on Nigg, Shandwick and Portmahomack. Subject-matter of this kind is evidence for the cultural richness of the church in this area.

The newly perceived Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab has also acquired the status of a monument influential beyond the immediate environs of the Tarbat peninsula, its presence accounting for the stepped base designs at Rosemarkie and Edderton. Kincardine's David iconography relates to Nigg, and its inhabited tree-scroll to Hilton and Rosemarkie. The sculptors on the south side of the Cromarty Firth, on the Tarbat peninsula, and on the southern shores of the Dornoch Firth, as one would expect, were in close contact, although to a degree not fully appreciated until the reconstruction of the Hilton cross-slab. Understandably there has been a tendency to treat the sculpture of Easter Ross as something exceptional in the corpus of Pictish sculpture. Links with the sculpture south of the Grampians have focused, on Aberlemno no 3 because of the shared trumpeters motif at the top right of the hunting scene, and more recently with the art of St Andrews Sarcophagus. The new Hilton sculpture on the front face of the lower portion is carved in the same style as the animals

on the corner-slabs of the Sarcophagus that flank the David panel. The animal ornament on the Nigg cross-head has the same structures as that of the St Andrews panels, but in a fine style appropriate to metalwork or bone carving. The fleshy Hilton animals on either side of the base now provide what was a missing link between the animal ornament at Nigg and St Andrews. A reappraisal of the hunting scene has shown that there are connections with sculpture at Meigle that have to be recognised. As a result of the reconstruction we can see that the shaft of Meigle no 2 shared with Hilton a form of animal ornament found less exactly at Nigg and St Andrews, and that the forceful image of a naked man being saved from the ravening mouths of the beasts of Hell on Meigle no 2 is matched at Hilton with a depiction of a man flanked by fierce animals. This theme is also found, but in a more conventional form, on Aberlemno no 3. Given these new parallels the contoured horses of three riders abreast on the reverse of Meigle no 2, and on a recumbent at Meigle suggest a possible southern origin for this device. More speculatively the figure riding facing frontally with a hound at her back on Meigle no 1 reappears at Hilton, and also, although here the rider is male, on Aberlemno no 3. The stepped base or the block base does appear in the south but only the Cossans cross-slab with its cross set on a pyramidal base approaches the grandeur of Hilton with its unique overt symbolism. The new Hilton carving has strengthened the links between the Pictish north and the Pictish south and it is a mistake to treat the sculpture as separate manifestations.

The most difficult aspect of the art-historical analysis to convey is the context of Hilton within Insular art. On the other hand, not to be aware of the nature of Insular art leads to ignorance of the cultural contacts enjoyed by Pictish sculptors and makes it impossible to appreciate their individual genius. Insular art is not a record of passive influences, but of participation, assimilation and innovation. It has also to be remembered that what survives is a very small proportion of what was produced. The close relationship between Pictish sculpture and the Book of Kells has long been recognised in the Easter Ross-slabs, but it is also a feature of the art of Meigle, and thus the reality behind the relationship may lie in the existence of now lost illuminated books, the decoration of which accounts for the observable changes in Insular book production that took place between the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Book of Kells. Some of these missing manuscripts could well have been the work of the

Picts, a view that has tangible evidence to support it in the majuscule inscription at Tarbat dated to the second half of the eighth century.[179] It has long been known that Pictish sculpture, including the Easter Ross-slabs, shares aspects of the ornamental repertoires of illuminated books produced in the south of England such as the Vespasian Psalter and the Gospel-book known as the Codex Aureus of Stockholm. The slab format made Pictish artists particularly interested in the decoration of manuscripts, but these southern connections have also been matched in sculpture in the south. As we have seen, the mechanisms whereby Mercian art and Pictish art could respond in the same way to the cultural resources of the period have recently been explored perceptively in connection with the art of the St Andrews Sarcophagus. Such mechanisms have to be complex, and credible within the nature of individual artistic production. Sometimes, of course, the links present themselves with great clarity, and this was certainly the case when the lower portion emerged from the ground and the animals to the left of the base on the front face were cleaned out. One with a twisted mane, and the other with a segmented head seen from above immediately recalled the superlative miniature art of a very different artefact, the 12cm-high, house-shaped box known as the Gandersheim Casket. The Casket was made in southern England most probably in the late eighth century. This similarity enriched and opened up previously perceived connections between the art of Mercia and the art of the Picts. Given the pervasive nature of these connections the Mercian elements in Pictish art can no longer be seen as a transitory exotic phase, they are rather part of the Pictish assimilation of art styles evident in art of all media in the Insular world towards the end of the eighth century. This view has special importance for the retention of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure as part of the corpus of Pictish art in spite of its evident relationship to south English metalwork. In this matter the similarity between animals from face A and the decoration of the sword pommel from Beckley (Oxfordshire) is particularly telling.[180]

The precise dating of sculpture and of much Insular art of this period can rarely be justified, but cumulative connections, in particular, with the art of southern England suggest a date for the Hilton cross-slab in the later eighth century rather than the often stated, though unexplained, 'around 800'. The current dating of the relevant comparative material cited above, such as the Gandersheim Casket, the front and back of the Croft fragment of a shaft, the southern books, and the Book

of Kells, all support such a date. Only the Breedon frieze, which has less exact parallels, has been assigned tentatively to a date into the ninth century, a date depending largely on the desire to find an appropriate historical royal patron for such an enterprise. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the whole monument as now perceived is the extent to which the sculptor can be seen to be manipulating a great number of visual ideas. There is nothing here that has become conventionalised or routine. This is a sculptor at the height of his powers ready to do something different at all points and to express fundamental Christian concepts in concentrated imagery. Such intellectual power and versatility is the hallmark of other works of Insular art, comparable in quality, which the best efforts of scholars in the field in all media have currently chosen to ascribe to the late eighth century. It is to this Golden Age that the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab can now be seen to belong.

Notes

1 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 182.
2 Henderson, G 1987, 19, 57, 99, 131.
3 RCAHMS 1982, 1980.
4 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 213.
5 Henderson 1998, 104–5.
6 Ritchie G & A 1981, figs 131–2; ECMS, pt III, figs 314A & B.
7 Curle & Henry 1943, 265; Henry 1965, 145.
8 Henderson 1998, 103–4.
9 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 50, ills 13, 184.
10 Henderson 1998, pl 14; fig 46.
11 Edwards 1983, 8.
12 Edwards 1983, 12.
13 ECMS, pt III, figs 87, 91, 92.
14 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 176–7.
15 Henderson 1998, fig 24, pl 5.
16 ECMS, pt III, figs 93, 94.
17 Tarbat Discovery Programme 2003.
18 Alexander 1978, ills 119, 282.
19 Henderson 1978, 52–3.
20 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 182–95.
21 Foster 1996 [2004], ill 85; Henderson & Henderson 2004, ills 216, 47, 48, 271.
22 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 183.
23 Nordenfalk 1968, 124 & n 28.
24 Fisher 2007.
25 Henderson 1998, pl 14, 148.
26 Kitzinger 1956, 218, n 1.
27 Bailey 1989, 241–2, fig 14.
28 Cronyn & Horie 1989, 253–6.
29 Henderson 1993, 209.
30 Meehan 1994, ill 27.
31 Meehan 1994, ill 7.

32 Meehan 1994, ill 6.
33 Meehan 1994, ill 54.
34 Meehan 1994, ill 37.
35 Meehan 1994, ill 5.
36 Alexander 1978, ill 114.
37 Meehan 1994, ill 36; Richardson 1996, 24–5.
38 Richardson 1995, 177–81; Weitzmann (ed) 1979, nos 545, 566.
39 Kitzinger 1977, fig 85.
40 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 312.
41 Webster & Backhouse eds 1991, no 12; Gannon 2003, fig 5.2a & b.
42 Sharpe (trans) 1995, 53–5.
43 Henry 1974, 206.
44 Harbison 1992, 2, fig 487.
45 Bettenson (trans) 1984, 633.
46 Webster & Backhouse (eds) 1991, no 171, 217–18.
47 ECMS, pt II, 291–3; pt III, 237.
48 Henderson 1997, 143–66.
49 Henderson 2007.
50 Henderson, G 2007; ECMS, pt II, 49–50; Tarbat Discovery Programme 2003, TR 29.
51 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ills 196, 279.
52 Meyer forthcoming and work in progress University of York (Department of Archaeology).
53 ECMS, pt III, figs 253, 359.
54 Harbison 1992, 2, ills 248, 256.
55 Henderson 1997b, 143–8; Henderson 2001, 115–47.
56 Foster (ed) 1998, pls 12, 13.
57 Henderson 1997, 160–1; Henderson & Henderson 2004, ills 164–6.
58 Marth (ed) 2000.
59 Plunkett 1998.
60 Alexander 1978, nos 29, 39, 36.
61 Brown 1994.
62 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ills 168, 316.
63 de Paor 1987.
64 Plunkett 1998, 211–15.
65 Webster 2000, 68 and n 34.
66 RCAHMS 1982, 198, ill F
67 Hall *et al* 2000, 163, ill 7; Fisher 2001, 120.
68 Fisher 2001, 19.
69 Bailey 2000, 48, 49.
70 Hawkes 1996, 88.
71 Webster 2000, 65, fig 4.
72 Wilson 1964, 12–13; Everson & Stocker 1999, 248–51, ills 339–345.
73 Webster 2000, 64, fig 1; 65, fig 4.
74 Webster 2000, fig 2c.
75 Wilson 1984, ill 33.
76 Wilson 1973, 2, pl xxxi.
77 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 163.
78 Webster 2000, fig 9d; Wilson 1973, 1 67 & 99.
79 Tweddle 1992, 1150–1, fig 576c; Henderson & Henderson 2004, 104–7.
80 Henderson 1997a.
81 Henry 1974, ill 123.
82 Webster 2000, ill 7a.
83 Meehan 1998, 31.

84 Henderson 1982, 102–3.
85 Stevenson 1974; Meehan 1994, 62–3.
86 MacLean 1998, 194–5, fig 59.
87 Weitzmann (ed) 1979, 396–406.
88 Ritchie 1997, 120–1, ills 1, 2.
89 Bailey 2000, 47, ill 4.
90 Jewell 1986, pl XLVe.
91 Mac Lean 1998, fig 59a.
92 Meehan 1994, ill 94.
93 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 41.
94 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 242, n 192.
95 Mütherich & Gaehde 1976, pl 20.
96 Pächt *et al* 1960, pl 106 a-e.
97 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 156–7, ill 230; Henderson 2000, 39–40, ills 1, 2.
98 Meehan 1994, ill 95.
99 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 208.
100 ECMS, pt III, 116, fig 119.
101 Meehan 1994, ill 63.
102 Youngs 1999, 281–95.
103 Stevenson 1955, 101–6.
104 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 59–60.
105 Foster 1996 [2004], 74–5.
106 Mack 1997, 5.
107 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 300.
108 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 183.
109 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 263; Pobé & Roubier 1961, ill 97.
110 Henderson 1967, pl 1.
111 Boardman (ed) 1993, 344, no 354.
112 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 35.
113 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 293.
114 Henderson 1998, 26.
115 Henderson 1994, 51–3.
116 Steer & Bannerman 1977, 186.
117 Black 1993, 37–40.
118 Forsyth 1995, 237–44.
119 Henderson & Henderson 2004, ill 188.
120 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 179.
121 Mack 1997, 34.
122 Close-Brooks & Stevenson 1982, 32.
123 Henderson 1998, 109.
124 Henderson 1967, fig 38.
125 Robertson 1991, 5–17.
126 Stevenson 1993, 23.
127 Henderson 1967, fig 38a & b.
128 www.Epona.net, a scholarly resource © 2004–5 Nantonos & Ceffyl; Schutz 1985, 64–5.
129 Pobé & Roubier 1961, pls 179, 181.
130 Toynbee 1973, 123, 197–8, pl 94.
131 Harbison 1992, 1, 134, cat no 162; 3, fig 809.
132 Cassidy (ed) 1992, pl 25.
133 Henry 1965, pl 72.
134 Toynbee 1973, 197–8.
135 Trench-Jellicoe 1999, 605–10.
136 Schutz 1985, pl 55.
137 Sutherland 1994, 185–7.
138 Black 1993, 37–40; Cessford 1993, 41–2; Trench-Jellicoe 1994, 1–7; 1995, 3–9.
139 Trench-Jellicoe 1999, 614; Alcock 2003, 414–15.
140 Henderson & Henderson 2004, 136.
141 Biddle & Kjølbye-Biddle 1985, 287–90.
142 Lewis 1980.
143 Gannon 2003, 40–1.
144 James 1998, 247.
145 Henderson 1998, figs 35 & 47.
146 Whitfield 2004.
147 Trench-Jellicoe 1999.
148 Foster 1996 [2004], 93–5.
149 Bailey 1996, 52–4.
150 Bailey & Cramp 1988, 67.
151 Jewell 1986, 102.
152 Schapiro 1958 [1980], 202–6, fig 4; Alexander 1978, ill 83.
153 Meehan 1994, fig 69.
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162 Jewell 1986, pl LIIIc.
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179 Higgitt 1982, 317.
180 Henderson 2007, 211, illus 13.