INTERLACED ANIMAL DESIGN IN BERNICIAN STONE SCULPTURE

EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF THE DESIGN CONCEPTS IN THE

LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

in Three Volumes

VOLUME I

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ABSTRACT

The concepts of interlaced animal designs found in the Lindisfarne Gospels, namely the particular construction and the naturalism, give a basis for analysing the animal interlaces in Bernician sculpture. At Abercorn and Aberlady pieces are shown to be close to these concepts, while related patterns at Lindisfarne itself indicate that there was an early sculptural school at that place, with this type of design on decorative cross faces.

There are however, other motifs adapted from the animals and birds of vine-scroll together with exotic dragonesque and horselike animals which make their appearance later in the eighth century and the Thornhill cross is the major example of these. However, in the eastern area the designs based on the Lindisfarne Gospels concepts continued by being changed and adapted. These are found on decorative faces of great crosses and can still be found even when expertise appears to have diminished during the later ninth century.

There follows a time of Scandinavian influence in the tenth century and the designs show either new simple forms of animals or snakes with basic lacing or the old designs continued, even when they are so debased as to be almost unrecognisable. The Chester-le-Street area and Lindisfarne itself both show this regression from the earlier style.

Lastly there is a period of revival which enters into the eleventh century in the Durham and Lindisfarne areas. The old designs are set in a new context, with Christian iconography in and between patterns as if the old designs have been given a new meaning. Although they are drawn anew, correctly following one concept of the Lindisfarne Gospels, the concept of naturalism is irrevocably lost.

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Photographs
I am indebted to Professor Cramp for making available the photographs from the collection of the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture at Durham. This makes up the bulk of the "A" plates. I am grateful also to Dr D. Craig for generously giving photographs from his private collection (plates 16-25, 27, 29c and 39). Other sources kindly supplied plates: the National Museum of Scotland (plates 11, 12 and 46) and the National Monuments Records of Scotland, RCAHMS (plates 37 and 43). I also thank Dr C. Batey for organising plate 10 from the Burrell Collection, Glasgow and Dr R. Trench-Jellicoe for supplying appendix plate 2.

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I thank the many clergy, wardens and laity who not only permitted me to draw in parish churches but showed interest and were helpful in all things necessary; Abercorn, Aycliffe, Chester-le-Street, Cundall, Gainford, Haughton-le-Skerne, Hexham Abbey, Ilkley, Jarrow, Masham, Melsonby, Nigg, Otley and Wabberthwaite. Most particularly I am grateful to the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral and all the staff of the Chapter Library who allowed me to draw the works of the Greenwell Collection and assisted in many ways; also the Deans and Chapters of York and Peterborough Cathedrals. Many museums, large and small, gave permission for drawing work and I am grateful to the curators of Bede's World, Dumfries and Galloway Museum Service, English Heritage at Tynemouth and Lindisfarne, the Museum of Glasgow, Kelvingrove and the Burrell Collection, the Museum of Antiquities of Newcastle, the Royal Museum of Scotland and the Woodhorn Colliery Museum. I also thank Mr A. Tancred-Lawson for permission to draw in his private garden at Aldborough.

Declaration of Contents
I wrote the thesis "*A Study of the Types of Interlace in Northumbria Sculpture*" for the Degree of Master of Philosophy at the University of Durham, Department of Archaeology, 1974. The present thesis of necessity used the knowledge and expertise as a starting point for animal interlaced designs. However, the few direct references are indicated, otherwise any diagrams or ideas have been entirely reworked as is appropriate for the new subject.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORTENED TITLES

Alexander	Alexander, J.J.G., 1978, *Insular Manuscripts, 6th to 9th Century. A Survey of manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* I, London.
Antiq. J.	*Antiquaries Journal*
Archaeol. Aeliana	*Archaeologia Aeliana*
Archaeol. J.	*Archaeological Journal*
BAR Brit. Ser.	British Archaeological Reports, British Series
Corpus Academy, Oxford.	*Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, British
	I Cramp, R.J., 1984, *County Durham and Northumberland*, 2 vols.
	II Bailey, R.N. and Cramp, R.J., 1988, *Cumberland and Westmorland and Lancashire North of the Sands.*
	III Lang, J., 1991, *York and Eastern Yorkshire.*
	IV Tweddle, D., Biddle, M. and Kolbye-Biddle, B., 1995, *South-East England.*
	VI Lang, J., 2002, *Northern Yorkshire.*
Durham Univ. J.	*Durham University Journal*
ECMS	Romilly Allen, J., and Anderson, J., 1903; reprinted 1993, *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, with an introduction by Henderson, I. Pinkfoot Press, Balgavies, Angus.
HAB	*Historia abbatum auctore Baeda, Bede's Lives of the abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, Farmer (trans.), 1965; reprinted 1983, 185-211.
HDE	*Historia Dunelmensis ecclesiae, the History of the Church of Durham attributed to Symeon of Durham*, Stevenson, J. (trans.), 1855, *The Church Historians of England*, III part ii, containing the *Historical Works of Symeon of Durham*, London.

HE	*Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Colgrave, B. and Mynors, R.A.B., (ed. and trans.), 1969, Oxford, Medieval Texts.
J. Brit. Archaeol, Ass.	*Journal of the British Archaeological Association*
Med. Arch.	*Medieval Archaeology*
Proc. Soc. Antiq. Newcastle	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities of Newcastle*
Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scotland	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities of Scotland*
RCAHMS	*The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.* HMSO, Edinburgh.
	1920 *Seventh report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the county of Dumfries.*
	1929 *Tenth report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the county of West Lothian.*
	1956 *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Roxburghshire, with the fourteenth report of the Commission.*
	1997 *Eastern Dumfriesshire: an Archaeological Landscape.*
Trans. Architect. Archaeol. Soc. Durham Northumberland	*Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*
Trans. Cumberland Westmorland Antiq. Archaeol. Soc.	*Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*
Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.	*Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquities Society*
Ulster J. Arch.	*Ulster Journal of Archaeology*
VCP	*Vita sancti Cuthberti auctore Beda, Bede's prose Life of St Cuthbert*, in Colgrave, B. (ed. and trans.), 1940, reprinted 1985, *Two Lives of St Cuthbert*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

VW	*Vita sancti Wilfrithi Deo digni episcopi, the Life of St Wilfrid* by Stephanus, Colgrave, B. (ed. and trans.), 1927; reprinted 1985, *The Life of Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Yorkshire Archaeol. J.	*Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*

COLOUR CODE FOR FIGURES

Note: Colour is used to clarify not to decorate. If a figure needs further colour definition than the standard colours then an individual key will be given.

1. Reconstructions of crosses or pieces

framework or format.
designs.
arrows indicating features and measuring points
20 measurements in centimetres unless otherwise marked.
features needing to be accented.
ground level.

2. Gridded patterns

grid
secondary grid

First animal

animal.
ear lappet.
tail.
tongue or continuous strand from ear to tail.

Second animal

animal.
ear lappet.
tail.
tongue or continuous strand from ear to tail.

3. Other genres.

interlace and key patterns.
interlace, when strands need to be shown separately.
plant ornament or the outside lateral.
fruit or the inside lateral.

4. Special use

reconstruction of animals or parts not to be stressed.
reconstruction of lacing not to be stressed.

INTRODUCTION

"What does it mean?" This is a question the present generation asks when confronted with abstract art; the purpose of which may either be symbolic or purely aesthetic. The interlaced animal designs give rise to theories of symbolism, even magic but Professor E. Kitzinger (1993, 3-15) in an article on "interlace and icons" warns against "flights of interpretative fancy". He (1993, 3) says of the cross-carpet pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels:

> Each of the four Gospels in the great book is preceded by such a page. If the intention was to protect the sacred text from adverse powers one cannot help feeling that the accumulation of interlace - plain and zoomorphic – amounted to an overkill.

He reminds us that for those who understood it, the "aesthetic effect was an end in itself".

Music is more readily accepted as an abstract expression and, of all forms of music, change-ringing is most akin to interlace in that the bells are run in mathematically controlled sequences or "methods" whereby the notes form complex plaits. The ringers' pleasure is enormous in following the complex designs to a correct completion. So one would expect an artist to gain great satisfaction from following constructional laws in a logical sequence until all falls in place. In both cases the uninitiated may be bemused and puzzled but will probably associate the finished product vaguely with religion or worship, but "meaning" is not an issue.

In the last thirty years much scholarly study has concentrated on iconographical aspects of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, with less on construction and formal patterns or techniques. The interlaced animal designs in sculpture[1] have had comparatively little analysis, perhaps because of their unprepossessing worn condition, perhaps because they look difficult. The few sculptural designs in Bernicia which are recognised have been repeatedly likened to Celtic or Scandinavian works. So the main aim of this study is to interpret the shattered remnants and sort out their pedigrees in a sequence and with the result that a heritage of animals peculiar to Bernicia may be made clear. This is not to say that these designs do not run parallel to Continental, Pictish, Irish and Scandinavian designs, since ideas

intermingle from time to time, but nevertheless they can be shown to be a group in their own right.

The design concepts of the Lindisfarne Gospels gives a broad base for analysis. The type of animal discussed here follows Salin Style II; although in fact styles may overlap. The concepts of this new style, however, go on reverberating weakly or strongly for four hundred years. It must be stressed, however, that in sculpture it was the concepts not the actual designs which were followed since there were necessarily adaptations and simplifications for the sculptor's chisel. It needs to be noted too, that the basis for analysis is broad observing foremost the overlying principles of construction, which control form, line direction, intervals and rhythm. An agglomeration of details, noses, paws, leg junctions and decoration is secondary.

George Bain (1951[19]) in his book *Celtic Art: the Methods and Construction*, aimed to teach people the structure not the details so that they could reproduce this form of art:

> The mere copying of ancient work is as valueless as it is impossible but by understanding the methods new designs and even new methods in this peculiar art may be produced.

The approach here is not to teach but to observe how designs change even in the method, so that the principles are clear and it is demonstrated how these were adapted over four centuries.

It can be expected that the manuscript artist had the most scope in decorating pages with borders, carpet areas, panels and fancy shapes, using the flexible medium of ink and paint. The metalworker was perhaps the supreme virtuoso in his ability to adapt designs to small, oddly shaped spaces with the strictest of limitations imposed by his medium. The stone sculptor had the least complicated designs, in that if designs were to be read from a distance a broad simplicity was desired, usually in rectangular shapes. So if one method of construction was used to draw up the ideas in the same style, then the constrictions of the media altered the result.

The relationship of designs seen in the various media has been considered of interest but it is not a problem if it is the concept of pattern construction which is the same. Just as I could draw a quick pencil diagram to show a person,who understands interlace, how to draw up an animal design, so I would expect an artisan could draw a diagram perhaps in the sand with a stick and adequately show others how a design was formed. The manuscript artist also had wax tablets (Backhouse 1981, figure 18) motifs on scraps of parchment on which to draw up more detailed "roughs", while the metalworker could have used these things too and perhaps had more tangible trial pieces.[2] These objects may have circulated but the stone sculptor at some stage would have had to "blow up" these diagrams to a useable form, for example on leather or lead sheets. The clues are scattered but much has been found to show about methods used by the sculptors.

Dating

Dating is a problem which confronts all. If it is assumed that ideas were circulated between artisans in the form of talk and rough sketches, why do the dates of stone sculpture tend to lag behind other media? D. Wilson in his book *Anglo-Saxon Art* (1984, 105) ponders this enigma with regards to the Wolverhampton round-shaft: the dating is always in the tenth century when similar designs in other media are found in the ninth. D. Tweddle (Corpus IV, 34-36, figure 8) dates all works with similar designs to the one period.

However, recent scholarship has found problems in dating the works of others other media, especially manuscripts. I have used the dates in *Insular Manuscripts of the 6th to the 9th Century* by J.J.G. Alexander (1978), as a conservative and scholarly work since it is beyond the scope of this thesis to follow all debates. *The Making of England*, edited by L. Webster and J. Backhouse (1991) and *Anglo-Saxon Art* by D. Wilson (1984) are mostly used as a basis for dating objects in other media. The volume of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* (I-VI) are used for stone sculpture unless the arguments of this thesis need to challenge them. Dates are broadly used especially when one considers the complications such as Wilson spoke of, "old fashioned perfectionists and experimental innovations, incompetents and journeymen" (Wilson 1981, 108), whose work may mislead when trying to create a sequence from the work available..

Drawing

> Line drawing rather than photographs are given because they show the facts of the design disentangled from the accidents of wear and tear.
>
> W.G. Collingwood (1972, preface)

> We should not accept any photograph, however good, as enough to record a stone.
> In my opinion the presentation of a subjective image is the more direct and quickly understood method of publication.
>
> I.G. Scott (1997, 129-130)

Whoever draws sculpture, of necessity studies every line and nuance of form, often taking in more than is consciously observed of the sculptor's technique and mannerisms while making choices as to what is important and needing to be expressed. Although the image is always inadequate when drawn and to an extent subjective, this process enables the observer of the drawing to pre-understand something of the work and look at the real stone with a "head-start" in deciphering it.

Collingwood himself has been greatly instrumental in this enlightenment and his *magnum opus, Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (1927) with 255 figures within 184 pages to show his expertise. He does indeed do as he says and disentangles the facts of the design but nevertheless he has an enormous range of expression so that he can still say something of the type of stone, the technique, the depth of modelling and the design while often representing the surface including the accidents of "wear and tear" of which he spoke. His pen strokes are many and varied which express these things and his experience is large enough for him to see Northumbrian Anglo-Saxon sculpture as a whole. His authoritative work has influence today and many still gain a preliminary understanding of sculpture though Collingwood's eyes, although they may develop this further when they see the real work.

An earlier artist, A. Gibb with a basic lithographical style and just enough line work accented with highlights and shade, drew with remarkable clarity and conviction. In Stuart's *The Sculptured Stones of Scotland,* in two volumes (1856 and 1867)[3] his works have something of the quality of the sublime and picturesque, which were popular in his

day but nevertheless are remarkably accurate. Relevant to this work, his drawings of the Monk's Stone (Corpus I, illustrations, 262-5) express with unfussed simplicity the abysmally worn and pitted surfaces and still make sense of the designs. My interpretation differs (chapter 10, plates 38-42, figures 10b and c) but I find his expression admirable.

Two other artists of note have worked in the field covered here. C.C. Hodges brings an architect's precision. His great volume *Ecclesia Hagustaldensis* (1888) details the architecture of Hexham Abbey but he also drew the Anglo-Saxon stones and other traces (plate 42) with a clinical accuracy and even charm. W.G. Footitt drew the stones of Greenwell's collection (Havenfield and Greenwell 1899) with a more limited range of expression but nevertheless with clarity and accuracy and a feel for the form of the designs.

J. Romilly Allen in *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* II[4] differs from all these in approach as he uses drawings with pertinent line and no modelling or he combines drawings with photography. His method of work was meticulous, acknowledged in the preface of *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (ECMS, preface VII):

> A precise description of every existing monument or fragment had also to be prepared by Mr Romilly Allen from the notes and rubbings made during the Survey.

I. Henderson in her introduction to the reprinted version of 1993 (pages forty four-six) throws light on his methods, illustrating them with the making of the plate for Ardchattan (ECMS II, figure 378). First, she shows that he made a rubbing and later outlined it in ink and also made pencil sketches of details. In this case the photograph, which lacked definition was retouched with Indian ink and Chinese white to bring out details using his sketches, measurements and rubbings. If good photographs were not available drawings alone were used. The drawings are linear without an attempt at form, and are immediate in presentation. The Thornhill cross (ECMS II, figure 469) pertinent in this work, is remarkably clear because he ignores the lichened and eroded surface to bring out the lively attractive detail, simply leaving blank what could not be interpreted. His drawing gives a base from which to take up the challenge of interpretation (figures 6a-c).

The recent years a new drawing technique, in dots or stipple, has been used for recording stone sculpture. This may be a good method for an archaeological excavation, to distinguish stone artifacts but it is restrictive for sculpture generally. I.G. Scott (1991, 13) who drew for the RCAHMS Inventories, is a brilliant exponent of the technique. He defends it because of:

> ... the comparative lack of an individual "handwriting" character (usually detectable in other styles of drawing)... It is the most natural way to convey the modelling of the third dimension ... The technique allows additions and corrections to be made to an extent not easily achieved with, for instance, a "hatched" style.

Although I applaud the last idea, it is the first point which is not correct, as Scott's own style itself is most distinctive. The rippling effect which he called "modelling" is suited to the closely carved Pictish slabs, but it is not suited to any extent to the varied and broad Bernician work, where Collingwood's "hatching" is more appropriate.

This summary of the styles of thoughtful and interpretive artists is important as it is, led me to consider what to observe and how to see, draw, measure and express what I consider to be important. Drawing has been my first step in doing research on all stones, as far as can be achieved in a neglected church-yard, or an over-protective museum. I can say with Collingwood (1927, preface) the following:

> The sketches are all my own work and nearly all derived from the study of the originals.

Photography

J. Romilly Allen, as has been explained, was one of the earliest to appreciate the value of photographs and it is said (ECMS I, preface, vii) that Volume II has "upwards of 850 illustrations of manuscript of which 200 are from photographs". The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume I, was published in 1984, and recently Volume VI has been published. This is a record of stones which relies on photography. All stones, whether complete crosses or fragments are recorded, with all decorated faces shown, even if they are not decipherable. This attention to detail enabled me to recognise the design on the almost blank face, Tynemouth 3C, not previously interpreted. In this work I have used the "Corpus" system of numbering the crosses, the faces and the pieces of which they are

made. Most plates which accompany the drawing of my text have been kindly supplied from the Corpus collection by Professor Cramp. In the proportion usually 1:2 their quality can be seen.

However, a photograph will bring out some details and suppress others because of the light source. Sometimes it may produce an illusion of something not there. On the other hand the photographs frequently show the mistakes in my drawings, and naturally they give a better impression of the type of stone, the depth of modelling and add infinite detail on the "wear and tear" which I tend to ignore. Even so I have often observed features, even felt details, which are not seen in the photograph and these can be brought out in the drawing. The drawing is already an interpretation of the stone but the photograph is yet to be interpreted. Scott (1997, 129) speaking of photography observed this also:

> The onus of identification and interpretation of what can be seen is passed to the beholder who will almost certainly see things differently and probably with difficulty, even when following a written description.

Restoration

Restoration may be defined as drawing in what is missing. The premise is that the work will continue along the lines it appears to be going, and this is hazardous but not willful in that accurate measurement and knowledge of other pieces can often result in a plausible solution. W.G. Collingwood had such knowledge, and rose to a challenge. Although his reasoned restorations go further than some would prefer. His Hexham cross (1927, figure 42) combined a base piece, a shaft fragment and a cross-head centre, number 12, 4 and 9 (Corpus I, illustrations 928-36, 944-5), and this gives a new cross which fits well with the Hexham group. One can ask many questions[5]: whether this delicate base piece, if it were a base, belonged to the shaft design; whether the shaft piece was face or side; and if the head would have had arms like those restored by Collingwood, in the light of other Hexham arms, and even whether the design drawn for the head should have been more like those on Carlisle arm pieces, numbers 2 and 3 (Corpus II, illustrations 204 and 7). The fact that these questions are asked is a gain, giving the separate stones a new significance.

Defending his reconstruction of St John's cross on Iona, I. Scott (1997, 132), wrote that:

> Drawings can and should stimulate such questioning and not simply be an inert record of bits and pieces.

In this work ~~here~~ I have made a restored version of each major cross which carries animal designs, using photographs, my own drawings and measurements. Measurements are often problematical with a high margin for error when they lack good reference points. Some drawings (figure 2b) have added little to what is known, as for example C.T.S. Calder's (1937-8, figure 2, here figure 2a) drawing of Abercorn 1934 is basically correct but I see his drawing giving the impression of finer strands than are in fact used. In other crosses I have made suggestions other than the normal interpretations as in Thornhill (figures 6a-c). The Woodhorn cross (figures 14a and b) has not previously been reconstructed and with a newly found piece it is a large three metre cross, badly crafted but an invaluable record.

Patterns, too, have been reconstructed relying on a knowledge of pattern construction, types of patterns, unit measure and the set of the strands. Often a few strands on a battered piece can yield a design, as is seen with the Great Farne Island cross (plate 45B). There is too the case of the spiralled animal design which is whole but worn on St Oswald's cross, headless on the Monk's Stone, bodyless on the Great Farne Island piece, upside down at Woodhorn and uncontrolled at Hexham (plates 58, 42, 44, 61 and 62). The understanding of the one pattern has allowed all these to be restored. For all that, no matter how much logic and knowledge is brought to bear, it may not be the logic of the sculptor.

Diagrams

Diagrams provide explanations. George Bain (1951) used labelled diagrams not text to explain the increasing complexities of "Celtic" art that he was teaching. J. Romilly Allen (ECMS I) in over a thousand figures explains and catalogues interlace designs, key patterns and spiral work with little written explanation. Diagrams based on my study of interlace (Adcock 1974) are used in the Corpus volumes (Corpus I, figures 14-24). The purpose of such a catalogue is to assist textual descriptions by having references which instantly explain the designs.

Animal designs, however, are too few and too varied for a catalogue form. In recent times S. Marx (1995, 235-40 and figures 1-8) has attempted, in an article on "The miserable beasts", to draw up diagrams of the poses of animals in the Gospels of Lindisfarne, Lichfield and St Gall, then to quantify these on distribution graphs. Since she does not eliminate enough periphery designs to find the basic types (as in figure 2ei here) the method is not helpful. There could be some feasibility in the approach if it were refined although animal designs in sculpture do not lend themselves to this approach at present because of the small numbers.

The backbone of this study is the square grid used for the construction of animal designs, as it is for interlace. Each animal can be displayed and analysed and designs in other media can be brought to one standard size or the one centimetre grid used. The method gains credibility in the way the animal designs settle into place on the construction, although it is a theoretical method. Colour (see colour key) here is used to clarify the components as did the artist of the Lindisfarne Gospels, but his colour was also decorative, complex and also pleasurable.

The diagrams can be readily checked against the plates here or in the Corpus volumes. In the case of other media, I have, where possible, added a small photocopy for the convenience of the reader, not usually as part of the diagram. Sometimes my actual drawings of stones are also scaled down to make various points. Diagrams of details, wings, necks and lacing, are added where necessary. The wealth of the subject has necessitated numerous types of diagrams which I hope remain as lively as the originals which they seek to explain. The figures are placed in the text facing the place where they are first mentioned, so that they can be seen alongside the discussion. I echo the statement of George Bain (1951, 21):

> Realizing the meagreness of the written language, especially when used by me, as a medium for the clear transmission of instructions on the partly artistic, partly geometrical and partly mathematical method peculiar to many forms ... I have put the onus of understanding upon the student by compelling close observation of every stage...

The area encompassed by Bernician Sculpture

Political boundaries of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms have been difficult to assess not only because they were frequently in a state of flux but also because information is inadequate. Written sources, augmented by archaeological research and tangible remains, give an incomplete picture. In the case of Bernicia the Tees is an accepted boundary between Bernicia and Deira and the firth of forth represents its northernmost extension dividing it from the Pictish area. The kingdom extended to the west and into southern Scotland as far as Whithorn.

The appendix map shows the distribution of the animal interlace designs within this area. As these designs are rare among the sculptural remains of the period, there is little of significance in the distribution, apart from the line of coastal monasteries affiliated with Lindisfarne on the eastern sea board, a cluster in southern Scotland and with another group around Durham.

The design on Lowther 2 has been added here because of its link with the Durham Gospels (chapter 2) and by way of contrast to the Lindisfarne Gospels' concept. The animal designs of Waberthwaite 2 although further south link to the Thornhill designs and add to this discussion.

NOTES

1. Work has been done on individual animal designs in various media, as Haselhoff (1987, 44-55). G. Speake (1980) *Anglo-Saxon Animal Art and its Germanic Background,* did work on Salin Style II. C. Hicks (1993) wrote on *Animals in Early Medieval Art,* but animal representations not the patterned animals.

2. Bone trial pieces have not been found in Northumbria until the Viking-age where they should possibly be seen as inspiration from outside.

3. I have seen Volume II, 1867, which is a magnificent work and it is the basis of comments here. The works from Volume I have not been available except when reproduced elsewhere.

4. *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland,* 1903 is in three parts in two volumes; the theory in the first and the survey in the other, and this is a convenient division here.

5. Cramp (Corpus I, 178, 180 and 1) questions whether the parts belong, but finds a leaf form in common to the base and shaft.

CHAPTER 1

THE CONCEPTS OF INTERLACED ANIMALS IN THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

Introduction

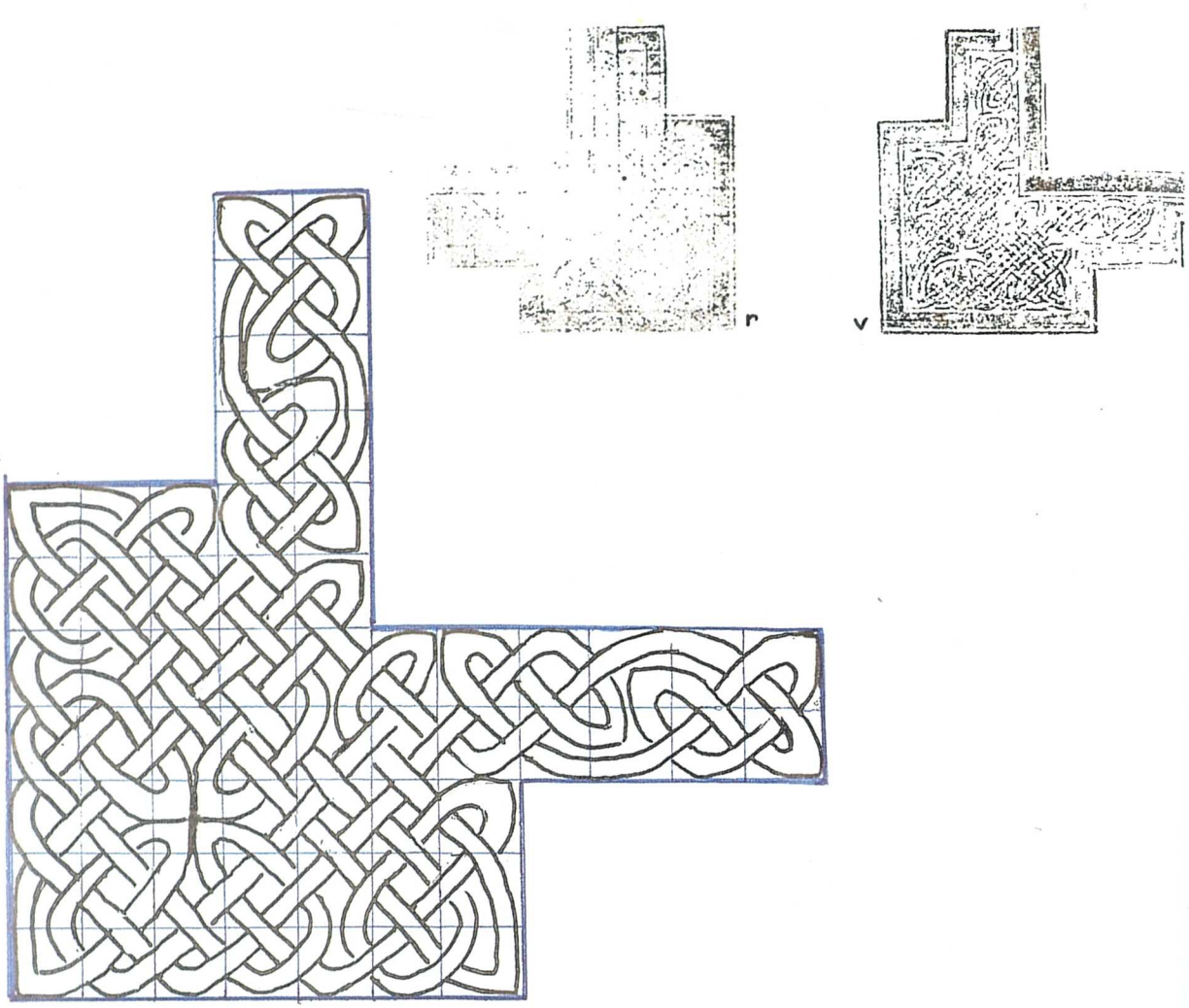
The artist using ink and paint can experiment more readily in developing and incorporating new ideas into his own artistic range than the sculptor can. In this Eadfrith, the artist of the Lindisfarne Gospels who is thought to have worked at the end of the seventh century,[1] developed his animal designs with a naturalism and order suited to the new age of classical learning.[2] These concepts are analysed here so as to give a basis for the discussion of sculpture.

These two concepts, order and naturalism are the ones to be traced through the whole of this thesis. Anyone looking at the designs for the first time may feel, however, that the opposite is true: that the designs are too confused and complex and that the animals are too savagely distorted. The first part of this chapter will be about the structure which gives control to the designs and then the natural features which give life to the forms. The second part will examine as to how the work of other manuscript artists is related or not to these ideas.

Modern analyses of the structure used in designs

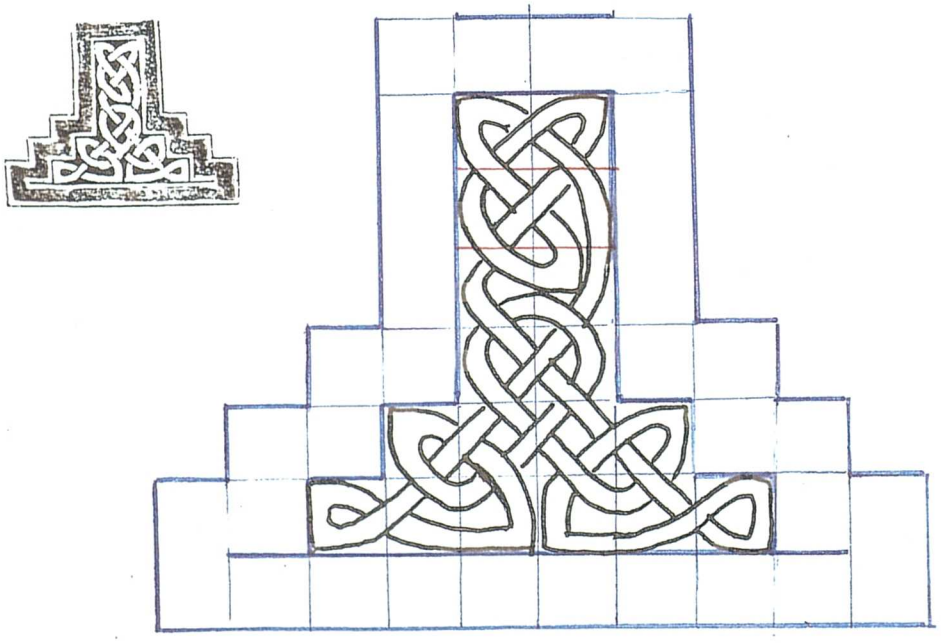
The publication in 1960 of a facsimile of the Lindisfarne Gospels (Kendrick et al. 1960, I) gave clear evidence of drawn guidelines used for page structure and sometimes for individual patterns. R.L.S. Bruce-Mitford in his part of the introduction to this work (1960, II, Part 4, chapter 8, 205-27) , "Methods of construction of Insular Ornament", points out the constructional lines and the pin pricks of compasses or dividers, with discussion on the construction of the ornament which was drawn by their aid. Since then J. Guilmain (1993, 92 - 95) has worked on overall page structure and shown Mediterranean precedents, while R.D. Stevick (1994) in his book, *The Earliest English and Irish Book Arts, Visual and Poetic Forms before AD1000*, has demonstrated that the proportions of the golden numbers which were used in the classical era were also used in insular manuscripts.

Figure 1a



i. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.26: recto, grid; verso, design; design on 1cm grid.

ii. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.11v: necessary grid: blue lines; added grid: red lines.



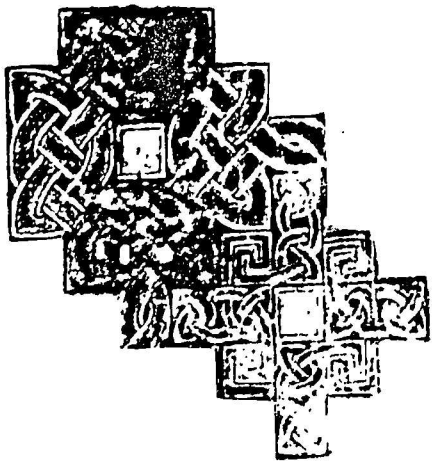
The study of individual patterns started much earlier. J. Romilly Allen in *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (ECMS, 1903, I) explained and arranged patterns from simple to complex in a logical catalogue whilst G. Bain (1944) in his instruction book, *Methods and Construction of Celtic Art,* showed a method of drawing designs in the hope that it would be used to revive the style. In 1974, I worked on interlace structure on the square grid, which can be seen in the Lindisfarne Gospels the facsimile on the backs of folios (Kendrick et al. II) to see how it related to Northumbrian sculpture. Iain Bain (1986) revised his father's work in another instruction book, *Celtic Knotwork* using a square grid also but with other aids to construction. Then J. Guilmain (1987, 21 - 52) in an article on the geometry of the cross-carpet pages in the Lindisfarne Gospels showed the use of the square grid which resulted as a basis for drawing all designs, aided by diagonals and circles. Both the latter have used structure to the point of allowing it to dominate individuality. M. Budney (2001, 283-210) "Deciphering the art of interlace" has entered the field recently, preferring to return to the diagonal method with a notation of dots and lines like a bell ringer's instructions, which was perhaps used for the late Irish designs (202-3, figures 19 and 20).

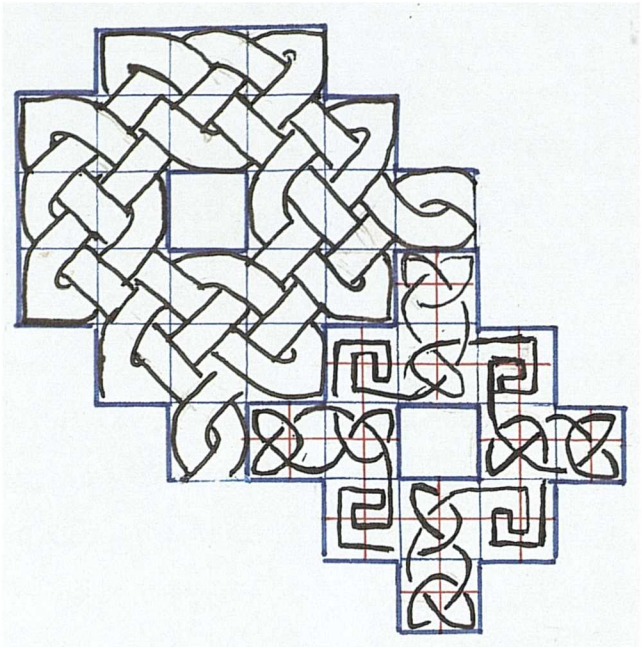
The starting point of the order and control of animal designs will be shown to be on the square grid. The way this is used for interlace is an essential beginning, since it will be made clear that interlaced animal designs in the Lindisfarne Gospels are drawn on a grid used in a similar manner.

Interlace designs[3]

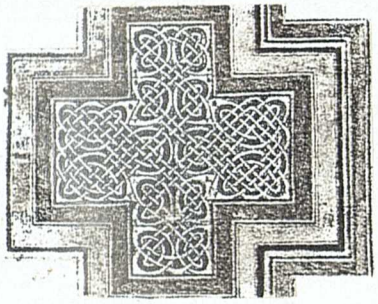
The Anglo-Saxon manuscript artists had a fine grasp of interlace, as if all understood a set of rules which is now hidden from us, but which we may find by deduction. In explaining some points it is necessary to use specific terms which will be found in the glossary. First of all it seems interlace was drawn up on a grid of squares and if some were slightly rectangular it made no difference to the pattern structure. Most of a grid can actually be seen forming the corner pieces of folio 26v (plate 1) of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Figure 1ai shows photocopies from the facsimile of both verso and recto, together with the interlace drawn on a 1cm grid diagramatically, here single-stranded not double-stranded lacing for clarity.

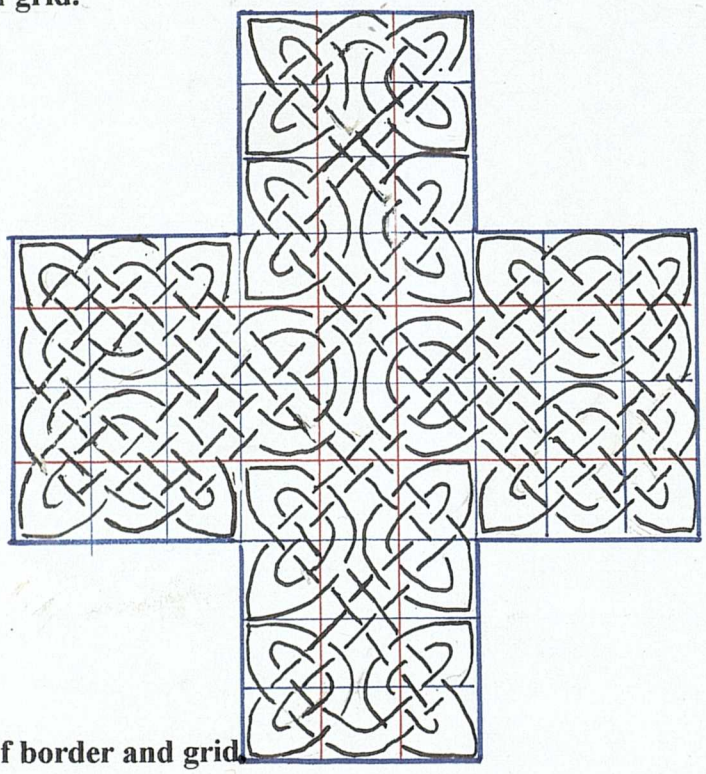
Figure 1b





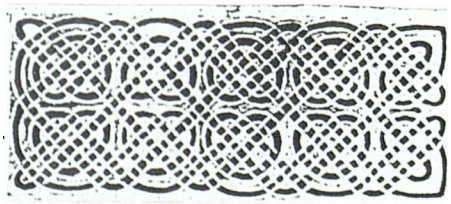
i. Book of Durrow, f.1v: detail of grid.

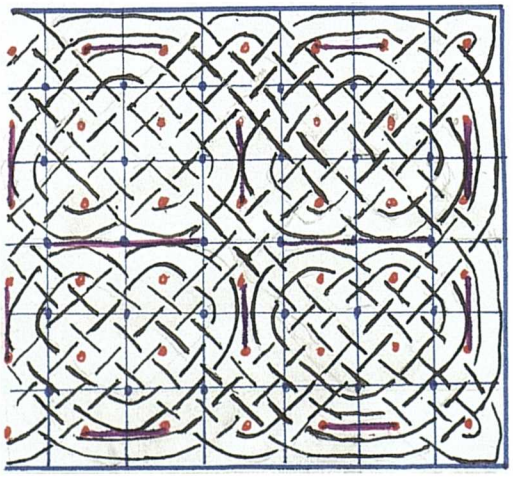




ii. Book of Kells, f.229v: detail of border and grid.

iii. Durham Cassiodorus, f.172v: detail of panel with grid and extra guidelines.



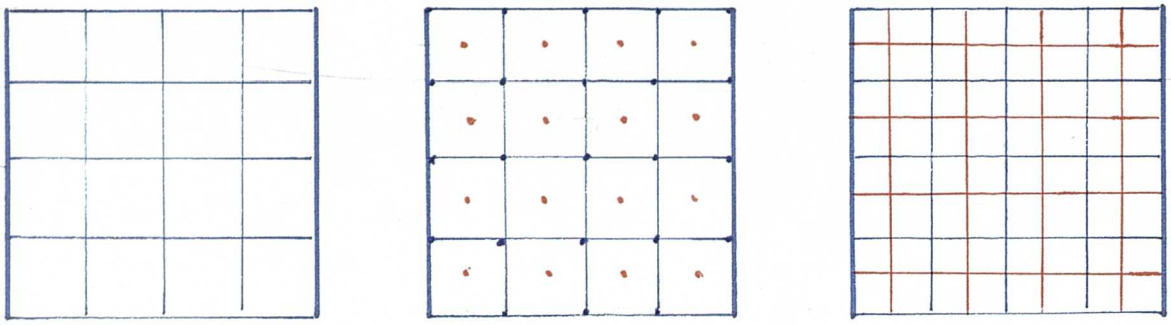


Frequently no grid can be seen, but necessary lines from the construction of the page or feature would form it. Figure 1aii shows a canon table base (folio 11r) where the necessary construction lines (blue) form most of the grid and other lines can be measured at the same intervals (red). The relationship of diagonals and loops to the grid is seen to be the same as those in figure 1ai. It is as well to point out that this method of drawing interlace was not a feature of the artist, Eadfrith in the Lindisfarne Gospels, alone. Both Stevick (1994, 213-18, figure 14) and Guilmain (1993, 93, figure 10.5) agree that the whole of the folio 1v of the Book of Durrow is drawn on a grid of squares (or units slightly rectangular). Figure 1bi shows a section with an interlaced cross among the secondary features and that it follows the grid in the manner of those in figure 1a. The smaller cross may have been divided again and evidence of the same type of construction can be found in all other manuscripts of the "insular" series. The last of these, the Book of Kells contains a good example on the folio 291v, which is shown diagramatically in figure 1bii. I. Bain (1984, figure 85) also agrees with this construction. Once it is clear how interlace corresponds to a grid, a grid can be drawn through any interlace because of its regular hole structure.

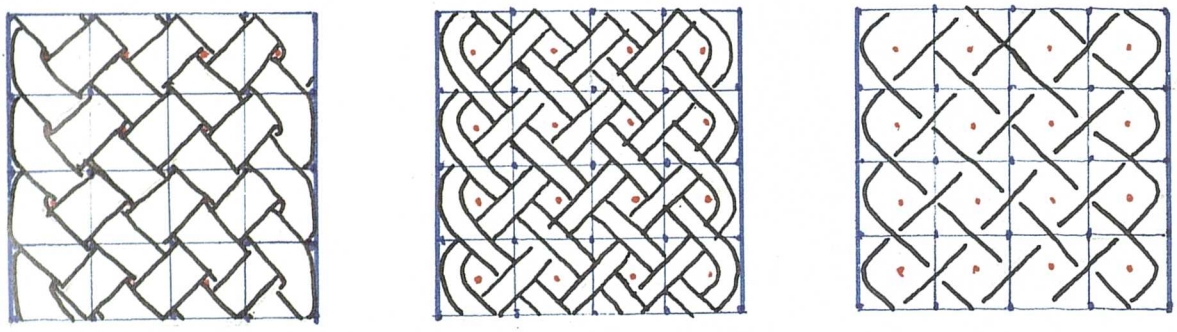
Since interlace is easy to draw on this simple construction by an artist with a good eye and steady hand, there is no need for further support, but the artist of the Durham Cassiodorus (Alexander, catalogue 17) did use other guidance. The square grid itself is clear on the backs of the two illuminated folios, 81v and 172v (Adcock 1974, 12-14, plate 1B), Dr. R. Bailey (1978, 12-13, plate 2.1), agreed after examining the manuscript, for his lecture *The Durham Cassiodorus*, and also remarked on pin pricks and short guiding lines on the painted side of folio 172v which he saw (figures 2.2 and 3). The pin pricks correspond to the hole points between the strands and the short lines to the "breaks". Here in figure 1biii, this extra constructional guidance is shown, with the grid crossings (blue dots), the centres of grid squares (red dots) and the short lines (purple)[4].

The square grid (figure 1ci) seems universal as a basis for interlace but it may have had dots as extra guidance on the crossing points (blue dots). Strands move diagonally through each grid unit passing the grid points at an equal distance on either side, in doing this another "hole" is formed in the centre of each square (red dots) or again a secondary grid may have been drawn in (red lines). Figure 1cii shows strands in three

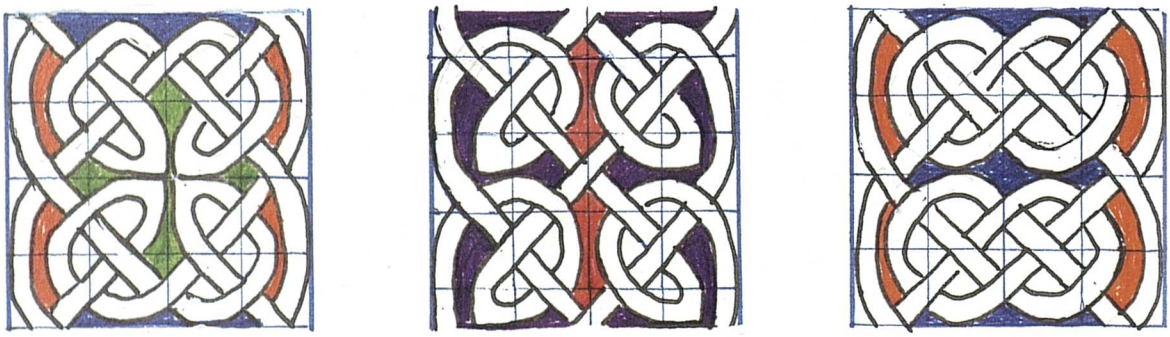
Figure 1c



i. Plain square grid, grid with central points and primary and secondary grid.



ii. Full-width strand, half-width strand and median strand.



iii. Interlace breaks: single opposed: red; single concentric: orange; double: blue; double with right angle: purple; cruciform: green.

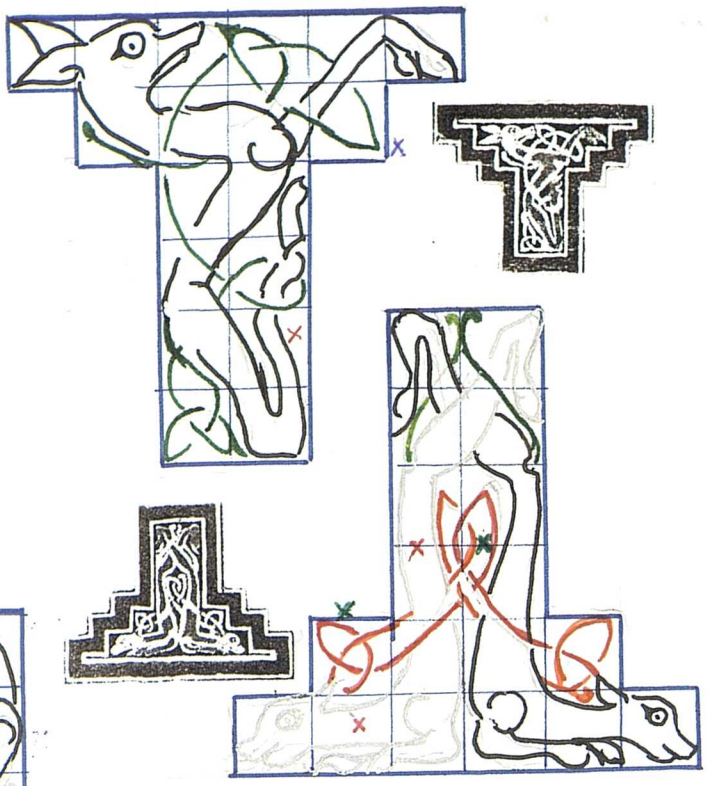
different widths. In the very early Durham A.II.10, folio 3v (Alexander, catalogue 5) the strands were so wide that they scarcely left a space or hole between, and much of the interlace of the Book of Durrow also has full-width strands (figure 1bi). The strand can be drawn half as wide as a grid unit, with a quarter of a unit to the hole on either side, (referred to here as the strand half-width), and much manuscript interlace is around this width (figure 1aii) since it is clear to follow. The interlace may be very narrow or just a line, drawn through the middle of grid squares. This median line is not often used in manuscripts but some interlace is so finely drawn that it would be thought of as linear.

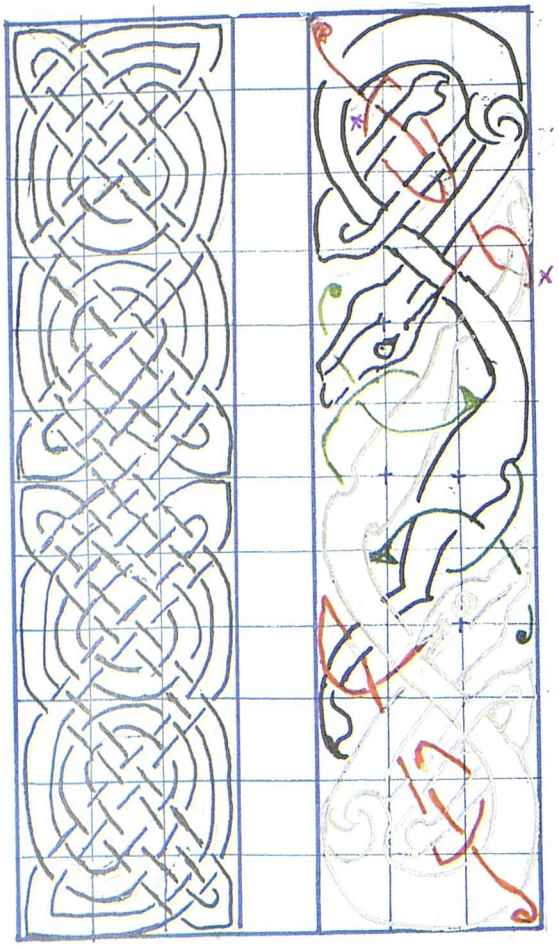
Such strands form plain plaits, but to form interlace, the strands must curve from their normal crossings or as J. Romilly Allen says they make "breaks"[5] (ECMS I, 162 -4, figures 287-98). Each strand then continues through the pattern on the opposite diagonal. There are very few types of "breaks" to make the hundreds of known patterns. The main ones are shown in figure 1ciii: the strands curve from each other (red) or run concentrically (orange); they may do this in a double movement either in a straight line (blue) or with a right angled turn (purple). If four right angled "breaks" are made, meeting at a grid point (green), this is appropriately known as a cruciform "break."

In interlace no grid point or point in the centre of a grid square can be crossed by a strand. No strand can cross the square diagonally unless met by a counter strand on the grid line, that is there can be no missed crossings (see glossary). Further if a strand "breaks" from a crossing it must be met by another strand in that "break" since there must be no unmet breaks. All these points are basic things which occur in a real plait made of thong or thread (Adcock 1974, plate 5), and manuscript interlace designs follow these "rules" in ink and paint. The illusion of a real plait is kept up by the strands appearing to weave over and under alternately. In a complex pattern this would seem to be difficult but if the alternation is kept up it will be brought to a correct completion.

In several other respects the discipline of plaiting is maintained. The thrust of a plait is diagonal and "breaks" make horizontal and vertical curving slits in the web but longer horizontals and verticals would weaken the web. Twists and unpinned loops (see

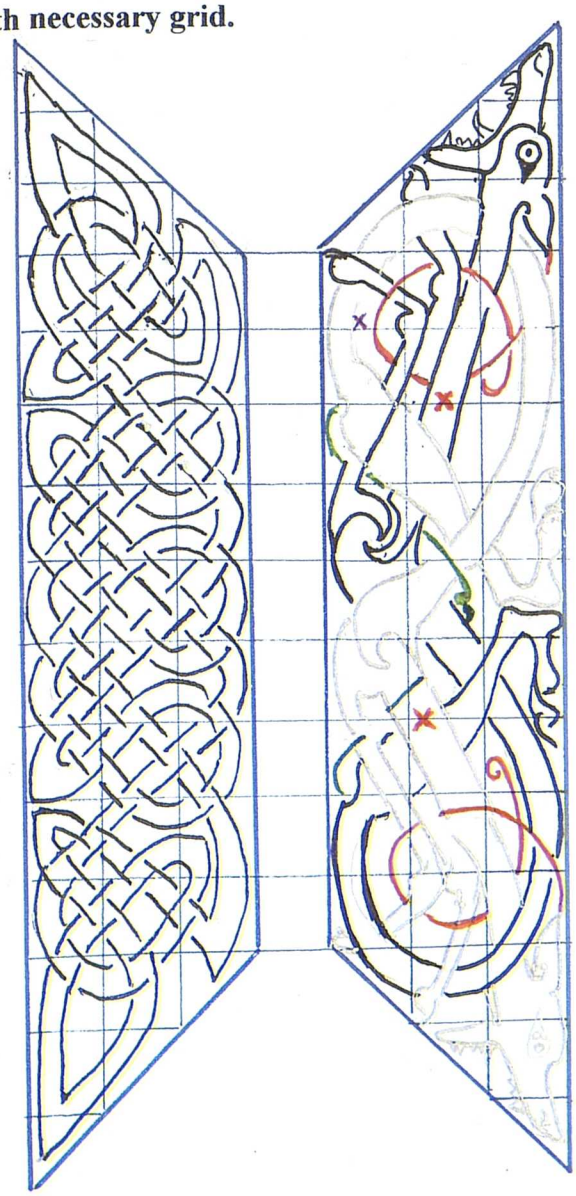
Figure 1d





i. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.15v:

with necessary grid.



ii. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.95r;

interlace and animal design.

iii. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.211r:

interlace and animal design.

glossary) are not normally used for the same reason. Strands must look continuous with no obvious closed circuits like a circle or a figure-of-eight, which would be impossible to weave and further all ends must be joined one to another so the pattern will not look as if it can unravel.

These are small points but they will have relevance again, when it is shown that Eadfrith developed, or was a major exponent of, a method of drawing interlaced animals on this same grid. This is used as far as possible in the same way as interlace. Animals, like strands, are curved and form diagonals as far as the exigencies of the design allow.

Animal designs on grids

Bruce-Mitford (1960 II, figure 59) saw orderliness, but no grids for interlaced animals. He believed folio 26v was based on circles and ruled lines from various points (figure 59)[6]. J Guilmain (1987, 21-52, figures 1-14) working on the overall construction of the cross-carpet pages found that the units for drawing up the format were often those of the panels and small spaces; although wider or narrower units could be used (figures 3 and 10). He shows grids of squares for patterns including animal designs but also uses diagonals and circles for their constructions (figures 5, 9 and 13). In his later article Guilman (1993, 93, figure 10.7) drew interlace in the squares first, which he said was not "planned as ornament in itself," because it was then later "transformed into ribbon beasts."

It is, however, simple to draw freehand without further construction following the grid so that its curves and diagonals follow the normal interlace courses. The animals in interlaced designs however, are not "ribbon beasts" since they swell and diminish in accordance with anatomy and so they could be thought of as short strands of uneven width, controlled but not inhibited by the grid. Interlace was not drawn first, as this would be an unnecessary and confusing step. Compasses and rulers may have given precision to the finish on important folios, otherwise freehand drawing following the rules of the grid could be expected.

I have made experiments, first with the canon table shapes where the grid is formed mainly by the overall construction (figure 1aii and 1di) and then with the letter stems

where animals are opposite to interlace, and seem to have shared a common grid (figure 1dii and iii). These diagrams with their photocopies show how far the animals drawn on a grid correspond to the manuscript animals. Other diagrams from patterns in the Lindisfarne Gospels which are necessary for the discussions in this thesis, follow this principle. The consistent way that my diagrams, which are drawn on a grid, match the intervals and angles of the manuscript designs demonstrate that this is a valid method. Grids can be found for these patterns in the same manner as they were for interlace, by drawing through major holes. More missed crossings and unmet breaks in animal designs can sometimes make the grids harder to discover.

It also becomes clear from the diagrams that some compromises and a little licence are needed for interlaced animals since different problems arise. Firstly the large head, shoulders and sometimes the curving back leg trespasses the minor grid points (those in the centres of squares) and occasionally even cross the major grid points (figure 1d, blue crosses). This is the thing which is impossible in interlace, but given the size and complexity of these animals it still happens comparatively rarely.

Secondly, there are more verticals and horizontals than in interlace, examples can be seen in the confines of the canon tables (figure 1di, red crosses) and sometimes a long diagonal is used, that is one which slopes across two squares not one (figure 1diii, orange crosses), but the normal thing is for the animal, body and limbs to move diagonally and curve exactly as interlace would. There is too, an inevitable lack of continuity since an animal has many endings; but often the paws or nose are tucked into another animal or curved at the edge of the grid so that the ends are less obvious, sometimes even difficult to find.

Further the animals leave many missed crossings and unmet "breaks" and this is where the lacing is used. The tail laces with the fluency of interlace, and so too does the ear lappet. These can then wind through the design on the grid, like interlace strands, meeting the missed crossings and curving with the "breaks". They fill in the web and integrate with the animal. The artist of the Lindisfarne Gospels forms loops mostly around the diagonal limbs and bodies (figure 1dii and iii, purple crosses). The animals in the designs fill the grid so that only occasionally are there spaces between the forms which are big enough for loops to be formed within them (figure 1di, green crosses).

The loops formed in these Gospels are as far as possible normal interlace loops, but because they do not meet a partner, as in interlace, frequently the points extend to assisting filling the spaces. At other times they can be half the normal size as if formed on the finer or secondary grid. The artist too, was fond of triquetra formations or double loops (see glossary), which could bond with the animals in several directions.

Folio 211r (plate 2B) shows three designs on the stem of the letter "I" and it is the middle one (also figure 1diii) which has a balance of animal and integrated lacing typical of the artist. The lowest design has little lacing, an unusual thing, and it looks heavy, while the upper design is unusual in that it has much lacing twirling in the spaces. Most designs have the balance of lacing, integrated with animals, whereby the lacing leavens the design but does not dominate.

To sum up the concept: it is one where the animal motif is drawn as interlace on the usual grid and is controlled, even given vitality by this constructional web. The lacing helps to fill the grid, integrating with the animal, complementing its curves but with an added role of decorating and refining. So far the motif itself has not been described but when it has been observed closely its natural features will have become obvious.

The natural animal

> It is common knowledge that the painters and sculptors of the early middle ages did not receive their inspiration from nature but they worked from models.
>
> Nordenfalk (1942, 157)

Nordenfalk throughout his now famous article: "Eastern Elements in the Lindisfarne Gospels", looks to such models. However, there were always artists who had a keen sense of observation and sensitivity to nature who consciously or unconsciously could lift their work to something above a mere copy of a model. In the Lindisfarne Gospels natural animals are also found on the Gospel-symbol pages and are generally believed to have come from classical sources which seem to have flooded into the monasteries in the late seventh century but hunting scenes, common in classical times,may have been found on objects brought in or those surviving in the area[7]. One would expect that the artists of the scriptorium and designers in other media discussed these and copied them as far as they had reason to do so. Eadfrith could well have learned from

these and yet his dogs are whippet-like (Brown 1921, V, 363). Bruce-Mitford believes them composed of various breeds (1960, 201-3). The artist shows a certain acuteness of observation coupled with this knowledge, which enables him to draw his own truly dog-like images.

He draws an ideal dog, an amalgamation of features which change a little according to the grid space: the muzzle may be long or short, or ears large or small. Numerous variations are formed but they are all recognisably the dog with an occasional cat (folio 1391r), in the natural details which are drawn, with precise out-lines of remarkable life and vigour. R. Bruce Mitford (1960, 230) puts it this way:

> The basic dog-type, with its various stylizations though treated with endless freedom and variety, always retains its cohesion as a complete animal.

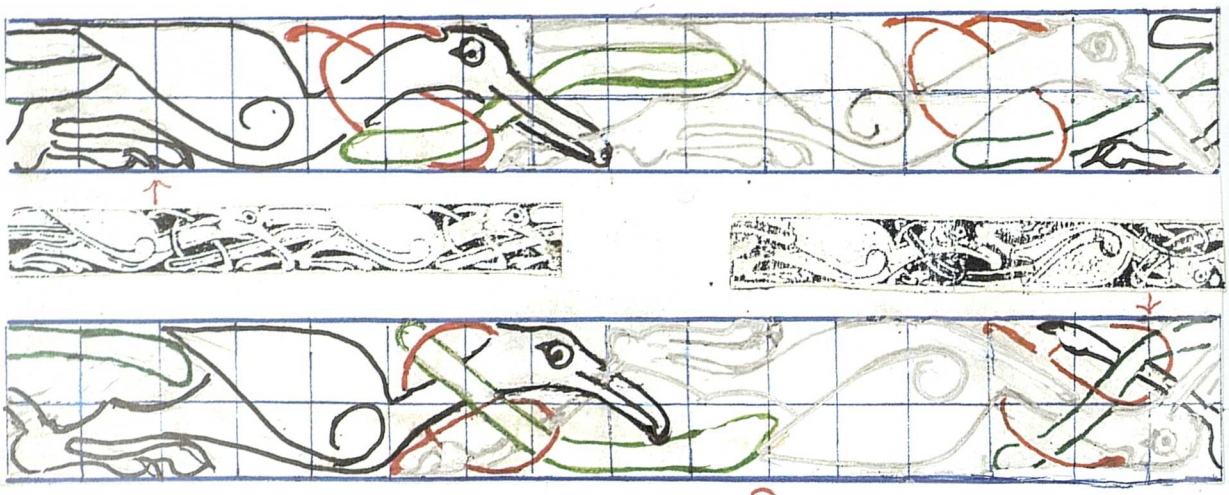
A motif is more than a collection of details but details add to the picture. The flat head, long muzzle, well-formed ear, lines delineating the jaw and eye are all salient features of this artist. The muscular legs, paws with pads and claws are arranged with an elegance and exactness of outline as by a master.

Some conventions seem to militate against naturalism. One convention is the way bodies and necks may extend and turn, but the turn is not against the joints in the bone structure, so that however impossible the position, there is always an element of plausibility. The turn may be a full 360^0 of neck, or neck and body, or body and legs as seen in figures 1dii and iii and figure 2ei, but it is controlled even relaxed, by the discipline of the grid. It is only on the famous cross-carpet folio, 26v, that the necks spiral and the bodies turn to allow legs to walk through, and within the cross shape on the same folio, animals actually form loops. These extremes of movement are exaggerated beyond the normal extensions but this is a very special cross-carpet page at the beginning of St Matthew's Gospel.

The way the front leg is often spun off with a Celtic spiral of three lines is certainly not natural but hints of movement. Soon this decorative feature develops into a wide triskele as if made from the bones of the shoulder, neck and body, with the accent on the rounded shoulder. Such a device is more natural than the spiral since it expresses

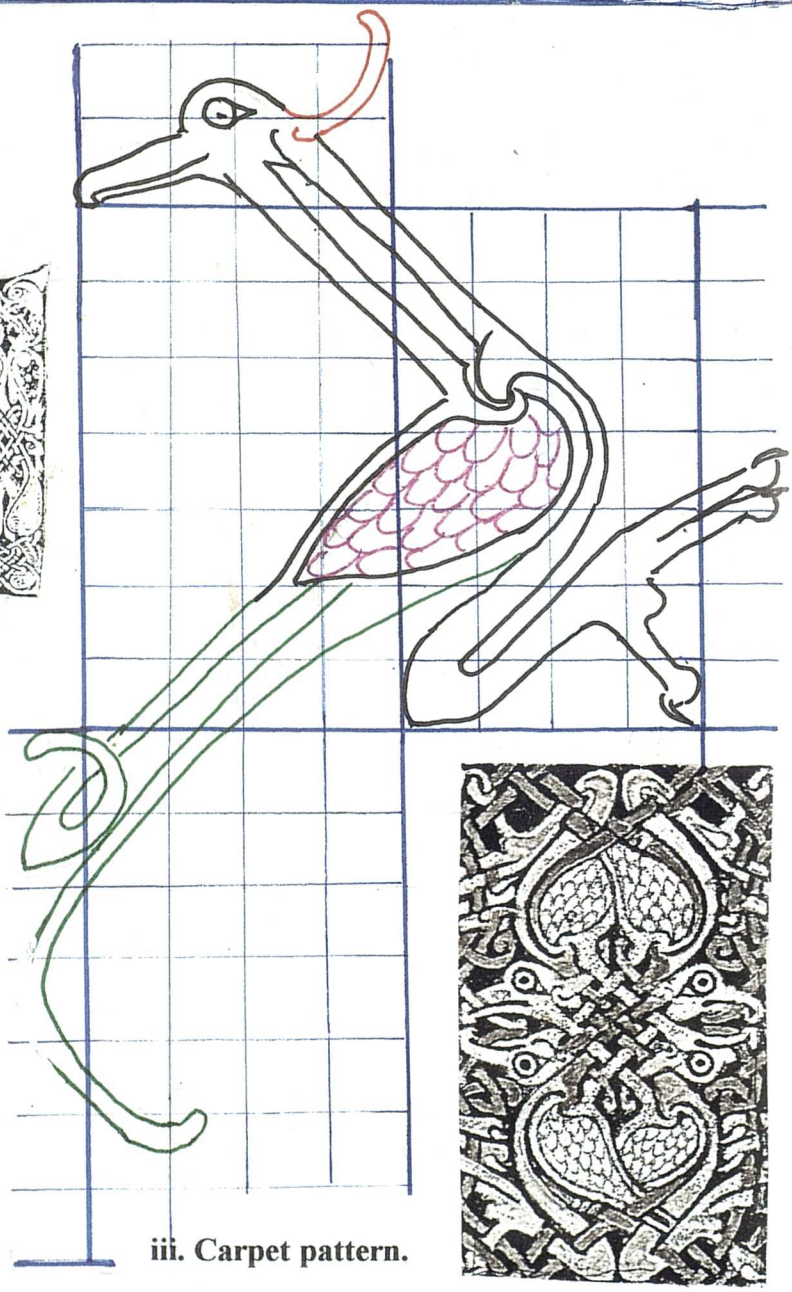
Figure 1e

Lindisfarne Gospels, f.139r.



i. Bird chains.

ii. Set-of-four.



iii. Carpet pattern.

the underlying bone structure and also the movement of the leg. Figures 1dii and iii show the different approaches.

The natural dog makes up about one half of the designs while the bird, makes up the other half: Bruce Mitford (1960, 201) gives the figure for dogs at 449 and birds at 559. Most of what has been said about the dog is true for the bird, although a few details need to be added.

The bird

The bird, like the dog, has natural features and can also be drawn on a grid. The examples on figure 1e are from folio 139r, plate 2A. The cormorant has been suggested as a model from among the teeming sea birds of the island of Lindisfarne[8]. The bird motif, however, has the hooked beak, which is a modified version of that familiar in the metal work of the Sutton Hoo finds (Bruce-Mitford 1979, plates E,G, 4, 9b, 10). This creature, like the dog is an idealised type, which amalgamates many of the observed features of birds. It can change shape according to its position in the pattern, as the dog could, and yet it too is convincingly alive in all its features (figure 1e).

For a creature so bird-like it is in many ways not unlike the dog in its response to the grid (figures 1d and e). The hooked beak and round brow replace the long muzzle and straight brow. The bird has a foot with two toes forward and one back with a pad between to replace the foot and toes of the dog. Even the wing bow spiral or triskele is like the front leg joint of the dog. The large wing which enfolds the body forms a bigger mass than any other feature covering a major grid point but it is broken down by feather design so as not to appear so broad.

As a decorative motif it lacks some of the attributes of the dog but gains others. There are two legs but the toes of the bird can be enlarged to play a role of threading (figure 1ei and iii). It may have a lappet and single tail, but the tail is often double (figure 1eii and iii) and even the neck can be divided (figure 1eiii). The body does not lengthen and turn but the neck can extend, turn and even lace (plate 2A, lowest on the letter "Q").

The dog and bird have a fairly equal role in the Lindisfarne Gospels but this proportion varies as the themes are taken up by other artists. When the biped or fantastic animals are fashionable it is difficult to tell the one from the other but it is the dog and later a dog-like dragon particularly which continues in sculpture.

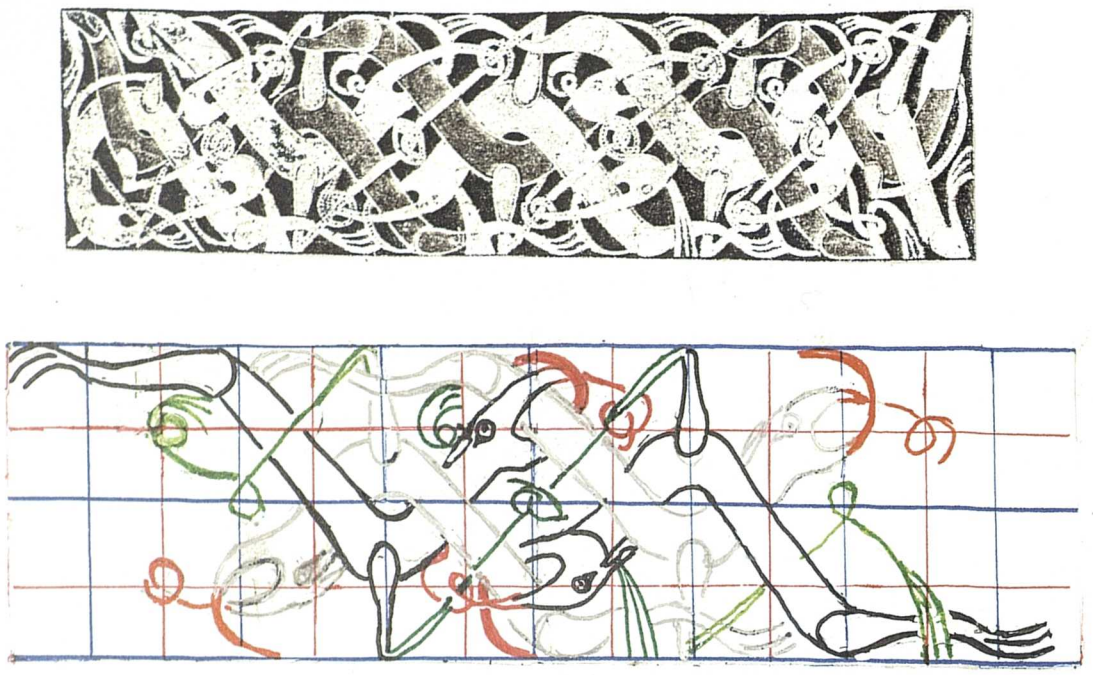
Pattern types

Repetition is an important part of design. The sort of repetition used by separate artists or groups of artists is a distinctive feature of their style. Repetition enhances interlace, where the motifs are small and the repetition can be easily seen: it also enhances the larger animal motifs so that it is often the overall pattern which is appreciated not its components. These methods of forming the design are not new: repetitive patterns, in chains, mirror-imaging or turning and reversing on an axis were all used in Style II metalwork, and some in Classical art before that.[9] Chains of animals, linked or overlapping, were frequently used in the Lindisfarne Gospels, in narrow borders which could be varied by turning the animals various ways as is seen in figures 1ei but animal chains are not important in this work.

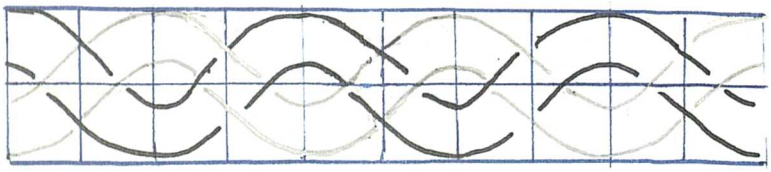
Most relevant in this study are the panels. In panels, Eadfrith rarely used single animals, although the upper panel on plate 2B is an excellent example of a single animal. More often he used a pair of animals reversing on the horizontal axis, as seen on the middle panel of the "I" or folio 211r (plate 2B middle, figure 1diii). However, he particularly favoured designs which were both turned and reversed seen in both dogs and birds on folio 139r on the stem of "Q" (Plate 2A middle and lower). These motifs are so well integrated with each other on the grid that there is no obvious break in the design or any aid for the eye to sort out the individual animals easily.

Sets-of-four, where four motifs are mirror-imaged on both the vertical and horizontal axis are found. The bird motif on the letter "Q" of folio 139r, (plate 2A upper and figure 1eii) being a notable example. The pose of each bird is simple but the design picks up interest from the repetition. Here the long straight tails cross diagonally in double-strands, together forming a feature in the centre. From the set-of-four comes the basic unit of the carpet-page designs. The carpet-area of bird design on the same folio consists of sets-of-four (plate 2A and figure 1eiii) which have complex integration within each set, but link with other sets by extremities of toes and tails.

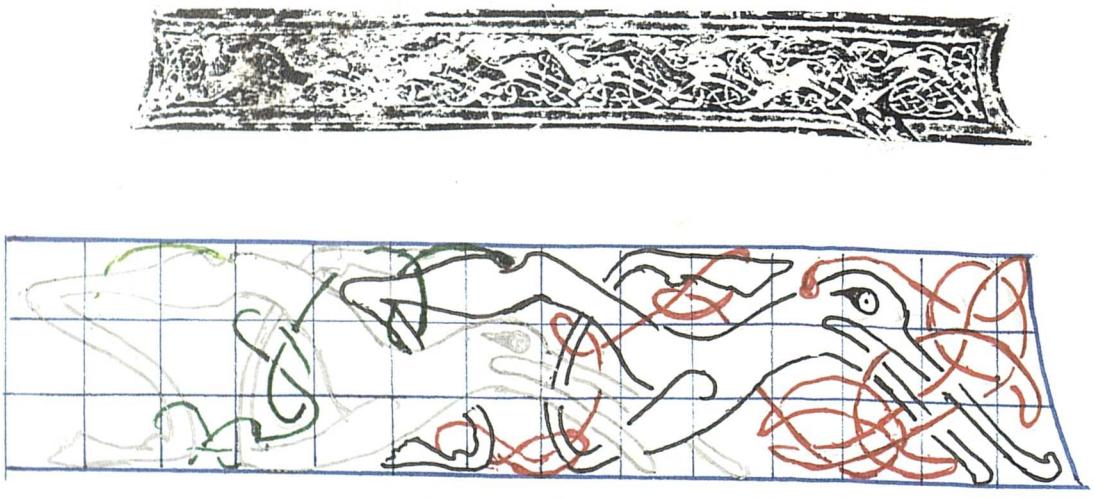
Figure 1f



i. Book of Durrow, f.192v: border pattern.



ii. Book of Durrow, f.86r: double twist.



iii. Durham Gospels, f.2r: animal chain.

The designs are varied but unified in the animal types, on the associated interlace and the manner of repetition. Other manuscript artists did not follow all these types as each had his own motifs and favourite way of decorating and repeating them. It is necessary, therefore, to look at other major manuscripts to see in what ways their work differed from the concepts of the Lindisfarne Gospels.

The Book of Durrow

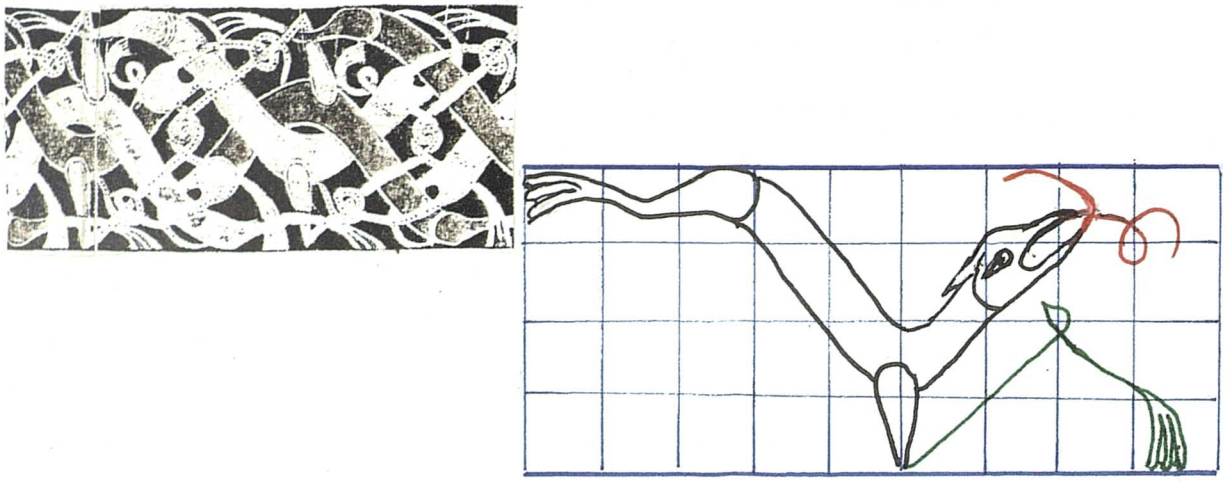
The Book of Durrow has been much discussed because alone it has animal designs which represent Salin Style II. It is dated by Alexander (1978, catalogue 6) to the second half of the seventh century.[10] The animal designs are on folio 192v (plate 3) and there are three varieties of bands or borders, which seem to have been inspired by metalwork in that they are representations of the techniques of enamel and beaded filigree. The designer, with paint and ink produced on one page something which would have taken a metalworker a very long time to execute. R. Bruce-Mitford (1960 111-112, figures 7 and 8) shows the animals are like the indigenous and continental motifs known as Salin Style II. G. Speake (1980), in his book *Anglo-Saxon Animal Art and its Germanic Background*, (figures 1 e-f, 8 l-m and 14) expands on this, showing related metalwork designs. His illustrations demonstrate that long panels used on rims of drinking horns and as weapon decorations have similar features. The Style II animals, although interlaced, were without naturalism and it was the bone part which extended and laced, that is the jaws and lower legs.

Figure 1fi, is from the lower border on folio 192v. The regularity of the design shows that some constructional lines must have been used. The figure has a grid which seems to support the accents in the piece in which the animals have vertical and horizontal legs suddenly forming tight curls, at regular intervals and these are probably wound around the grid points. The dominant tube-like bodies form the main lines of the design, not unlike the popular double-twist which is, an early interlace design used in folio 86v (Alexander, number 10, plate 18, here figure 1fii). This pattern is also found on that other early work, the Durham A.II.10, folio 3 (Alexander, number 5, plate 10, middle lobe).

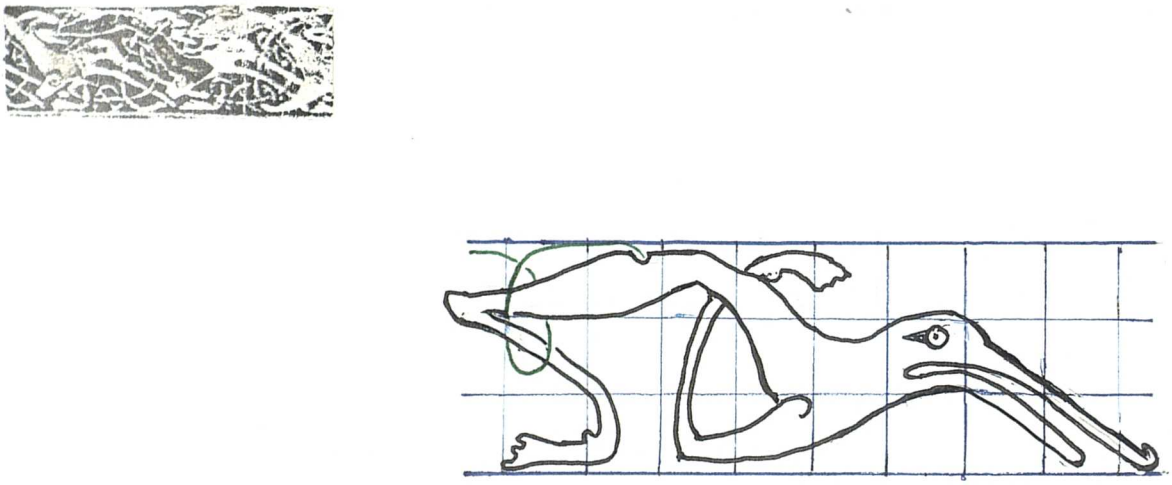
The animal bodies are without anatomical shape and have slightly swelling heads, separated from the thick neck by lines, which make them look almost fish-like. Their

Figure 1g

Comparison of animals.



i. Comparison of animals, Book of Durrow, f.192v.



ii. Durham Gospels, f.2r.

iii. Lindisfarne Gospels, f.211r.

gaping jaws quickly become thin "filigree" strands, scarcely a quarter of the width of the body and curve off to lace. There is a clear demarcation of the legs from the body in that they are in pear-shaped insertions. The lower legs end in brush-like webbed feet.

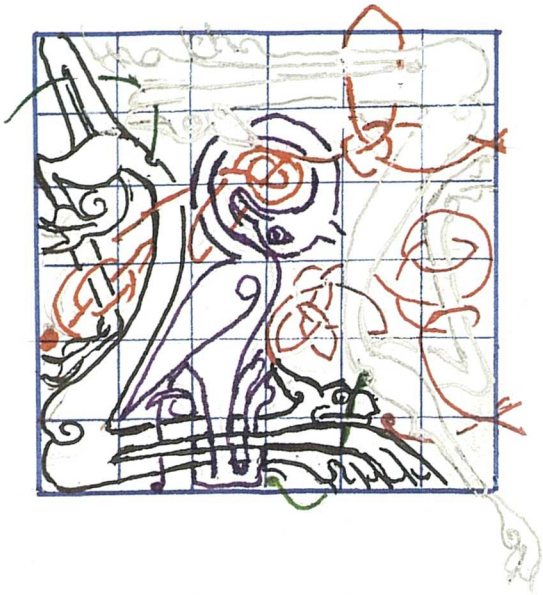
One might sum up saying that the Style II animals of Book of Durrow are kept in order by a grid but are not governed by interlace laws although the artist is one of the great innovators in interlace itself, there is not a breath of naturalism in the animals nor are they integrated with the lacing as interlace. Its animal designs have nothing in common with the Lindisfarne Gospels, except that they are considered a suitable form of decoration for Gospels. The type of motif is without followers in manuscripts but the Durham Gospels (A.II.17) have a motif similar in many respects but tending also towards the Lindisfarne Gospels' type.

The Durham Gospels (A.II.17)

The Durham Gospels letter page 2r features interlaced animals(plate 4, figure 1fiii) in long intricate undulating chains which appear at first glance to be after the manner of the Book of Durrow designs. The animals have thick necks, fierce eyes and great gaping jaws, not dissimilar to the former book; yet, these acknowledge both Style II, and also the new style of the Lindisfarne Gospels. This is seen in their beautifully shaped back legs continuing from the body not joined by a pear-shaped joint. The front legs are also joined by a spiral, albeit one which accents the opposite side to those of the Lindisfarne Gospels, the elbow not the shoulder, but it is not the pear-shaped joint of Style II.

The lower legs appear to have no bones and this allows the legs to go in directions which are anything but natural. The jaws are long and stiff like knitting needles picking up strands, but not themselves lacing in loops, rather just threading. This artist has a middle position between Style II and the natural style. Figure 1gi-iii shows comparison of animals from each book, in similar positions, and the shift from the Book of Durrow to some naturalistic features in the Durham Gospels can be seen, but it is still far from the animal type in the Lindisfarne Gospels. However, the interlace is not from the bony parts as it is in Style II, but comes from the flexible strands, tail and ear lappet as it does in the Lindisfarne Gospels and yet these extensions run

Figure 1h

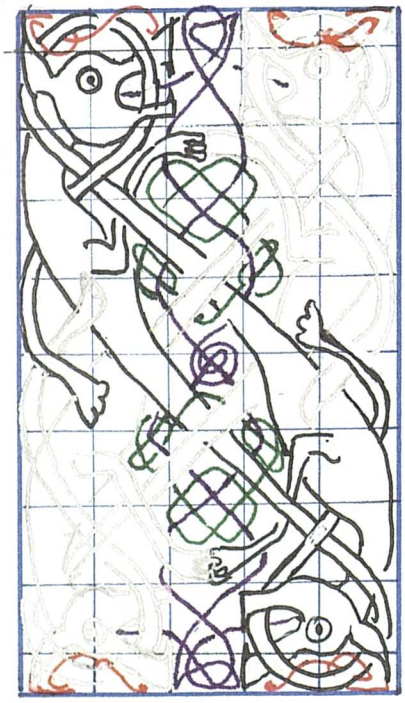


i. Lichfield Gospels, p.220: unit of carpet page.

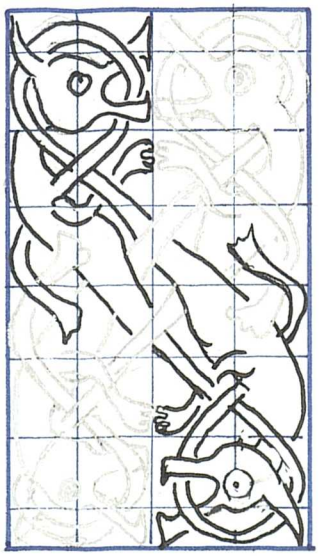
ii. Swirled loops (from above).

L

R



iii. Durham Cassiodorus, f.81v: border animal design.



iv. Four unit grid.

rhythmically and freely, without attention to the grid construction which seems to be there only to keep the design regular. Figure 1fiii demonstrates a possible grid for the animal. The lacing is a calligrapher's romance, as strands run through the design forming elegant flourishes in all the available spaces.

The three animal types, contrasted in figure 1g, visually link to the animal of the Durham Gospels closer to the Book of Durrow type, whereas in fact this animal goes much of the way to the Lindisfarne Style[11]. For all this the designs do not have the appearance of the work of a master who is the innovator of the new natural ideas. Rather it has the look of the work of an artist who knew the new style and chose what he wanted. I cite one detail: the only natural feature of the foot he uses is the stopping pad decoratively but incorrectly, on both front and back legs. This feature is not the foremost detail of a dog's foot which one would expect an innovator to use. On the other hand it might indicate that the artist chose this feature from the naturalistic style of another as a decorative detail to be incorporated into his own work.

The Lichfield Gospels

The Lichfield Gospels, dated to the second quarter of the eighth century (Alexander 1978, catalogue 21),[12], too, has a famous cross-carpet page with animal decoration, page 220, (plate 5). This bears an obvious resemblance to folio 26v of the Lindisfarne Gospels and the dog and bird motifs have similarities, yet they become almost a caricature of the former, for example the paws of the dogs are huge with long toes and exaggerated claws. The bird feet too, as the toes curl up and out like a fountain, gain interest as a design motif but are far from reality. The line work is decorative but not sensitively defining nature. Bruce-Mitford (1989, 187 and 188) describes the works as being "derivative and repetitive of established formulas without feeling" and talks of the "tendency to run to seed".

A grid may guide the intervals of the design as suggested in figure 1hi but little of it is used in the manner of interlace, in curves and angles. The animal motifs which make up each square unit of the carpet design are not integrated with each other. Two dogs each bend around two sides, horizontally and vertically rather than diagonally, while the bird merely fills the hollow centre without connecting with dogs, apart from by its feet (Figure 1hi).

The lacing just crosses the forms and twists in the spaces with calligraphic freedom. This has little to do with the integrated and gridded interlace of the Lindisfarne Gospels and, because it is not formed on a grid, it is very irregular, and no knot is exactly the same as its neighbours. The exigencies of animal patterns lead Eadfrith occasionally to use some unorthodox loops which would be difficult to place on a grid, but the Lichfield artist did not attempt true interlace and his loops are formed around verticals, horizontals or any sloping lines. I have called these calligraphic flourishes swirled loops, to distinguish them from the controlled plaited form (figure 1hii).

The Durham Cassiodorus

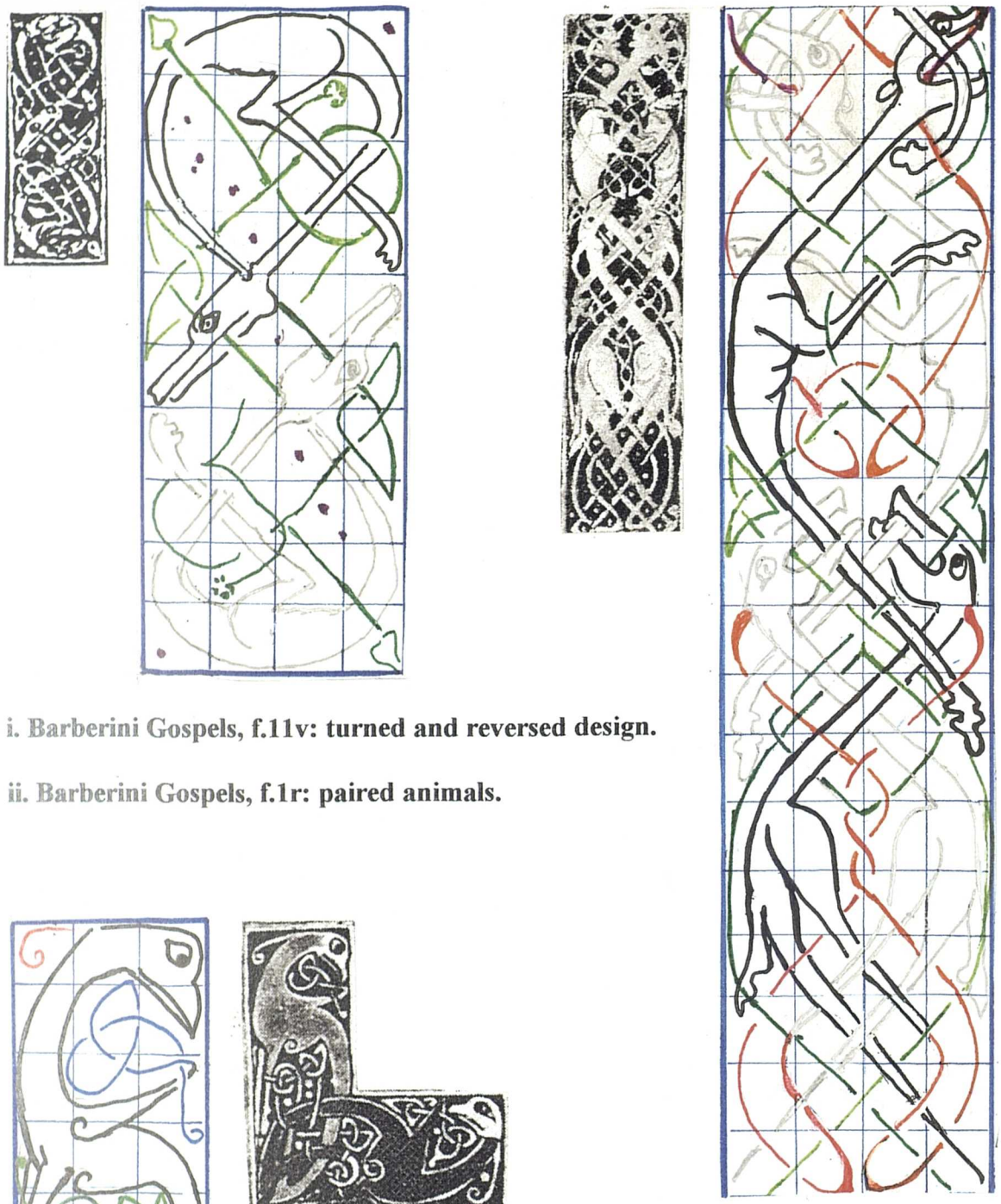
While the artist of the Lichfield Gospels copied something of the Lindisfarne animals but not the concept of interlace, in the Durham Cassiodorus, we have an artist who has vastly different animals but ones which appear to follow a grid. The relevant folio is 81v and the designs around the wide border are in panels, four pairs of animal designs alternating with interlace panels (plate 6). The figure of David on the folio was meticulously constructed, even by the use of templates (Bailey 1978, 15 and 16) and the interlace designs too, have a rigidity of structure. The animals, by contrast, appear to float on freehand interlace which makes a background web so that details of the interlaces differ even in what seems to be the repeat of each pattern, (figure 1hiii, photocopies), where the example is from the lower part of the side borders.

Richard Bailey says of the animal designs (1978, 20):

> What we have on this page is a very eclectic set of animals;
> some ribbons, some solid, some developments of Lindisfarne
> art, some new introductions given a bit native knotwork.

Most of the animals are without naturalism and take on a sinuous serpentine aspect, which is coupled with over large head with gaping mouths. The biped, dragon-like creatures (figure 1hiii) are in a set-of-four formation on a grid five units wide. If the grid had been four units in width the animals would have integrated tightly (figure 1hiv). Five units allows space between the slim bodies and most of the gaps are in the web are in the centre. These are filled by rather irregular interlace (figure 1hiii), some of which comes from the tongue (purple) but some arrives from nowhere at all (green). R. Bailey (1978. 20) dates the manuscript to the third quarter of the eighth century,

Figure 1j



i. Barberini Gospels, f.11v: turned and reversed design.

ii. Barberini Gospels, f.1r: paired animals.

iii. St Petersburg Gospels, f.18 : reversed animals.

preferring about 750. Alexander (1978, catalogue 17) places it in the second quarter of the eighth century. The "monsters" without naturalism seem to indicate a date much later than the Lindisfarne Gospels (chapter 6) and the move from the former concepts is considerable.

The Barberini and the St Petersburg Gospels

Bipeds again make up the decorative themes of these two manuscripts, which may or may not be connected with Northumbria (Alexander, catalogue 36 and 37), namely the Barberini Gospels and the St Petersburg Gospels, dated by Alexander to the second half of the eighth and late eighth century respectively. There are features of both these works which will prove to be relevant for some sculpture, to be discussed.

The Barberini Gospels feature a simple little biped with furled wings, on folios 1r and 11v (plate 7, figures 1ji and ii). The canon table frame has a strip of mainly paired animals, while the St Matthew portrait is surrounded by a thick border of alternating interlace and animal panels, not unlike the arrangement in the Durham Cassiodorus. Like that manuscript, too, the relaxed apparently freehand animals make a contrast to the strict, rather blockish interlace. Those on the strip (figure 1jii) have ever changing liveliness but the panels (figure 1ji) are turned and reversed, others are reversed on one axis in a simple manner. The slim animals and very fine lacing which forms for the most part, orthodox loops, respond to the grids which have been put through the holes in a normal manner. Dots and leaf terminals make it appear quite different from any other style, and yet it is close to the principle of animals with integrated interlace used in the Lindisfarne Gospels and the animals are elegant but not natural.

The St Petersburg Gospels (Alexander catalogue 39) have vigorous animals, on many folios of canon tables and letter pages. There are several dragonesque hybrids, but the types shown either on plate 8 (centre) or on figure 1jiii have bulgy bodies from which strong necks curve up from one side, while equally strong tails with leaf terminals turn down from the other forming a balance. Each has a short wing raised on a spiral and a long, slim straightish leg or legs. Simple though the motif is, it can be twisted in extraordinary ways to fill some very strange shapes either singly or in pairs; either simply expressed or well integrated together. In spite of its flamboyant appearance it is always well controlled. Figure 1j iii shows a pair of animals, nicely formed on their

probable grid. The lacing, however, is separate and in no sense integrated. It is white on a dark ground; lacy calligraphy, filling in spaces with loops, both orthodox or swirled. Ostensibly the lacing may come from the already completed tail, wing or ear, or it might be the tongue, and its purpose seems as a joyful background filler.

This artist is Eadfrith's real heir in his imagination and ability to follow the potential of his motif to the limit and express all designs with vigour, cleverness and not a little wit. If this work is late in the eighth century about a century has passed from the time Style II inherited by the Book of Durrow to the new breed of strange animals. The naturalism of the early part of the eighth century has passed, allowing a return of something closer to the hearts of the Anglo-Saxons, the fantastic animal.

So each of these manuscripts, mostly connected with Northumbria, has individuality, and there are no exact followers of Eadfrith's interpretation. Although, apart from the Book of Durrow, all seem to owe something to his concepts in the type of animal, or pattern type or the use of the grid or perhaps even the daring vitality and imagination.

Conclusion

Two main aspects are present in the concepts of the animal patterns of the Lindisfarne Gospels. One main theme is naturalism, that is the natural animal (bird) is an ideal one with shape of body, head, legs, paws are all important but it is not one particular breed. The extension of any of its parts, body, neck or limbs can be used. Exaggerated turns do not detract from the natural features as the turn is not against bone or natural joints. Yet the complexity has often bamboozled the onlooker into thinking that these patterns were not part of the movement towards naturalism which took place in the late seventh and early eighth century. The early Style II work lacked this naturalism and so too did the later bipeds to an extent, which returned to fantasy while not entirely giving up some convincing details of living beasts or their vitality.

The other main aspect of the concept in the Lindisfarne Gospels is that the grid which is used for interlace, is now used in the same manner for animals. Previous work of Style II was set out evenly and a grid of squares seems to have been used to support and regulate the design but it was not placed as interlace. The new animals curl and thread themselves on this grid so as to use up as many crossings as possible and lacing

is added to tighten the design on the web. No other artist achieved this to any extent, some did not observe the later part of the concept at all. For Eadfrith the lacing in true interlace loops completed the work and held it together, using a complementary rhythm in a lighter strand. Apart from the Barberini Gospels' master (plate 7), other artists kept to a calligraphic style of lacing. Such lacing runs free of the grid, sometimes in orthodox loops which often are freehand, elegant but impromptu knots. However since it is hard to form adequate lacing on a grid with animals, the calligraphic style is an easy option.

The Lindisfarne Gospels are distinctive then because of the concepts described. The sculptors of Bernicia did not copy the designs even if they were available to copy in sketch form. The actual designs were too complex for their purpose since they had to look to the medium with which they had to work. They could however use the concepts in simpler forms, which were most suitable for their purposes. So it is the concepts which are now followed through the study of the sculpture.

NOTES

1. Aldred's colophon (folio 259v) written in the mid-tenth century names Eadfrith as the writer of the Lindisfarne Gospels. He was made Bishop soon after the elevation of St Cuthbert in 698. Alexander (catalogue 9) gives this as the likely date for the Gospels but allows a range from the late seventh to the early eighth century. Although there is controversy, the exact date is not critical for the arguments of this thesis and the turn of the century is a convenient pivot.

2. Valuable small objects brought from the Continent are frequently mentioned in primary sources: Bede, HA chapter 6 Eddius Stephanus VW chapter 22. The often used example of the similarity of the Ezra page (Codex Amiatinus, folio Vr) and the St Matthew folio from the Lindisfarne Gospels (folio 25v) indicates the use of a Continental model in manuscripts.

3. Much of what is said on interlace on the next three pages is selected from the introduction of Adcock 1974, and reworked, both text and diagrams, for this context.

4. Adcock (1974,24-5, figure 9), shows a method of using dots and dashes or holes and grooves for interlace which is similar to Budny's notation (2001, 202-3, figure 20) but more suitable for Northumbria, as this grid would support the box points. Here figure 1biii and 5ai and ii.

5. The term "break" has been placed in inverted commas to distinguish this feature from actual breaks in the stone.

6. Double stranded interlace in the Lindisfarne Gospels was drawn first in three strong lines (1960 facsimile: folio 94r). This may have enabled grids to be seen on the opposite side of the folio where the surface was weakened. Animals have larger matt areas in different pigments.

7. Slim hunting dogs appear in secular classical hunting scenes such as in the *Vergilius Romanus*, folio 46 (Weitzmann 1977, plate 12) but works like the Rudston mosaic (Ling 1988, Plate 22) or other work may have been available to the Anglo-Saxons.

8. The cormorant (suggested by B Brown 1921, V, 377) is discussed by Bruce-Mitford (1960, 199-201). He concludes that the bird was not one particular type. Backhouse (1989, 167-8) however, believes the bird has natural features gained from observation.

9. Decorative borders with repeated or alternating motifs were commonplace in classical objects and mosaics. The Style II metalwork forms are more relevant as there were animal chains, reversed designs and turned and reversed designs all of which can all be found in the Sutton Hoo treasures (Bruce-Mitford 1972, Plate F).

10. Roth (1985, 25) lists authorities who date the Book of Durrow from 600 to the eighth century. The animal designs in this Book are mentioned for comparison; the date is not critical for the following arguments.

11. The two manuscripts may be from the one Scriptorium (Bruce-Mitford 1989, 175-188) but as only one animal page of the Durham manuscript survives and a few letters with animals, there is not enough evidence to make a conclusive answer on the flow of ideas in animal designs.

12. Henderson (1982, 126-9) dates the Lichfield Gospels (705-16) shortly after the Lindisfarne Gospesls (698) but the gulf between them seems considerable.

CHAPTER 2

ABERCORN 1934: THE MOST LINDISFARNE OF ALL

Introduction

Abercorn is marked by an ancient church which stands on a strategic prominence overlooking the Firth of Forth. Although the present century seems to have passed this place by its position suggests a site of early occupation. The architecture of the church bespeaks a history going back to Norman times, while the stone sculpture in its possession tells of an Anglo-Saxon heritage, as also does the Venerable Bede (HE IV, 26).

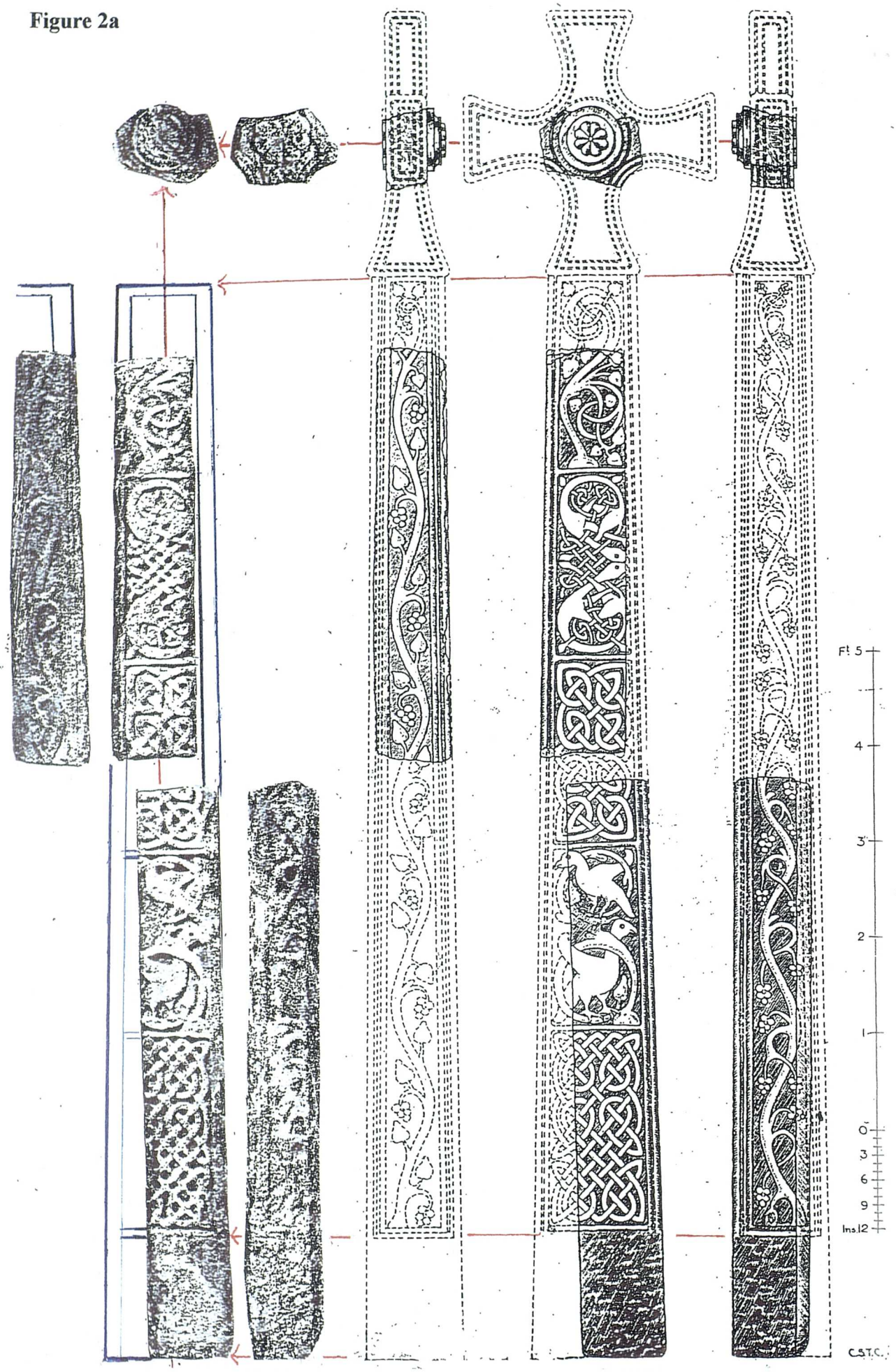
Bede records that Trumwine was made Bishop in 685 and his seat was the monastery of Abercorn or *Aebbercurnig*, (HE IV, 26). This place on the northern edge of the Northumbrian kingdom was connected with Lindisfarne, its founding monastery, by sea, the Pictish north across a narrow stretch of water and the kingdom of Dalriada and the Anglian area in southern Scotland along the river valleys to the west. Although the bishopric only lasted until 707, the peace in the area remained well into the eighth century, allowing time for creative works.

Charles Thomas (1984, 324-37), who excavated on the site, which contained both church and modern graveyard, discovered traces of early boundary walls and small finds which indicated that this was a seventh century foundation, but found nothing of a definite nature. However the tall, elegant shaft which was found in 1934 (Calder 1937-38, 217-223) has attributes which make it a likely work of this early time. The examination of the features of this cross with the animal interlace in particular, is the subject of this chapter. The purpose is to establish its position in Bernician sculpture.

The cross-shaft, found in 1934

The pieces of Anglo-Saxon sculpture are now housed in a little building at the gateway of the Church. The interlaced animal design, just referred to, is carved on a long cross-shaft, now broken into two pieces and lying on a wooden bench so that the work raised to a convenient height, can be studied accurately but little appreciation of its former visual effectiveness as a standing cross can be gained.

Figure 2a



Abercorn 1934: reconstruction and photographs by C. T. S. Calder (1937-8).

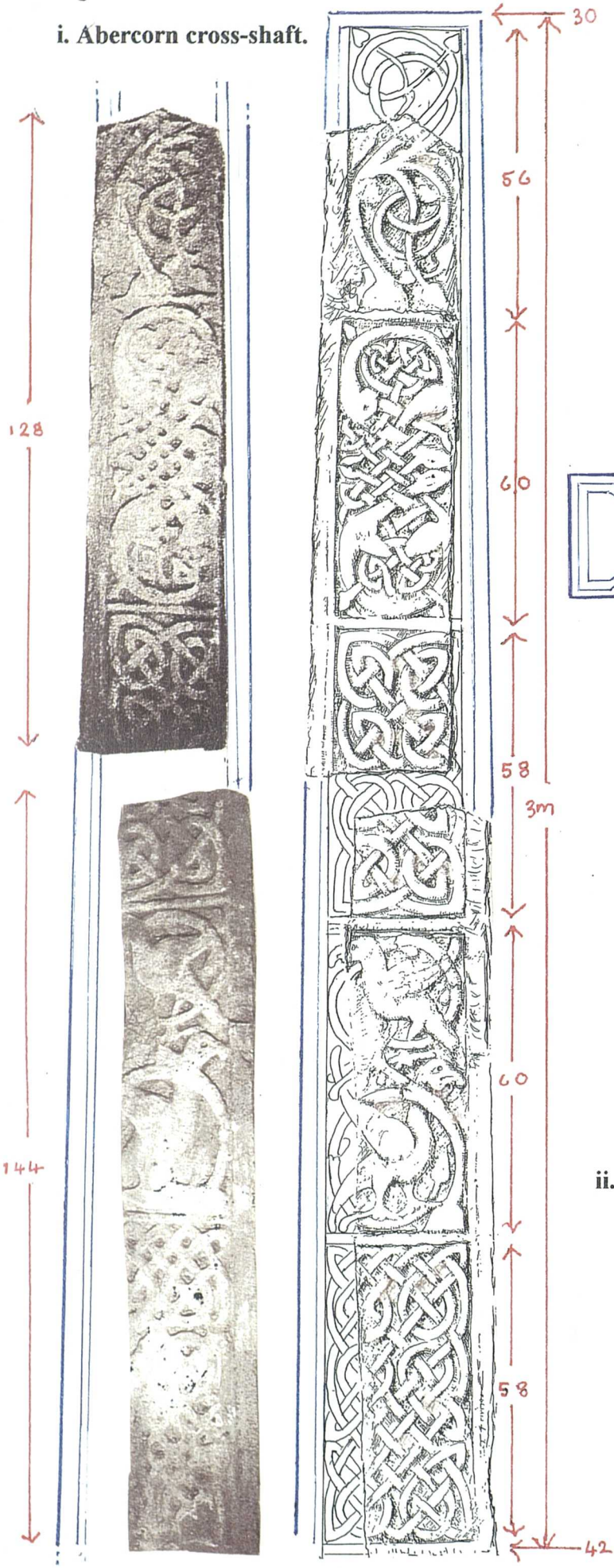
There is comparatively little of the decoration of this once splendid shaft now remaining, since one main face and one narrow side have been removed completely from each piece when it was trimmed as a building block. Further, the remaining narrow side on each block is now severely weathered because of time served in the fabric of Midhope bridge, which was one kilometre south west of Abercorn. However, it was the faintly discernible plant trails which enabled the stones to be recognised, while still embedded in the bridge, and to be removed in 1934. C.T.S. Calder (1937-38, 217-223) published the details, together with photographs and a drawn reconstruction (1937-38, figures 1 and 2). Here I have used his illustrations at the one scale as figure 2a, with my own reconstruction of the face and more recent photographs[1] as figure 2bi.

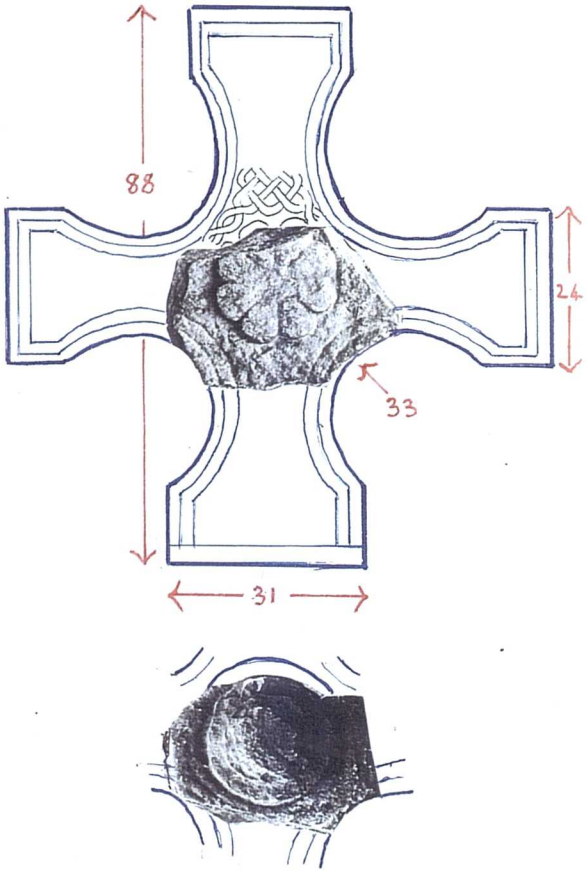
The surviving main face of each piece, which had been buried in the mortar, is in surprisingly good condition. One edge is missing, and a certain amount of abrasion and chipping has disfigured it further; but for all that it has not been greatly weathered. This could indicate that the cross had stood within the church rather than outside for most of its life before it was incorporated in the bridge. The lower piece is 184cm long, 40cm of this at the bottom is uncarved and there are 144cm of carved designs. The upper piece is 128cm long, which if one adds on 8cm for the break and an amount to complete the upper pattern (figures 2a and b), then the decorated part of the shaft is about three metres tall. With a head, the height would be over four metres, making an impressive cross. The work is 42cm wide at the base of the designs tapering to about 30cm, a gradual taper over such a length. The depth is 30cm tapering to 22cm near the top.

In technique this work stands high among the best Bernician works. The strands and vine stems are carved deeply, well rounded on top and smoothly curved to lace. The larger forms are modelled in depth, with some detail engraved on the surface. The carving has been well finished with shapes rising from a smooth ground which is carefully worked so that neither punch nor chisel marks show. The eyes have been drilled to make small round holes 7mm across and deep enough to show as black dots or to be filled with glass or paint.

Figure 2b

i. Abercorn cross-shaft.





ii. Cross-head: a reconstruction.

1:12

The format and programme

The cross-shaft, like many to come, has a double vertical edge moulding about 4.5cm wide, with a deep well rounded inner bead and a flatter roll, rounded at the edge, and there is a single horizontal bead moulding about strand width between each panel. The sides of the shaft have a wider edge moulding, described by Calder (1937-38, 221) as having "an extra V-shaped fillet, which is interposed between the angle roll and the bead."

The carved panels (without mouldings) on the face are all near 60cm in length, from the lowest to the highest 58, 60, 58, 60 and 56± (restored) cm and are 32-21cm wide. In his published drawing Calder (1937-38, figure 2, here figure 2a) shows all the designs of the shaft on one main face, rather than some on one face and some on the other. He read the two registers of pattern A pointing upward on the upper piece as being joined to the two registers of down pointing loops of the same pattern on the lower piece. About 3 inches in Calder's drawing or 8cm had been lost between the shaft pieces in the trimming process.

Normally pattern A, the commonest of all Northumbrian designs, flows one way in a continuous chain. Therefore, one may wonder whether this pattern had been on both faces but pointing in opposite directions. Since there are at Abercorn itself two other stones Abercorn 1 and 4 (ECMS II, 119-120, figures 435A and 437A) which have panels in the form of reversing interlaces and one of these, Abercorn 1 has four registers, two of which are pattern A and two of pattern B combined and reversing. It is most likely then, that pattern A on the shaft had been treated in the same way and that Calder's interpretation is correct. When I drew it in 1974, I too, was also convinced that it was a panel of this sort (Adcock 1974, plate 63).

It has been important to establish that we are looking at one face, as it is rare to have an almost complete length of a shaft face. We have four vertical patterns complete and part of a fifth. The bottom panel is lowest since the rough chiselling below it appears to be original. It is the extension upward which is unknown, although the fifth panel can be completed with reasonable confidence and finishes the shaft well. The subject of the broken top panel is plant-scroll with a spiral to the right and the start of one to the left at the broken edge. Calder's reconstruction (1938, figure 2a) allows the stem to

follow through to a full spiral and finish there. These two spirals produce a panel roughly the same size as each of the other four and match the three patterns below which have two registers. I agree with the reconstruction of the double volute but see the detail as slightly different (figure 2bi).

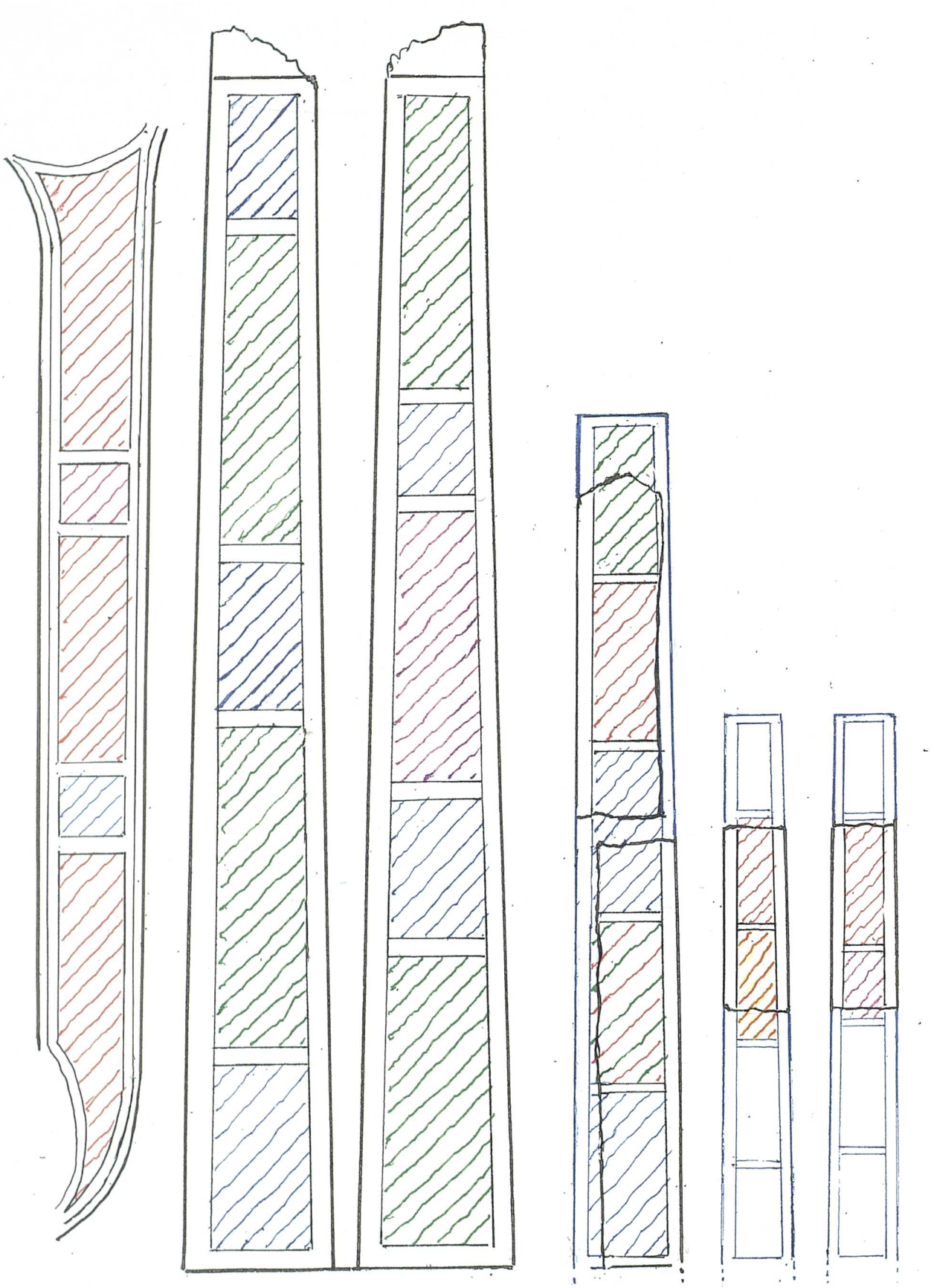
The cross-shaft now looks complete in its tall, slim, slowly tapering proportions and 30cm is a good width to carry a head. A piece of cross-head was photographed in 1938 and 1974.[2] Calder (1937-38, 223) gives its measurements, the boss is 20cm in circumference and projects 6cm, while the roundel on the other side is 19cm, projecting a little over a centimetre. The depth otherwise is 12.5cm. The fragment, with its sharp double mouldings and projecting boss, would appear to be suitable for this shaft or a similar one. The armpits have very wide arcs so that the arms must have been quite narrow. Calder (figure 2a) reconstructs the head with wedge-shaped arms 9B (Corpus I, figure 2). Figure 2bii shows a continuation of the arcs following the natural curve and finished with spatulate or bladed end. This is based on four known Bernician heads: Hoddom (figure 29 C and D), Jedburgh (Cramp 1983, figure 115), Rothbury and Norham (Corpus I, illustration 1207 and 1186)[3]. All have bladed ends, some cusped and are classed as a 9D (Corpus I, figure 2).

From Bewcastle, there is an early drawing surviving (Corpus II, 72-73, illustration 117-8), which shows a stone as if in the rough marked in chequers, with short splayed arms but the rough edges may indicate that the blades were knocked off. However, Calder's similar long wedge shaped arms (Corpus I, figure 2, type 9B) gain some credence from St Cuthbert's pectoral cross (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 98).

The five panelled cross

If five is the number of panels, this cross is placed in a very interesting context. Several major letter stems in the Lindisfarne Gospels have five panels. The best example is the stem of the "Q" on folio 139r. where there are three long animal interlaces separated by two formal square patterns, one an interlace, the other a fret (plate 2A, figure 2ci). The same sort of thing occurs on the "I" stems of folios 95r and 211r (plate 2B). Such an arrangement is also used in sculpture on the Bewcastle cross on sides B and D (Corpus II, illustrations 92 and 3, figure 11, here figure 2cii). Here

Figure 2c



Panelled shafts: i. Lindisfarne G. f.139r, ii. Bewcastle, iii. Abercorn 1934, iv Aberlady.

interlace, animal interlace, plant-scroll, figural, geometrical. 1:20

short panels alternate with long ones in the manner of the Gospels, the short designs are interlace but the long ones plant-scroll. On side B three short panels are separated by two long ones, ABABA and the reverse is true on the other side, except that the central panel is just chequers BACAB. Figure 2cii expresses these faces diagramatically. The chequers eight abreast by twenty five in length are either a simple relief from the rhythmic plant scrolls or are the grid for setting out a design which did not eventuate, a feature panel.

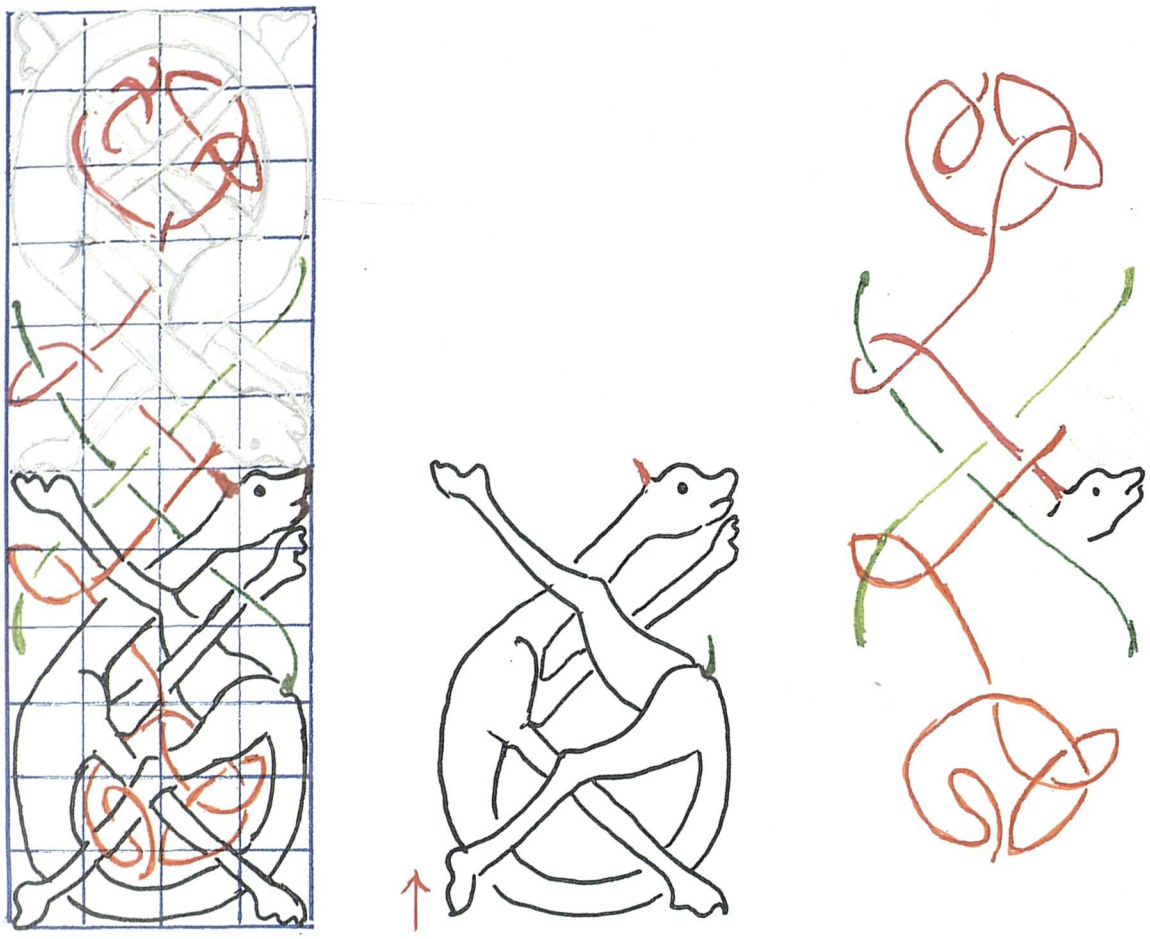
If the Abercorn shaft (figure 2ciii) had five panels, then it would follow the scheme of the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Bewcastle cross. However, there are two notable differences: firstly, all the panels are roughly the same size, although the animal panels are slightly longer. This evenness is reminiscent of the patterns on the side borders of the Durham Cassiodorus (folio 81v plate 6), where interlaces alternate with animal interlaces but the sizes of the designs are fairly even. The second difference is in the various types of pattern. On the shaft, from lowest to highest is interlace, animals in plant-scroll, interlace, interlaced animals, then on top it has a plant-scroll. Aesthetically the inhabited plant-scroll and the plain plant-scroll continue the rhythm of the interlace designs but are of different genres. The artist may have thought that the two animal designs were related. Then it would have some sort of alternating rhythm ABAB(C).

The genres of the cross-shaft

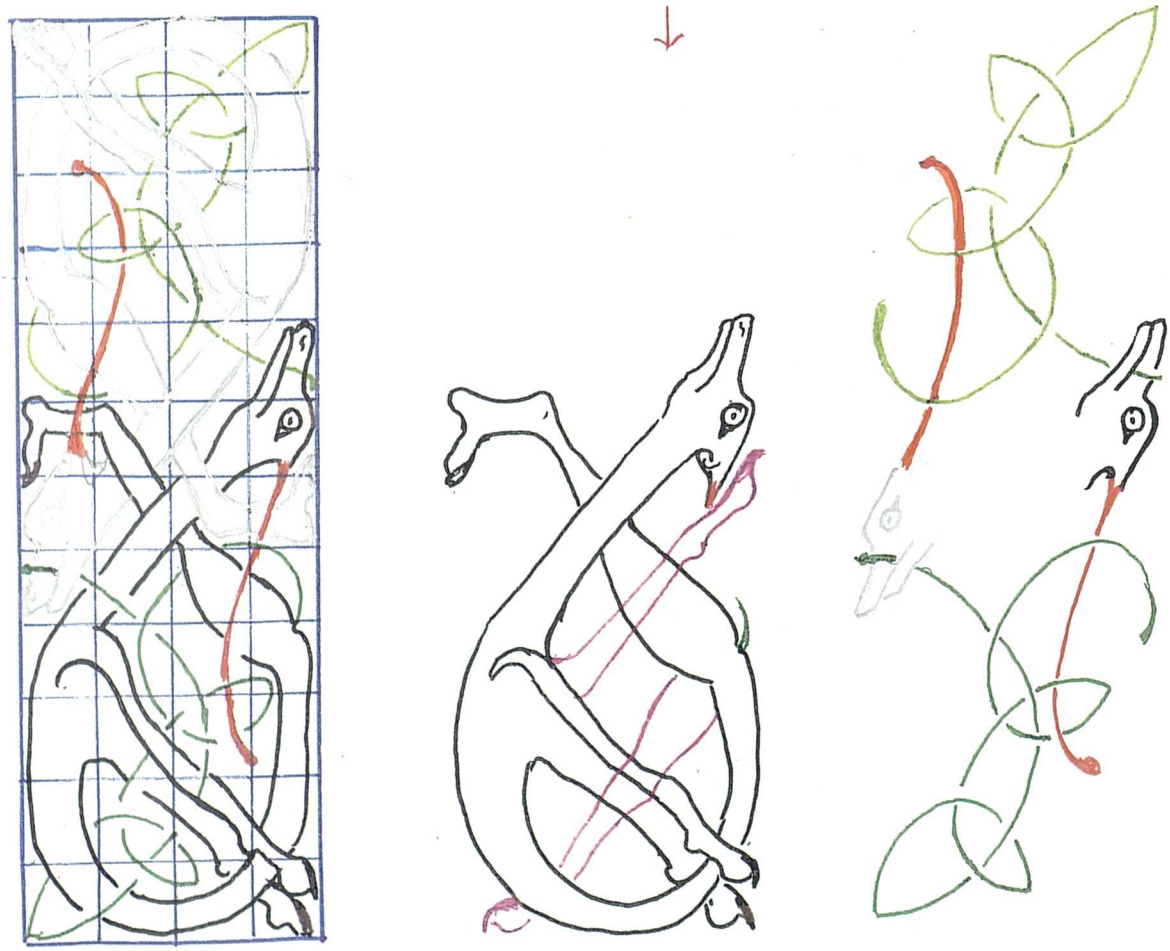
There are two main streams of designs: the first is naturalistic plant-scroll with inhabited plant-scroll and the second is interlace and animal interlace. There is no plant form in the early manuscripts but much in early sculpture from Jarrow, Hexham, Hoddom, Bewcastle and other places. Since there are no early to middle eighth century cross-shafts found at Lindisfarne, because of the loss of this type of sculpture there is no indication to show whether plant forms were not present or not.

The continuous plant trails on the side of the Abercorn cross and the two face panels have a paucity of foliage, with little variety compared to Bewcastle (Corpus II, illustrations 99 and 100). The few leaves are heart shaped with or without lobes (Corpus I, figures 11 and 12) and if fruit is present on the worn side, it is the same triangular shape (figure 2a). Yet there is an uncrowded classical simplicity and

Figure 2d



Pattern, motif and interlace: i. Abercorn 1934. ii. Lindisfarne Gospels folio 139r.



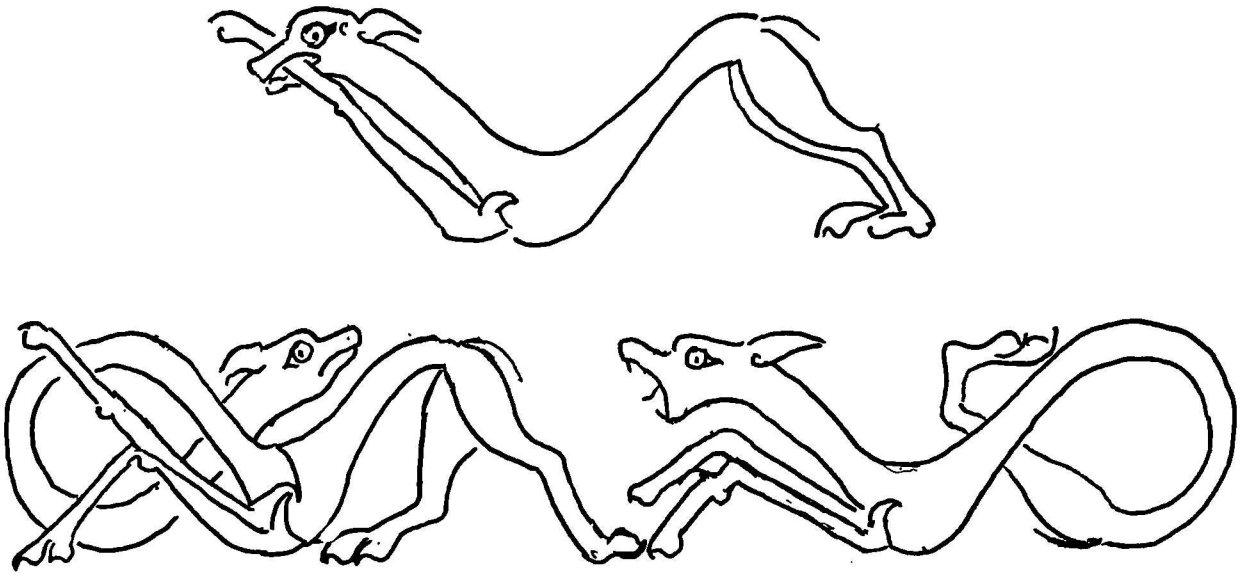
elegance of line, without formulaic arrangement. The plant-scroll on the face panel has something of the elaborate curling of Bewcastle 1Dii (Corpus II, illustration 102) but with the uncluttered line of Norham 1D (Corpus I, illustration 1159). The inhabited scroll (appendix plate I) is more circling than spiralling and the birds form diagonals akin to interlace. There are two further features like interlace: firstly the beak of one seizes the ribbon tail of the other instead of nibbling fruit; secondly the upper bird has huge feet which weave on a diagonal course instead of sitting on the branch, as do the neat-footed birds of Bewcastle (Corpus II, illustration 115).

The interlaces are of excellent quality with slightly finer than half width strand (figure 2bi) but there is nothing distinctive about the patterns. The ten cord pattern (lowest), with symmetrical loops and outside strands, is related to the varieties found in abundance on folios 211r (plate 2B), while the pattern A was perhaps a little too common for a major design in the Lindisfarne Gospels but the rubricator used it on the same folio. Both are also found, top and bottom of folio 81v (plate 6) of the Durham Cassiodorus. The animal interlace design, however, is much more distinctive and this is the design which I claim to be the most "Lindisfarne" of all.

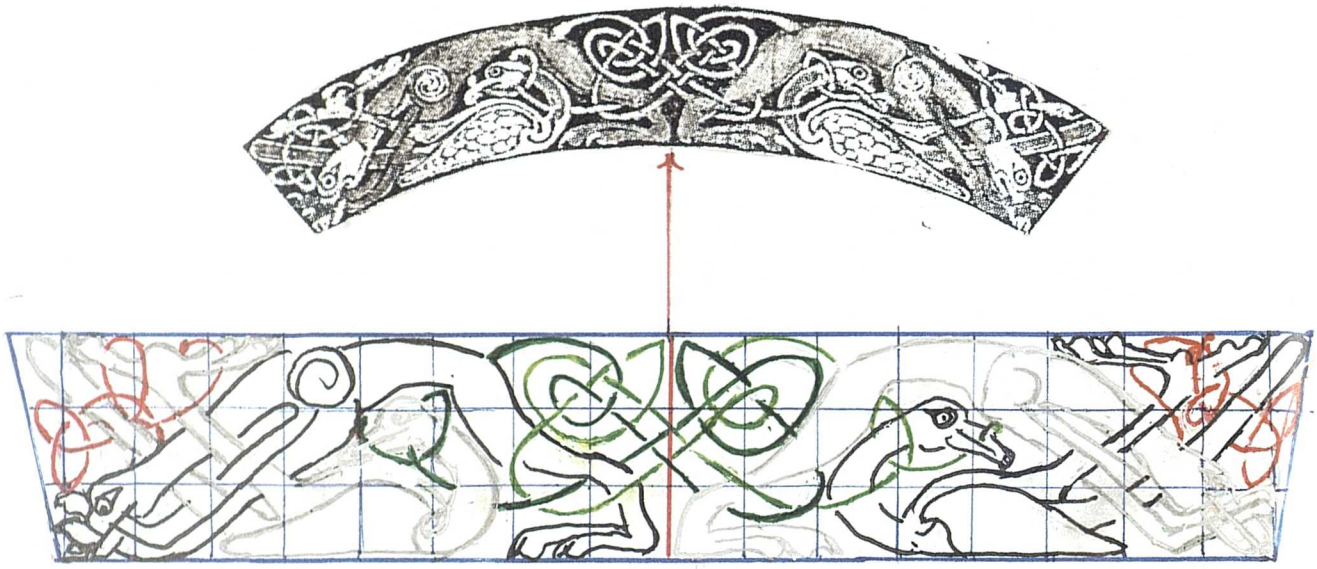
The Abercorn animal design compared with pattern types in the Lindisfarne Gospels

The animal design (plate 9) is a simple reversing pattern in two registers. Plate 9B shows the drawing with a grid that is four units in width and twelve in length placed through the natural hole points. The shoulder and back legs cover grid points as such features can. The divisions along the vertical axis are 4.5cm apart wider near the bottom but on the horizontal axis they are wider and tapering with the shaft, 6cm intervals at the lower edge which is 24cm wide. The designer, who presumably needed five patterns on the shaft of near equal length, must have had to give this design a rectangular unit to fit it to the space as often happened both in sculpture and manuscripts. His units on the two interlaces below were 6cm, and as 4.5cm is three quarters of this, here is the first evidence of the use of some sort of graded scale or ruler. Figure 2di shows the design on a 1cm grid in an ideal fashion, with separate animal and interlace for clarity.

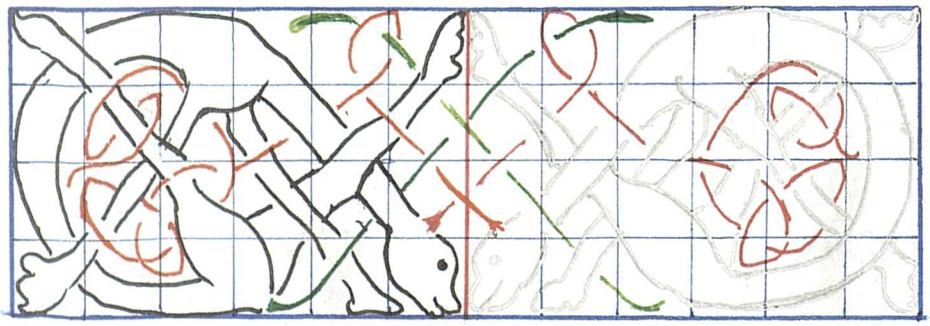
Figure 2e



i. Poses of animals in the Lindisfarne Gospels: zig-zag, head turned, body turned.



ii. Lindisfarne Gospels f.139r; turned pattern.



iii. Abercorn 1934: turned pattern.

The design is a simple idea. The body turns in a bend so that walking back legs from the right diagonally cross walking front legs from the left. The neck is extended following the diagonal direction of the upturned front leg and is opposed by a back leg from the opposite direction to complete the loop, while the other back leg and front leg form diagonals in the opposite direction to pin the lacing (figure 2di).

This pattern is like some in the Lindisfarne Gospels which have a similarly turned body. It seems to happen particularly in the Canon Tables or some borders, as on folio 27, that there are long chains of dogs which terminate by having the head end or the hind quarters turned back into the pattern. So with rectangular panels, the dog or dogs may turn back their necks or legs so that these parts thread back through the design. The diagrams of figure 2ei show three of these typical poses all taken from folio (211r, plate 2B). However, a fourth pose is produced if the turn is midway along the animal so that the neck will cross the legs to form the loop. There is an example on Lindisfarne Gospels folio 139r and the Abercorn design is this type of pattern, with the neck crossing a back leg (plate 2A and 9, figure 2d). The design on folio 139r (figure 2dii), is formed on a grid using the units in almost the same way as the sculpture, except that the back stretches one unit higher. The front legs are parallel but the back leg is single, however, it would be simple to add walking legs on the grid like those of Abercorn (figure 2dii, purple lines), to achieve almost the Abercorn pattern motif itself.

The lacing and the Lindisfarne Gospels

Equally important in linking the design to the Lindisfarne Gospels is the lacing. It has been shown in chapter 1 that Eadfrith's lacing, unlike that in the other manuscripts discussed, is well integrated with the animal. Its purpose is to join forms, to cross uncrossed crossing points on the grid, as well as to decorate in a suitable rhythm. The designs are a unity, not two separate entities, even though the lacing is picked out in another colour. The sculptor adheres to the same principles with a simpler format. He achieves a tight integrated design (figure 2di). In this example, in the plain area behind the heads, the tail and ear strands lace. Two asymmetrical loops make a counter weight on the left to the heads on the right. It is not easy in a photograph to extract animal legs from lacing strand, but in reality the interlace is a few millimetres lower (plate 9B cross section). The ear strand plunges into the round hollow formed by the body,

which is crossed diagonally by two legs so that it forms a double loop, (see glossary) then circles around going with the curve of the animals and finally ends in a single loop at the top (plate 9 and figure 2di), with a different ending using a "U' bend motif at the bottom. The diagonal legs pin the loops. This area is ambitious and although it fits a grid with a few compromises, the designer did not seem to allow for the difficulties of such a complex area in sculpture. It is an example of how a fluent pen can go further in intricacy than the chisel. This is the only case of the triquetrá-like double loop, so characteristic of the Lindisfarne Gospels, being used in Bernician animal designs.

From this analysis of the pattern itself it is clear that the sculpture is for the most part drawn up in the manner of the Lindisfarne Gospels: the use of the grid and the proportions of the panel; the pose of the animal and the integrated style of lacing and last of all the double loop used in the lacing. This is a strong case for the pattern being the most "Lindisfarne" of all.

The naturalistic dog and the Lindisfarne Gospels

The second great concept of the Lindisfarne Gospels, that is naturalism, is expressed in a similar form in the Abercorn piece. The Abercorn body itself has a wide chest and slims down towards the back legs. On this body there is a trace of contouring or a second edge line, carved as a groove near the edge. As the surface is well rounded this is a counter productive feature set into the curve, since it negates the three dimensional forms. Of the anatomical details, it is the realistically drawn back legs which seem the most impressive shapes. They lead to long slim feet ending in expressive paws. The sculptor relates forms to the grid well, slipping between grid points. Often in the drawn work of the manuscript the near leg of a pair is divided from the further leg with a line. Here the sculptor could have used a groove to represent this line but he carves the leg, which is behind in much lower relief, by several millimetres, so it can be interpreted in light and shade. The sculptor also rounds the hips and shoulder to give form, displaying considerable awareness of the third dimension.

Eadfrith's depiction of the front legs often uses the junction, which I have called a bone joint (figure 1diii and glossary); a wide triskele that stresses the shoulder in a manner which seems both to represent bone and to anticipate the movement of the leg.

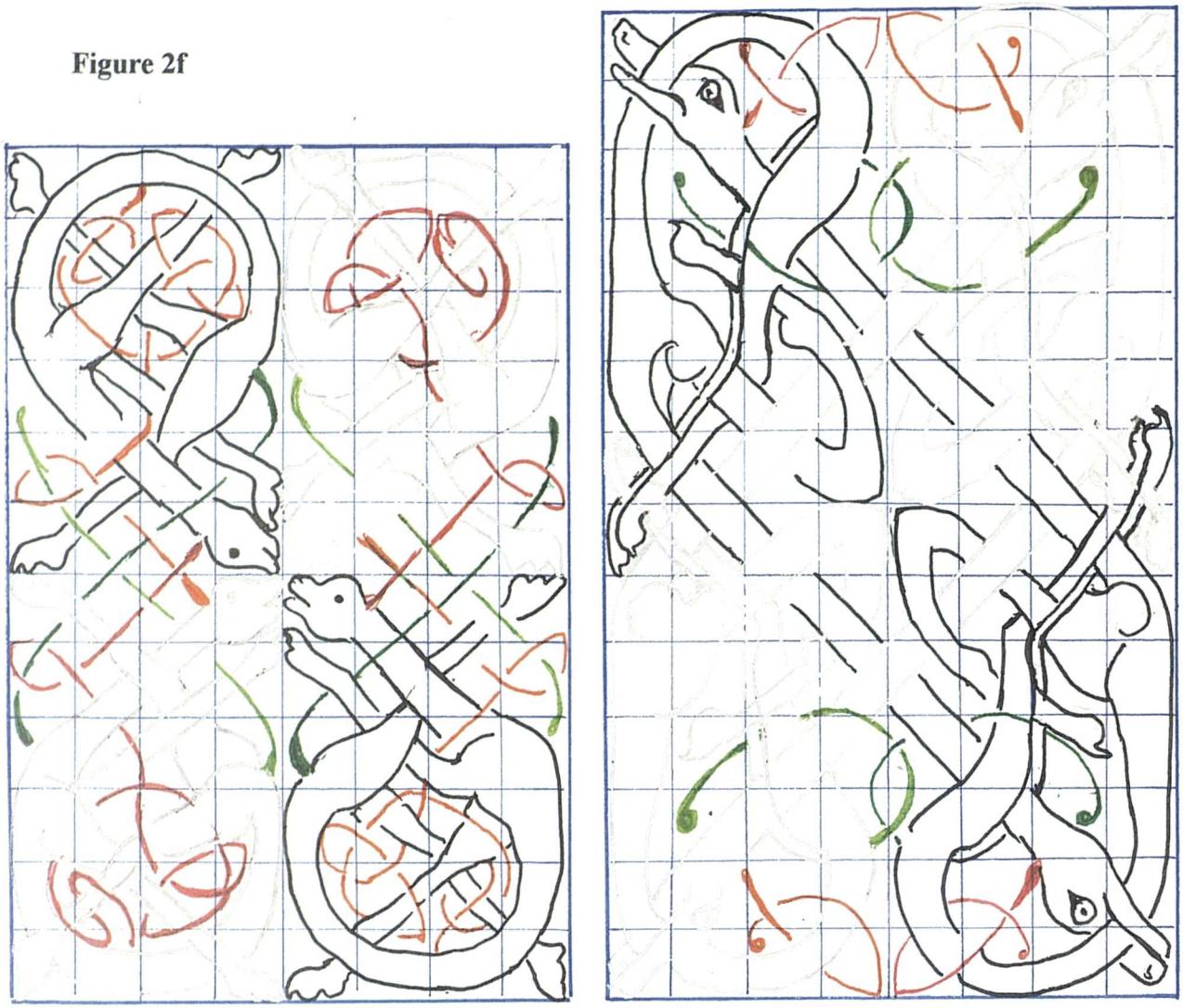
The sculptor also stresses the shoulder joint with a full well modelled curve and shows the elbow joint pulled tightly into the body. Whether there was more detail, in the form of a decorative spiral or a triskele, cannot be ascertained. Traces of tooling in the area show that something of the sort may have existed but the area has been rubbed, and no sense can be made of the marks.

The paws of animals in the Gospels are long and bony, with a variety of expressions appropriate to the space available. The common Gospels' type has either a paw pad, toe pad and claw, or just toe pad and claw, while there is a stopping pad on the front leg. The sculpture is not so clear here but there can be seen a triple arrangement which may represent toes or toe pads and claws, or a double arrangement, just toe and claw, with perhaps the hint of a stopping pad above. These are placed correctly, even elegantly, on the variously positioned legs. The back leg meeting the central axis, could not have trailing paws, a characteristic of the Lindisfarne Gospels, but the space available on the sculpture only allows them to face backwards towards each other. The upper part of the paw is not long but firmly rounded, with a feline appearance.

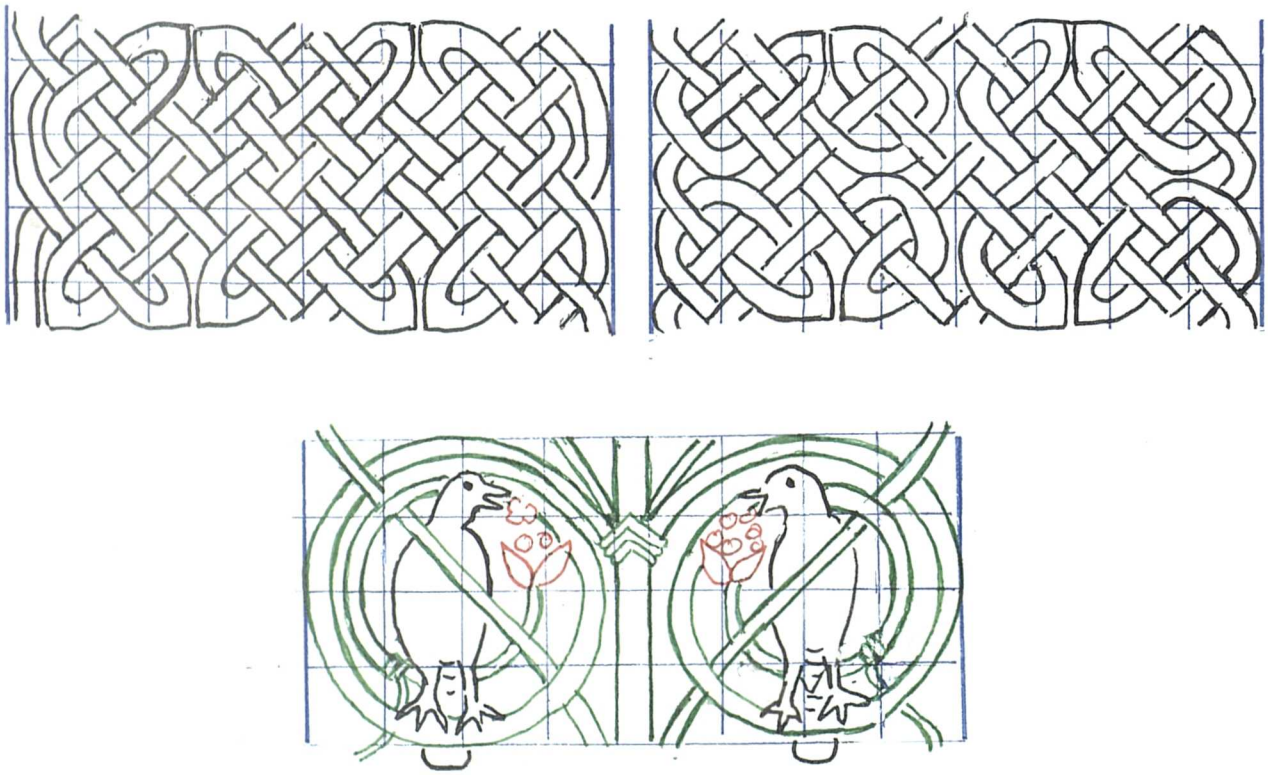
The Lindisfarne heads are usually long with a straight brow stepped down to a long canine nose, while the lower jaw is straight and the mouth long. Even when the space available reduced the length of the face, the straight muzzle and stepped brow remained (folio 15v, figure 1di). The sculptor, on the other hand, used a double curving line for brow and nose and a firmly rounded lower jaw. The result is again rather feline, and individual to the sculptor. The firm well rounded curve mentioned several times now, is a distinctive characteristic of this work. Not only do we see it on the paws and jaws of the animal but it can also be seen on the vine bases, leaves, bird wings and heads on the near-by panels (appendix plate 1).

The last important physical feature is the eye. In the Lindisfarne Gospels the eye is interpreted with a black dot surrounded by a drawn circle and a point at the back. On the sculpture there is a neatly drilled hole 7mm in diameter and several millimetres deep. When unworn this would have been seen as a black dot. Traces of grooves around the drill hole are too worn to be interpreted correctly, but possibly could allow for a representation like the circle and a point to the back. Colour may have been used for defining the area of the eye[4]. These then are the details of the physical features on

Figure 2f



Sets-of-four: i. After Abercorn 1934. ii. Lindisfarne Gospels 138v.



Eight-unit patterns: iii. Rothbury 1C, iv. Ancrum fragment. v. Jedburgh shrine.

the one hand relating to the Lindisfarne Gospels, and on the other hand a few individual characteristics.

The reversed pattern

The animals of Abercorn touch but do not integrate with each other since they turn from each other on the horizontal axis. There is one design in the Lindisfarne Gospels which reverses in a similar manner to the Abercorn piece, that is it reverses with the animals end on, with limbs not threading or crossing, so that the lacing strands join the design across the middle. This design is on the round of the "Q" on the *Quoniam* page (folio 139r, plate 2A and figure 2eii). On the central axis the space above their hind quarters is filled with interlace from the tails. The pattern is typically more complex than the sculpture with a bird added beneath each dog which is arched, in what might be called the fifth major pose. The reversed design in the Gospels makes sense in its position, marking as it does, the midpoint of the curve. It makes less sense sculptured on a vertical cross-shaft, although it would have been well suited to a horizontal lintel or impost such as is found at Hackness (Corpus III, illustration 471). However, if the pattern motif or unit was originally designed to be arranged as one of a set-of-four, figure 2fi shows how this would look when put together. It could also have been an out pointing arrangement of the four motifs; that is noses to the side. The set-of-four would have been eight units in width and twelve in length.

There are several sets-of-four in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Two pairs of feature panels on folio 138v are not unlike the Abercorn design. Figure 2fii shows the upper one for comparison. In the Gospel pattern it is the knees not the noses which meet at the centre and the necks which cross to integrate and combine the motifs. This pattern is eight units in width and fourteen units in length. The extra two units in length enable the necks to cross through to the other half of the pattern instead of meeting in the centre. This allows the design to integrate tightly, otherwise it would have been quite like the sculpture.

If this Abercorn design is, as it seems, half of a complete set originally designed to reverse on both axes, then the whole pattern would have been carved on a wide panel and if the unit measure is 4.5cm, it would have been 36cm in all. Two large works, not very far distant, are in eight units and when measured, found to have units of 4.5 cm.

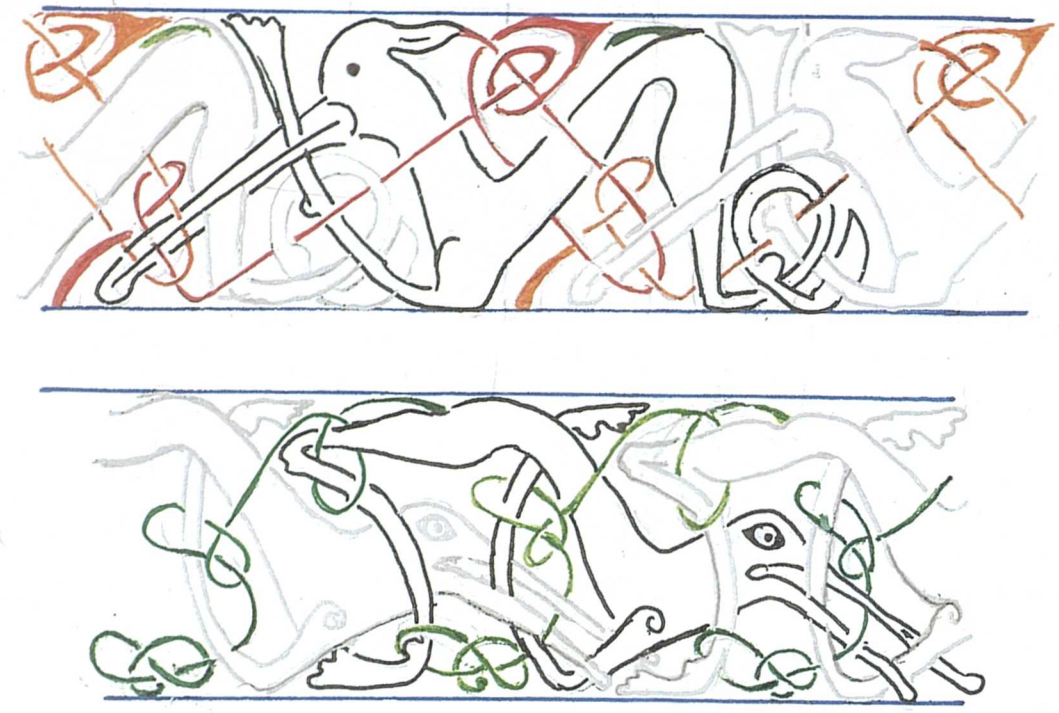
The first work is found on the base of the Rothbury cross 1cC (Corpus I, illustration 1222). The design here is an interlace which has sixteen cords or eight units together 36cm in width (figure 2fiii). The panel is arched but it is twelve units or 54cm to the start of the curve. This is a deceptively simple looking design, although in fact it is one of the cleverest and certainly the most accurately executed in the Northumbrian heritage (Adcock 1974, 166, plate 58). The designer/sculptor of this piece should have had no trouble with setting out an eight unit animal interlace on a cross of a similar size. The second work is a fragment from Ancrum now (figure 5aiv), rightly or wrongly, restored to the Jedburgh Shrine.[5] This piece also has the unit measure 4.5cm like the pattern from Rothbury and I have shown (Adcock 1974, 169, plate 60, figure 31), how this pattern is interchangeable with that from Rothbury, with asymmetrical loops being used instead of "U" bends. Figures 2fiii and iv shows these designs diagramatically, together with a section of the famous slab with inhabited vine-scroll which is 40cm wide (appendix plate 3, figure 2fv).

If this Ancrum fragment is part of the famous shrine, or another shrine of similar size, then an animal interlace as a set-of-four, double the width of the Abercorn design, could alternate with it. Conversely, large patterns for shrines or larger crosses in eight units could have been halved at Abercorn. This demonstrates that there could have been a use for a wide animal interlace and may explain the reversed design of Abercorn.

The sculptor and the manuscript artist

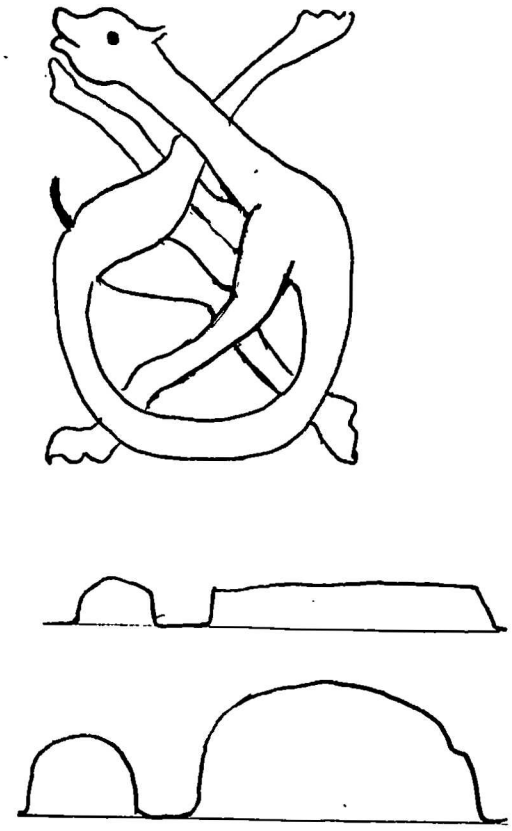
The ease with which manuscript artists could design and execute patterns on parchment is made clear in chapter 1. Eadfrith, with animals which followed the grid in the manner of interlace, made numerous integrated designs. This was a concept which could readily be transferred to sculpture. Those artists who formed calligraphic interlace in irregular swirls could less easily be followed by the sculptor, unless that sculptor used such shallow relief that he was almost "drawing in stone". An example of a sculptured design like those in the "Durham Gospels" in style could demonstrate this. It is on a piece from western Bernicia, Lowther 2 (Corpus II, illustrations 432-5, here plate 10).[6] The shaft piece itself is a squarish gradually tapering piece of fine silt stone. Two faces appear to have been recut at a later date by cutting back one or two centimetres into the designs, thus destroying the mouldings.

Figure 2g



Animal chain: i. Lowther 2. ii. Durham Gospels.

iii. The animals: Lowther 2, Abercorn 1934.



iv. Cross-sections: Lowther 2, Abercorn 1934.

On the earlier side D is a simple medallion plant scroll whose stems with the twigs form a virtual double-twist so popular in early manuscripts (figure 1fii). The few strands are finely cut and elegant, but leaves are sparse and heart shaped with lobes in form similar to those on Abercorn 1934 (figure 2b). Space filling pellets and detached rosettes in the centres of the medallions complete the decoration. In contrast to this simple, well worked plant ornament, side B has a most complex animal chain design (plate 10, figure 2gi) badly carved, as if unfinished.

It is not the same as any other design now remaining on the Durham Gospels (plate 4, figure 2gii), but its concept is the same. There is the major feature, the long straight beak threading through the design and picking up strands. The body, too, has a broad neck and a deep chest slimming back with a leg long, shapely, and at right angles to the body, while the front legs and back leg thread, even loop, and both are embellished with stopping pads and a large unnatural brush-like paw. The ear lappet after a swirling spiral wanders curving and looping as the tail does in the manuscript in a calligraphic manner.

There is some underlying construction to keep the design even but the animal is not formed as interlace on a grid and the interlace also appears free. This has given the sculptor problems even on fine grained stone which accepts delicate carving. The animal is left flat and carved crisply rising a few millimetres from the ground with straight sides. The strands, scarcely 7mm in width, are faceted or rounded but when they cross the animal they have a groove dug either side so the strand need not rise above the animal. Modelling is at a minimum and the sculptor is really clarifying a drawing in low-relief.

It is the irregularities and ambiguities of the strands on this ambitious design which demonstrate that the sculptor, even though treating his design as a drawing in low relief on fine grained stone, could not carve such a complex work. The lack of finish contrasts with the smooth and simple design on the other side. By comparison the motif of Abercorn 1934 is orderly (figures 2 giii and iv) as it was drawn up on a grid, together with the interlace. The cross-sections over animal and lacing strand are given for contrast (figure 2giv).

Even so, the transferring of simple designs from manuscript types to sculpture raised problems. The translation into three dimensional shape or form which is seen in animal and bird bodies in plant-scroll from line drawing is difficult. Contour lines in the Gospels have a gap between edge and the colour, and this may have also been the case in sculpture but it would tend to negate the form. Even without colour, or contour line dug into the rounded body militates against the curve.

However, the different size of strand caused another problem. A rule of thumb might be that a strand should be carved as deep as its width: the higher the strand the wider and conversely, the finer the strand the lower. The Abercorn strands were slightly finer than half width, they tend to be carved a little lower than the well rounded animal with which they must lace. On the flat Lowther work, the artist simply put two grooves across the animal to mark the strand crossing, as if it were a drawing in lines but a sculptor mindful of three dimensions must make his strand look as if it goes up and over the animal, and then down and under in modelled curves and any difference in the height of the strand and that of the animals could create a problem.

This is seen in the work of the Picts, who loved complex designs and fine strands. In one of their greatest works, the St Andrews sarcophagus (ECMS II, figure 365) the sculptor struggled with naturalistically rounded forms and fine low strands. The strands a few millimetres deep cut across the animals, giving a tight, bound appearance to the bodies. The Nigg slab (ECMS II, figure 72A, here appendix plate 2) is a little less extreme but shows the contest between the rounded animal and the lower lacing strands well. Bernician work has not normally tended to such fineness, and works became simpler rather than more complex and strands became wider and thus higher so the problem is solved by bolder and broader higher strands with fewer complexities in lacing. The tight double loop within the hollow of the bodies of the Abercorn 1934 pattern, which shows it to be the "most Lindisfarne of all" is not repeated.

Conclusion

Abercorn 1934, has the pattern which is most like some designs in the Lindisfarne Gospels but it is not a copy of any of them. The artist understood the use of a grid since both animal and lacing integrate. Animals too, have naturalism: head, body, legs and elegant feet all indicate this attention to nature. The work shows a sculptor with a

feeling for form and this raises a few problems as to how to change two dimensional patterns to sculptural works with naturalistic form.

The Abercorn piece although adhering to the Lindisfarne Gospels' concept in its interlace and animal designs, may have wider relationships. Without a full range of sculpture from Lindisfarne itself there is no way of telling if the plant scrolls and birds were from Lindisfarne or other sources. By its geographical position Abercorn could have received inspiration from other places, even if it were basically dependent on the island with which it was connected. There is a work from Aberlady, now to be discussed, which has many similarities and can add further to the repertoire of this period. A more particular conclusion can be reached at the end of that chapter as to the place these pieces hold in sculptural development and their date.

NOTES

1. The photographs used in plate 9, appendix plate 1 and figure 2bi, were taken in 1973-4 (Department of Archaeology, Durham). The photographs of the stones, lying on the vestry floor, have distortion because of the angle (figure 2bi).

2. I drew and measured the cross-head at that time when it was beside the shaft and it also appeared in the photograph with the shaft (figure 2b). In figure 2bii the photograph of the cross-head is from RCAHMS (see acknowledgements). The measurements of Calder are correct.

3. The Abercorn head is larger than the Norham head (Corpus II, illustration 674), from armpit to armpit 33cm to 28 cm. They are proportionally the same and both have a double moulding, bosses either side and decorative twists, the one taking interlace from arm to arm, the other encircling the boss. Norham cross-arm, number 14, (Corpus I, illustration 186, plate 29 A-B) can be matched up with the Norham cross-head. It has cusped blades similar to Hoddom (plate 29).

4. Most other sculptured animal designs have eyes marked with grooves, sometimes carved so as to protrude slightly (plates 60 and 29). To make a strong visual impression these would need to have been painted. Lang (1990, 135-46) discussed the widespread use of paint on crosses. Enamel or even glass may have been used.

5. The Ancrum piece, published by Laidlaw 1905, figure 10, was reconstructed in a drawing by Radford (1956, 43-44, figure 1) as part of the shrine. This reconstruction is used by the Jedburgh Abbey museum.

6. Lowther 2 is in the Burrell Collection, Glasgow. The photograph was obtained from there, and it was drawn by the permission of C. Batey (archaeological adviser to the Kelvin Grove Museum).

CHAPTER 3

ABERLADY: BIRD AND BEAST

Introduction

The medieval church at Aberlady stands on a low rise overlooking a wide expanse of seagrass and mud flat bordering the Firth of Forth, while inland is rolling farmland. It is an area which must have long been a desirable place for human habitation. A river anchorage nearby gives protection to small ships, making the place readily accessible from Lindisfarne in the south-east, with Abercorn further along the estuary. These monasteries on the northern-most boundary of the ancient Lindisfarne diocese are linked closely by land and sea.

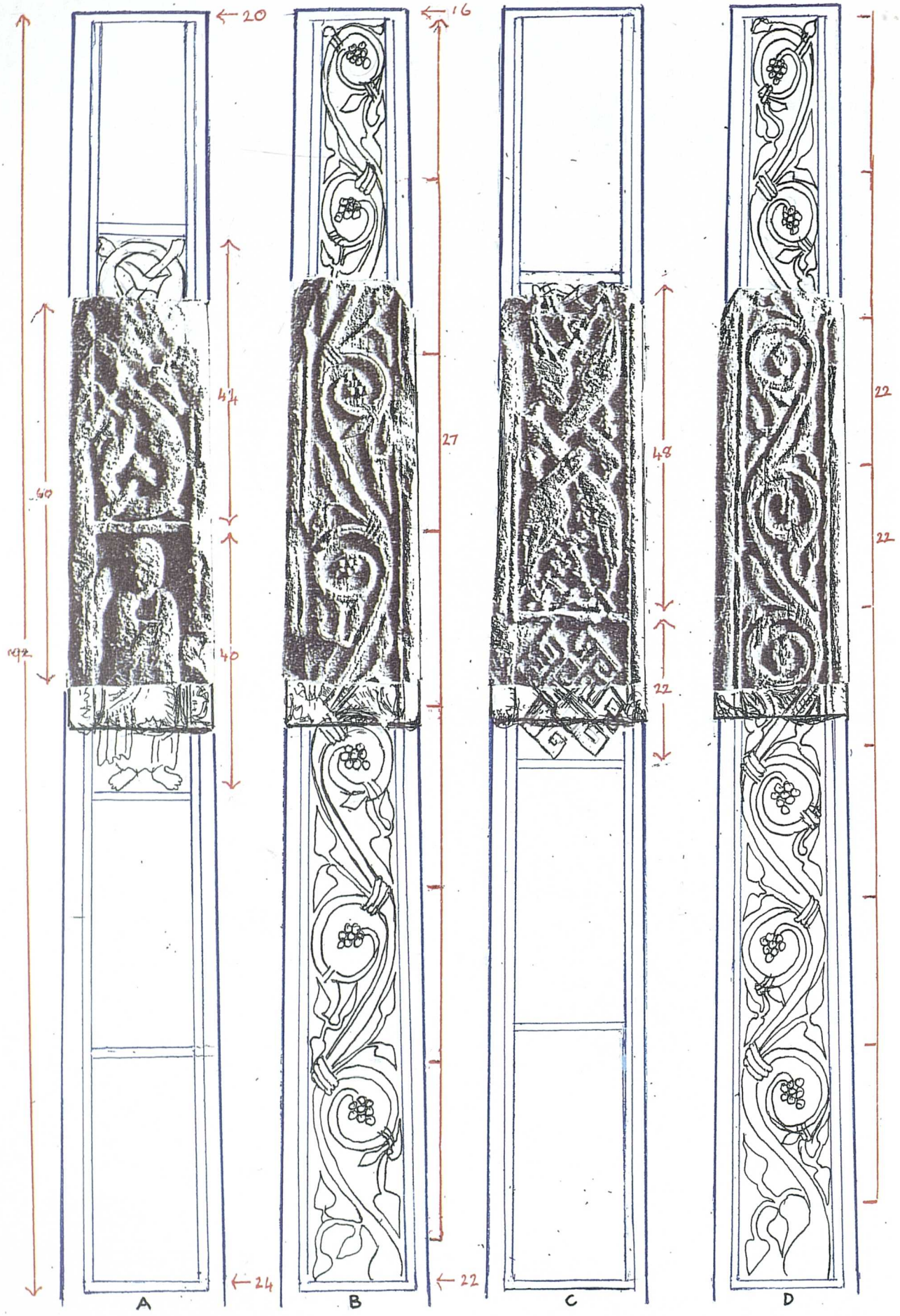
The church has claim to a piece of Anglo-Saxon sculpture[1] removed from the manse garden in 1863 (ECMS II, 428). This enigmatic fragment is remarkable for the confluence of a number of decorative genres: plant-scroll, figural work, fret design and animal interlaces. The relationship of the interlaced animals to the Lindisfarne Gospels is widely acknowledged[2] and as I have already discussed Abercorn 1934, in this context, I will pool the meagre evidence from this second stone with the first so as to find the nucleus of a sculptural school.

The cross-piece: general

The cross-shaft at Aberlady seems to have been broken up for building blocks, as this one piece found, has been squared off at both ends. It is in surprisingly good condition and only face A shows exposure to the weather, either when in its former rightful site or its place in a building. Even then this face has deep and clear carving of its forms, lacking only surface detail.

Technically this is an excellent piece of carving. The medium grained, rust coloured sandstone has accepted strong modelling as well as fine surface detail. The depth of carving is well over a centimetre and the background is smoothly worked with forms rising sharply, having rounded surfaces whether strands or animals. The famous angel has subtle concave and convex curves. Much detail has been engraved on the surface: there are median lines on strands, contours on animals and birds, with feather patterns

Figure 3a



Aberlady cross-shaft: a reconstruction.

1:8

also; folds are shown on drapery, nodes on vines and hemispherical berries individually carved.

The dimensions of the block are 64cm in length,[3] 23-21cm in width and 20-18cm in depth. The sides thus are quite wide in proportion although this is a small cross. The faces are roughly two thirds the width of the faces on Abercorn 1934. Like that cross, too, the taper is quite gradual.

Format and programme

This cross, as far as can be seen, is set out like Abercorn 1934, but on a smaller scale. It has a double moulding along all edges, with a well rounded inner bead and an outer moulding curved around the edges. The mouldings are 3.5cm compared with 4.5cm on the Abercorn shaft. There are narrow single mouldings between the pairs of panels but no panel is complete, estimations (figure 3a) show them as varied rectangles. The width of the decoration is 16-15cm at Aberlady and 24cm at Abercorn (both measured at the bottom of the animal interlace). On the sides continuous plant scrolls are depicted which form regular spirals not waves or trails as was the case on Abercorn 1934. They have longer more pointed leaves but similar short triangular grape bunches. All patterns are seen to be continuing with no terminal in sight, which means that the shaft continued both up and down. The question is how far and did the faces also have five panels?

Since the width of the cross-shaft and also the length and width of the panels as well as the mouldings are about three quarters to two thirds of the size of the equivalent features on Abercorn 1934, then it is possible that the total length of the shaft would have been in the same proportion. The decorated part of the Abercorn work was three metres, so the smaller shaft may well have had about two metres or more of carved designs, if so this would allow for five panels on each side averaging 40cm.

There is some supporting evidence for this on the side ornament where the two plant-scrolls each have slightly different designs and also the lengths of the registers differ: 27cm on side B and 22cm on side D. Both would be extended to start level with the trunks to the side as at Abercorn (figure 2a) and should have finished at the top with complete volutes. Since it is clear that the volutes on the piece are well out of kilter, it

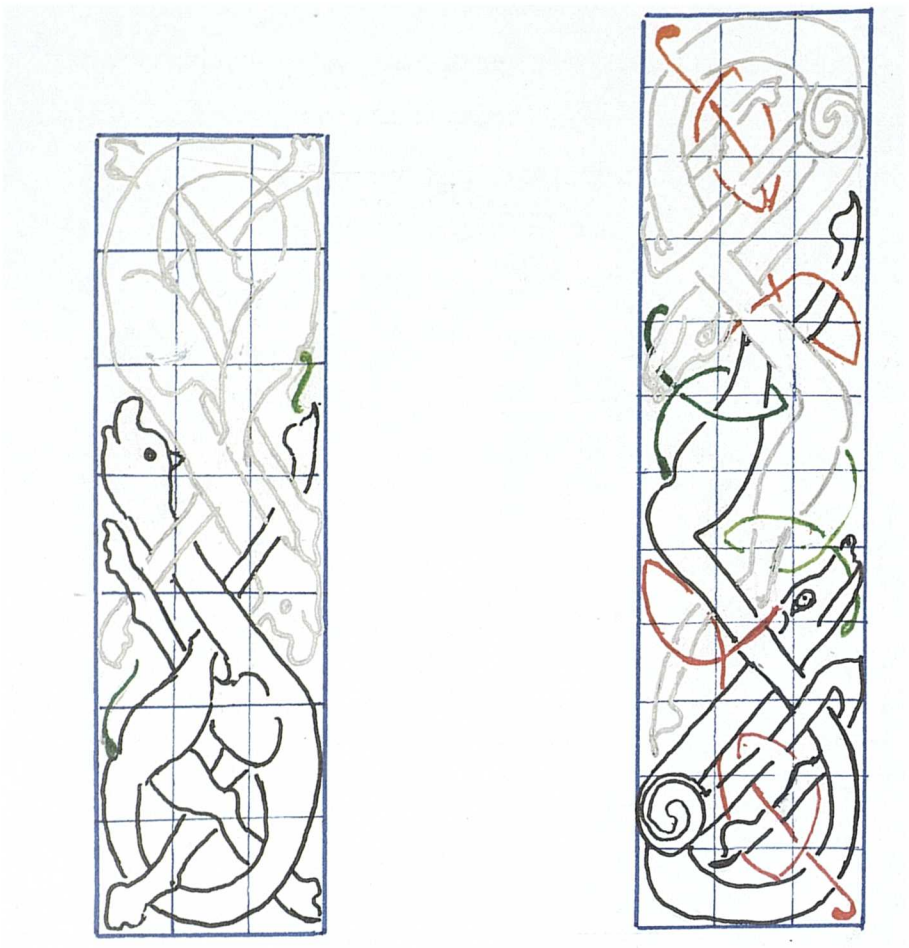
shows that the piece was towards the middle of the shaft. Figure 3a gives a hypothetical reconstruction which would be valid if the volutes continued to be evenly spaced. This is not necessarily the case since Abercorn 1934 B and D (figure 2a) shows some irregularities.

However, the reconstruction places the angel on side A in the centre, which is appropriate for the forward looking, pointing angel in a didactic pose. On the opposite face a fret is central, perhaps acting like the square geometrical designs in the Lindisfarne Gospels' letter stems (plate 2, figure 2c) which break up the lacing rhythm. This type of central feature was not used on the Abercorn work where a rather simply conceived interlace panel occupies the place but since only one side survives, the opposite side may have been the main one with a more striking feature panel.

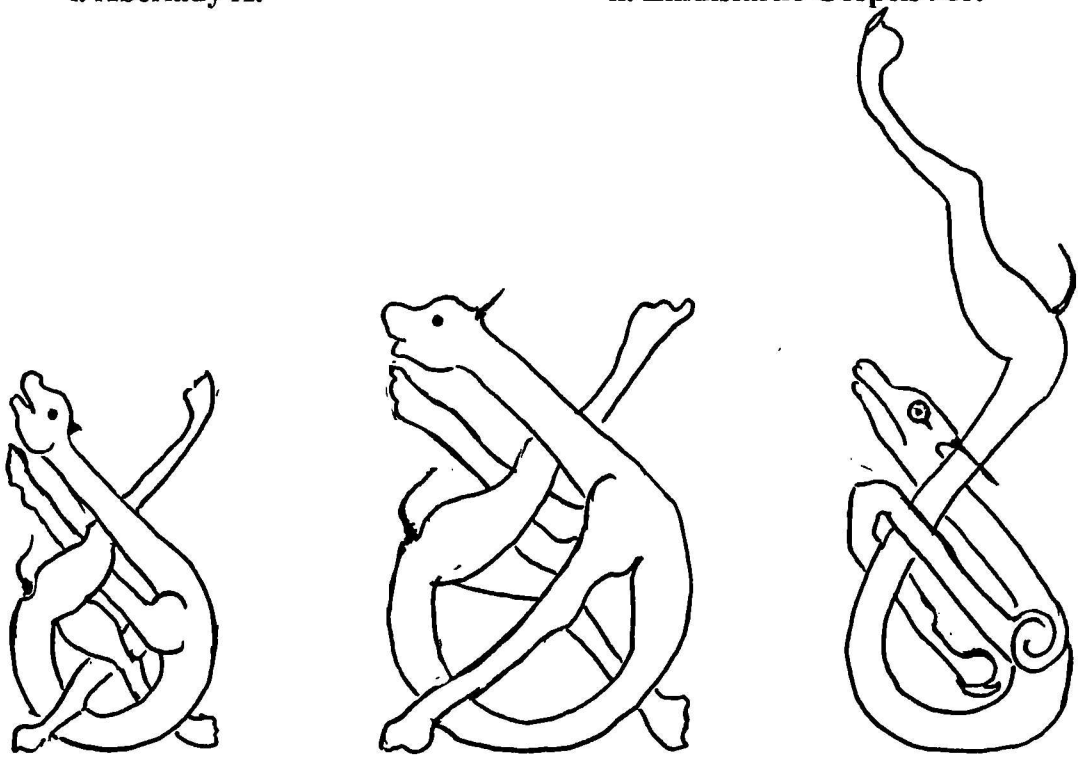
Since the technique, the mouldings and format and the general programme all link with the Abercorn cross, it is interesting to find such a variation in the pattern types on the faces: the one with interlace, plant scroll and animal interlace, the other with a figural piece, fret and animal interlace. The common factor, the animal interlace, will be analysed in detail but first something should be said about figure and fret.

The angel shows well developed form with a classical simplicity modelled with concave and convex forms not less impressive for its small size, than figures on the Bewcastle cross. However, the figure itself seems to be based on the same model as the figures on St Cuthbert's coffin particularly the St Matthew symbol (Alexander, figure 5), but here it is expressed in more natural line and form. It has the same halo, sloping shoulders, enfolding wing, raised arm and book and roughly the same pertinent folds of drapery as the St Matthew figure[4]. This makes a close link with Lindisfarne itself. The fret furthermore, is the exact form as the simple diagonal frets on folio 138v of the Lindisfarne Gospels. The pattern is basic in that the strand steps in but not out again and there is no filling in the triangular spaces along the edge, unlike most Pictish forms (ECMS I, figure 968, here figure 9cii). So here are two genres traceable to Lindisfarne but even more significant are the animal (bird) designs.

Figure 3b



i. Aberlady A. **ii. Lindisfarne Gospels 95r.**



iii. The animals: Aberlady A; Abercorn 1934; Lindisfarne Gospels f. 95r.

The turned and reversed animal design

The turned and reversed pattern type which Eadfrith so favoured is used here on side A (plate 11, figure 3a). It is about 15cm wide between the mouldings, with little taper and 44cm in length (when restored). It is a very basic solid-looking design since neither its ears nor its tail extend to lace; it is the limbs which thread to combine the design. The heavy result matches the solid little angel beneath, but the animal surface appears to have been enlivened with contour lines (plate 11a), as the angel's was with folded garments. This heavy design without lacing strands also has the same feeling as the unlaced pattern lowest on the letter stem of folio 211r of the Lindisfarne Gospels (plate 2B, figure 13dii).

The grid of the Aberlady pattern as it falls naturally is three units with a unit measure of about 5cm. It is seven units in length and the unit measure is just on 6cm, as was used on Abercorn 1934. The rectangular units may have been caused by the need to fit the very narrow stone and like the design on the Abercorn piece the heavy back leg and thick chest cover the grid points but it is more obvious on the narrow design (figures 2di and 3bi). This happens also in the Lindisfarne Gospels as figures 2dii and 3bii show. The diagram from folio 95r is on a three unit grid and demonstrates clearly how little room there is for lacing in the confined space.

The natural animal

When looking at the animal motif, it becomes clear that this is the self same animal as that on the integrated design of Abercorn 1934. The body in either case curves around, so that walking back legs from one side thread through walking front legs from the other side. The extended neck follows the diagonal of the upturned front leg until the nose is at the side, and in this case the muzzle is able to extend and nestle into the back of its partner, so that it is not so short and cramped as that on Abercorn 1934, even so it is still rather feline in appearance. Bone for bone, muscle for muscle, the animals on the two shafts are the same but further they are both modelled in the distinctive three dimensional technique, giving form to the shoulders, body, neck and leg junctions and both have traces of contour lines on their backs. The Abercorn animal looks longer and more sinuous, having been drawn on a wider grid to encompass the interlace. Figure 3biii shows the animals turned the same way for comparison.

The last point, which needs to be mentioned, is the natural way in which the paws are carved although some changes in direction or extension are needed because of the exigencies of the pattern. Also the Aberlady paws each have toe pad and claw and the stopping pad further along the leg is clear. Out of sixteen paws in total between Abercorn 1934 and Aberlady sadly very few are clear. Where these are clear, one can see that great attention was paid to the elegant positions of these extremities and this is a feature of both crosses.

One question is whether this is the same sculptor and workshop as Calder (1938, 290) observed. From the discussion above the case has been put. Since one recipe does not produce two similar cakes when baked by two different cooks, so one set of patterns does not produce similar panels when carved by different sculptors. After drawing both works, I do not doubt that these are the works of one man, but this judgement has elements of subjectivity. The lesser claim that one workshop or one group of sculptors trained in a single tradition, were responsible for the works, is within the bounds of probability.

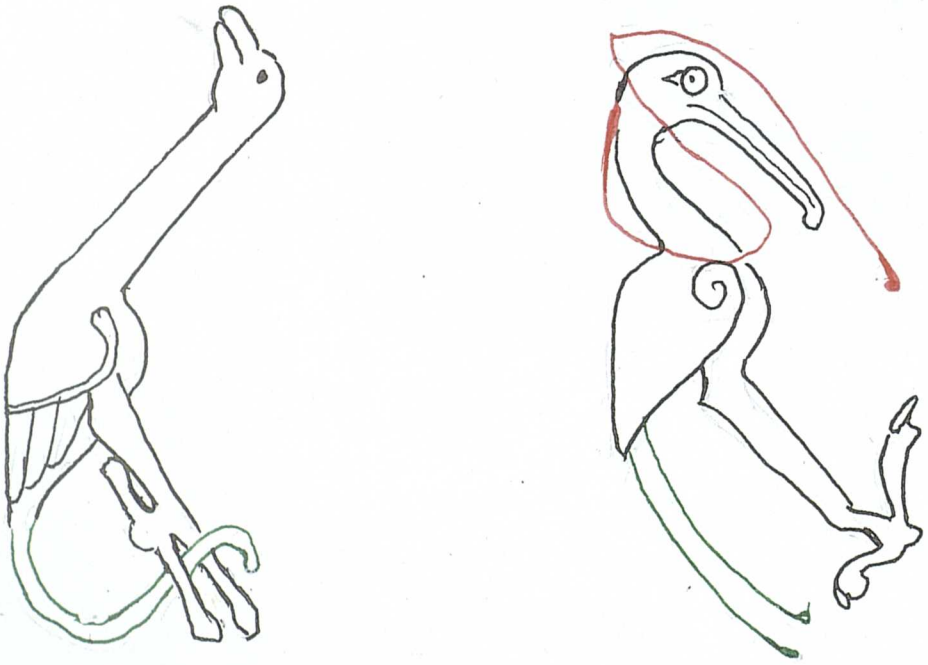
Lastly, ~~since~~ the two animals are the same but are fitted into different pattern types, the one only reversed so that there is space on the grid for it to be intricately laced, the other a turned and reversed pattern not laced and further the possibility of a set-of-four has been discussed (figure 2fi). How many more designs could the artist build on this animal type? Could he, like Eadfrith, produce varied poses? The example from the Lindisfarne Gospels, folio 95r (figure 3bii and iii) is basically the same animal with the back leg drawn free and crossing diagonally. If the sculptor could do the simple animal, then more complex designs could have been at his disposal. Could he design the lacing to suit the variations? These two competent works suggest the possibility of a considerable repertoire once the concepts were grasped.

The birds: a set-of-four

When we turn to the other interlace on side C of the Aberlady fragment (plate 12) we are looking at one of the few surviving patterns using the bird motif which was as popular as the dog in the Lindisfarne Gospels. The naturalistic cousin of this bird appeared inhabiting the plant-scrolls of sculpture, and a debased interlaced relative appeared somewhat later (plates 63, 64 and 76), but here is a fine set-of-four as an

Figure 3c

Set-of-four and motif: i. Aberlady C, ii.Lindisfarne Gospels f. 139r.



interlaced bird design. If the animal designs could have had variations which may have been carved but are now lost, it would be difficult to believe this high class, well understood bird design at Aberlady was the only one of its kind and that it was not repeated or had no variations, since Eadfrith, with a basic bird could turn, twist, weave and lace an endless stream of variations.

On this set-of-four, (plate 12, figure 3ci) the birds face inwards with their necks forming the simple lacing feature in the centre. The legs cross diagonally with the claws continuing the diagonal to the corners, so that they thread through each other in a complex manner. The tails curve around to tie in the ends and complete the design. It is a simple but satisfying design.

The uncomplicated neck area has the hole pattern of a design two units wide but the area of the legs and tail needs four units or a secondary grid (figure 3ci, red lines). This natural grid is put through the drawing on plate 12B. In the terms of the two unit grid there are seven units in length, or if thought of as four units then it is fourteen in length. The diagram, figure 3ci, has been drawn on a four unit grid so that the necks occupy two units not one. Eadfrith divided wide necks and made them double stranded (figure 3di) but the sculptor did not use this means of making his pattern more complex. The centre then is particularly simple while the extremities of the design are tightly packed and difficult to interpret.

Here there is a different unit measure from that used for the animal designs. The full length of the design is about 46cm and so the finer unit measure is just over 3cm, on the vertical axis. The units are even, except for the lowest and highest units which are lengthened a little. The pattern being 14.5 - 13.5cm wide, it would be necessary for four units on the horizontal axis to be wider, about 3.5cm.

The natural features

The birds at Aberlady are deeply carved and the forms are well rounded but these wider shapes have broader surfaces than those of the animals, so that the modelling seems less pronounced. Added to that the surfaces have much linear engraved detail, which is better preserved than on the animals, therefore the effect is less three dimensional. Even here the higher sections are quite worn: for examples the eyes are

drilled holes like the designs mentioned but further details about them cannot be seen; the wings inside their outline appear to have traces of a scaly feather patterns but exactly what it is like is not clear. However, the wing flight feathers the wing bow and legs can be followed easily.

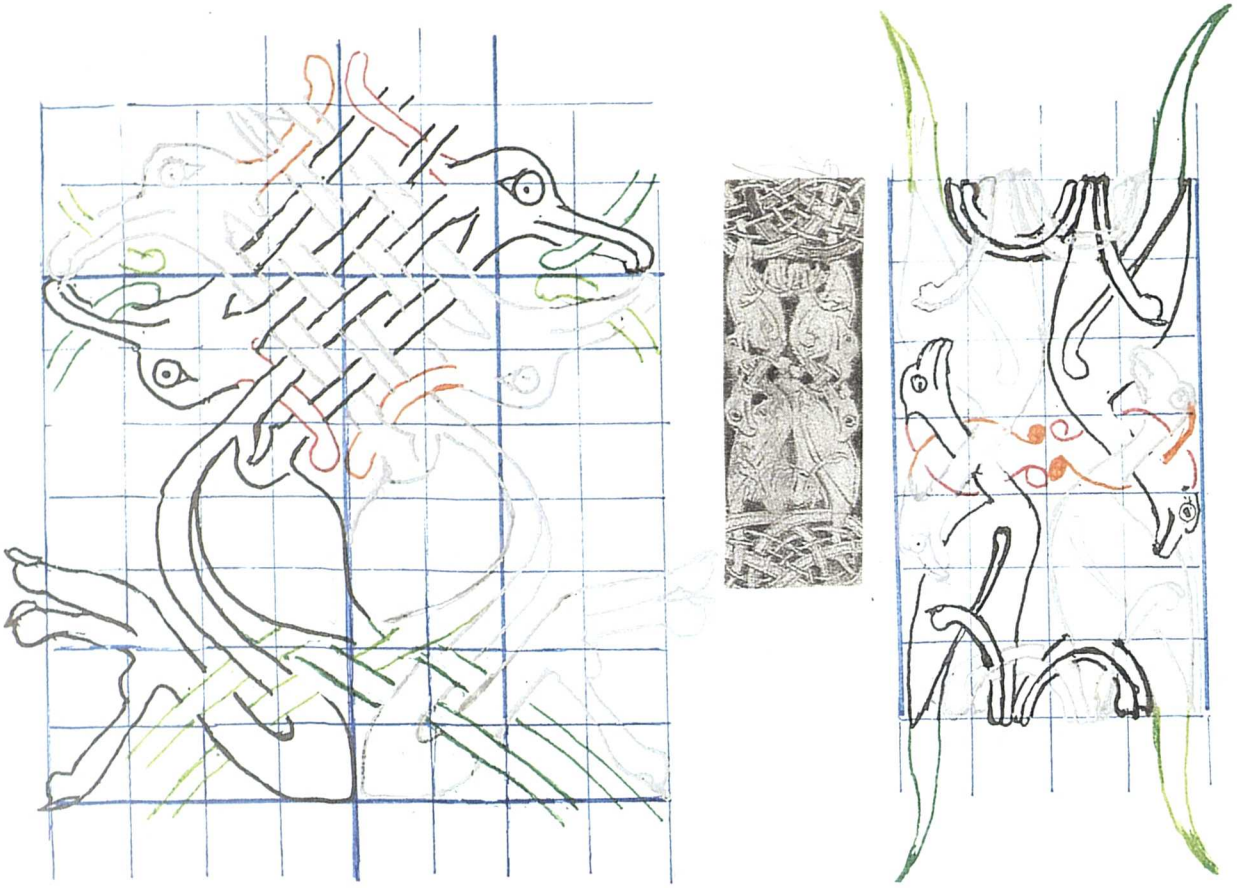
The birds sit chest to chest on either side of the vertical axis with their simple thick necks extended and they have relatively small heads. These have round foreheads, rounded throat, and short curved beaks, which seem to be tucked into the backs of the diametrically opposite birds and twisted as are the heads in the animal design on folio 139r of the Lindisfarne Gospels (figure 2dii). The furled wings follow the line of the body ending in a point, as they do on any bird in the Lindisfarne Gospels, but here they are divided in half by a double bounding line starting with a small comma curl and within this is a scaly pattern, below it are three flight feathers (see below and figure 3e). The legs thread diagonally. There could be two legs on each bird, one in front of the other each ending in a toe, but close inspection shows the better interpretation is one leg each with two toes forward and one back. Each toe ends in a blunt swelling, not as elegantly carved as the toes on the dog but nevertheless it may represent toe-pad and claw. The tail is single, extending from the body and able to lace.

The design and its relationships: i Lindisfarne Gospels

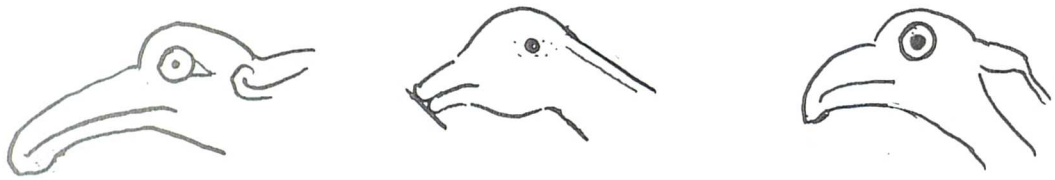
This pattern is related to the highest design on the letter stem of folio 139r (plate 2B), which is above the dog panel the one most similar to the animal designs on the sculpture, both of Abercorn and Aberlady. Perhaps this is no coincidence. Eadfrith, to reach his peak of perfection, may have used many wax tablets or annotated sketches and these may have been available to the sculptors. This is borne out by this evidence: namely two designs of one folio and the adapted designs on the same piece of sculpture.

Be that as it may, the birds of folio 139r are in a set-of-four formation with their chests touching similarly (plate 2a, figure 3cii). This time the birds are not positioned with heads towards the central horizontal but to the top and bottom of the design, nor do the necks cross the central vertical axis but draw back and curve around so that finally it is the beaks only which cross and link. It is the legs and tail, coming towards the centre, which form the central lacing feature and it seems to be on a grid of the same number

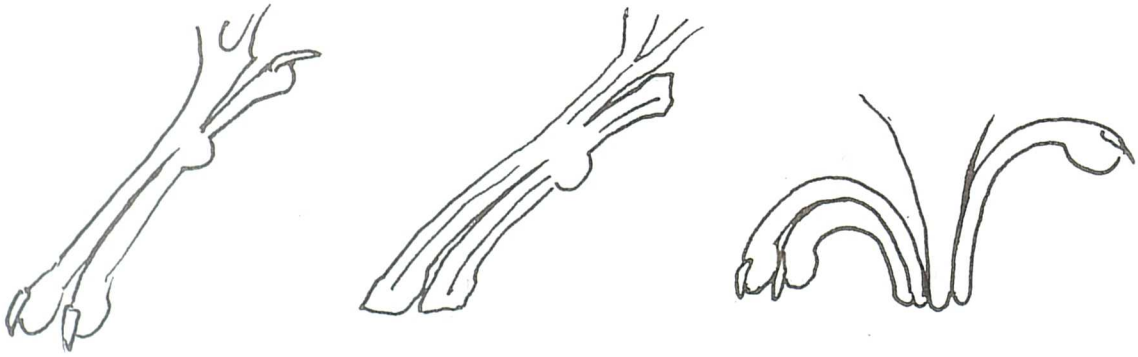
Figure 3d



i. Lindisfarne Gospels, f. 139r. ii. Lichfield Gospels page 220.



iii. Bird heads: Lindisfarne Gospels, Aberlady, Lichfield Gospels.



iv. Bird feet: Lindisfarne Gospels, Aberlady, Lichfield Gospels.

of units. The patterns, sculpture and manuscript are shown side by side, figures 3ci and ii, with the motif below, for comparison. It was Bruce-Mitford (1960, 255) who observed that the reversing of heads to the centre was a legitimate pattern ploy in interlaced designs. Since any set-of-four could be arranged in four different positions, Eadfrith was possibly experimenting on those very lines when he hit upon another variation in the carpet area of the same folio (left of the letter "Q", plate 2A). He placed the birds back to back this time, with their necks pulled across the central horizontal and vertical to weave through each other. These sets-of-four are in the carpet section, so the heads are not turned back within the pattern but continue outward to link into other registers. The legs point outwards using toes and tails to link the set.(figure 3di). It also shows that the neck is thick, occupying two units as the sculpture did, but divided into separately plaiting strands, and actually coloured in two different colours (plate 2A).

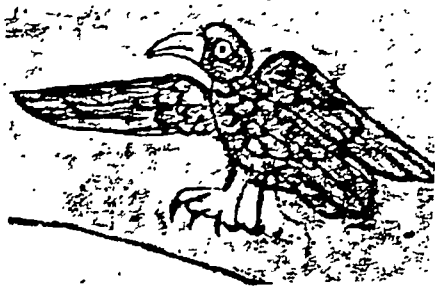
ii. Lichfield Gospels

G. Henderson in his book from *Durrow to Kells* (1987, 124) suggests that the birds on the cross-carpet page of the Lichfield Gospels, page 220 (plate 5, and figure 3dii[5]) are more like those of Aberlady than birds in the Lindisfarne Gospels. The simple bird design of which he speaks is repeated again and again in the narrow sections of the cross. The sets-of-four have the birds turned inwards towards the centre, in pairs with chests touching. The necks do not actually cross the centre but pull back so that each crosses with its partner directly above. This brings the heads in the position they are at Aberlady, without threading across each other in the centre. It is another variation on the theme.

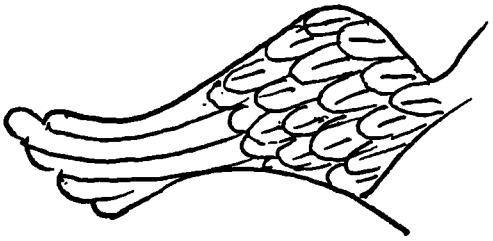
The heads are a modified form of those in the Lindisfarne Gospels and those of Aberlady are simpler still as is expected in sculpture, but with no necessity of either having been copied off the other. These are shown in figure 3diii. However, the feet on all the birds on that page of the Lichfield Gospels are not simple but could best be described as bizarre, with sprays of toes curving either side of the leg. The Aberlady feet are the true Lindisfarne Gospels' type with two toes, forward and one back. Folio 26v (plate 1) has the exact type where leg and toes follow on one diagonal (figure 3div).

Figure 3e

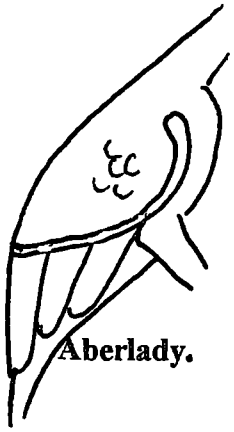
Bird feather patterns



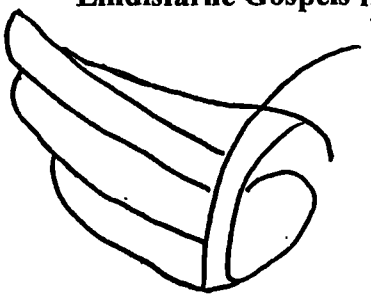
i. Codex Amiatinus f.790v.



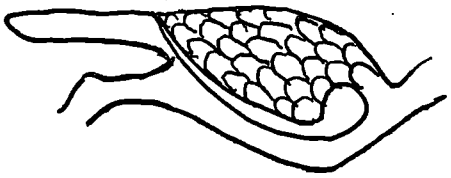
Lindisfarne Gospels f.209v.



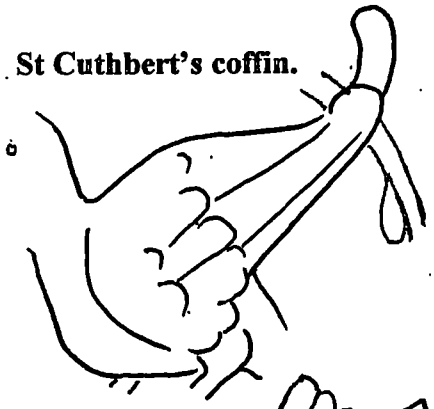
Aberlady.



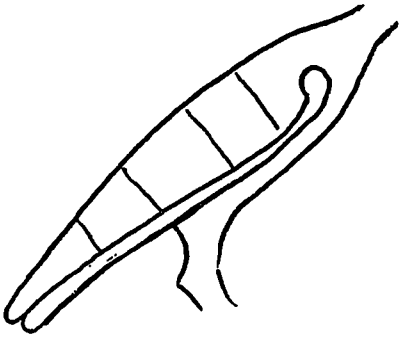
St Cuthbert's coffin.



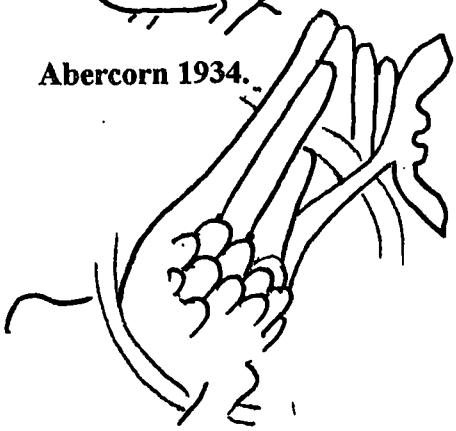
Lindisfarne Gospels f.139r.



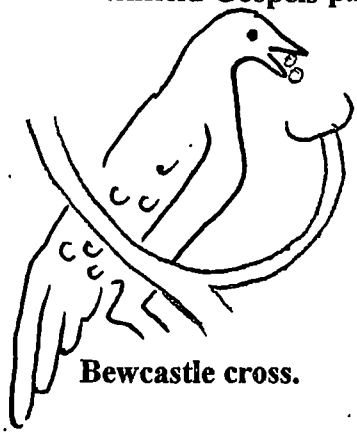
Abercorn 1934.



Lichfield Gospels p.220.



Kirk of Morham cross-shaft.



Bewcastle cross.

ii. Raised wings.

iii. Furled wings.

Each of these works, the Lichfield Gospels and the Aberlady sculpture, is an ideal example of an artist doing exactly what an artist should do; taking the rules or principles of his traditions and designing within them to create something which is recognisably in his tradition but with his own personal stamp on it. If both the manuscript artist and the sculptor have used the same variations neither can be said to have been influenced by the other.

The individual wing

The wings of the birds in the Aberlady pattern show that more than one influence was stirred into the milieu. There is a bird as the St John symbol on the Codex Amiatinus folio 796v (Alexander number 7, date: before 717) it is in the classical three-quarter view with impressionistic featheration of both short and flight feathers. A raised wing with short scale-like feathers and long flight feathers is drawn in a more orderly way on the St John folio (209v)[6] of the Lindisfarne Gospels, and more simply on St Cuthbert's coffin (Alexander, figure 5). Birds with raised wings on Abercorn 1934 (appendix plate 1) have faint traces of the same featheration and there is a clearer version on the Kirk of Morham shaft,[7] and both of these are naturalistic birds in vine-scroll. Figure 3eii shows the group.

The Aberlady birds have furled wings with traces of worn scaly feathers within the short wing bow and long flight feathers. However, the manuscript tradition of the Lindisfarne Gospels in many places and the Lichfield Gospels, page 220 (plate 5) shows the furled wing covered in short feathers or even left plain, either way with no flight feathers. Only the natural birds in plant-scroll have both types on a furled wing, as can be seen on a bird in Bewcastle 1C (Corpus II, illustration 115). Figure 3ciii shows this range, demonstrating that the Aberlady artist showed some individuality in fusing the natural and the pattern traditions.

Conclusion

One major theme in this chapter has been the link between the Aberlady piece and the Abercorn cross-shaft. I have noted how these works are set out in a similar manner although so different in size: that is the double edge mouldings are deep and well carved; there is continuous plant ornament on the side, as well as panels on the main faces and these are separated by slim single mouldings. Where the patterns are the

same genre then designs and details are in a similar mode and this occurs in both plant-scroll and animal interlace. The sparse leaves and short triangular bunches of fruit on the plant ornament, the pose of the animals, the method of using the grid, the physical features both large and small and the technique of carving, all point to a very close connection. This is a powerful argument for the involvement of one workshop, or one group of artisans trained at the same time, with also the possibility that this is the work of one man.

Having demonstrated such a connection, I further suggest that this workshop or master sculptor had available a wide repertoire of pattern genres when the two pieces are taken together. There are three types of plant ornament: the continuous chains common to both, the decorative plant panel and the inhabited scroll. To accompany these there is a figural panel executed with three dimensional, classical simplicity with well rounded convex forms and the concave halo and wings, worthy of the best of sculptors. Along side of this type of ornamentation are the interlaced forms: the two precise interlace patterns, two variations of an interlaced animal and a bird design, and finally the simple fret.

No single piece of sculpture remaining in Bernicia shows all these pattern types at once, although the Bewcastle cross has a large number of them. All great workshops of the time may well have had extensive repertoires from which to choose a programme for a particular work. Abercorn/Aberlady combined show not only the variety of designs that could be at a workshop but also how designers could vary and adapt patterns, and indeed there may have been a great selection of patterns available. These may have been in various sizes but 6cm 4.5cm and 3cm are unit measures mentioned frequently, although the sculptors showed flexibility in fitting patterns, using larger terminal units, rectangular units coping with taper.

The other major theme throughout these two chapters has been the connection with Lindisfarne or, often for want of other contemporary sculptural evidence, with the Lindisfarne Gospels. The interlaces, the fret and the animal designs have been of the same concept displayed in the manuscript but have not been copies. They are adapted to the medium of stone with such simplifications as were necessary for the sculptor. Alongside this was a strong urge to gain expression in patterns with elements of the

natural world, so that vine-scrolls and even animal interlaces were tinged with the naturalism used in the great sculpture of Bernicia. This influence may have been through Lindisfarne, but the position of these two northern monasteries may have allowed ideas, from the west. It should be noted that there is nothing inherently derived from the Pictish north, although there may have been some exchange.

The major traceable source is the Lindisfarne Gospels. The freshness of the designs, particularly the animal interlaces, together with the confidence in drawing up this type of pattern suggests a date not far from the original source. It is the same naturalism, the same type of grid used and the same sort of lacing. The double loop design in the curve of the animals of Abercorn 1934, is the strongest argument of all that these crosses were within a generation or so of the Lindisfarne Gospels, I suggest the first to second quarter of the eighth century.

Nothing at Lindisfarne, among the sculpture there, has an immediate resemblance to these two crosses. Nevertheless, there are later works which, by redactive reasoning, may show that there was an early sculptural school producing animal interlaces and that Lindisfarne was the source.

NOTES

1. I drew the Aberlady shaft in the Royal Museum of Scotland and they also kindly supplied the photographs used as plates 11 and 12. A good plaster cast is in the church of Aberlady.

2. The Aberlady shaft has been connected with the Lindisfarne Gospels mainly because of the bird design: Allen (ECMS II, 429); Kendrick (1938, 135); Bruce-Mitford (1960, 255); Backhouse (1981, 75); Wilson (1984, 75); and others.

3. The cross-shaft was first published by J. Anderson (1888-9, 352, figure 10). The excellent engraving was from a photograph. Later the shaft was set in a base so that about 8cm was lost (RCAHMS, 1929, figure 228 and Corpus I, illustrations 1430-33, here figure 3a). It is now displayed correctly in the Royal Museum of Scotland.

4. The book and hand are just discernible seen in J. Anderson's engraving (above). It is the swing or drapery across to the lower right which links it more closely with the St Matthew symbol. Kitzinger (1952, 232-5) believes there is a confusion between the pallium and other garments in this ~~the~~ coffin figure, as there is on the Aberlady garments.

5. I have no information as to how the Lichfield Gospels were drawn but the design fits the grid shown in figure 3dii.

6. Kitzinger (1956, 292-7) believes the Lindisfarne Gospels' eagle folio 209v, is from a classical model. I believe it could be from the same source as the Codex Amiatinus model folio 717 but with a more knowledgeable interpretation.

7. Callender (1932-3, 241-3, figure 10) first published the Kirk of Morham shaft. It is now in the Royal Museum of Scotland. This shaft has similarities to Abercorn 1934, such as the birds' feet, but its animals seem later in that they are more fantastic.

CHAPTER 4

LINDISFARNE: THE SOURCE.

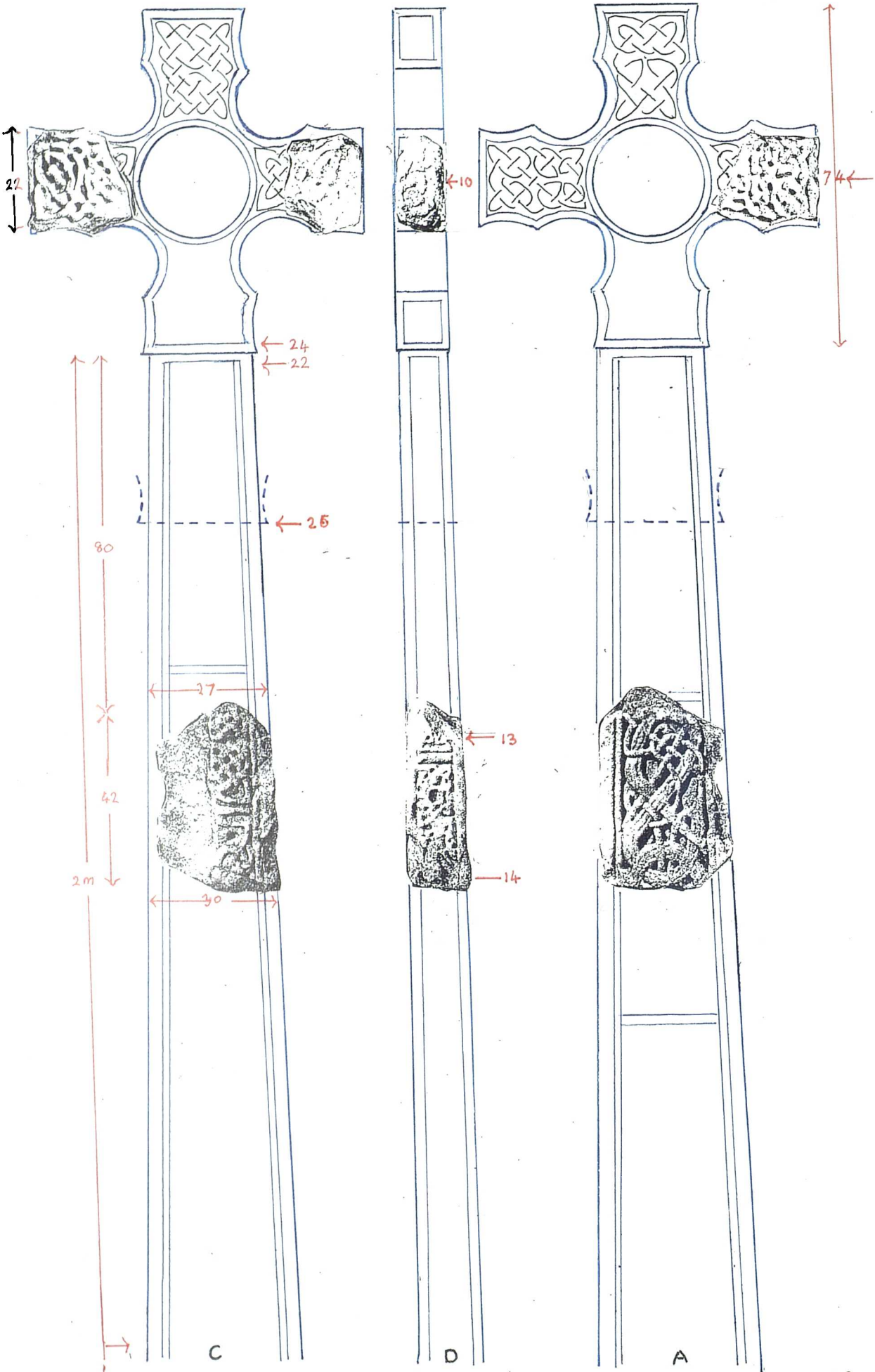
Introduction

Lindisfarne, is an island separated from the mainland by tidal washes, to which St Aidan came on his mission of conversion, an island like Iona. It was briefly home to St Cuthbert, and has the charisma to be called "Holy Island". As the theological and cultural centre where the Lindisfarne Gospels and other great manuscripts were produced it would be easy to believe it was also a centre for great sculpture in the eighth century but the evidence for this is difficult to find.

Of the collection of sculpture found around the priory at Lindisfarne, some was drawn in Stuart (1867, plate 26) and noted by other antiquarians towards the end of the nineteenth century.[1] C.R. Peers, after repairs were done to the priory and excavations had taken place on the site in the 1920's, made a catalogue of all fragments found, the earlier ones and the ones found during that exercise (1924, 255-70, plates 49-55). In this collection he saw just one shaft piece which he classed as "work of the Irish type", by which he meant that it could "be said to recall detail of the splendid ornament of the Lindisfarne Gospels" (1924, 267). In this he was correct, to the extent that this stone shows something in its technique, format, programme and designs of the early eighth century Abercorn/Aberlady works which had features following the concepts of the Lindisfarne Gospels (chapters 2 and 3).

This shaft piece, noted first by Peers and singled out as number 1 (Peers 1924, 267, plate 51) will be analysed in this chapter to see how far it does indeed relate to the Lindisfarne Gospels and the pieces from Abercorn/Aberlady. I will argue that a link can be demonstrated and that this supports the possibility that Lindisfarne too, had an early sculptural school and points to that island as the source of inspiration in the area.

Figure 4a **Lindisfarne 1,**



with cross-arms Lindisfarne 17 and 18.

1:12

The carved fragment

The stone is a smallish piece, badly broken with a jagged edge but with a length about 40cm of designs remaining. The width is somewhere near 29cm tapering to about 27cm over the 40cm, which is quite a sharp taper compared with the pieces from Abercorn and Aberlady. The depth is only 14cm tapering to 13cm. Sides A and D have the full width of their designs but side C has been broken off down the middle, while side B has gone completely (figure 4a).

The piece is a massive yellow sandstone and although it has a coarse grain it has accepted deep carving (over a centimetre) with a well modelled surface and the ground cut smoothly like the works discussed. The surface details are good and contour lines on the animals are clear and there are traces of pellets along the central section between the contour lines (plate 14).

Water has at some stage done much damage by percolating around and enlarging the holes of the punch and undercutting forms (plate 14B, cross section). On the side D this has broken into the surface, forming holes which are as large as interlace holes (plate 13), but the main face has survived so well that it is this side which is displayed as the show piece of the museum.

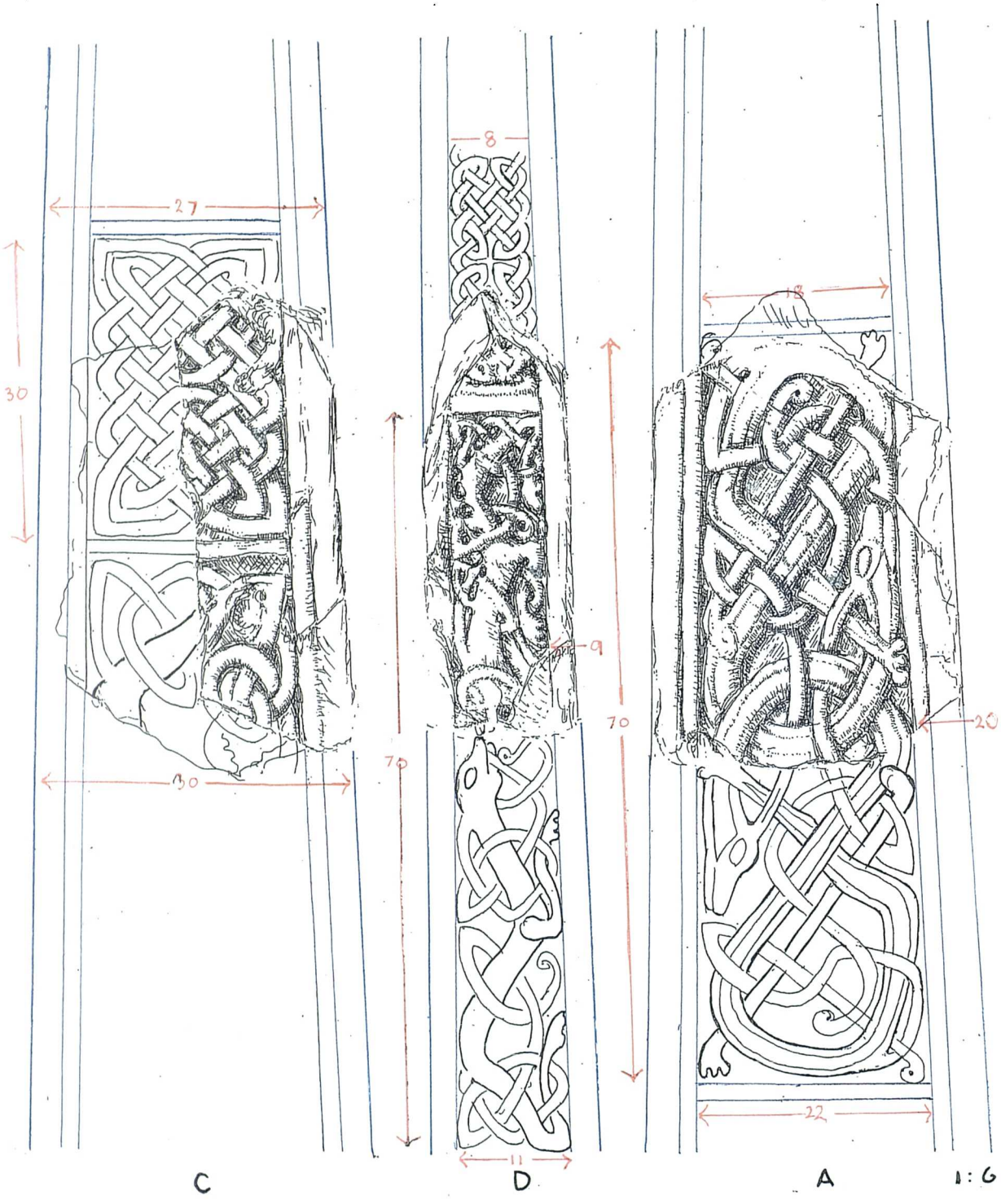
Format and programme

The general presentation, too, is that of an early work. The double moulding on the main faces establishes that sense of verticality and spaciousness associated with an eighth century work (figure 2c). The width of the double moulding is a generous 4.5cm to 5cm. The surviving narrow side, however, has a flat moulding about half of that width (2.5cm). It could have been the narrowness of the slab, about 14cm, which prevented a double moulding from being carved here, even so only 9-8cm is available for the patterns. Like the early works, the panels on face C are divided by a single horizontal roll moulding. Unlike early works however, the side has two patterns divided by a moulding, not a continuous design.

A little can be gleaned about the programme of the cross from this one piece (figures 4a and b) but the wide mouldings suggest a long shaft. A single design

Figure 4b

Lindisfarne 1; drawing and reconstruction.



on face A fills the 40cm, probably broken within a centimetre of its top terminal since its strand and leg are in a position to terminate. It is attached to a second motif by a linked join (see glossary) which, if regular, would extend 30cm downwards. This would make a longish animal panel. The length of the whole panel will be shown to 70cm and it is about 20cm wide (middle) which is not greatly different in proportion from the Aberlady bird panel which is 47cm by 13cm (plate 12).

Face C on the opposite side adds more information to the programme but as the left half has been smashed off an accurate interpretation is difficult to make. There are two designs divided by a horizontal moulding. The upper pattern is a neat regular interlace in half width strands with a unit measure of 4.5cm, a unit measure already noted at Aberlady on the animal design (plate 11). It might be described as a variation of the double stranded Stafford knot pattern (see glossary) or an interlace with breaks, in J. Romilly Allen's terminology. It is very like the pattern of face A of a shaft fragment Abercorn number 4 (ECMS II, figure 437), which is decorated with frets on the other main face. If the Lindisfarne panel continued, as it appears to do, as a simple reversed design (figure 4b), it would have been 30cm or so in length which would end some 10cm higher than the animal design on the other main face, suggesting that the cross would extend upwards by at least one panel to level the designs for the start of the head.

The pattern below the moulding on side C is in sharp contrast to the tightly plaited interlace above, and that is almost all that can be said for certain about it. The terminal of the design is loose with space around, then there is a tight knot of interlace just at the break. In 1974, when I looked at this, with interlace in mind, I supposed it might be an unorthodox design on the lines of the great Alnmouth/Lindisfarne design (figure 11aviii). In 1996, when I looked at it again with animals in mind, I thought it might show the joint of a back leg in the corner, similar to the leg on side D. The design being larger than that on side D, could have featured two animals by turning and reversing. There is also a slight possibility that this is a vinescroll (Cramp, Corpus I, 194) of the wayward Norham type, numbers 1, 2 and 10 (Corpus I, illustrations 1159, 1161 and 1178)

although no leaf or node is seen. So to whichever genre it might belong, it is the contrast to the interlace above which is important because contrasting or alternating panels have been a theme in the works discussed so far.

The narrow side D, is indeed narrow (14cm - 13cm). If the design were to continue for any length it would have needed to be simple, as only 8cm is available between the mouldings at the broken edge. This side, unlike Abercorn/Aberlady, is not decorated with a continuous plant-scroll, instead it has evidence of two panels with interlace above and an animal below the moulding. The two designs may have been long with the change-over in the middle. The Monk's Stone (chapter 10, figure 10b) is apparently of this type, but it too is so incomplete that its restoration is also hypothetical.

The upper pattern which exists to only a couple of centimetres, is unmistakably the terminal of pattern D, in three units and a unit measure of 3cm. Which of the many variations of the pattern is unknown (Corpus I, figures 15, 16 and 24). It could be a continuous variety extending to any length necessary,[2] in the way that vine-scroll on cross-sides was continuous (figures 2a and 3a). Below the moulding is one of the interlaced animals to be discussed. There is nothing on the main faces which hints that it is different in programme from the works discussed. The technique, the setting out with edge double mouldings, panels divided by single roll mouldings, the use of an animal design next to interlace are all within the bounds of early sculpture only the taper is more marked. So the overall appearance of the main faces indicates an eighth century cross but not the sides.

Reconstruction

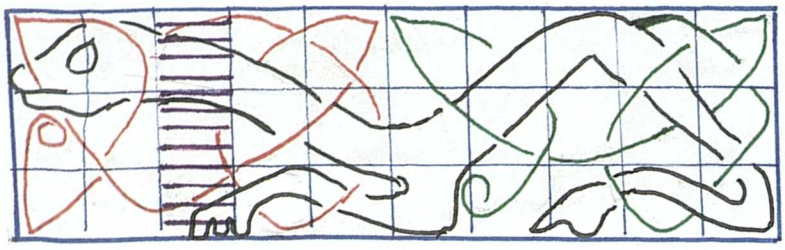
Did the cross have five panels on each main face? That the cross extended both upwards and downwards is quite clear. Figure 4b shows the designs as far as they can safely be extended. Since the taper is a little sharper than Abercorn/ Aberlady, the shaft may be expected to be shorter in proportion so as not to be too wide at the bottom or narrow at the top. If the large animal design is placed centrally on face A, then the shaft should extend upwards about 80cm and downwards about 100cm if it had five panels in all a little over two metres. The

size at the top would at that point be about 22cm and about 36cm at the base (figure 4a). If the design or face A was the second highest then the shaft extends upwards about 40cm and it would be closer to 26cm wide at the top (figure 4a blue dotted line) and perhaps 38-40cm at the base.

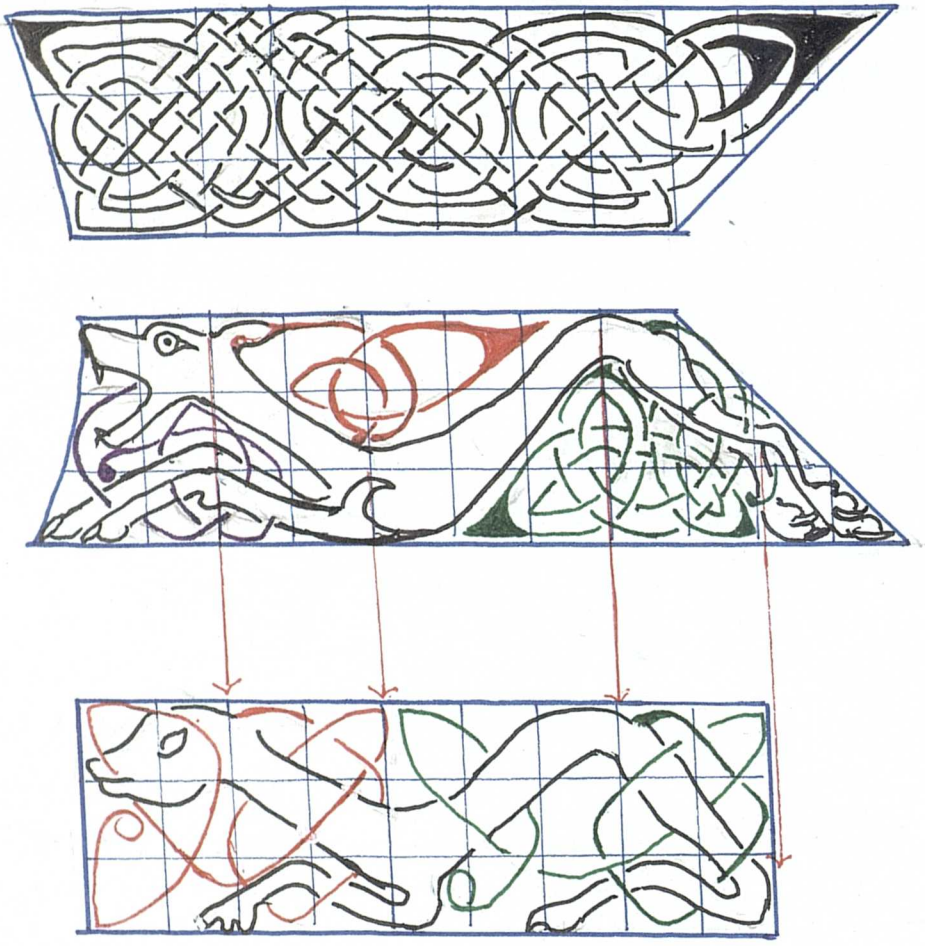
The tentative reconstruction (figure 4a) also shows a head made from two small cross-arm pieces from Lindisfarne, which are about 22cm across the blade. The cross-arms, Lindisfarne 17 and 18 could well belong to this or a similar cross for three reasons other than size: they are of massive yellow sandstone; they have designs with a unit measure of 4.5cm; and they have compatible designs, in that both 17A and 18A have a double-stranded Stafford knot design not dissimilar to that on the shaft piece, 1C. Cross-arm 18C has an extremely clever pattern with asymmetrical loops, some long loops and others single. One could say the long loops of the interlaced animals shows equal cleverness. I have added a design to the reconstruction from Lindisfarne 13 which was drawn by Gibb (Stuart 1867, plate 26). Although the measurements are not compatible, the design is compatible and it is an authentic design also seen on the cross-arm Tynemouth 5 (figure 14gii). The measurements of the designs show the arms would be short and the boss or roundel large. Since a lower arm would be wider than the other arm a few centimetres wider than and the top of the shaft (figure 4a) this a possible reconstruction.[3] However, the lower arm would look more correct if it were a little wider still, and so it could have fitted better lower down on the reconstructed shaft (blue dotted line). This seems the better solution according to the proportions.

To summarise the knowledge gleaned about the cross in general: it is carved in a similar technique to Abercorn/Aberlady, with the format of the faces as far a they can be seem the same but with a sharper taper. It could have had five panels since it is within the size range between Abercorn and Aberlady. The designs seem to have alternated between interlace and animal interlace. The sides, however, are quite different with single mouldings and patterns which may be in panels or long strips but are not continuous nor are they vine-scroll., this will be discussed further in chapter 9. The Lindisfarne cross-arm pieces are compatible on such a shaft.

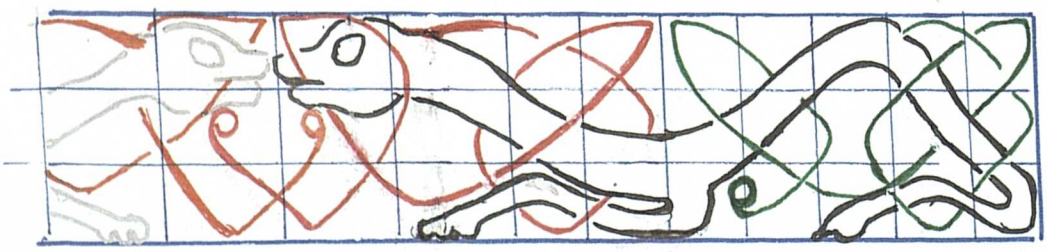
Figure 4c



i. Lindisfarne 1D: the animal on a grid.



ii. The animal: Lindisfarne Gospels f.211r compared with Lindisfarne 1.



iii. Lindisfarne 1:the long neck explained by lengthened grid units.

The undulating animal of side D

Since there are two animal patterns to be analysed and both are of great importance to this thesis, I will start with the simpler one, the single animal on side D (plate 13, figure 4c), so as to establish some ideas about it before attacking the more puzzling design on side A. The diagrams for the single animal and the discussion of it will regard the animal as horizontal even though it is crawling down the shaft. When drawn horizontally it is easier to understand.

The animal is small, just 29cm long and 9 to 8.5cm wide. One might be excused from thinking that this small animal is entangled in intricate interlace but the difficulty is a geological one not an artistic one. This piece of even grained sandstone has a surface hardened by minerals, as often happens when sandstone is exposed to the weather over a period of time. Where the surface is undamaged it has held tooling and grooving reasonably well, but where recent damage has broken through the crust the stone has powdered away. Holes have formed which in the photograph are easy to confuse with interlace holes (plate 13A). I have endeavoured in my drawing to clarify the design (plate 13B) while still saying something about the present appearance. Figure 4ci shows the animal drawn diagramatically on a centimetre grid.

The natural features

The animal itself, in spite of a broken end and some abrasion, is bold and clear. A glance gives the impression of a Style II crouching animal with its back bowed and its legs beneath it, in fact something like its close neighbour, that minute slip of gold known as the Bamburgh Beast.[4] However, it is a member of the group of animals under discussion. In the Lindisfarne Gospels there were three basic positions for animals, shown in figure 2ei, and the zig-zag or undulating forward movement was the basic one. This pattern is a version of this simple forward undulating type.

The natural details are not accented but there is a marginally deeper chest and a body which slims towards the join with the back leg. The leg itself has a rather lethargic structure, a long foot with paw consisting of pad and toe. The paw is in the correct position for the foot supporting the animal but clumsiness replaces the

elegance of Abercorn/Aberlady (plates 9 and 11). If the back leg had little muscle, the front leg junction is positively weak and unconvincing with the barest trace of an oval shoulder joint. The foot ends in three round rubbery-looking toes. The neck is neither straight nor diagonal and seems to be both over-thick and over-long by 3cm (figure 4ci, shaded area). The head looks huge and unbalanced in comparison to the rest but it will be shown that the bizarre appearance is due mostly to lacing strands, not deformity. In fact the muzzle is straight and the closed mouth is biting a strand which moves under the bottom jaw then runs over the top jaw (plate 13B, figure 4ci). these details are only just discernible.

The round head, closed mouth and neat muzzle could be like an animal on a very much later work, Norham number 3A, which is related to this design (plate 49, figure 11h). The Norham pattern is so confused that it even laces a moulding into the design and yet in the tangle of strands there is a clear face with a straight nose and closed jaw, which is consistent with the information at Lindisfarne.

Indeed, the anatomy has no lively naturalism. It has the look of being done by someone working without conviction or understanding. Yet there is enough muscle and bone correctly placed to reveal that anatomy had existed in this pattern at some earlier time: but it apparently was of little importance to the craftsman who worked on this piece.

The animal pattern and the Lindisfarne Gospels

Professor Cramp (Corpus I, 194), noted the resemblance of this little animal to an animal on folio 211r of the Lindisfarne Gospels; that is the design on the top left hand side of the letter "I" (plate 2B, figure 4cii). This is a single animal with a typical undulating or zig-zag pose: head up at the top, chest on the lower edge, rump up and back legs stretched diagonally along the 45^{o} back edge of the panel. The front legs, like the one on the sculpture, run along the edge arching gently over interlace strands. The back leg in the Gospels' design stretches back because of the shape of the panel, but on the sculpture it is turned under the body, like the front leg.

The similarities are more explicit in the way both designs fit onto a grid. On this occasion the Lindisfarne Gospels design has a grid which can be checked with its accompanying interlace (figure 4cii, top) and is three units wide and eight on the top edge, eleven to the end of the point. The sculptured work is also three units wide when a grid is put through the natural holes. It is shorter in length since the leg is turned under. However, the overlong neck, if shortened by one unit, would bring the major features of the design level with the Gospels model (figure 4cii, red arrows) and the shortened neck would look more natural and follow a diagonal course. As the panel is 28cm by 9-8.5cm and the unit measure is just on 3cm (plate 13B) except for this overlong neck.

The reason for such a long neck, which in the broken work looks so ill-balanced may be found on a cross not very far distant, one at Woodhorn (plate 66, figure 14fiii). Here there is the same design also on the side of the shaft, but it is twice as large. Although it is badly damaged the evidence points to the fact that it extends to another register (plate 66B).[5] So it may be that this animal at Lindisfarne was one of two or a chain of motifs, and if so lower down the shaft the unit measure would certainly have been larger, possibly 4.5cm. There may be two units at the head end still at the larger measure. Plate 13B and figure 4ciii show this. There may be another reason for the overlong neck and that is the designer wanted both halves of the design to be the same length so that the ear and tail section of interlace could perform the same loops.

The lacing

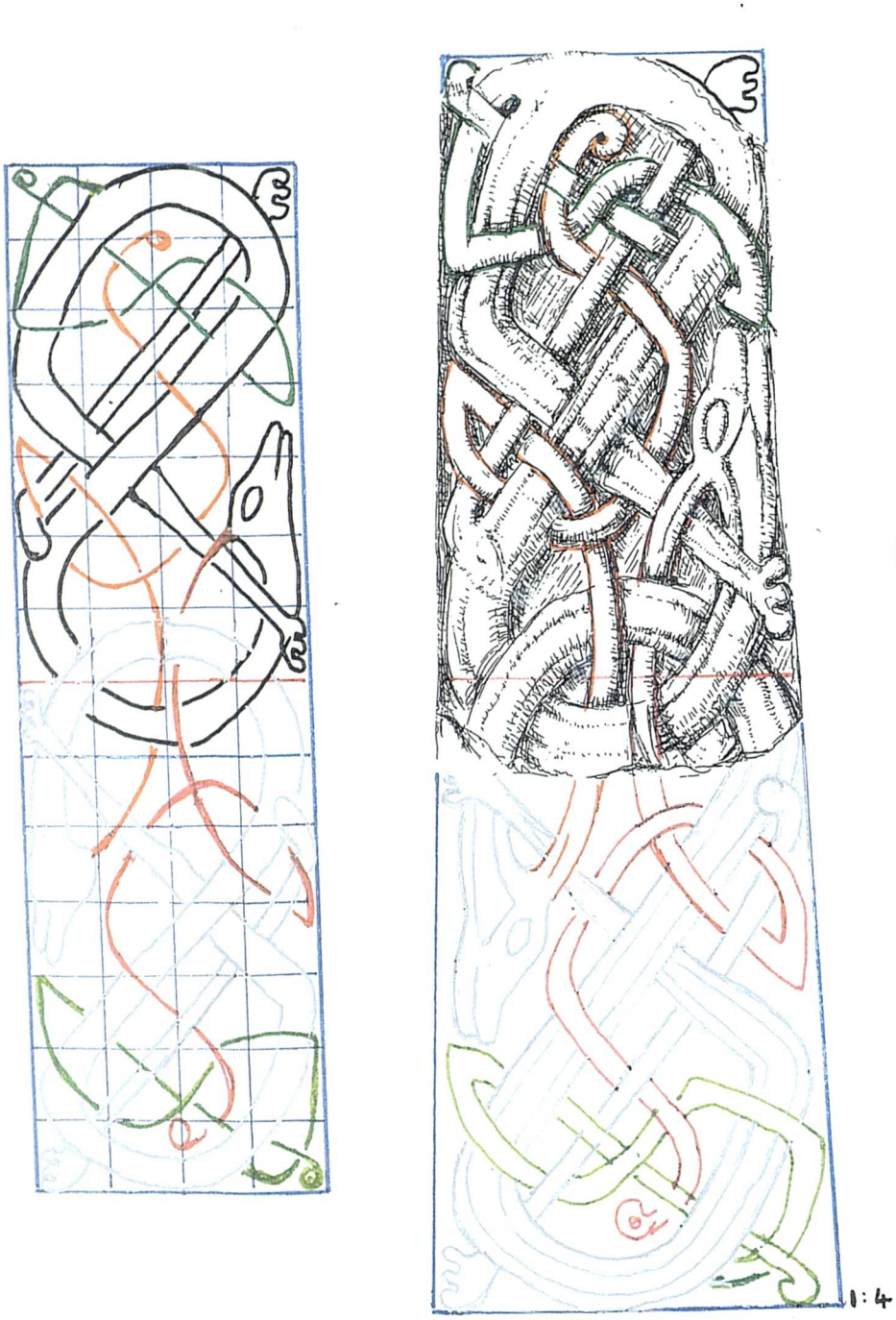
This interlace designer had a feeling for symmetry if no care for the animal (figure 4ci). Interlace is quite unlike the design in the Lindisfarne Gospels where Eadfrith was in experimental mode, using ear and tail strands together with the rare tongue strand, each filling its own triangular spaces with patterns on the triquetra theme. This is one of the few times in Eadfrith's work that lacing mostly filled space without being integrated into the design. The sculptor, however, did not copy this but used the orthodox path of integrating lacing with the animal. What we see on the sculpture is both integrated and symmetrical. Here the basic form is not the triquetra or complex double loop but the long loop (see glossary). This form was sometimes used by Eadfrith (folio 95v, figure 3b)

but it was an easy one for a sculptor, as it could reach over and combine two parts of the body and the work would not look crowded.

Here the ear strand and tail each lace one half of the design. They form the same manoeuvres, both moving right, around the body and the appropriate leg, then forming a long loop to the top right (figure 4ci). Each strand comes out under the animal and at this point the ear lappet is rubbed off, but the tail strand goes on to make a long loop to the top left, on the central axis, and to finish with a curl beside the front leg. This is the necessary information to restore the front end and to pick up the scattered clues remaining. By taking the ear strand from where it disappears beside the front leg up through the jaw to the top corner, along the odd piece of strand which looks like an antenna, then across to the head (this section of strand has been completely obliterated), it can then join the face strand, the remains of which are seen clearly giving the face the strange appearance of a hollow dish. The strand would then have dropped to the corner and seeing that there is no leg to curl against, it would return and make its terminal curl against the jaw, or if there were indeed a second register it would curl against the jaw of the next animal (figure 4ciii). The symmetry of the design has dictated the reconstruction while the reconstruction has explained the evidence which made no sense. Peer's reconstruction (1924, plate 51, figure 2) does not follow the design to this point.

In conclusion, I interpret the design as having developed in two stages. The first phase of the design could have contained a more natural animal, perhaps with more complex lacing since it may have been contemporary with Abercorn 1934 and so more akin to the Lindisfarne Gospels. The second phase sees the design adapted for this piece of sculpture with no stress on naturalism but keeping interesting lacing. The designer seems to have extended the neck for one of the two reasons given above but clearly cared little for the appearance of the animal. Although his loops are neatly pointed, even extended a little and he finishes his strands with a flourish, his loops have not the fullness of loops which are well drawn on a grid. Keeping in mind the two phases, the naturalistic integrated animal of the first phase, then the well laced animal without the interest in anatomy of the second phase, now the more difficult design is easier to follow.

Figure 4d



i. Lindisfarne 1A: diagram and drawing.

ii. Poses of animals in Lindisfarne Gospels.

The figure-of-eight animal of side A

The animal on the face A of the shaft fragment, is a complete motif without significant surface weathering. The design is legible because of its simplicity and flowing strands (plate 14 figure 4d). Yet it has oddities which suggest anything but a simple history, so again only a careful analysis can tease out the evidence.

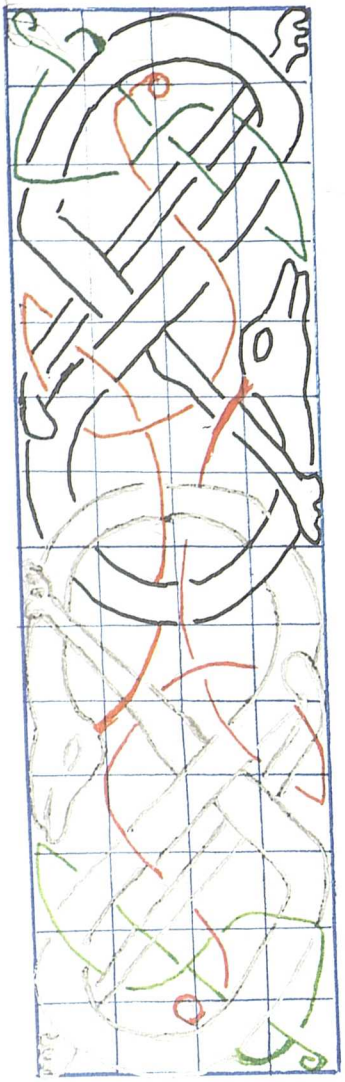
There is very little natural anatomy to discuss here, even less than on the undulating animal of side D. The diagonal back leg has almost no shape in the upper muscular part, but there is a slight hock, then the lower part slims gradually down to a foot seemingly facing backwards since it is neither the upturned trailing foot nor the one turned under to support the weight. The body does not slim down at the junction of this leg: it is more ribbon like than any other in Bernicia and together with the neck it flows in smooth curves interrupted only by the oval joint of the first leg. The front paw is the one part of the motif missing.

The body and neck have contour lines, set into the lens shaped curve, similar to Abercorn/Aberlady but flatter (see cross-section). Here the lines are further from the edge and may have low pellets along the central track which would make it very different in appearance. The head faces outwards with the jaw along the line of the moulding. The long muzzle is sloping, the forehead is rounded with an almond eye engraved. The mouth is not biting as there is no strand available. This head is less canine than those in the Lindisfarne Gospels, even less feline than Aberlady, and more dragonesque than any discussed. This is not just a careless depiction of naturalism as it was on side D, it is all but gone.

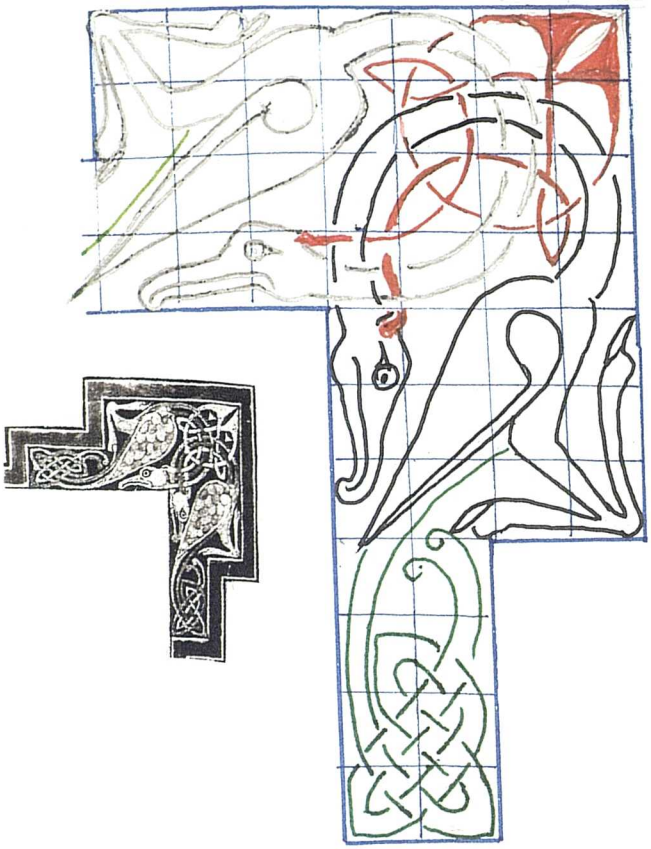
The animal as a design motif

The design has a controlled look. The diagonal crossings and a certain regularity point to the underlying grid structure in spite of many missed crossings. The grid is indeed there since the design is readily calculated to have four units in width as the vertical lines can be drawn through the appropriate points. Horizontal lines divide the pattern into eight units although the curve at the lower end where it is joined by a link to the second motif, is irregular (plate 14 B).

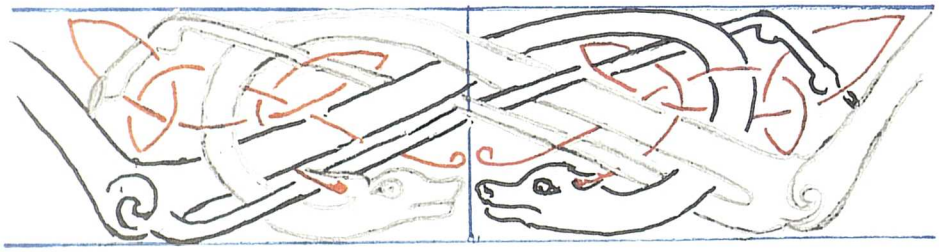
Figure 4e



i. Lindisfarne 1A: the pattern.

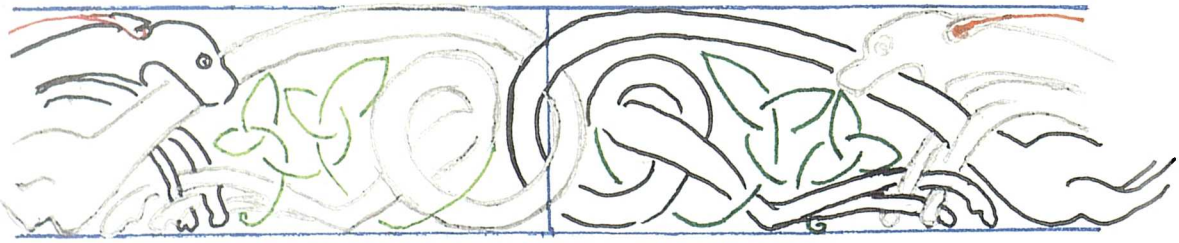


ii. Lindisfarne Gospels f.138v: birds with linked necks.



iii. Lindisfarne Gospels f.95r: animals with curved necks.

iv. Book of Kells f.7v: animals with linked bodies.



The design is about 20cm in width tapering to 18.5cm and this makes the units around 4.5cm. The units on the vertical axis are also 4.5cm (except for the bottom units). The unit measure 4.5cm already mentioned, may be noted as half way between 6cm and 3cm mentioned often for Abercorn/Aberlady. Added to that the interlace pattern on side C has the same unit measure (4.5cm). This sequence makes a very important link with the early patterns and is some indication that something like a ruler might have survived in a workshop.
The passages of interlace fit the grid perfectly, so too does the back leg but a slight warp to the lower left pulls the body and front leg off the diagonal (plate 14). The diagramatic drawing, figure 4di, restores these features to the true diagonal without any vital change to the design.

The motif we have been discussing is complete and also it is a visual unity, but a second animal can be seen linking with it at the bottom. A back paw of the lower animal can be traced at the break on the left while the turn of the body is just beginning on the right. If these parts are interpreted correctly this is a turned and reversed animal. Figures 4a and 4di shows the full pattern diagramatically on a 1cm grid and the drawing to the scale 1:4. When looking at the complete design it is not the diagonal movement which most attracts the eye but the curves of the linked necks and the long slack curves threading through the pattern predominating, whereas in the single motif it is the neat interlace and strong diagonals of the Lindisfarne Gospels' concept what dominate. The interlace is well thought out in the full design: it has an alternating symmetry, as the loops change in direction from right to left and point up then down.

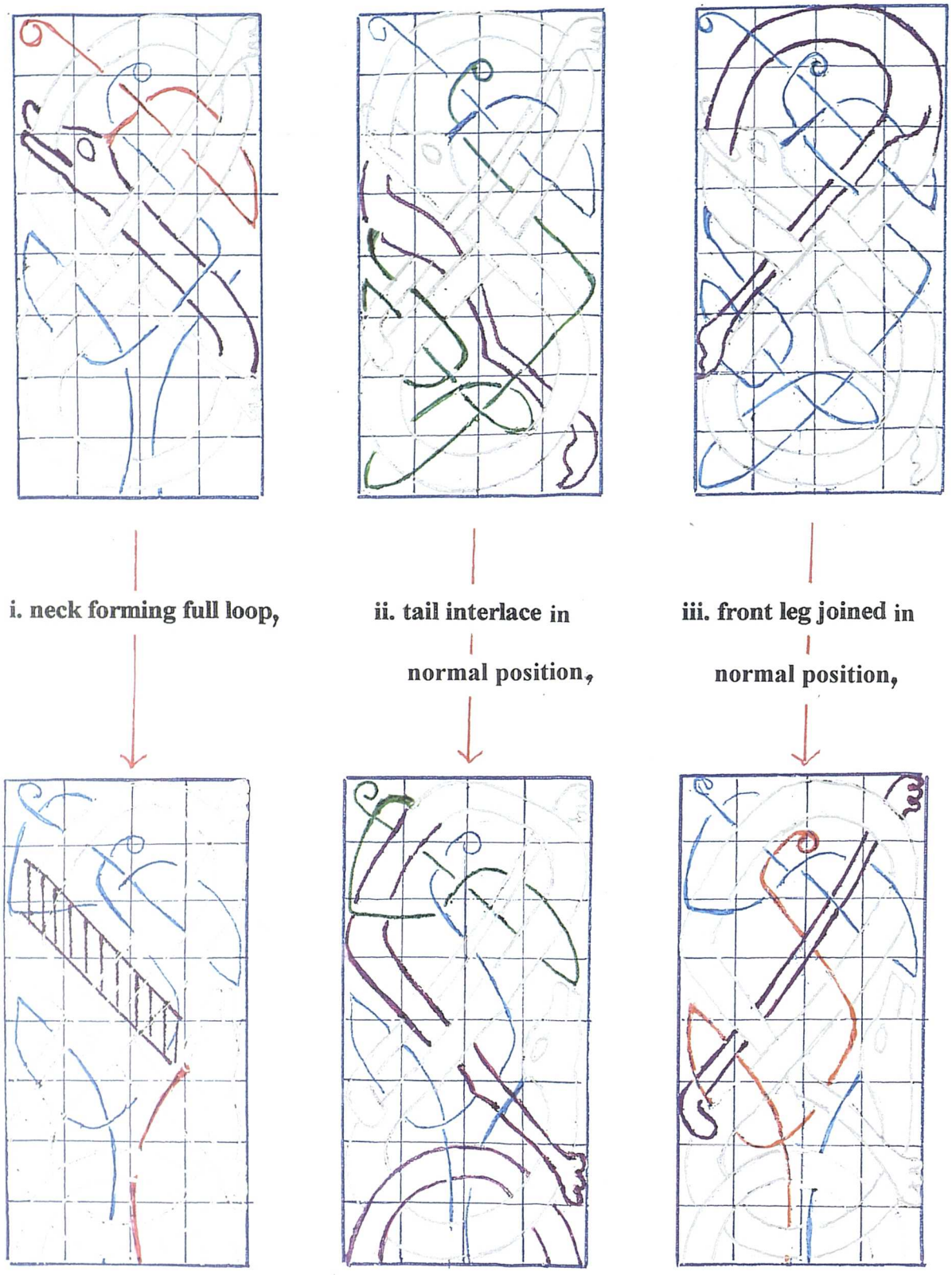
The features unusual for the Lindisfarne Gospels' concept

Several features are different from those of the patterns discussed so far. The first is the figure-of-eight arrangement of the motif. Figure 2ei showed that apart from the undulating animal, the common pattern types of the Lindisfarne Gospels have either the neck or the body turning around in a full turn at either end of the panel.

The figure-of-eight motif combines the two components (figure 4dii). They were not used together in the Lindisfarne Gospels but it is not difficult to imagine that a sculptor who needed to fill a short panel would hit on this simple idea of

Figure 4f

Irregularities in Lindisfarne 1A:



turning both neck and body to form the figure-of-eight motif, which in itself followed the rules of the grid in a normal manner.

The next unusual thing is that the animal, a complete motif in itself, should then have a linked join (see glossary) to a second motif. The linked join, too, is unusual. It occurs in some bird designs in the Lindisfarne Gospels where necks are decoratively used. Such a join is seen on the lower bird panel on the "Q" of folio 139r (plate 2A) and also on the corners of the folio beside this, folio 138v (figure 4eii). The later Book of Kells (Alexander, catalogue 52, date eighth-ninth century), has an example where there is a whole border of linked animals on the feature page, folio 7v (figure 4eiv)[6] and this is more like the sculpture.

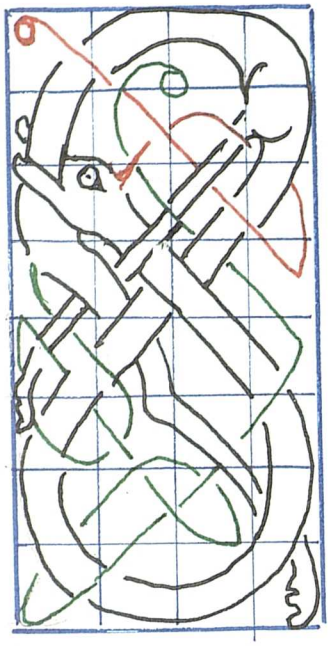
Yet it is not only the linked neck which looks strange in the sculpture but the fact that each neck bends just half a turn, around 180° so that each head lies with jaws on the outer edge and the neck does not complete the loop as a pattern following the usual Lindisfarne Gospels' style would do. However, in a minor pattern, probably a narrow two unit design on folio 95r, it does occur with certain vigour (figure 4eiii) but in the sculpture the 180° neck looks slack and lethargic compared with a looped neck or a diagonal neck. Nevertheless each feature, the figure-of-eight formation, the linked join, the curved neck with head turned, and the ribbon-like extension, are all within the aegis of the Lindisfarne Gospels, the range of features together causes the design to seem remote from the normal.

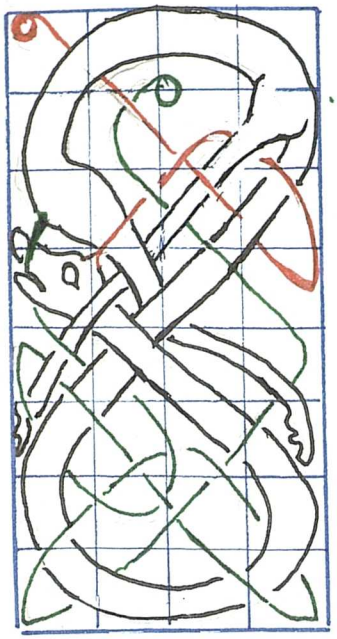
The anomalies in the pattern

Beside these unusual forms of expression there are several features which are decidedly irregular, anomalies in fact, which point to alterations from the regular gridded single figure-of-eight motif. Figure 4f demonstrates the features (top row) which may have preceded the anomalies in Lindisfarne 1 (bottom row). Each is dealt with singly and picked out in purple (or lacing colours) to save confusion.

Firstly, if a looped neck of the Lindisfarne Gospels' (figure 4fi, top) type was removed from the design so that the head lay along the side, a row of missed crossings would be left (figure 4fi, bottom). This looseness of the web is in fact

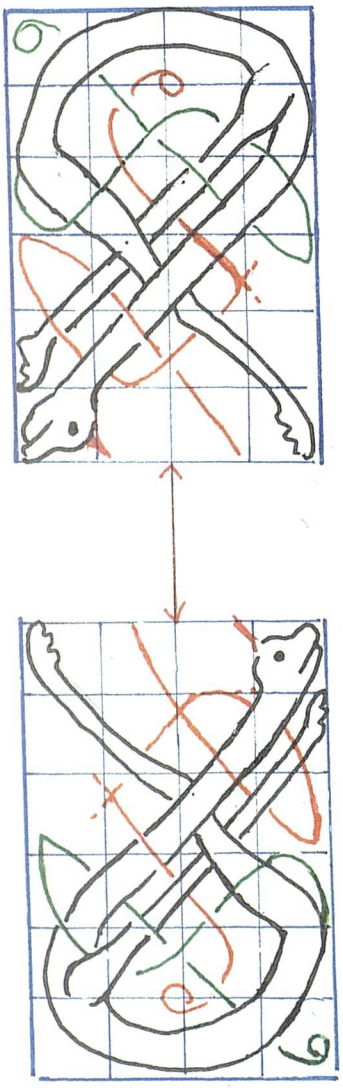
Figure 4g

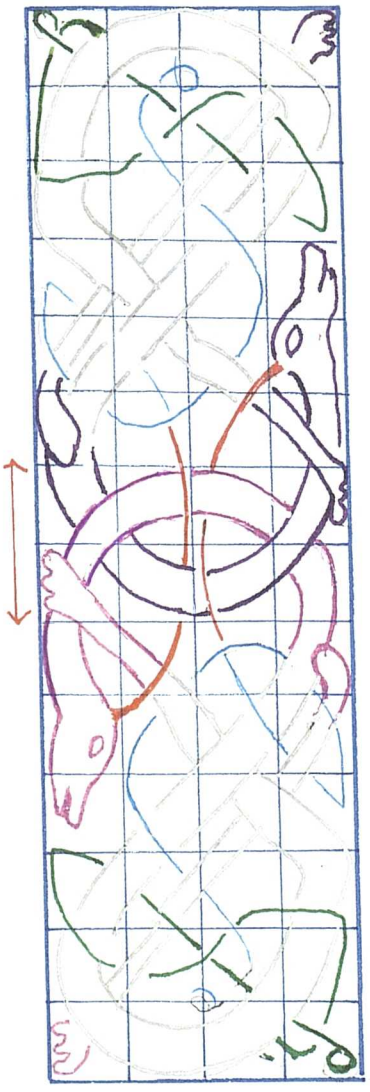




i. Single figure-of-eight motif.

ii. Lindisfarne 1A formed from motifs of Abercorn 1934.





one of the most obvious features of the design (plate 14). The ear lappet would be of no use now and a new lappet would be substituted (red).

The next problems (figure 4fii) seem to have been caused when the linked body of the second animal entered the figure-of-eight motif. The tail from the rump, which would have laced somehow through the lower part of the design (top, green) is constrained for space, so the old lappet becomes tail (bottom, green). To do so it takes some strange turns and fastens along the back. The shapely back leg and trailing paw of the Aberlady type is back to front and awkwardly fills the constrained space available (purple).

Lastly, the front leg runs backwards from a spindly joint and extends strand-like until the paw reaches the opposite corner (figure 4fiii). This is an inexplicable or perverse alteration from the ordinary leg joined at a neat shoulder (top purple) but nevertheless a simple one (bottom purple). It remains to re-route the remaining interlace as the lappet of the second animal (orange)

The point of the exercise has not been so much to explain the anomalies but to demonstrate that a design lay behind them. Figure 4gi is the hypothetical prototype with a variation. However, looked at another way the whole linked design may have been formed by laying two simplified Abercorn/Aberlady motifs, in the turned and reversed position, nose to paw but two units apart (figure 4g ii), then using a link to cross-join the heads, which must be moved to the place where the back leg comes down behind the neck (figure 4gii, purple). The lacing would then have been adjusted by taking the lappets through the link, to cross join the pair. This, however, does not explain the anomalies so well.

It has been necessary to show how a normal design of the Lindisfarne Gospels concept lay behind Lindisfarne 1A, but the problem seems to be to imagine artisans who were so conservative that they would adapt the designs at hand rather than design afresh. Many more instances of this conservative approach are brought to light in following chapters. However, if a case is made out here that this has happened then, two things follow: firstly, that the Abercorn design, or something very like it, was at Lindisfarne at a known unit measure (4.5cm),

secondly, that time had elapsed from the original drawing to the carving of this design. It is the adaptation from the early ideas that shows us that not only was this carved at a later stage but that Lindisfarne was the source of the designs.

Conclusion

To sum up, the piece Lindisfarne I in many respects looks early and like the Abercorn/Aberlady pieces. It displays the same deep carving and has the same format on the faces as far as can be seen. The two genres are interlace and interlaced animals and possibly in alternating panels. The shaft, in this reconstruction would have been shorter than Abercorn 1934 and larger than Aberlady, and would have had room for five panels on its faces. However, its taper is sharper than the gradual taper of the former works (figure 2c and 4a). The side is very narrow and has interlace and interlaced animals perhaps in long designs but not continuous like vine-scroll seen on other crosses. Its head, if the arms are correctly identified, has cusped blades but shorter and thicker arms than those attributed to Abercorn 1934.

The interlace designs tell little, as pattern D is ubiquitous, while the double stranded Stafford knot design exists but not in the same form, in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Yet on Abercorn number 4 there is a design like that on Lindisfarne 1C and this forges a link with that monastery on the northern edge of the diocese. It is the animal designs which make a strong statement about the relationships of the work.

There is evidence that three main poses of animals in panel designs on the Lindisfarne Gospels, namely the basic undulating animal or animal with the body turned 360° or neck turned 360° are all seen here. The undulating animal of side D is like that on folio 211r (plate 2B). The turned body of the motif on side A had been accompanied by the neck also turned, to make a figure-of-eight. This combined form does not appear as such in the Lindisfarne Gospels, but is a clear derivative from that source.

This sculpture is the closest at Lindisfarne to the concepts of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Time has passed, in that the concept of naturalism prominent in the

Lindisfarne Gospels and at Abercorn/Aberlady has all but gone, although the other major concept of animal and lacing on a grid integrated together still flourishes remarkably well on Lindisfarne 1. Both of its animal designs, however, have a simpler form of lacing, not double loops but long loops (see glossary), and yet the lacing follows the design web and has attractive rhythm.

If sculptors at Lindisfarne worked on designs like those at Abercorn/Aberlady in the early eighth century then one would expect the Lindisfarne workshop to be the source for these adapted forms. There is nothing like this in Pictish work or the work of western Bernicia, which could have been taken in through Abercorn to Lindisfarne.

The work is clearly later than Abercorn/Aberlady so the evidence for actual date and position of Lindisfarne 1 in the sequence of animal designs will be followed up in chapter 9 where the type of adaptation fits in with other works. Here the purpose was to find if the animals of the Lindisfarne Gospels entered the sculptural workshops at Lindisfarne and the evidence though indirect, points to the affirmative. More evidence is also found on a very different cross shaft which is to be discussed next, Lindisfarne 2.

NOTES

1. Some shafts were recorded in Stuart in (1867, 19-20, plate 26), also mentioned by Allen and Browne (1885, 351) and Hodges (1893, 79-80, figure on 79).

2. Both continuous and closed circuit pattern D are on the sides of many cross-shafts to be discussed: St Oswald's Durham (figure 13b and cD) is an example.

3. There are few cross-heads where the base of the head and an arm can be measured. All lower arms are wider than the other arms: Rothbury: 32: 25, Hart 7: 22: 20; Woodhorn reconstruction (figure 14a) 32: 26, Durham 7 32: 20 (Corpus I, illustrations 1207 and 213 and 418).

4. The Bamburgh Beast (Webster and Backhouse, 1991, number 45) has lacing legs, a Style II feature (plate 8). See also plate 3 for that feature.

5. Woodhorn 1bD (plate 65) shows the animal in the reversed direction with the opposite lacing. This is evidence that templates of the design consisted of reversed pairs.

6. The design in the Book of Kells (figure 4eiv) seems to fit a three unit grid and is drawn in this way.

CHAPTER 5

LINDISFARNE: FURTHER EVIDENCE.

Introduction

In the Priory Museum at Lindisfarne there is a sizeable alcove in which an impressive display of sculpture has been set up. The works which are now displayed have been found on the priory site at various times. For the most part the surviving pieces of sculpture have been carved on poor quality rock, which is closer to mudstone than sandstone and often cracked along bedding planes. This very fact may have been their saving grace. Whereas good stone could have been redressed and used in the great medieval priory church, these poorer pieces seem to have been broken and reused with many designs intact, perhaps in the less grand buildings of the monastery, although exactly where each was found is not recorded.

Lindisfarne number 1 which was discussed in chapter 4 is on one side in the display and it is visually different, while the other large pieces with intricate patterns form the central group. It is the link between one pattern in particular from this group with the work discussed which is the subject of this chapter, namely the animal design on Lindisfarne 2 (plate 15). To appreciate the gap which existed between this and earlier work, it is necessary to have a preliminary first to look at this group, although it is discussed in greater detail in chapter 11.

The Lindisfarne/Alnmouth group

Cross-shafts numbers 2-12 (not 10) belong to the group together with some smaller fragments (Corpus I, illustrations 1144-1087).[1] They are related in the stone used, their layout and technique as well as being interrelated by the pattern themes running through them. The workmanship varies in quality from good to shockingly bad, which may indicate that the workshop was in operation over a considerable period. Fragments 2-4 (Corpus I, illustrations 1044-1054) are of a fairly high standard in technique and the designs are well expressed. These are related to a sizeable piece of shaft from Alnmouth,[2] a site not very far south of Lindisfarne along the coast (Corpus I, illustrations 808-811). Professor Cramp

links these works, calling them the Lindisfarne/Alnmouth school (Corpus I, 27, 161-2, 195-6) and dates them from the late ninth to early tenth centuries. If this is so the works would have been done at the time of disruption caused by Lindisfarne invasions.

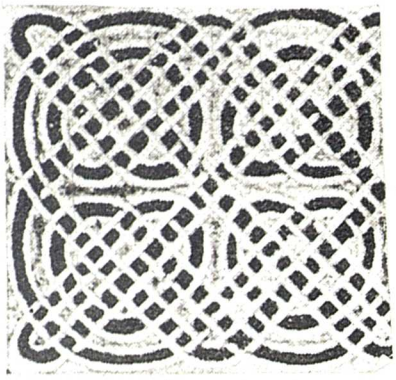
All the evidence points to these works being of a much later date than Lindisfarne I. Although there are no remaining complete shafts there is a feeling of horizontality not verticality. The outer edge mouldings are flat and very narrow, 2cm or less where the complex designs within them somehow thrust outward as much as upward. Further, the designs on the main faces are separated by single roll mouldings or perhaps a flat band and are shortish rectangles. Since all designs have great density, in that the positive spaces are slightly larger than the negative ones W. G. Collingwood (1927, 62) says of them:

> The plaits are fairly complicated, but not made of flowing lines like those of Bewcastle and other such fine works; we see here the beginning of elaboration of stiff detail which takes so large a place in Scottish slabs.

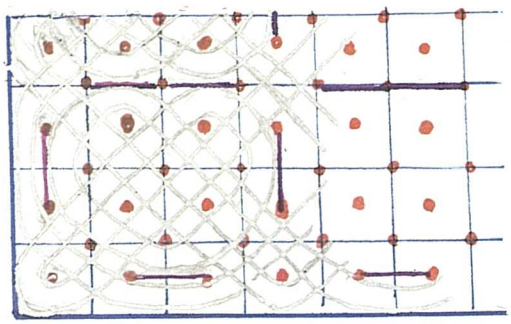
Not only is there a stiffness about these slabs with no contrast of rhythm, the sides have a staccato arrangement where simple complete designs in squarish blocks are separated by blank spaces. Since the sides, which are full of bedding cracks, would have been difficult to carve, these blanks may have been left where the stone was particularly unsound, perhaps painted instead.

The sculptors, however, have a goodly range of patterns to draw on and the evidence suggests that the genres are mixed but no full programme can be recovered. There are two major figure panels in the group: Alnmouth 1A and Lindisfarne 3A with a simple one on no. 8A and there are the decorative genres: mainly frets and interlaces (Corpus I, illustration 808, 1050 and 1061). Lastly there is the one animal motif on the side of number 2^3, the subject of this chapter. This animal design on number 2B is placed at this point in the discussion because it has a significant but not at first obvious relationship with the early group although it will be discussed in its actual context (chapter 11). This prompts an explanation of the methods which could have been used to transfer

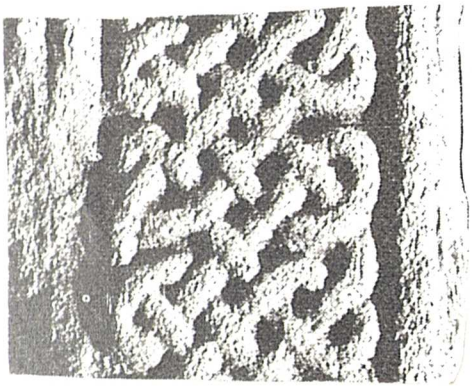
Figure 5a



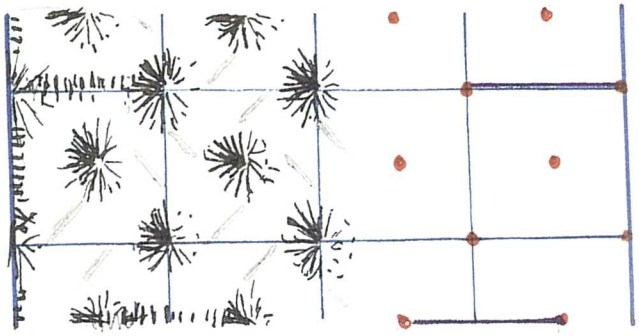
i. Durham Cassiodorus f172v:



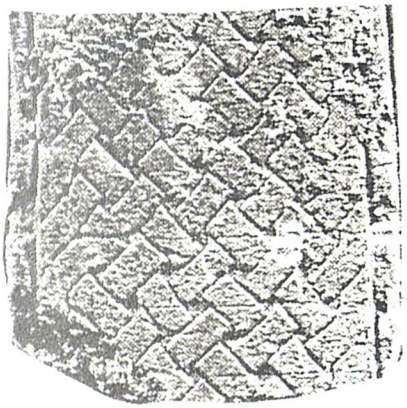
the construction.



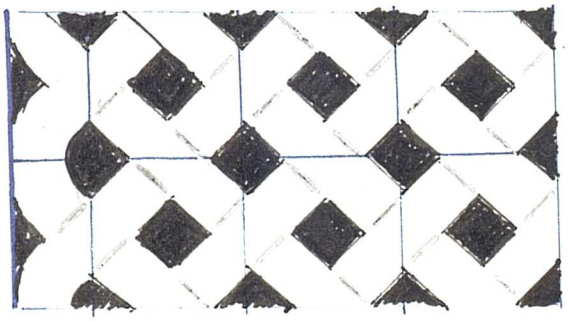
ii. Carham 1B:



the holes and grooves.



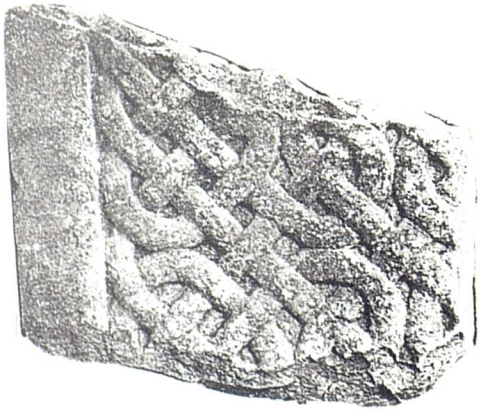
iii. York Minster 1B:

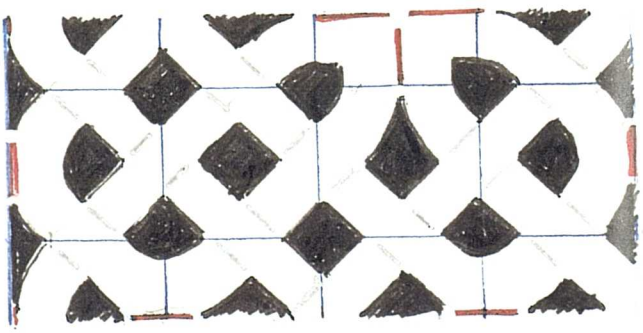


horizontal grid line, holes and grooves.

iv. The Ancrum Fragment:

different types of holes.





patterns, as the claim here is that although it is an early pattern of significance to the argument, is used later.

The pattern template

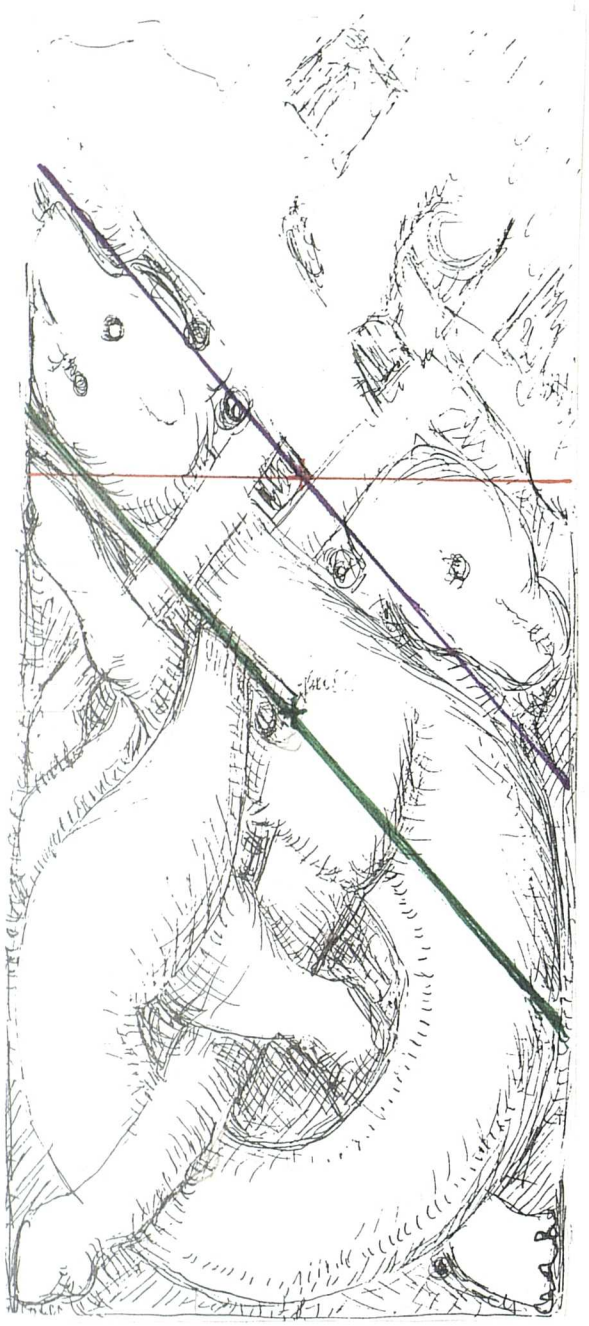
The animal design on Lindisfarne 2 (plate 15), has a set of features which are quite different from the works discussed especially in its construction, in that there is no particular alignment of the holes of a grid and the stress is on the horizontal and vertical rather than the diagonal, so it seems to have been drawn up by another constructional method other than on a grid.

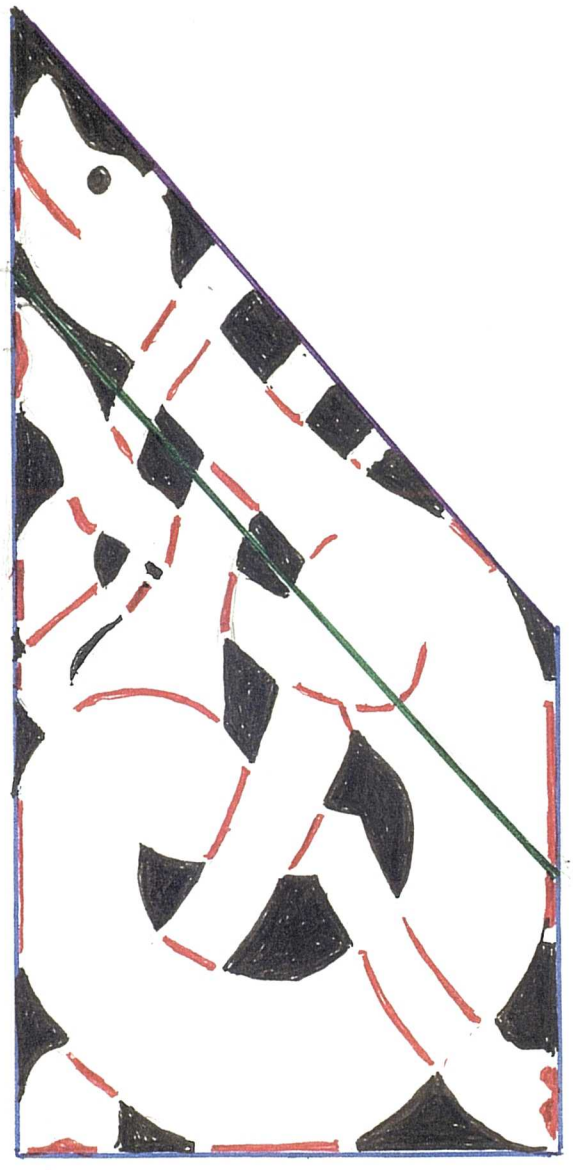
Plain interlace may hold the key to the way an animal pattern could be transferred since it has regular holes at the grid crossings with secondary holes in the centres of grid squares and none of these holes can be crossed by a strand (figure 1c). The points noted by R. Bailey (1978, 12 and 13, figure 2, here figure 1biii and 5ai) show that the Durham Cassiodorus artist, as well as having a square grid, used pin pricks to mark holes and short lines to show "breaks." If one wished to use such construction one would simply draw diagonals, and turn at the line marked for a "break".

Similarly, a sculptor with the guidance of holes and grooves for breaks could work up an interlace (Adcock 1974, 28-29, figure 11). In fact, this seems clear on the work of a sculptor at Carham (Corpus I, illustration 857), where the accent is on conical holes and strong grooves (figure 5aii, black and red). The sculptor may have used a mechanical method to set out the holes at least, since here he often has used a hole where a box point should have been. The means of drawing this type of interlace, could be a template or stencil made of lead or leather[4] with holes as its main guidance. There may have been also slits for "breaks", through which a pointed tool might be inserted. It could even have had some way of indicating the lacing (figure 5aii, grey).[5]

Such a template would give the minimal information needed. Holes, however, in the best pieces had definite shape. There is a piece at York, York Minster 1, (Corpus III, illustration 3) which has almost a basket plait on the side carved to a depth of just 3mm on very fine dolomite. This is one of the few designs where

Figure 5b





i. Aberlady animal interlace. **ii. Hypothetical template.**

Horizontal half; diagonals half; part used on Lindisfarne 2.

something of a grid can be seen, The horizontal lines are clear (figure 5aiii, photocopy) but only traces of vertical lines can be found amid the striations of the grain. In this design each hole is a perfect lozenge shape, and shallow grooves made with a "v" shaped chisel radiate from the holes to mark the lacing. Deeper grooves mark the few "breaks". Although in this case, a grid is drawn on the stone, it would be simple to transfer the design information by the use of a leather template with shaped holes as shown in figure 5aiii (black) and slits for the lacing (grey).

In such shallow carving the shape of the hole can be accurate but a piece from Ancrum (Laidlaw, 1904-5, figure 10) has deeper holes and well modelled strands in a complex pattern but the holes are as carefully shaped as well as showing the full range of types (figure 5aiv). Works of this standard could be drawn up directly on the stone by an understanding designer but it is possible here to imagine a stencil with holes cut to the exact shape together with slots to mark other necessary details.

If there were templates of this kind for interlace then there could easily have been templates for animal interlace. In such an object the holes would be very varied and would also need to be very accurate, as they would not only define the lacing but the negative edge of the body parts. Figure 5bi shows my drawing of the simplest of these designs, the animal design at Aberlady 1A (plate 11B) and from it I have traced the holes and crossings as from a template (figure 5bii), the holes being black, the slits to mark the grooves being red. The Aberlady design was not only chosen for its simplicity but because there is something not at first obvious which links this design with that on Lindisfarne 2D.

It is a fact that a turned and reversed design like this one, would only need one template as the two halves of the design are laced the one way (see glossary). Whether the division of the halves would be horizontal (figure 5bi, red line) or diagonal to make the motif more meaningful (figure 5bii, purple line) is impossible to say. If the design were just reversed or a set-of-four, two templates would be needed for the opposite lacing (see glossary).

The evidence which can be brought forward to show a template was used rather than a direct drawing on stone blown up from small squared diagrams or even a copy from an existing stone will be discussed many times during this thesis. However, Lindisfarne 1A, already discussed in chapter 4 (figures 4f and g), showed the framework of an animal and its interlace which fitted a grid perfectly. The missed crossings, however, indicated strongly that something was ignored by an artist who did not attempt to redesign the area. This seems to be the behaviour of one who had the full design on a template and adapted it rather than one who drew up or copied the design afresh. This hypothesis is tested by an experiment, set out step by step to show that the Aberlady template can be used to draw the animal design on Lindisfarne 2 and that its use would explain oddities in the design.

The animal pattern

The design on Lindisfarne 2B (plate 15) is a small one, just 14cm wide and 24cm in length. The "centre" point is 13cm from the bottom and 11cm from the top, which appears to be sliced off prematurely by the cross head. The pattern would have been 26cm long if it had run its natural course which makes it longer in proportion to the other squarish designs on other sides in this group of stones, but not long for an animal design.

The rock itself is a poor quality. Now the bedding cracks are open but perhaps it always had a bad surface causing the sculptor to carve in very low relief, shallower here than anywhere else in the group, the depth is only 3-5mm. Yet the design is neatly punched out and the flat surface of the animals has been smoothed and the edges rounded, while the ground is chiselled flat and in its weathered state the punch marks can be seen clearly (plate 15A). Strong grooves mark the crossings but there is little rounding of strands, so that it is more like a grooved drawing, than a three dimensional carving.

The design has been described by Professor Cramp as "unique to Northumbria" and "more closely related to Pictish than to English ornament" (Corpus I, 195) and she names the St Ninian's Isle board with the little animal on Meigle number 1 (figure 8dii)[6]. The latter has a realistic pig-like body, except that there the back

does a full turn and the well shaped little legs walk through. It is, in concept, like the lower part of dog on folio 26v of the Lindisfarne 2 Gospels (plate 1). The Lindisfarne sculptured panel is quite different in that it has bipeds, with curling tails in a spiralled pattern C loop which is pinned by the front leg. This is explained in figure 5d i and ii.

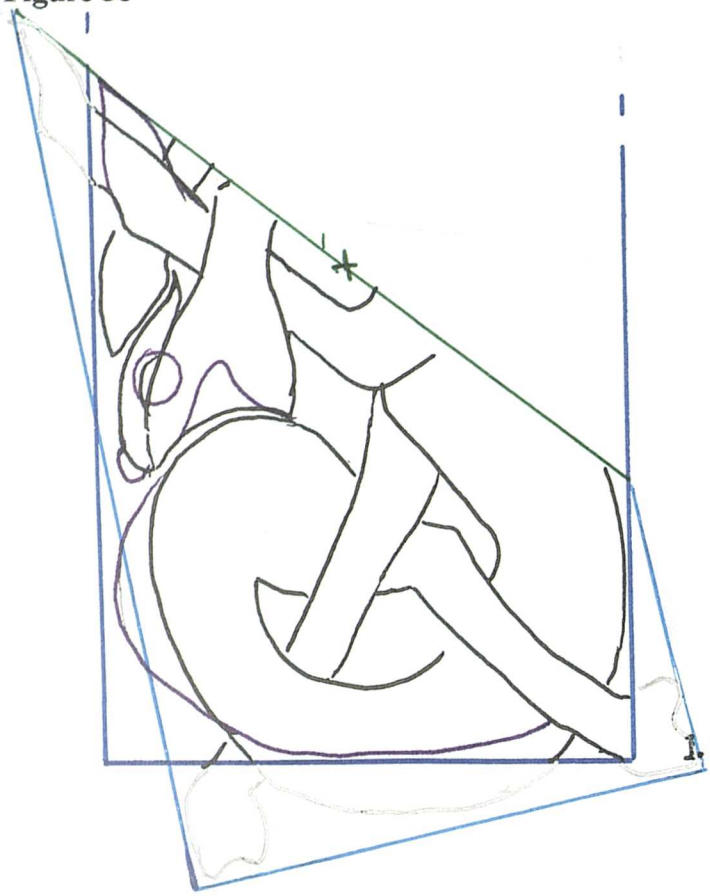
There is, however, much about this animal design that is familiar. For a start it is in a turned and reversed formation so favoured in the Lindisfarne Gospels and used at Aberlady. The width also suggests Aberlady which is about 15cm wide, but Aberlady is almost double in length 44cm to 24cm. It is in the arrangement that there is a real similarity. Both have "chesty" animals with 13cm from the lower edge to the chest. Backs curve around the bottom or top of the panel. Each animal has its front leg extended diagonally from the chest, crossing the body curve and reaching into the opposite corner. The direction of the back is continued by a leg crossing to the opposite side of the Aberlady piece but on the Lindisfarne piece it becomes a spiral finishing as a tail, not a leg. Most compelling of all is the comparison between the elegant front paw of the Aberlady animal, which creeps up the side of the panel, and the ear extension that ends in a similarly shaped tassel not a paw but likewise creeping up the side. This "tassel" is unusual on lappet strands, since a comma curl is the normal ending in the area.

The similarity ends for the moment as the heads differ, the Aberlady one on an extended neck crossing the design diagonally as is normal in the Lindisfarne concept and the other on a short neck pulled back. It is as if the part of the design, containing the original heads was truncated in some manner (figure 5bi, green line). This is where the experiment with templates and tracings starts. What follows here is not pattern analysis with exegetical comment but a practical experiment set out step by step.

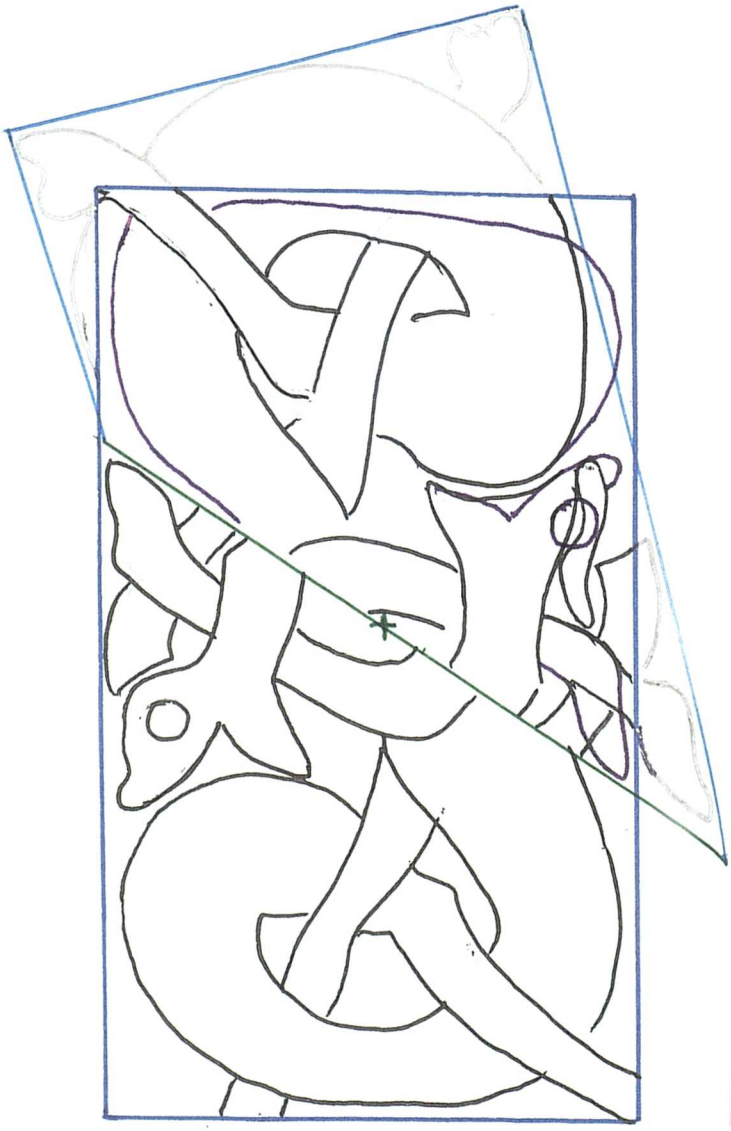
The experiment

One important alteration is made for using the template. I have deliberately made the lacing the opposite way to that on the Aberlady shaft as if it were the partner in a reversed pair (see glossary), so that the back leg which is the near one turns

Figure 5c



i. Lower template.



ii. Top template.

: design within the panel.

: design outside the panel.

: alterations.

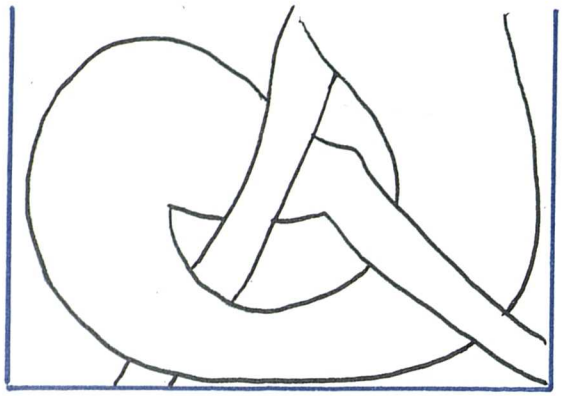
down to the corner not up through the other motif, (compare figure 5bi and ii). The larger version of this design on Abercorn 1934 (plate 9) has the near leg of the lower animal folded down and on the other motif extended upwards because it is a reversing pair. There is then no reason why the Aberlady motif could not have been drawn both ways on templates. This change is the nub of the experiment; the *sine qua non* of the argument.

The purple line (figure 5b) marks where a template should end, the green marks the relevant part used here. The head of the former seems to have been eliminated by accident or design, and the new head comes down onto the rump of the animal below where the stretched out back leg and tail were. It is impossible to tell what it was that the designer actually saw but it is a known fact that we tend to see the familiar to interpret the unfamiliar. I suggest the sculptor did not understand the original template and interpreted the design in a way with which he was familiar, so that what formerly was back leg and tail now became a small head and open mouth (figure 5ci).

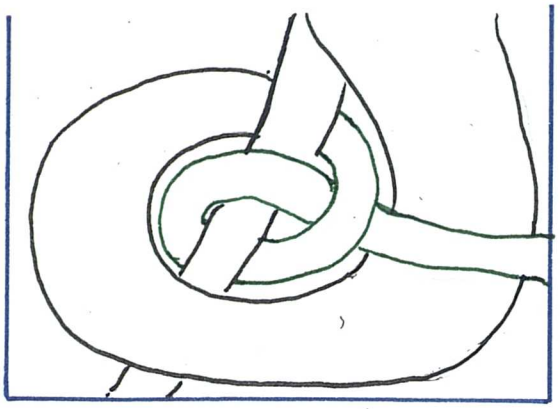
Animals with gaping mouths are not part of the main Lindisfarne Gospels' tradition[7] nor have they been seen in the sculptural designs already discussed. At Thornhill to be discussed in chapter 8 there are animals (plate 27), with small heads, knobbly noses and wide mouths or tongues, playfully biting or licking at their rumps. On the other hand at a later date, the many animals of the Viking-age sculpture at York had gaping mouths (appendix plate 12). Viking-age metalwork too (figure 9e), has animals with short heads and wide open mouths in something the same manner, some with tongues and some without, and these too have short necks, curved back or forward in a sharpish curve (figure 9eiii and iv) in the manner if the Lindisfarne piece.

By tracing through a template made of cardboard, cut as is shown in figure 5bii, (where the holes are shown in black, and slashes to mark the crossings are in red), figure 5ci was marked out. The original appears to have been skewed some 15° from the vertical. This may have been done to fit it into the panel which is a little too small (13cm available) or on the other hand the sculptor may have been at a later date seeking some fashionable touch by straightening up the pattern to

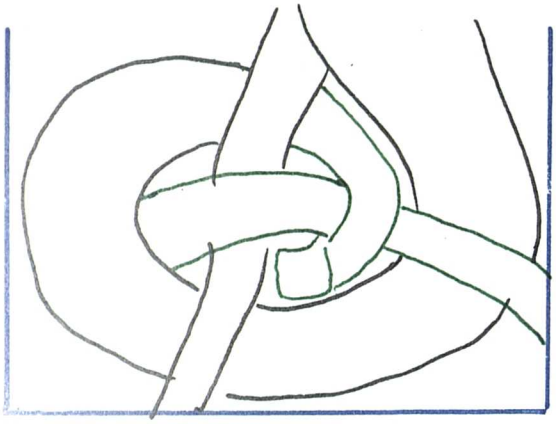
Figure 5d



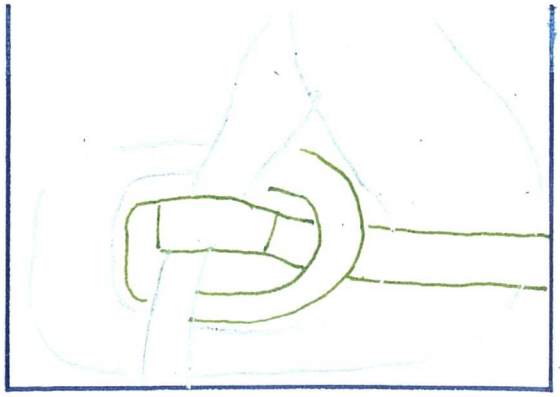
i. Leg drawn from template.



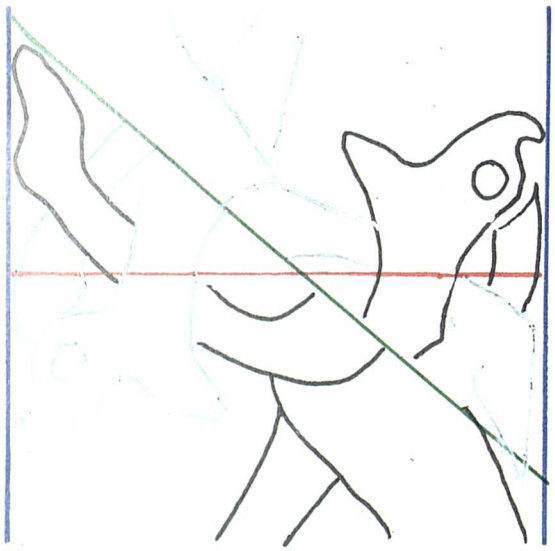
ii. Leg turned to spiralled tail.



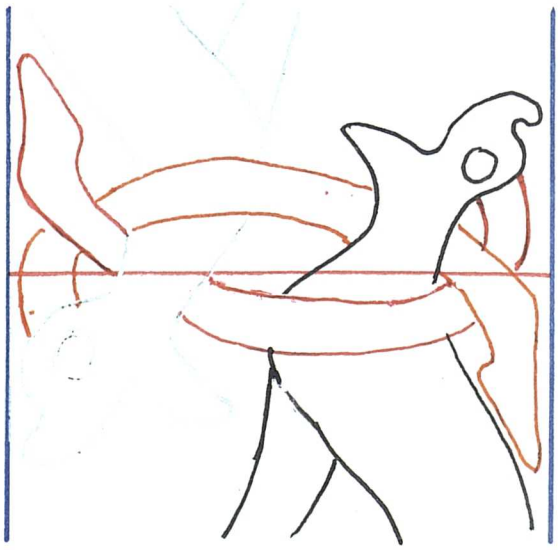
iii. The lower tail from panel.



iv. The upper tail from panel.



v. Central section from template.



vi. Central section with lappets.

The final details of Lindisfarne 2B.

look more vertical and horizontal than diagonal. Straighter lines are a feature of later York work (appendix plates 12 and 13), so some Scandinavian or proto-Scandinavian fashion may be expressed here.

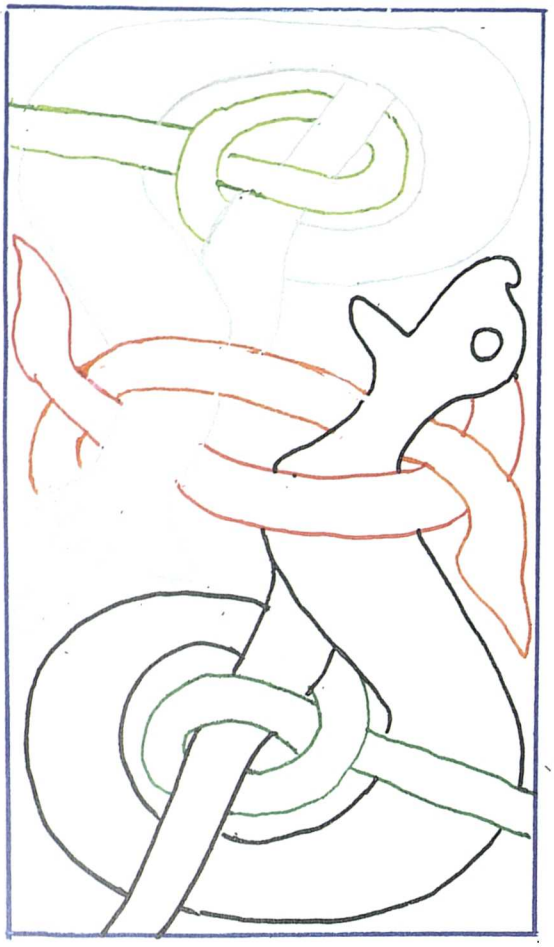
The tracing from the template needs little change within the panel (figure 5ci). The sensually curved legs of Aberlady now lack reason as the shapely paws disappear outside the panel. Even the creeping paw would have gone but it seems to have been redrawn at a sharper angle. This little detail is to me the most convincing part of the new design. The few adjustments needed, especially on the face, are shown in purple on figure 5ci.

To make a turned and reversed pattern the template must be twisted around 180° so that the design fits back onto the green line, still 15° from vertical. Now only 11cm to the centre is available so more must be cut off because the pattern must end as the cross-arm has been stepped out here. The sculptor was forced to shave more from the top of the design, a ploy which is quite detectable to the eye as the curve of the body is very thin and cramped (plate 15). Apart from this the paws and face are treated the same way. The chests and the old shoulder lines, are in some confusion but the rudiments of the design are in place and the adjustments are shown in purple (figure 5cii).

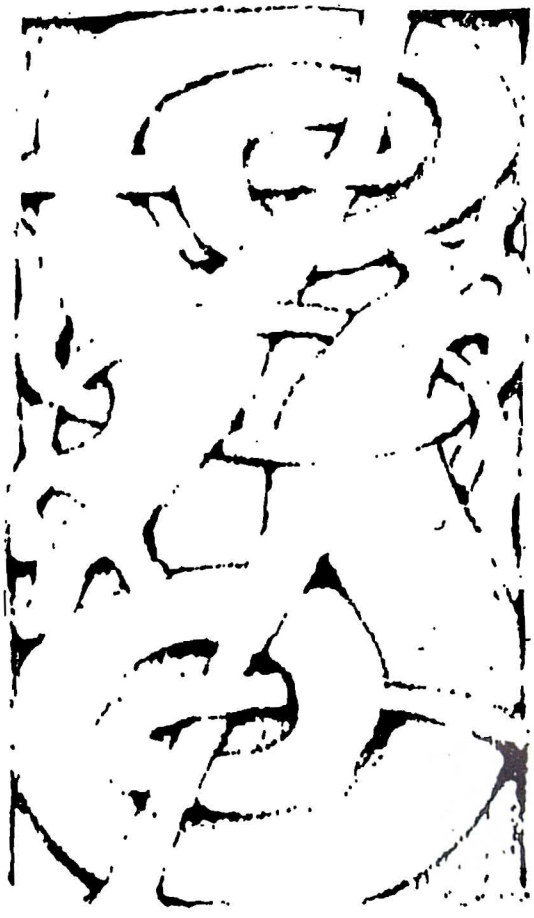
This then is the major part of the pattern layout on the basis of the Aberlady design. If it had not been for the shorter space there would have been no adjustment necessary apart from the face and chests. Now two further changes are made to bring the animal into the style of a later date. One change creates the spiralled tail of the Anglian style (chapters 7 and 9), while the other involves the lappet strands linking the animals.

The first alteration should have been only too easy for the sculptor, as the chubby back leg without a paw would suggest the spiral according to the fashion (figure 5di and ii). He had simply to turn a strand around as a loop mostly within this thick upper leg and allow the diagonal front leg to pin it, as at Thornhill (plates 21, 22 and 23) or Abercorn 1 (plate 37). There are spiralled interlaces within the group itself to copy from: a gigantic spiralled pattern A appears on Lindisfarne

Figure 5e



i. The design drawn from template.



ii. The design drawn by Peers (1923-4).

1:2

3A and a very much smaller one on the Alnmouth cross-shaft (Corpus I, illustrations 1051 and 808). So although a spiralled loop should have been simple for the sculptor he bungled it badly, perhaps because he was adapting a design, not using a template.

Figure 5di shows what space the designer had while figure 5dii is the pattern to be achieved. In executing the bottom motif there was a mistake or else a piece of stone broke away because the loop is not finished (figure 5diii). The spiral in the upper motif is cramped but complete, yet the leg pinning the design has two "overs" running, the cardinal sin in lacing (figure 5div). The design may have been already laid out from the template and the spiral was an afterthought. There is no finish with tassel or comma curl to the tail. It simply stops at the edge as if it were cut off, as the paw was cut off (figure 5c).

The other alteration, the linking of the lappets, would be a simple one. Two grooves are carved to cross each body creating a strand linking the old paw and ear, forming an ear lappet with tassel while reducing the muddle in the centre. Figure 5dv and vi (red, orange) show how this could have been done very simply. The idea of linking these ear strands may have come as a direct descendant from Lindisfarne 1A. There the bodies linked and the lappets curved through: here the lappets link and the bodies are held between them. The lappets on Lindisfarne 1 do not have any tightness as they join the design together, but these make a firmer even tighter line, and also match the horizontal direction of the tails. Tight binding ear lappets are frequently see in Viking-age sculpture at York and York Minster B and D (appendix plates 12 and 13) are again fine examples.

This is the completion of the experiment. Figure 5ei shows the design drawn from the template. Peers' (1923-24, plate 52, figure 1) drawing has been added for comparison. There seem to have been many alterations and adjustments to the original pattern, but most are minor. When drawing this, it has been surprising how accurate the template was in the direction of lines, angles and junction of forms, and yet the outcome is so different from the original design.

The case which has been set out step by step is that the Aberlady design was used and modified to make this unique version. The designer who conceived this idea may have seen the original animal pattern on standing crosses or broken shaft, but the new fashionable ideas were apparently adapted from a template, since a template seems a better way to transfer angles and details from a former pattern even when turned 15°. Such details would be unlikely to be in position if just copied from a diagram or another stone. The designer did not use the grid system, since there are now no natural points left because of the method of working. He seems not to have understood or cared about the mechanics of the early interlaced animals according to the concept of the Lindisfarne Gospels.

What then was the time gap between the original design and the new version? I have reasoned that the Abercorn/Aberlady shafts were close in concept to the Lindisfarne Gospels and should have an early to mid eighth century date (chapter 3). As the new work, done in an age of different aesthetic values, seems to reflect later Viking-age tendencies indicating a large time gap. Its date will be discussed when the work is placed in its context in chapter 11.

Conclusion

Whatever the exact date of the original pattern for Lindisfarne 2 it must have existed for long before such a different design was accepted. The sculptors, it could be reasoned, must have been very conservative with their patterns. Yet if this "Aberlady" design had been looked on as a basic design, just as pattern A was for interlace, even in its original form there could have been numerous variations, as well as this version altered for later fashions. We know at Abercorn there was a wider laced version and from Lindisfarne itself (number 1A) there was probably another version, perhaps formed into a figure-of-eight at an early date. A sculptor may not have felt constrained by having a basic pattern in template form with endless variation at his fingertips, of which we see but a small fraction. The unit measures to date being 6cm, 4.5cm and 3cm suggest that sets of patterns may have been made up in these sizes. This point is taken up again in later chapters.

In the repertoire we know that the zig-zag single animal also existed on Lindisfarne 1D (plate 13), while the set-of-four birds used at Aberlady (plate 12) may have been popular but does not appear in the remnants. So all these patterns could have had numerous expressions in the eighth century. That we do not see this plethora of patterns shows how great is our loss. However, the basic patterns must have been revered to appear again at later times, sometimes very altered and misunderstood, as Lindisfarne 2B shows.

The main thing that the basic "Aberlady" animal design indicates, now that it is found at Lindisfarne, disguised though it is, is that Lindisfarne is the more likely source and that the patterns or perhaps sculptors with patterns probably issued forth from there. It is not a final proof, because it is conceivable that a provincial sculptor may have created an appealing design which was then at a later date copied in the centre. The closeness in concept of Abercorn/Aberlady designs to the Gospels and the way the animal designs relate to those on Lindisfarne 1 and 2 is strong evidence for a lost school of early sculpture at Lindisfarne.

If many animal designs have indeed disappeared from there, were there also figural panels, frets, or vine-scrolls, both inhabited or just fruiting, of the sort seen at Abercorn and Aberlady? The eighth century sculpture of Lindisfarne will remain shadowy unless some new deposit is tapped during further building repairs or archaeological excavations. The Lindisfarne Gospels' concept has been traced as far as it can be at Lindisfarne. New influences and new tastes can now be followed.

NOTES

1. Stuart (1867, plate 26) published numbers 3, 6, 11, 12 and 13; Hodges (1893, 79-80, figure 79) first published number 2, relevant in this chapter; Peers (1924, 68-9, plates 53-54) recorded 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9.

2. The Alnmouth shaft was found in 1789 and published by J. Brand (1792, 472 and figure), showing the crucifixion somewhat misunderstood.

3. Number 2 also has a confronted pair of animals with interlace, on the head (plate 47) and a long design chiselled off on side D may also have been an animal design. No other stone in the group seems to have interlaced animals apart from a possible design on 4A, upper (Corpus I, illustrations 1047 and 1048)

4. Adcock (1974, 32-4) discussed the use of templates or stencils with holes for guidance of interlaced designs. Bailey (1980, 242-54) discussed templates in the form of shapes to be traced around. Both would be needed, according to the design.

5. If the stencil/template gave instructions for lacing in the form of slits the sheet would become unstable. One or a line of punched holes could have given such directions.

6. Small, Thomas and Wilson 1973, figures 35 and 6, illustrate a selection of animals, including those from different places, which have legs walking through a curled body.

7. The tongue must issue from an open mouth: Lindisfarne Gospels folio 211r, plate 2B, the top animal on the letter does this with a wide open mouth.

CHAPTER 6

THE THORNHILL CROSS: THE EARLY ROOTS

Introduction

The Thornhill cross has a double charm: it is an ancient stone in an idyllic rural setting and also a shaft with almost its full complement of graceful and legible patterns. W. G. Collingwood (1927, 54) remarked that "the cross is pleasant to behold in its native surroundings," referring to its position in a field and the nearby river with its stone bridge carrying the main road westward. It is indeed a delight, although there is nothing to explain its original "native surroundings." There is now no church, monastic ruin, graveyard or shrine visible but a river ford could be an important site for a boundary marker.[1]

As it stands alone in its field it also stands as a beacon in the north, witness to a style popular, not at Lindisfarne, but in the south and one which is more connected with Mercia and Deira (chapter 7). Because of its physical distance from this epicentre the cross has been thought a reflection of major works further to the south and has not had the detailed study it deserves.[2] Recently Dr D. Craig (1992, II, 12-35, 141-157) has described the cross and its designs in detail for the first time and, illustrated with accompanying excellent photographs (here plates 16-25 and 27, figure 6a). He has looked also into the very many relationships between the patterns here and those in other media and other areas (1992, II, chapter 12).

The panels are all animal designs but even a glance shows that they are not the type found in the Lindisfarne Gospels, however, closer study reveals subtle influence from that source. The cross with its competence, internal unity and a felicitous range of expression, can be seen as a masterpiece in its own right. Even if there is influence from outside Bernicia, there is a range of features which are northern and this has gone unrecognised. These Northumbrian features which are the subject of this chapter, are analysed here while the external features are discussed in chapter 7. First there is much about the cross itself which needs to be discussed as a basis for the patterns.

Figure 6a Thornhill cross.

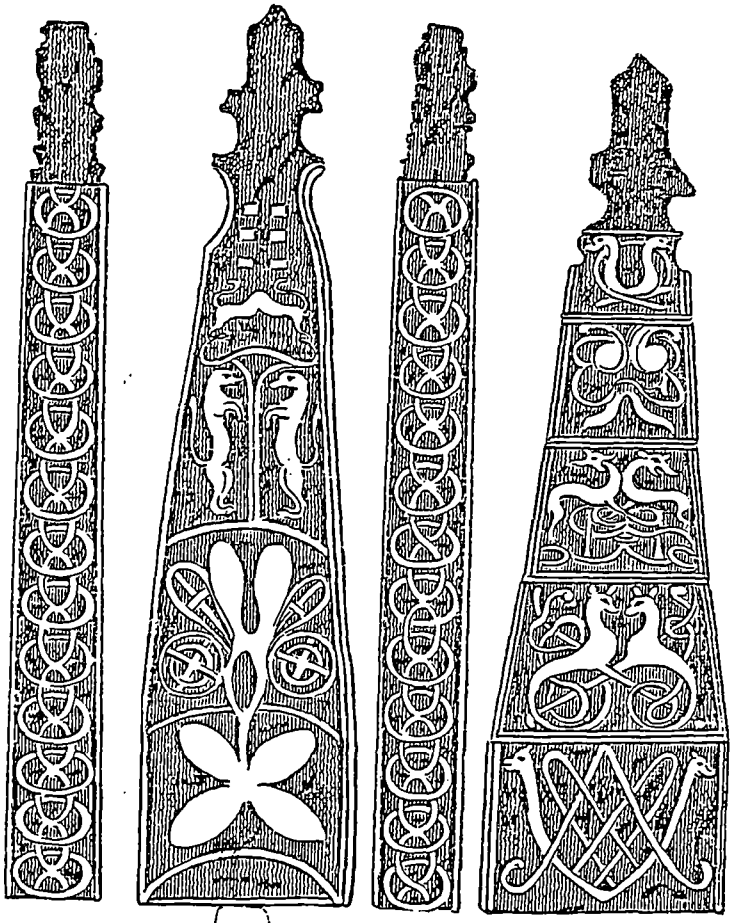
The cross

This impressive but not a huge cross, less than three metres (278cm in height, figure 6a). As it stands in full view of the road it has been of interest for a long while, as seen in R. Riddell's drawing (1793, here figure 6bi). The designs have the clarity and the carrying power of the best Anglian work. Some of the head has disappeared and the ground level has built up so that the lower part of the designs are now buried. The main faces are difficult to measure because of their worn edges, but they seem to be about 46cm tapering to about 34cm, while the sides are quite slim, 24cm tapering to perhaps 16cm or 18cm. This is wider but much shorter than Abercorn 1934 with a stronger taper and very much narrower (figures 2a and 6a). J. Romilly Allen (ECMS II 449) followed by W.G. Collingwood (1927, figure 68) have made the general aspects of the work clear but are both lacking in detail (figure 6bii and iii).

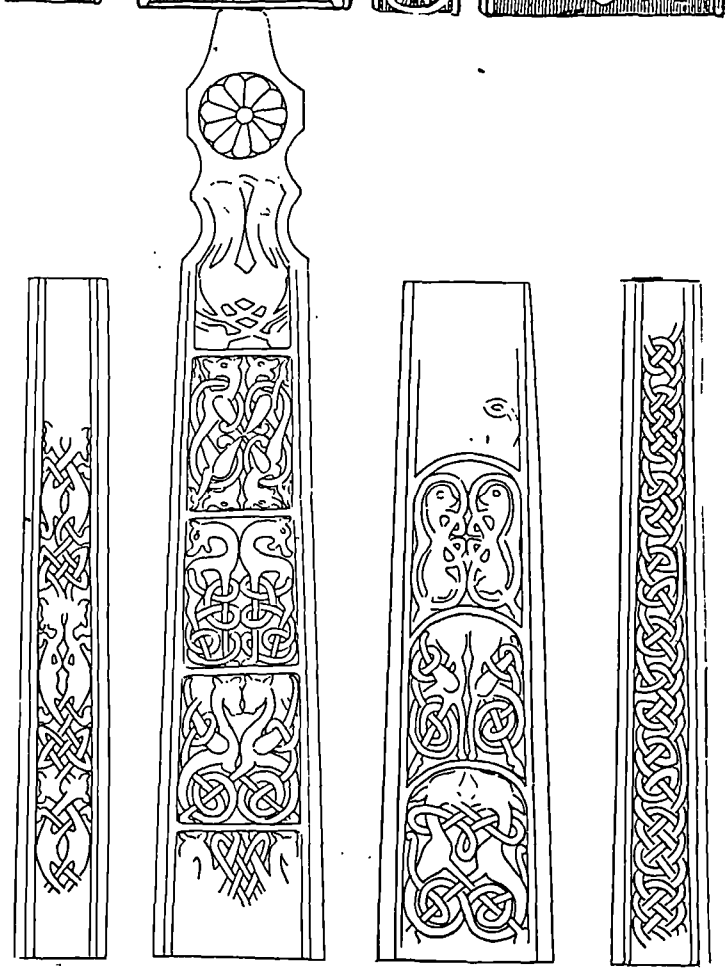
The coarse grained, pink sandstone is of local origin and its surface has weathered to the extent that the designs are less certain at close quarters because strands are worn,[3] holes are enlarged and crossings or junctions are confusing. The bedding cracks on the sides have opened up to make the designs there even more difficult to follow. A large portion of the upper west face has split away along the bedding planes. There are no side arms but the deeply curved cusps towards the top should indicate the lower arm and above the cusps should be the cross centre. The over-deep arcs give this lone cross, as it stands in the field, a distinctive appearance.

The technique is difficult to assess because of the weathering, but after studying the fresher parts it can be said that this was once an excellent piece of craftsmanship. The strands of the lacing can be seen to have been high and fine carved at slightly less than half-width more in the manner of Deiran work, indeed like a work which has many similar features, namely Cundall/Aldborough (appendix plate 4). Strands were once well rounded and the over/under indications carefully carved to look natural. The bodies of the animals were once all modelled and smoothly carved with junctions of legs and wings set back into the body, worked carefully not outlined with a groove. These now are indicated often by the remaining punch holes. The extremities such as paws, noses and wing-tips are frequently now just blobs with hints of having once been delicately shaped in a variety of ways. No surface patterns, such as wing feathers or hackle remain, but in certain light there are elusive traces of such decoration. Even

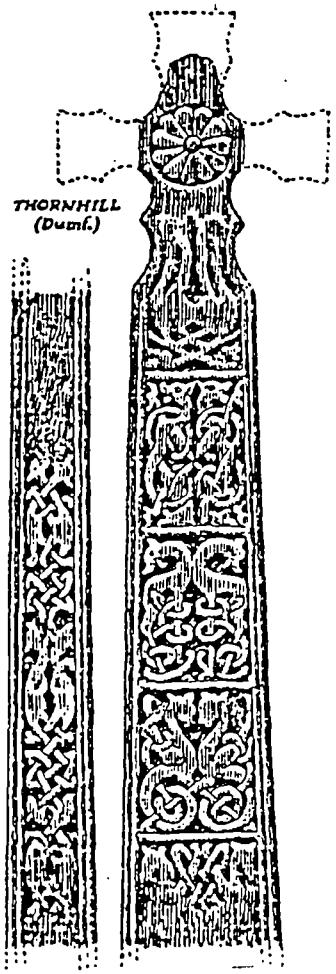
Figure 6b



i.



ii.



iii.

Thornhill Cross:

i. R. Riddell (1793).

ii. J. R. Allen (1903).

iii. W. G. Collingwood (1927).

the eyes of the animals are difficult to find now but a few can be seen to have been well defined rounded shapes.

The cross-head

There is, however, a problem with regard to the head which needs to be rethought before the whole programme can be discussed. The deep, double cusps on the upper part of the apparent cross-head lead to a large rosette which is naturally interpreted as the centre of the head. This rosette is an elaborate one with a knob in the centre and twelve petals, surrounded by an outer decorated ring of twists or some similar pattern. Twelve is a symbolic number in Christianity and the motif is appropriately large as a central motif should be but eight petals are usual on rosettes which are in the centres of cross-heads. There are rosettes on both sides of the head associated with Abercorn 1934 (figure 2a and b), also on cross-heads at Hexham, 8A and 9A (Corpus I, illustrations 910 and 944). Small flowers with six petals are on Carlisle 1A and C (Corpus II, illustrations 196 and 200).

Yet other observations indicate that this rosette at Thornhill is not the centre, appropriate though it would be but belongs to the lower arm. Firstly, the uppermost of the carved panels on face A continues from the shaft and past the arcs to end at the rosette (figure 6aA). It would be difficult to find a Bernician example where a shaft pattern trespasses onto the lower arm. Normally there is a definite break (plates 43 and 72) and the designers go to great lengths to terminate the patterns evenly on all sides at the start of the head (figures 9a and 11f). In the lower arm one would expect a new design which would introduce a theme used in all the arms.[4]

Secondly, the piece of the dividing moulding at the top of the panels on side A is bowed downwards, counter to the up curve of the circular motif above. This could only make sense if this was the final moulding of the set of panels. It does not make sense for a down curve to be against a round central motif, as designers were normally sympathetic to the space left to them by the roundel making the designs fit neatly up into the corners. There is also just a trace of a similar bowed moulding on side C directly opposite.

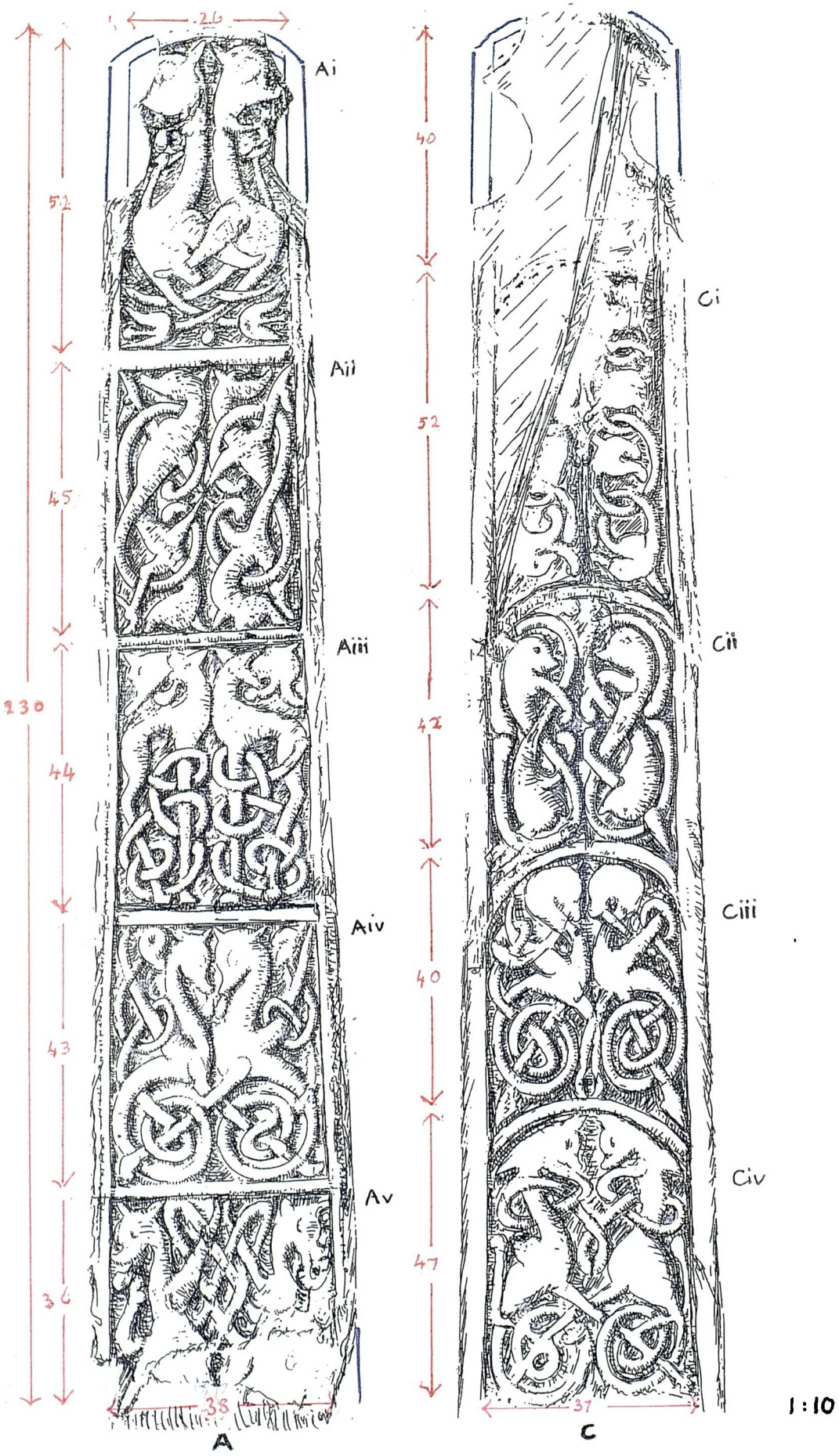
Thirdly, there is the evidence of the mouldings themselves, since the double moulding of the sides of both A and C are damaged but clear and then they cease at the arcs (plate 25, figure 6a); not a vestige of moulding can be seen now following around the curves. Figure 6bi shows that R. Riddell (1793), thought that the mouldings continued on side C, (the very worn side) but not side A where he saw the mouldings as being cut away. Unfortunately his observations of the cross seem less than trustworthy and his drawing of side C seems even less reliable than side A. J. Romilly Allen (ECMS II, figure 469A; here 6bii) shows single mouldings around the lower cusp which he stops before it reaches the rosette, he is clearly doubtful. W. G. Collingwood (1927, figure 68; here figure 6biii) follows him and smudges out the moulding. Neither of these artists understood the animal heads and up pointing feet of the paired animals on that panel (plate 25, figures 6a and c). Had they done so they would have realised not only that the design came too close to the curved edge for a moulding to be there, but also that the head of the left hand animal was partially cut away (plate 25). On the tip of the point of the cusps on the right is the remains of the moulding, the continuation of the moulding from the side. One cannot make a definite statement about the sides which have so many bedding cracks but there the mouldings there do not seem to continue around the cusps.

The conclusion must be that the rosette is in the bottom arm of the cross and a trace of a circle above it is the real cross-centre. Since a head is most likely to be broken at the narrow part of the arm, this break at the central roundel would be unusual but it was perhaps the weight of the head which caused it to sheer off along weak bedding cracks seen in figure 6aB and D. The head has now been trimmed and remodelled as far as it could be. The deep cusps are cut without mouldings to suggest the lower arm and are felicitously fitted into the addorsed pattern. The cross, Aycliffe 2, discussed in chapter 12, *Y* is another which has acquired a new form with the head cut into the shaft (figure 12c), although it was both reshaped and the designs recut.

A rosette indeed, would be more normal as a central motif but there is a precedent for it as a cross-arm decoration, moreover the example is close at hand: Hoddom, only 35km south-east of Thornhill provides the evidence. There magnificent cross-heads and other pieces were ignominiously mortared into the wall of a summer house at Knockhill, incurring the wrath of Romilly Allen (ECMS II, 441, figures 463 and 4).

Figure 6c

Thornhill cross-shaft: the designs on the main faces.



They were later taken out and photographed, but are now destroyed.[5] The simpler rosette on cross-head from Hoddom was carved on the arm next to the *agnus dei* roundel, and there is too, a separate arm, probably the right arm (ECMS II, figures 463 and 464). W.G. Collingwood (1927, figure 51) has drawn a logical reconstruction showing a cross-head with a flower in each arm around the large central circle. The flower is like the one at Thornhill in that it has no ornament assisting it to fit the arm[6]. There is too another connection with the Hoddom cross-head, as the lamb roundel is surrounded by a ring of unpinned loops or twists, which may also be used on the edging surrounding the Thornhill rosette.

If the rosette is in the lower arm, then the small fragment of stone above belongs to the real centre. There are but a few holes, of a wide arc which can be discerned, (figure 6aA) probably a fancy border, perhaps chain of twists like those which surround the bass on the Norham cross-head (Corpus II, illustration 675). Side A is clear enough and the information on it is reinforced by more shadowy roundel seen in side C (figure 6aC). The head would indeed have been one with double cusps, as the moderate curve to the right side of the rosette on side A seems to be the original curve of the arm. The shape may have been 10 or 11D (Corpus I, figure 2) with a substantial lower arm. Figure 6a shows my reconstruction with necessarily tight arcs to fit between the roundels. It is now not unlike the *agnus dei* head found at Hoddom, in shape or designs (Collingwood 1927, figure 51). The head, about 84cm high and 80cm wide, is now more orthodox in size and shape.

The cross-shaft format and programme

With the head established the shaft is about 230cm high from the start of the designs. The main face has five panels and there is room on side C for five also although one cannot define the top of the uppermost visible panel (figure 6cC). It seems that the cross was originally set in the ground at the bottom of the fifth panel where a moulding just can be discerned. However, as five was the number of panels on faces B and D at Bewcastle and also on Abercorn 1934 (figure 2a) face A at least reinforces the theory that five was considered an appropriate number.

There is a difference here from the panelled letters seen in the Lindisfarne Gospels and the faces on the Bewcastle cross (figure 2c). There, short formal panels alternated with

long flowing designs of another type and contrast was the hall-mark. This is not the case at Thornhill where each panel is much the same size and not only this, but the density and rhythm of the panels is very even. Craig (1992, II 12-13) points out that the panels on face A actually decrease a little in length as they become wider. The horizontal mouldings, which are straight on side A (apart from the uppermost moulding) but curved on side C, separate each pattern. The patterns also respond to the central axis in that very little transgresses this line. This seems to be more the discipline of inhabited plant-scroll.

Professor Cramp (1978, 6-11) when placing Anglo-Saxon design into phases and describing the changes which occurred, made the following comments as to when animals were released from plant-scroll. Phase II (710-740/50), includes both Ruthwell and Bewcastle:

> Plant scrolls are of East Mediterranean type inhabited by thrush-like birds; small bipeds with leaf tails; a single leaping quadruped; and a gripping, biting quadruped: all contained within the volutes of the scrolls.

However by the time of Phase IV (775-825), she describes further developments in the genre:

> In Northumbria the exotic animals and plants are taken over as motifs but translated into already established idioms:..

The Rothbury and Easby crosses are the examples. Of Croft and similar works she says:

> In plant scrolls animals and birds straddle the scrolls and penetrate two volutes.

It is in the next phase, Phase V (820-865/75), that she sees the change continuing thus:

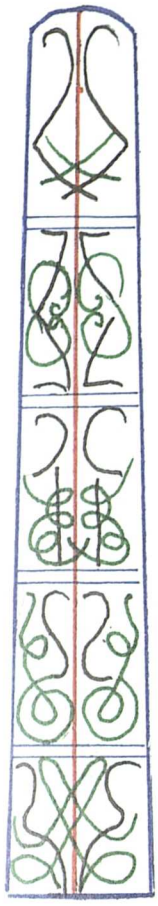
> The development begun in Phase IV ... whereby the birds and beasts fulfill the same functions within the plant scrolls as leaves and flowers continues ending in such crosses as Gloucester 2.

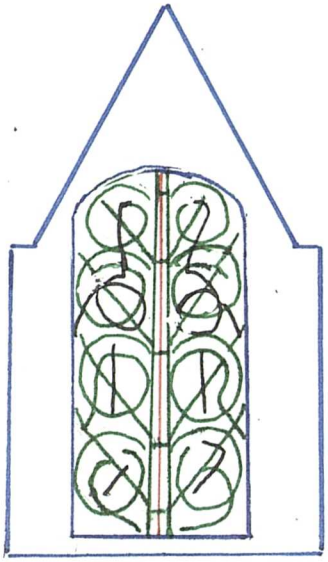
Gloucester 2 (figure 7gi), like Thornhill is without plant-scroll, but featuring animals in interlace. This makes one set of criteria to establish the place of this cross.

The Thornhill shaft designs would be an excellent example of this change which came at the end of phase V, as these mirror-imaged pairs sit as if in plant-ornament, but it is

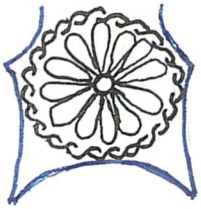
Figure 6d

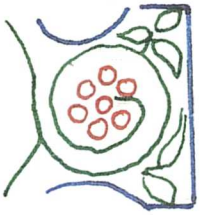
Thornhill cross: features which appear to replace plant ornament.





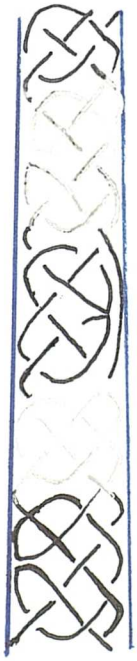
i. Shaft face Thornhill A; Jedburgh shrine.

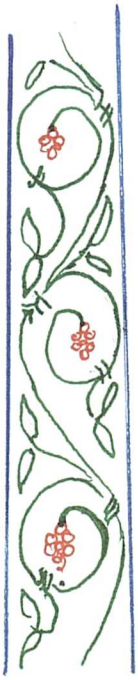




iv. Cross-arms: Thornhill A Carlisle 3bA.

ii. Medallion designs: Thornhill B, Lowther 1A.





iii. Alternating design: Thornhill D, Aberlady D.

their tails which curl with no sign of the vine itself. The rectangular panels on side A are balanced either side of a strong vertical axis and the arched panels on side C give an even stronger impression of a tree-scroll, since the mouldings, about 2cm thick are as willowy rods, they have neither nodes, nor are they architectural, being without capitals.[7] Figure 6di shows diagramatically the "A" side of Thornhill in proportion to the face of the Jedburgh shrine (1:20). The main faces of Thornhill keep something of the effect of vinescroll in the curling lines, which engulf the bodies. Green is used in the figure for both tendrils and tails, black is used for the main design lines of the animals.

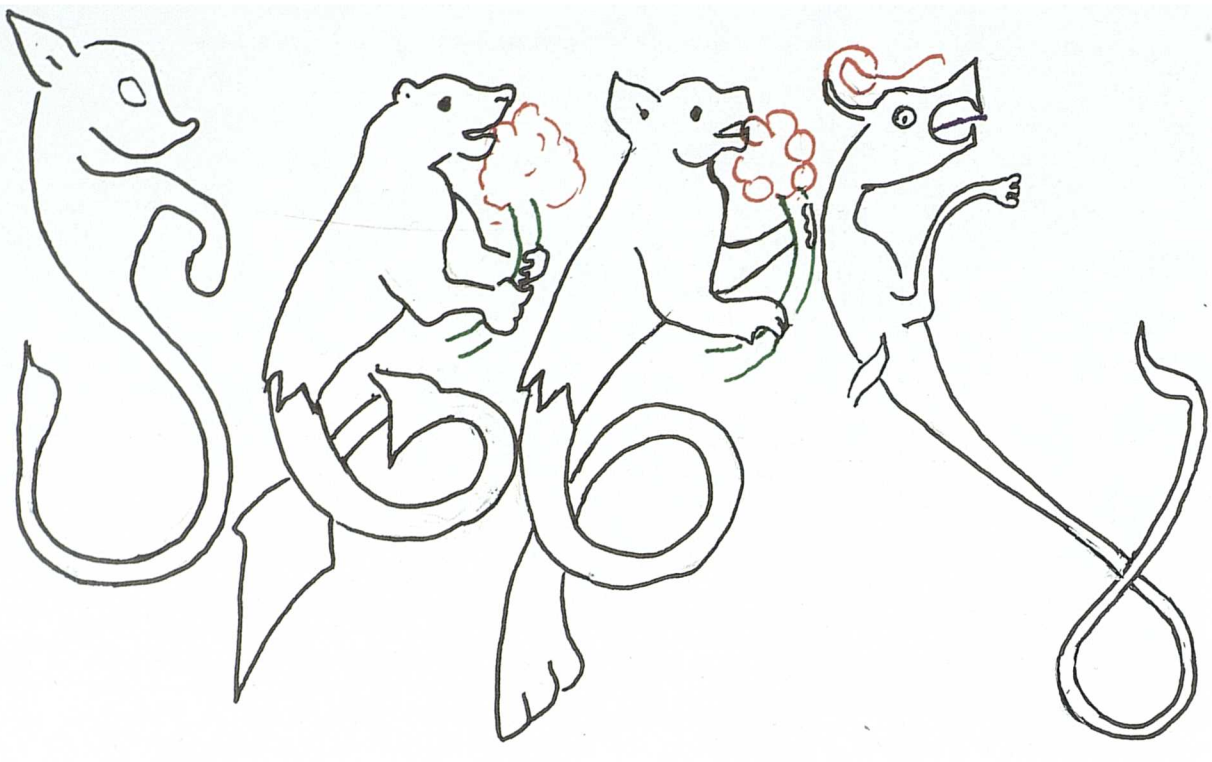
This point can be taken further with the designs on side B where there is a long, perhaps unprecedented chain of paired animals, interspaced with a simple interlace motif. The animals have their backs curved to the outer edge and their legs and sometimes necks threading diagonally, to form medallion shapes (plate 18, figure 6a). In figures 6dii the design is contrasted with Lowther 1A (Corpus II, illustration 436). Like the medallion-scroll, the animal design continues the whole length of the shaft.

On the other side, side D, is a pure interlace design in a five cord changing pattern which also occupies the full length of the shaft. Such changing patterns are associated with Deira, of York, Croft, Otley and Easby (Collingwood 1927, and figures 146, 59, 60 and 53). Some of these crosses have both interlace and plant-scroll. The similarity of interlace to plant-scroll is not so obvious as with the animal designs, but these patterns tend to have loops pointed one way then the other, alternating like plant-scrolls. Figure 6diii shows in a simple way the interlace on Thornhill D contrasted with the plant-scroll of Aberlady B (figure 3a B and D).

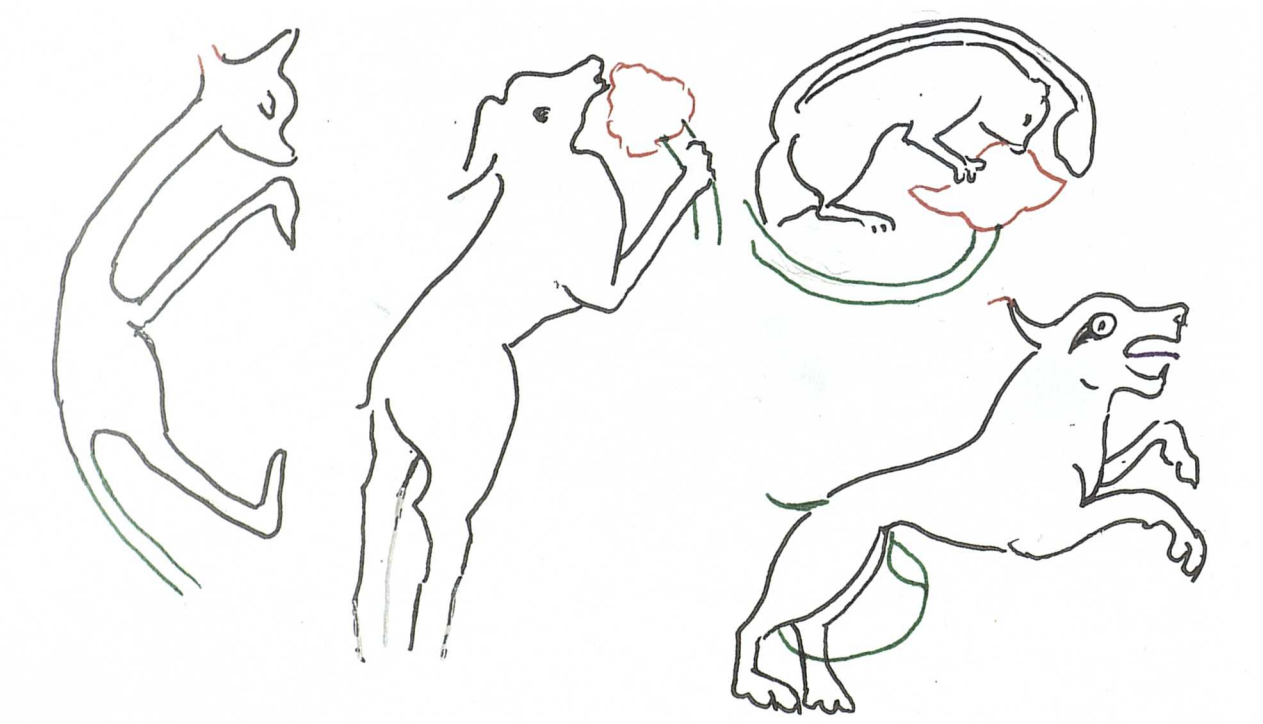
The cross-head too, which is reconstructed in figure 6a has rosettes in the arms. The single flower is a common decorative feature but the artist may have chosen the rosette while rejecting continuous plant-ornament, which was also common. At nearby Carlisle there are cross-arms with running plant-scroll and grape rosette ornament, 3aA and bA (Corpus II, illustrations 212 and 213, here figure 6div).

The whole programme then, seems to be the substitution by this individual designer of animal interlace and interlace for plant ornament, which was part of a wide movement.

Figure 6e



i. The biped:Thornhill, Bewcastle, Ruthwell, Durham Cassiodorus.



ii. The quadruped with neck forward: Thornhill, Bewcastle, Bewcastle,

Durham Cassiodorus.

The panelled faces have paired animals for tree-scroll and on one side there is a continuous animal chain for medallion-scroll and on the other interlace for alternating-scroll and the rosettes are on the head instead of rosettes of grapes. The animal designs retain something of the rhythm, density and unity of the plant ornament which they supplant, and some of the animals seem to have crossed from inhabiting plant ornament to become pure pattern motifs.

The early naturalistic animals

There are three types of animals on this one cross: the more naturalistic type, the dragonesque and the one which is here called the tall horse. The naturalistic animals, consisting of both bipeds and quadrupeds are the ones discussed in this chapter, while the winged dragon is discussed in chapter 7. The tall horse too, which appears in the middle of side A as if the show piece of the cross, is from another stream dealt with in chapter 8.

Naturalistic bipeds are seen on side C. This is not altogether a contradiction for although there are no bipeds in real life, they somehow carry a conviction of being furry squirrel-like creatures. The small animal is best seen in an arched panel, Thornhill 1Cii (plate 16, figure 6ei and gi). J. Romilly Allen (figure 6bii) was correct in essence but lacking in the detail necessary to appreciate the little creature.

The animal has a very round forehead and its face is dished, leading to a pointed turned up nose which is mouse-like, and his jowls are rounded. There seems to be a floppy tongue coming somehow from the closed mouth. but it is not exactly clear from where. The front leg of this animal develops from a naturally rounded shoulder directly below the jaw. The stress on the rounded shoulder joint is a feature of the Lindisfarne Gospels and seen too in the early sculpture at Abercorn and Aberlady (plates 9 and 11) but it is also seen in the natural animals of vine-scroll (figure 6ei). The front leg is held in a "begging" position and ends with a paw, now only a blob as weathering has taken away any details of the toes. The body is comma-shaped, diminishing quickly to strand size. This strand, as the tail, does the lacing necessary and finishes as a vague shape, which could have been a tassel (plate 16A, lower left, figure 6ei).

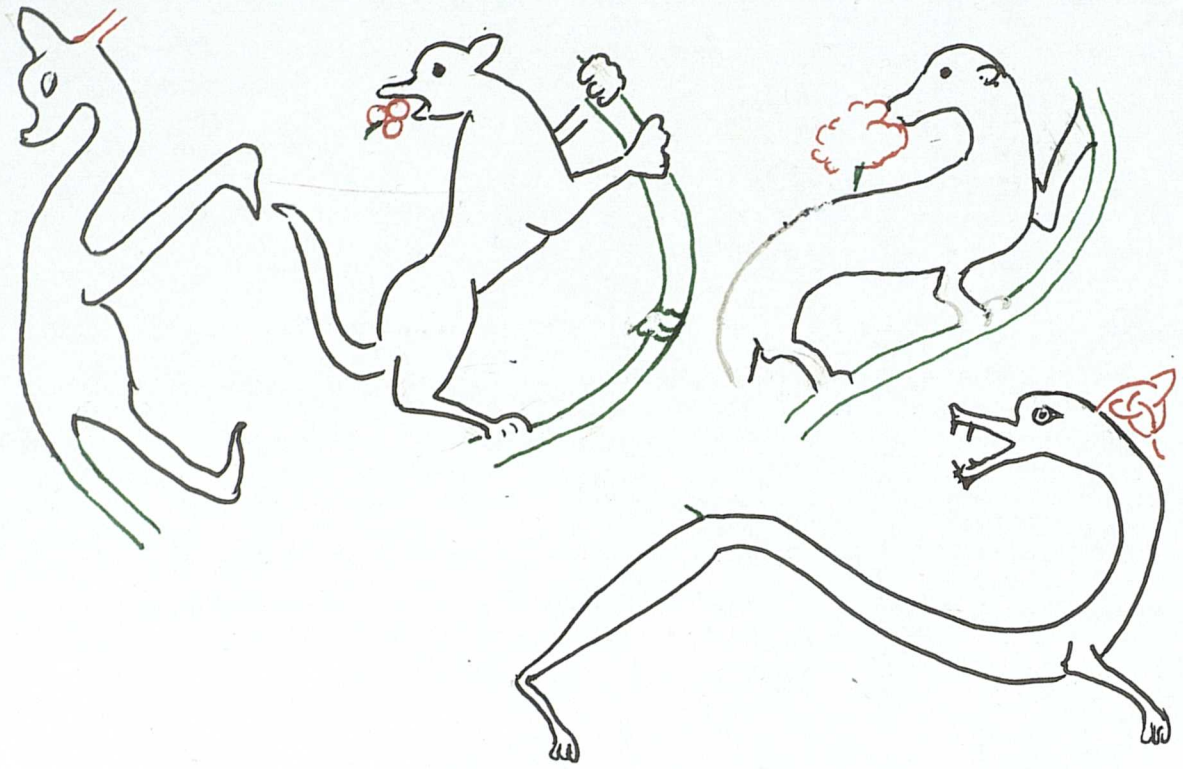
The uppermost visible panel, Ci (plate 17, figure 6gii) has another form of the animal, rolled so that its tail links with the one above. There is enough clarity in the lower right motif to give an idea as to how it was constructed. D Craig (1992 II, 16) believed these were a chain of heads and tails only. The head has an ear to the outside corner and a tongue extension to the centre but there is also a leg which bends in a natural manner from a full shoulder: it is just like the former animal with the tail curled. This being so, the rough shapes of the other motifs can gain a modicum of certainty.

The biped at Thornhill is in simple profile as befits a pattern, but the ancestors of the small creature are not difficult to spot and furthermore they are close at hand. The Ruthwell cross is just 35km to the south-east and the Bewcastle Cross is as far again to the east and both of these have small bipeds which are more detailed versions of those at Thornhill (Corpus II, illustrations 113 and 686, here figure 6ei) but in the context of plant-scroll. These are full of life, with their furry bodies moving amongst the foliage, as their paws grip to support them while they munch the fruit.

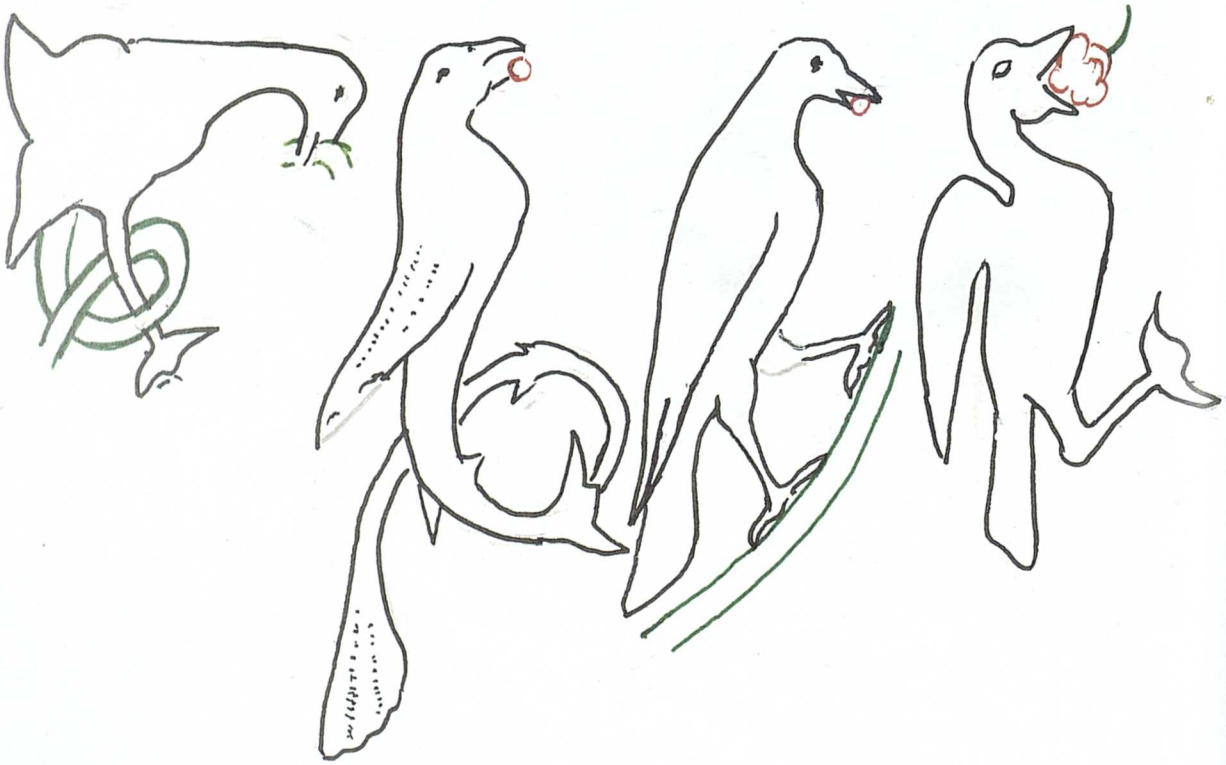
Their heads and ears are less exaggerated than those at Thornhill, and the legs join the bodies similarly on rounded shoulders set in beside rounded chests. Then the better filled bodies descend again comma-shaped, and the tail takes over curling to the rhythm of their plant-scrolls not to the interlace grid. The tails end in large splayed tassels, like those seen on the Thornhill animals. The only other animal, even a little like these, is on folio 81v of the Durham Cassiodorus, on the lower side panels shown on plate 6. Ignoring the great vicious looking head which that artist favoured, there is a longer neck and the chest is finer body with the shoulder leading to the weak front leg. The long tail extension with its tassel like ending makes a strong link with the plant-scroll animals and also Thornhill (Figure 6ei).

The other natural animal at Thornhill is the quadruped, paired and repeated over five registers, the whole length of side B (plate 18 and figures 6eii and fi). Here weathering and cracks have destroyed any detail. The animal is clear enough in outline having an arched back which runs beside the mouldings and a long neck either crossing the design or turning back at the centre. The head has the same exaggerated features as the animals on Ci and ii, turned up nose and pointed ear and behind the ear joined to the back of the head is an ear lappet, which extends to do the lacing, (plate 18B) joining as

Figure 6f



i. The quadruped with head back: Thornhill, Jedburgh, Ruthwell, Durham Cassiodorus.



ii. The bird: Closeburn, Ruthwell, Bewcastle, Nunnykirk.

tail to the animal above. The front leg comes from a rounded shoulder while the back leg has a shapely hip, but both legs are straight ending in hooked paws with one pointed toe, on down the other up.

Looking at the same sources as before, there are plenty of quadrupeds with their heads in either position stretched across or turned back (figure 6eii and fi). Most are like the small squirrels with arched backs in the upper reaches of the plant-scrolls at Bewcastle and Ruthwell (Corpus II, illustrations 114 and 685) or standing on the ground stretching into the lower branches of the vine. At Bewcastle (Corpus II, illustration 112) is a sheep not unlike the Thornhill quadruped. Also there is an animal in a similar pose on the Jedburgh shrine (Corpus I, illustration 1429). These motifs as drawings or perhaps as templates for the drawing of outlines may have been in a workshop collection, at Thornhill or a central workshop.

Quadrupeds too, are in the repertoire of the artist of the Durham Cassiodorus, on folio 81v (plate 6). A leaping "lion", looking quite realistic and substantial is on panels of the lower and upper borders. Snake like creatures on the upper side borders turn out to be quadrupeds in a turning back position. Figures 6eii and fi shows a range of both types and may indicate that the Thornhill artist was choosing from a popular form.

The bird

The evidence points to naturalistic animals such as are found in Bewcastle, Ruthwell and Jedburgh being adapted for patterns. To add further to this case, a bird pattern on the nearby Closeburn cross-shaft seems also to have come across from the real world of the Ruthwell or Bewcastle shafts. If templates of these were at Thornhill they could also have been used on the Closeburn cross shaft, found within a few kilometres of Thornhill (ECMS II, 436, figure 458)[8]. This shaft is in a very different style, crowded looking and deeply carved, by different hand in a different age. The lowest panel on side C (plate 19) is cramped and difficult to follow but it shows two birds which have round heads with slightly hooked beaks, stubby and partly raised wings on straight backs and tails which curl. Each leg comes forward with perhaps a wide foot with two toes and a pad between.

This bird could well be explained in the light of a particular bird on the Ruthwell cross on the lower west face (Corpus II, illustration 682) where there is a bird with a straight back, slightly raised wing and a tail with fins which curls lavishly. There is no clear leg here or claw, for comparison but there is on a very fine bird from Bewcastle (Corpus II, illustration 115). These eat seed with slightly hooked beaks, whereas the Closeburn birds being in pattern form catch the opposite tails in their mouths. At Nunnykirk (Corpus I, illustration 1193), also, birds in vine-scroll are not dissimilar. All have similar heads, wings and feet (figure 6fii).

In conclusion the natural animals (birds) on the Thornhill and Closeburn shafts seem to have come from the crosses like Ruthwell and Bewcastle although used in a very different manner in interlaced work rather than in a natural setting. The motifs from these early eight century shafts[9] could have been translated into interlaced animal designs sometime in the eighth century. In view of what has been said about the rejection of plant-scroll, a later date is more likely.

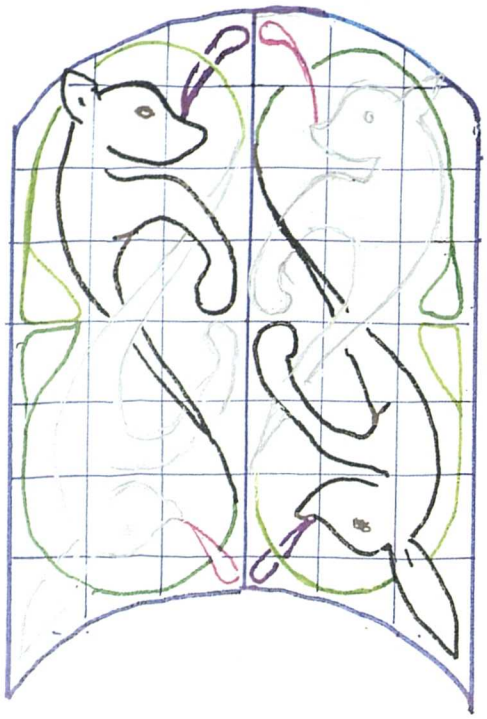
The evidence of the Durham Cassiodorus (folio 81v, here plate 6 and figures 6e and f), shows that the bipeds and quadrupeds of the plant-scroll were also adapted there into interlace designs which were even more remote from natural forms. That manuscript is dated to the first half or middle of the eighth century, (Alexander, catalogue 17 and Bailey 1978, 14). Since the artist of that decorated folio has a certain style which makes the animals into fantasy, one suspects a more literal artist may have preceeded him in changing natural animals into a form to be used in patterns.

The old pattern form: the set-of-four

The natural bipeds of Thornhill are in sets-of-four. However, these sets-of-four are not integrated with diagonal limbs crossing and strands of interlace joining them, as in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Each motif is kept basically within its quarter and a little interlacing is done by the tail. The union across the vertical axis is left for the eye to do visually, in that the vertical axis is kept clear as possible of crossing strands.

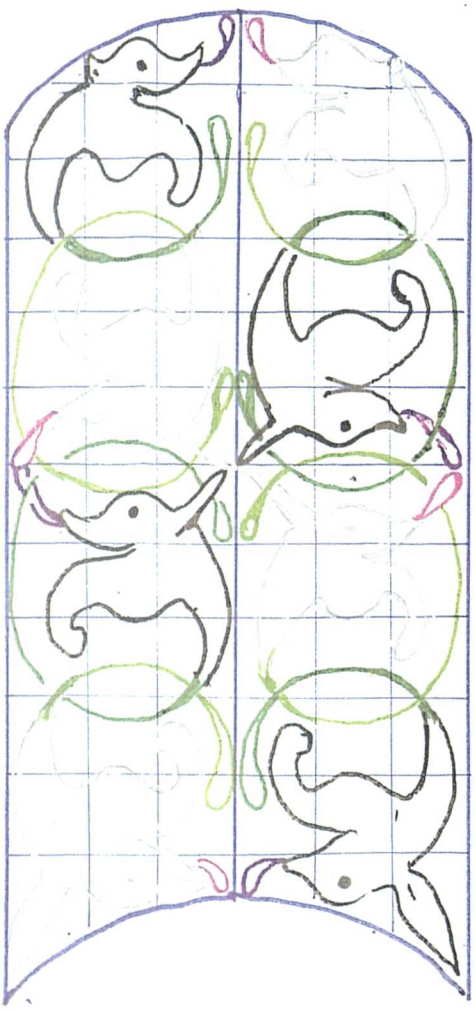
The mouse-like biped of Cii, (plate 16, figure 6gi), is in an extremely simple design. The small biped are turned with heads to the top and bottom, chests into the central axis. The four paws meet in the very centre, curling back slightly. The bodies and

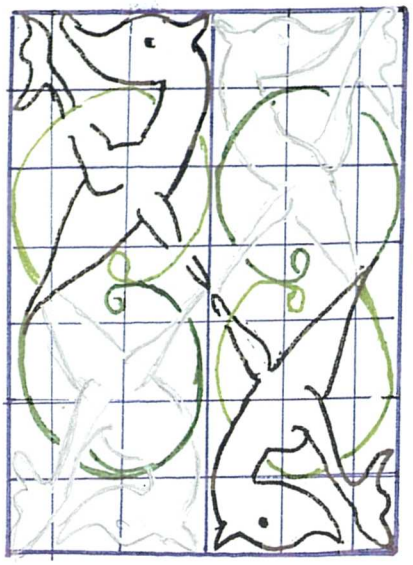
Figure 6g The natural animal patterns.



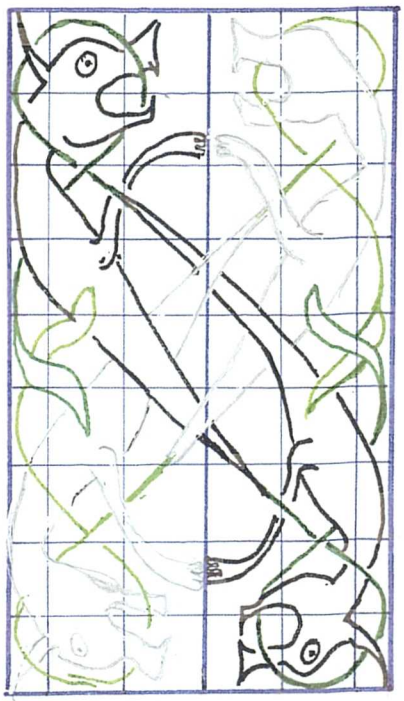
i. Thornhill Cii.

ii. Thornhill Ci.



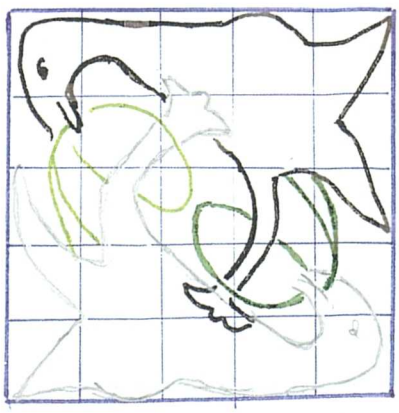


iii. Thornhill Aii.



iv. Durham Cassiodorus f.81v.

v. Closeburn Ciii.



heads give a little weight to the pattern and the tails curve above and below in that wide circling movement characteristic of the cross, combining the motifs in keeping with overall rhythm. The attraction of the pattern is only partly in the motif but mainly in the repetition. Just as a kaleidoscope is made up of inconsequential fragments but forms unending, magnificent patterns in hexagonal formations, so in this case the simple motif is enhanced into a fascinating design by its quadripartite repetition.

There is also that same smooth, ordered rhythm which bespeaks the use of a square grid. Indeed a grid can be drawn through the holes in the standard manner, with the result that the grid lines are quite evenly spaced. The strands cross the grid correctly and the curves obey the laws of the grid, all curves being answered with no obvious missed crossings. So, although the motif is very different from Eadfrith's dogs or birds, it obeys the same rules. Since the panel is near 42cm in length and 29-30cm in width, it has six units across and seven and a half units on the vertical axis, the unit measure is about 6cm. The panel is curved, arched at the top and concave at the bottom, so some compromises are needed to fill these odd spaces. A tongue strand appears going up to the arch and the lower ears are over-long extending into the bottom corners (figure 6gi).

The second set-of-four at Thornhill (Ci) is a more elaborate panel. The linked design (plate 17, figure 6gii) has the same basic animal as the one below but in four registers, turned both ways in a new rhythm, AB/BA. The sculptor for some reason dug out the holes within the links assiduously, so the divisions between the registers are clear even in the very damaged condition and the mass between each link should be a similar small animal. There is a reconstruction on plate 17B and an interpretation on figure 6giii but there is no absolute certainty. If the design had four registers it is 52cm in length but only 30-28cm in width but again has the regularity of grid which is suggested in plate 17B to be six units across and three for each register. If the suggestion is correct the unit measure would be 4.5-5cm.

There are no more of the well marked links to show that the design was longer than four registers, but by the same token no moulding can be seen to divide this pattern from a new one, which would be a short panel (figure 6c). Evidence from interlace

shows that four registers in AB/BA rhythm was popular: examples are Bewcastle IBvii and iv (Corpus II, illustration 101 and 98) and Abercorn 1A (figure 9a and b)

There is another set-of-four, this time on the main face number Aii (plate 20 and figure 6giii). This pattern is formed along the same lines as Ciii but uses the winged dragonesque creature, the animal type to be discussed in chapter 7 (plate 20). The general elegance and the use of concave and convex curves puts the design on a higher plane. The animals are addorsed, with their bird feet to the corner, and the wings meet at the centre forming major diagonals. The tails curl again to link the upper to the lower animals. The panel is 44cm by 30-28cm and the set is formed on a grid, five units across and seven in depth (plate 18B, figure 6giii), so the unit measure is about 6cm on both axes.

Figure 6ei showed that the animal of the Durham Cassiodorus panel (folio 81v, plate 6, lower side border) is a more exaggerated version of the squirrel-like creature and the set-of-four formed with it is remarkably similar to the Thornhill Cii design, allowing for the elongation and the diagonal crossings (figure 6gi and iv). Even more like it but addorsed is the design, Thornhill Aii with its sophisticated animals, where the wing in the position of the tassel in the manuscript. The likeness of sculpture to manuscript leaving out the calligraphic lacing (figures 1h iii and iv) is beyond coincidence and speaks of some common source or contact which has transferred the design from one to the other.

The birds of the Closeburn panel which are of the same concept as the animals of Thornhill are in a turned and reversed design, the other favoured pattern type in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Like the Thornhill set-of-four the linking is mainly done by the eye, as the bulk of each animal stays in its own half of the pattern while the tail only does a curl or loop to fasten the design. This points to a design being drawn from the same repertoire. The panel is 21cm square and on a grid five units both ways, with a unit measure of 4cm through the holes (plate 19B).

Conclusion

On the Thornhill cross there are two types of animals based on those which move naturally among the plant ornament of the neighbouring crosses of Bewcastle,

Ruthwell and Jedburgh with a bird motif at Closeburn from the same source. However, at Thornhill the animals, together with the bird at Closeburn, are used as pure pattern motifs, having been reduced to a simpler form than those in their more natural environment. Their sinuous bodies and curling tails, nevertheless, maintain something of the rhythm of the plant ornament they supplant. The biped and quadruped at Thornhill and bird at Closeburn are types which have nothing in common with the Lindisfarne Gospels' animals except the basic concept of being derived from naturalistic forms, which may indicate that this concept was widespread, that is for patterns to be made up with other natural animals, but only the Durham Cassiordorus is close on concept to this.

There are also among the Thornhill and Closeburn designs the set-of-four and the turned and reversed patterns which are indeed favoured in the Lindisfarne Gospels. In the manuscript they are tight well integrated patterns but in the sculpture the works are less integrated formed by the eye rather than strands. Like the Gospels however, there is an order in the drawing up seen in the alignment of holes, pointing to the grid system and again the animals curve around and slip into their elegant positions in the manner of interlace. The unit measures of the designs are roughly the size of that of the sculpture in the eastern area, with the same visual impact. However, there seems a different set of actual measurement, that is Thornhill (Closeburn) shows measurements approximately 4cm, 5cm and 6cm, or a sequence which is a small "half-inch" apart. The measurements can be seen in the Lindisfarne area 3cm, 4.5cm and 6cm. More information is necessary to see how such sequences develop.

The Thornhill cross, with all its designs ~~was~~ deliberately severed from plant ornament, ~~it~~ should belong to the ninth century (Cramp 1978, Phase V, 820-865/75). There is no way of knowing how many lost works with natural animals in formal patterns there were but the manuscript, the Durham Cassiodorus, which has such a strong connection, is dated either side of the middle of the eighth century so works of sculpture using this type of motif may have been done in the second half of that century. This however, is not the whole story of the Thornhill cross but the unrecognised part. The other designs tend more towards the fantastic and are well aligned with a movement which has wider implications. The wider picture is the subject of the next chapter.

NOTES

1. D. Craig kindly explained that aerial photographs, which he has, have features which may be buildings, in the field near the cross. It is not known what date they are.

2. Collingwood (1924-5, 54-5) places the crosses in the tenth century as degenerate Anglian work, Kendrick (1938, 198) passes over the work as having a more barbaric version of the Anglian twin beasts. Cramp (1961, 16) also believes the cross is tenth century but gives little detail.

3. Even this worn Anglian crosses had a visual carrying power of over 30 metres because of wide unit measures (5-6 cm), half-width strands and deep carving.

4. Arms from one cross-head have a theme: symbols: Hart 7A (Corpus I, illustration 418); vinescroll: Carlisle 3a and bA (Corpsus II, illustration 207); interlace and animal interlace: Woodhorn, figure 14a and b).

5. Radford (1952-3, plate 2-4) published the photograph of the cross-head pieces by O.G.S Crawford after the pieces had been freed from the summer house.

6. Monkwearmouth 1A (Corpus I, illustration 590) is a fragment of a cross arm with a different multi-petalled rosette (24), with a pellet in the corner and a large central circle. This does show that rosettes could belong to arms as well as central roundels.

7. Otley I (Cramp 1970, plates 7 and 8) has arches with capitals; Rothbury (Corpus I, illustrations 1220 and 1222) has arches with nodes.

8. J. R. Allen (ECMS II, figure 458) calls the side with animal panels "the front". I believe the opposite side, the figural side, which should be called "A" so the animal panels are on side "C".

9. The sculpture of Bewcastle, Ruthwell and the Jedburgh shrine have been controversial but normally placed in the first half of the eighth century (Cramp 1978, Phase II: 710-740/50; Corpus II, Cramp 69).

CHAPTER 7

THORNHILL: THE WIDE PICTURE

Introduction

The fascination of the Thornhill shaft is in the plethora of its animal interlace designs, repeating or varying in elements of designs while always being recognisable as the Thornhill style. There is however, a new animal which is here called the "dragonesque", to distinguish it from the natural type, and it is this animal which is predominant at Thornhill. This time the animal is not a local type but widespread both over a large area, of England and in all media. There is no dearth of connections to be found for anyone studying any form of the dragonesque type.

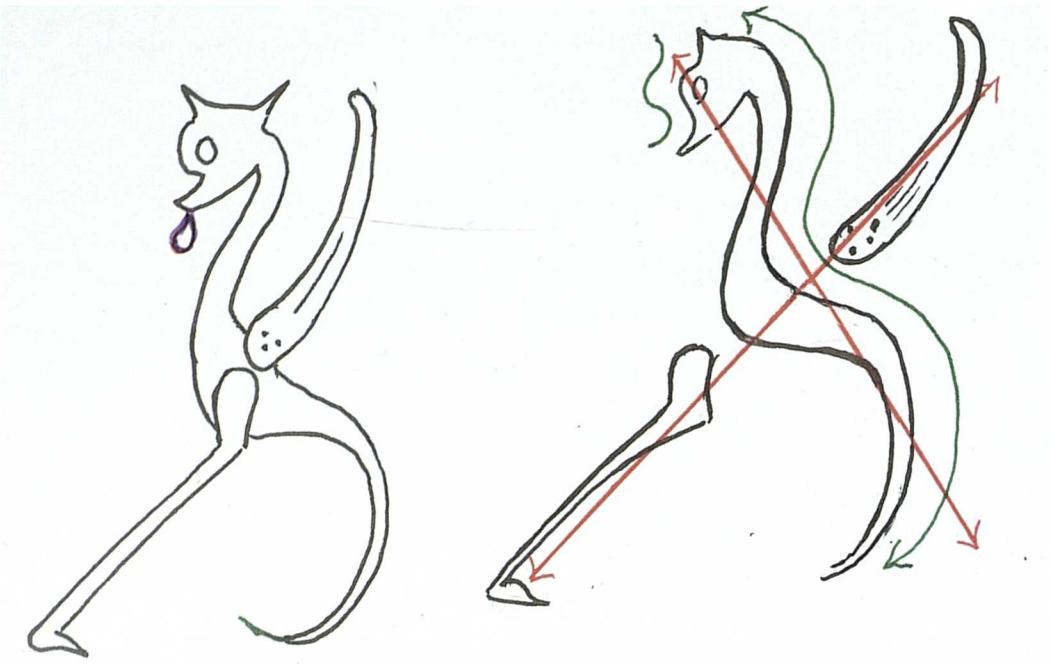
Professor Cramp (1978, 6-11, figures 1.1 and 1.2) created some order in the whole animal sequence. The single animals move from basic forms to designs in interlace which include some of these winged bipeds, while the paired natural animals start in plant-scroll then emerge to interlace with their own extremities. These frequently feature this new form of dragonesque creature. In studies of the animal, Thornhill is on the outer fringe because of the northern position but Dr Craig (1992, II, chapter 12) has done much groundwork in finding relationships, looking from what one might call a "Thornhill perspective."

In this chapter firstly, the actual animal of Thornhill is analysed to determine its construction so as to see where its roots might be. Secondly, the paired or mirror-imaged designs with their numerous variations within this pattern type are discussed with related expressions. The aim is to see how the Thornhill cross fits with the mainstream so as to determine whether it is indeed just a distant northern echo or an innovative work in its own right.

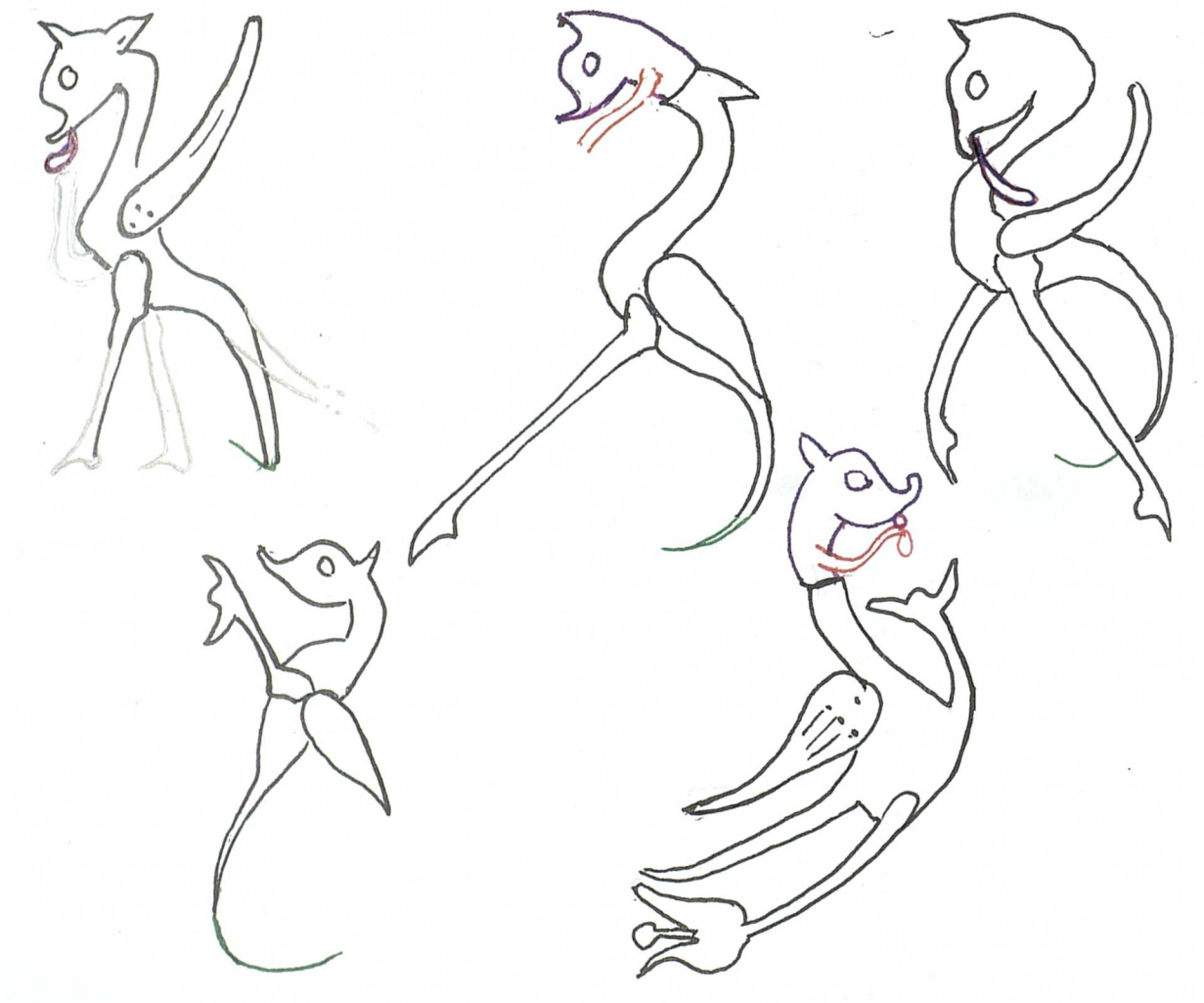
Thornhill: the dragonesque animal

A dragonesque animal is featured in six designs (plates 20-25) out of the ten which can be seen: it is a winged biped which slims to a lacing tail. There is

Figure 7a



i. The basic dragonesque animal and its components: Thornhill Aiv.



ii. Other dragonesque designs: Thornhill Av, Civ, Ciii (top), Aii and Ai (bottom).

another new animal which I shall call the "tall horse" on Thornhill Aiii, the feature panel in the middle of side A. This is discussed in chapter 8.

The prominent dragonesque creature at Thornhill needs to be defined before the pattern type is discussed. The animal motif on Aiv will serve as the type (plate 21, figure 7ai) from which the others vary (figure 7aii). The example has a central body, which is fine almost horizontal, able to extend up for the neck and down for the tail. Its exact shape depends on the extensions but here the neck and tail counter curve from either end of the body (figure 7ai, green arrow), while the leg and wing together make a diagonal through the design, forming a St Andrew's cross (figure 7ai, red arrows).

The long slim, curving neck, which is slightly thicker than a strand, leads to the head. This head has a round bulging forehead, pointed ears and turned up nose again forming the characteristic double curve (figure 7ai, green), in fact it is much the same as the head which was has been seen already in the patterns discussed, numbers Ci and ii and B; (plates 16-18). The mouth is closed and the muzzle is mouse-like but a floppy tongue extends from somewhere. The head may be carried outwards dog-like but here it is downwards horse-like from the curved neck. At the other end, the body slims and merges into the tail and as the tail takes over it slims slowly to strand size laces, then ends probably in a comma curl or a floral terminal (plate 21A). The main direction of the animal form is diagonal but it is also curvaceous.

An opposing diagonal is partly made with the raised wing, which fits into the hollow of the back on a curved join, then extends slim and blade-like on a diagonal course. No details of featheration can be seen here, although holes in the wing bows may be the remains of scaly feathers and there is a hint of striations of the flight feathers (plate 25) and to support this the wings of A1 and those on a similar animal on Waberthwaite 2A, also seem to have a short feather pattern inside the wing bow (plates 25 and 26).

The other part of the diagonal is formed by the leg of the Thornhill dragonesque type, which starts within the body up against the wing on an oval joint. Outside

the body it turns sharply at the hock, and continues forward on the diagonal course, long and straight, through the design. The paws have shape seemingly with a heel and an elegant pointed toe. Since the tail laces, the continuous diagonal of leg and wing together makes the ideal pin around which the interlace can be formed.

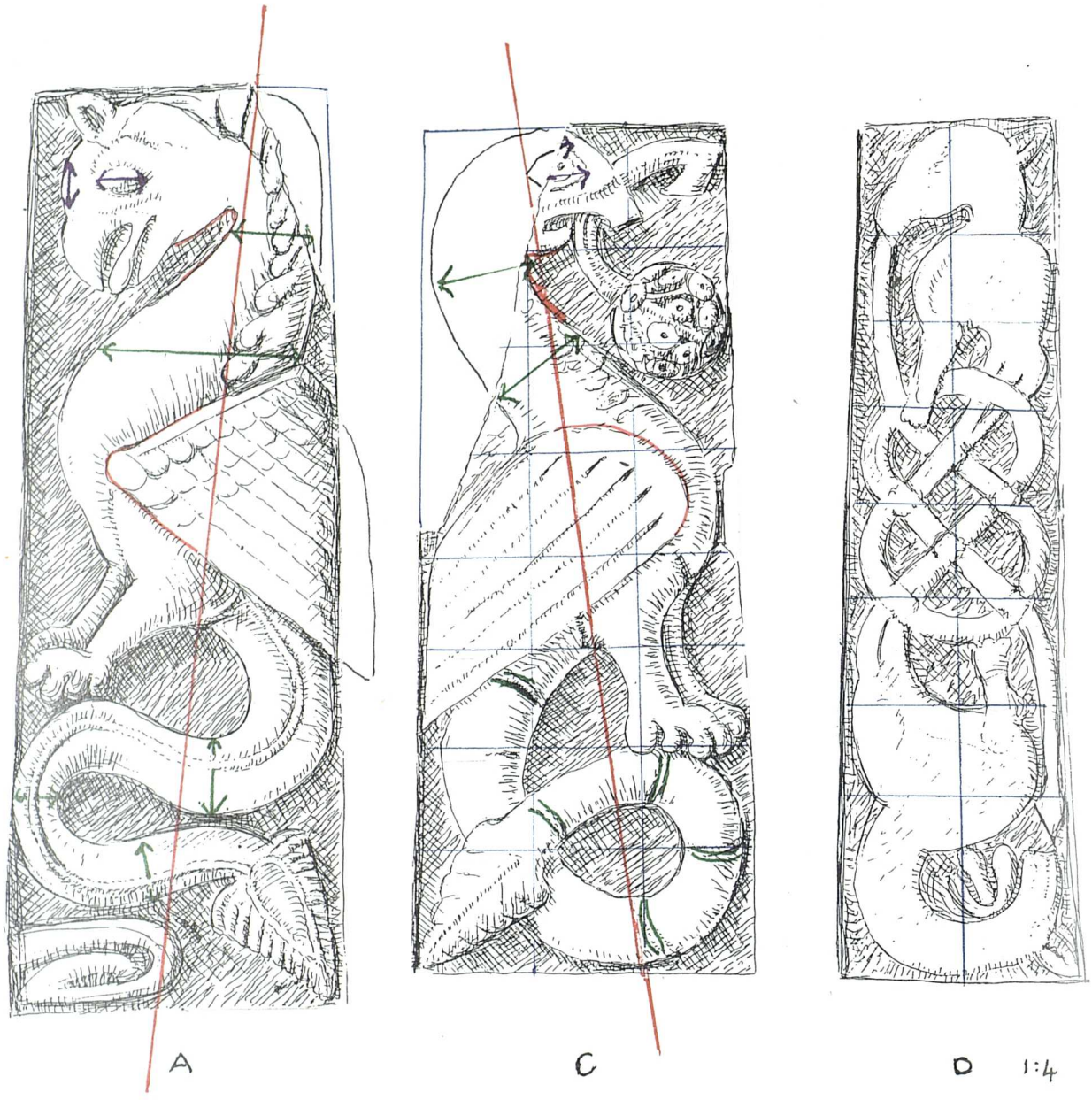
The animal which has been described as the type is seen with mostly minor variation on the other five panels. Figure 7aii shows simplified diagrams of each animal, separated from its context, so the structure of each is clear. The heads all have the deep double curve of ear, forehead and nose and most face forward to the central vertical, and tongues usually extend. The bodies are all slim and the slimming tails lace, except one which just threads. The wings have upcurving fine blades but one is furled and all legs are long and straight. Three patterns, have both legs present and Av has alternative positions shown in grey (figure 7aii). Paws are hard to see but there seems to be a heel and a single long pointed toe on some, while others have bird feet with two claws separated by a pad. One foot even seems folded like a bell flower.

The animal type of the highest panel Ai is particularly different in that wing, leg and tail on each sweep back on the one diagonal. Extraordinary arrangements of neck, leg, wing and tail are seen in the St Petersburg Gospels (plate 8) and may also be seen in some metalwork.[1] There is too, a more surprising feature on Ai and also Civ, whereby there seems to be a division or a head part way up the neck from which another head, and part of a body, perhaps that of the small natural animal, issues forth. Plates 22A and 25A can be seen to hint at this, and figure 7aii (purple) shows an interpretation. The leg of the small animal may then be interpreted as a tongue strand. This point will be taken up in chapter 8 when the tall horse is discussed (plate 27).

The Otley griffin: its place in the formation of the dragonesque

There was a love of the fantastic animal in early times but the dragonesque animal and its discipline is so different from the early Style II, which had lacing legs and long beaks, that some other influence must be sought. One work in Deira has all the features of a type quite foreign to the Anglo-Saxon milieu, yet it

Figure 7b



The Otley griffin shaft (Otley 2).

apparent axis; direction of eye; width of neck;

outline of wing, bow and neck; tail details.

has features which could readily be turned into the dragonesque animal: the work is Otley 2 (Collingwood 1927, figure 60, here figure 7b in the ratio 1:4) and its main feature is the griffin on side A.

Professor Cramp (1970 in 1992, 61) put forward the theory that the Otley griffin could well have been derived from eastern fabrics entering England and the strange filler below the tail bears out the relationship to fabric design. The depth of carving and its strong under cutting suggest that something three dimensional "in the Roman manner" influenced the technique. J. Lang follows on this theme (1990, 11):

> The Otley griffin, I suggest, derives from the senmurv or hippocamp found on Sassanian silks, like that from the reliquary of St Lew in Paris of the sixth to seventh century. Whilst the principal broad faces of Otley 2 present the beast in high modelled relief with a very foreign air, the narrow side of the same shaft bears an Anglo-Saxon modification of the monster.

The features which belong to an overseas concept in this work, are, however, modified even on the second broad face (side C), where the animal there has already either turned a long way towards or has been found to be more compatible with the Anglo-Saxon expression. If the design, which was copied, was more appropriate to Anglo-Saxon thinking, the artist may have only needed to adjust it a little. The following anomalies of structure show how foreign side A is and in what ways side C is modified according to the approach to animal designs in this thesis.

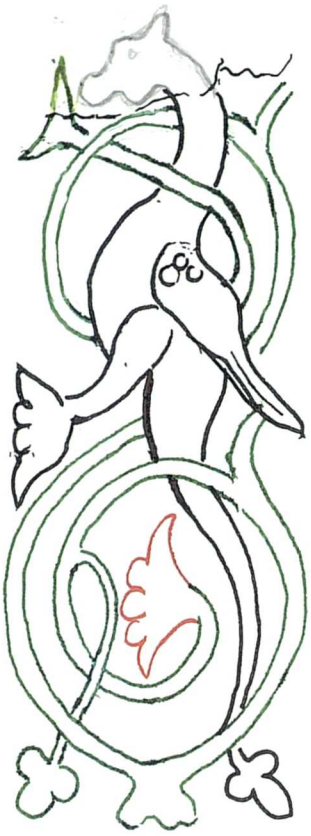
The griffin on side A appears to lie on an axis 10° from the vertical, as if the artist tried to copy faithfully a design too small for his space and placed it as best he could (figure 7b, red axis). The second design the more bird-like creature, also slopes back but in spite of that, it responds to a grid of 6cm squares, in that the curves and turns appear governed by the grid points and lines (figure 7b, red axis and blue lines).

There are also numerous small features which indicate a foreign origin for the griffin and a modification of these on side C. First, the griffin on side A has a wide neck at the base and it narrows greatly, while that on side C has the more

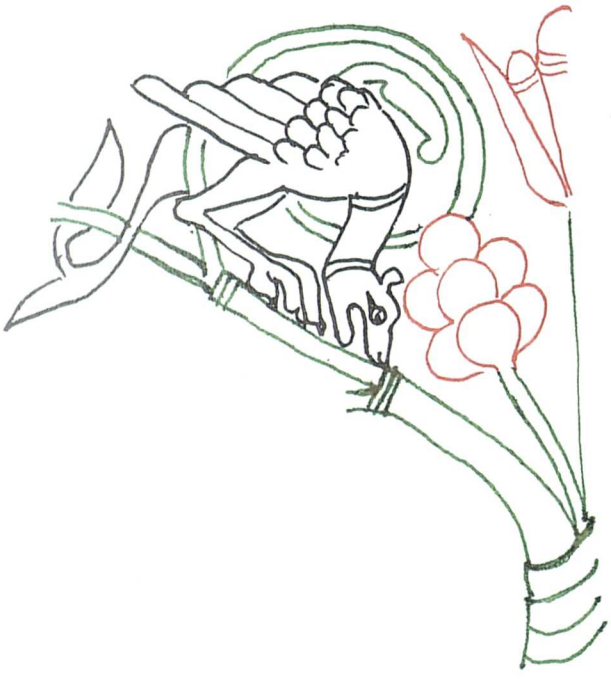
Figure 7c

The dragonesque animal in plant-scroll.

i. Jedburgh slab.



ii. Cundall/Aldborough shaft B.



iii. Ormside bowl.

iv. Hilton of Cadboll slab (border).

normal curved tubular neck (green arrows). Secondly the neck of the griffin together with the jaw, forms almost a "U" bend, whilst that of the other beast makes a normal junction of neck and lower jaw (red lines) at a grid point. Thirdly, on side A the wing-bows makes an unprecedented right-angle bend (red lines), and has within scaly feathers which are in neat rows, not stepped as they are in the Lindisfarne Gospels and other works in the area (figure 3eii), while on side C the wing bow is a normal curve and only the wing striations.

Then, the angle of the eye on the griffin lies at right angles to the forehead, but the eye on the second creature follows the line of the head in a compatible manner (purple arrows). At the opposite end, the tail on the griffin writhes making bulging "S" bends, not an Anglo-Saxon type of curve, while that on side C has flopped over into an orthodox unpinned loop. On the tail of the griffin, the median line is anything but in the middle, giving an appearance of a writhing movement. This odd feature is eliminated on the more moderate creature to become bands (green arrows and lines). Both tails end in a leaf like decoration used frequently on tails in the works to be discussed but rarely so elaborate as that on the griffin.

The addition of all these points would lead to the conclusion that even in the carving of the two broad faces, the second design was toned down and brought into line with the Anglo-Saxon pattern concept. It is not surprising that side D (figure 7b) is modified even more to allow the tail to interlace, between the tiny animals, and that the interlace is the common Carrick bend. Even if the dragonesque creature, which is not so different from a griffin but not necessarily this griffin, entered England from overseas on one or many occasions, its indigenisation into the dragonesque biped could have been swift.

The dragonesque animal in plant-scroll

There is evidence for the existence of this dragonesque creature in the natural setting of plant scroll, not at Ruthwell and Bewcastle, but on the Jedburgh slab (appendix plate 3, figure 7ci). Above delightful animals and birds in the tree-scroll, there is in the upper volute before the break, an animal which conforms in three parts to the hybrid, the fourth part being broken off. The neck

and head are missing. The body is a little more rounded and natural than those at Thornhill, with a blade-like wing extending upwards, starting at a rounded joint within the body and the leg also begins within the body against the wing, which after a sharp joint extends in a short diagonal to an animal paw with three toes. The tail thins in half a turn to strand size and curls with the branches, and like Ruthwell and Bewcastle creatures drawn in figures 6e, the tail has fin and tassel, and is ambiguous as branches, in that the paw rests on it not a branch.

W.G. Collingwood (1927, figure 57) reconstructs this animal as a crested bird head turning backwards, on a short neck. He picks up the lines of the neck by the broken edge but has no real evidence that the head turns back and certainly there is no precedent for a crested head nor is a bird head called for seeing that the animal has paws. A reconstruction from RCAHMS (1956, figure 259), which follows on from Collingwood's idea but has an animal rather more dragon-like. I believe the animal would have had a longer neck to gain balance and that this would then necessarily have been a feature of an upper volute.[2] The head then may face forwards on a curved neck to eat the fruit of the volute. If the neck were long, then an animal existed here with all its components like those at Thornhill but in a more natural form and setting.

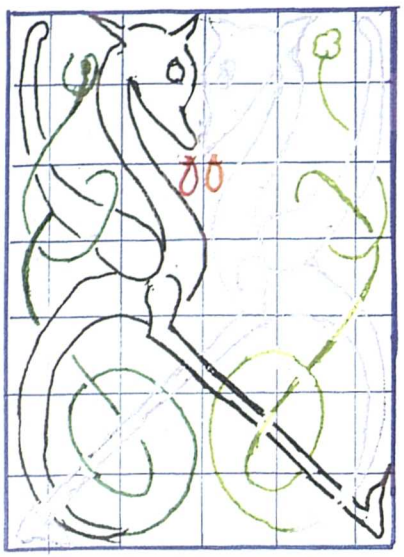
The Cundall/Aldborough shaft in Deira also has forms of this dragonesque animal on its panelled sides B and D, alternating with filigree-type interlace: paired designs are in plant scroll lower down, and single animals are higher. All are characterised by the way they combine with the plant form rather than move within it. The animal highest on side B (Corpus VI, illustrations 169, here appendix plate 4, figure 7cii) is surprisingly like the Jedburgh design in shape, size and its extension over a double scroll. The swelling body, the fine wing, the width of the tail all correspond, so it is likely too the length and curve of the neck and size of the head at Jedburgh would have been roughly the same, adding evidence to the reconstruction of figure 7ci. Ambiguities in the Cundall design show that it has moved someway from the age of naturalism. The tail merges into the plant and perhaps ends in a trefoil leaf which doubles as a leaf while a vine strand across the shoulder terminates in a bird foot. Again, the central bell flower is repeated as the animal's paw or paws.

The Ormside bowl, repousse metalwork with strands raised like sculptured strands, is relevant here as it too, shows lively hybird animals cavorting in lush rather exotic bush-scroll. One in particular (Webster and Backhouse 1991, figure 134, lower diagram upper right, here used for figure 7ciii), is the type which is relevant here. In spite of the heavy body and a certain fierceness of expression, this animal has all the features described above: the long curved neck is topped by a head with a bumpy rounded forehead, small ear and nose; the tail extends curling in, becoming confused with the branches and is completed with fin and leaf-like tassel, similar to the Jedburgh tail, with ambiguity again between plant and animal. The wing also starts within the body on a curve and this time has its full complement of feathers, both the small scale-like ones and the long flight feathers such as has been noted in Bernician work (figure 3e). The leg, commencing against the wing, here bends back strongly then forward ending in the pad, toe and claw of an animal, not a bird. The Ormside bowl is usually dated to the late eighth century (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 134), but it may or may not be associated with Deira. Even so the existence of this one bowl could mean that numerous similar designs existed in metalwork, and were widely distributed.

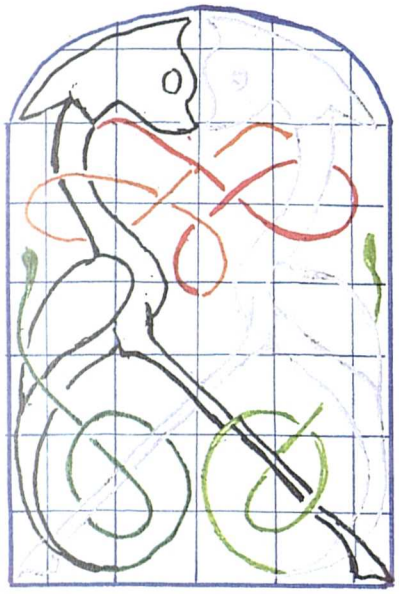
An even more liberal interpretation of the dragonesque creature, which is thin and spiky, appears far to the north on a major Pictish slab from Hilton of Cadboll and a fragments from Tarbat in Ross-shire[3] (ECMS II, figures 59 and 71, here figure 7civ). The lively but unrealistic animals cavort in stylised plant scroll. They are in decorative borders around panels of a very different character: natural hunting scenes and tightly packed indigenous pattern. The animal border looks to be indeed an outside genre, and yet it has a streak of Pictish realism, in that usually animals have both wings and legs, although they are the same general type described. They have the typical curved neck which carries a head with a rounded forehead, pointed ear trailing, and a narrow muzzle. The tail with its three-fold leaf terminal which extends from the other end of the body balances the neck and head in both length and weight. This terminal is like that on the Cundall piece. The wings are raised and the legs have strongly pronounced hock joints. Sometimes the wings bend to form a zig-zag through the design.

Figure 7d

The dragonesque design on the Thornhill shaft.

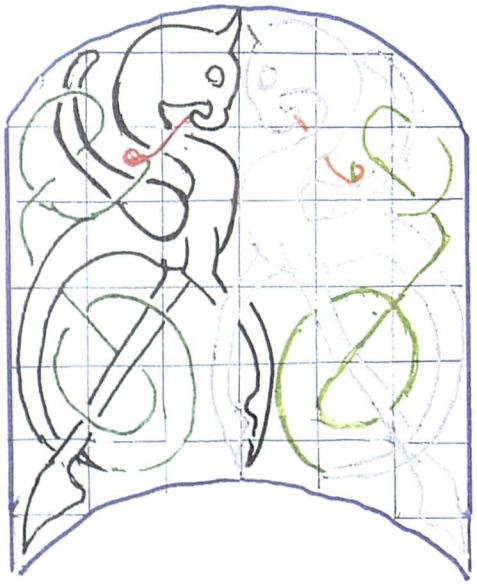


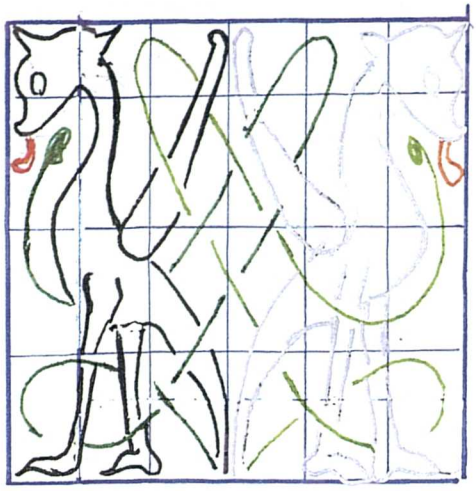
i. Thornhill Aiv.



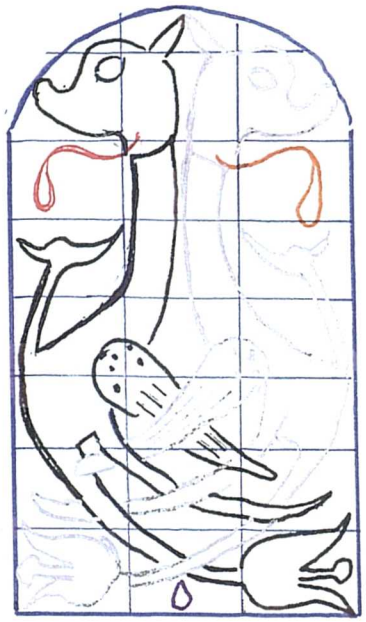
ii. Thornhill Civ.

iii. Thornhill Ciii.



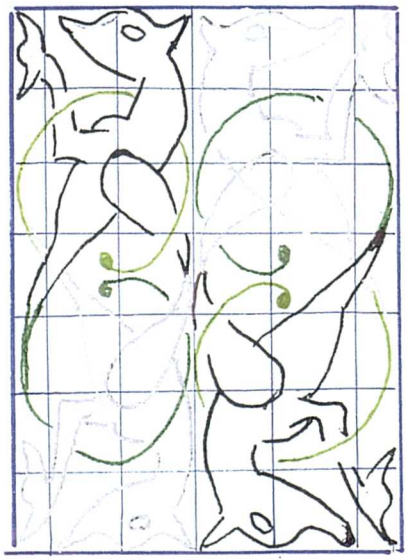


iv. Thornhill Av.



v. Thornhill Ai.

vi. Thornhill Aii.



The stylisation of both plant and animal seem to have taken this design a step further than Cundall/Aldborough. I. Henderson (1983, 243-67), when writing of Pictish plant-scrolls, sees them as adaptations of English work but redesigned to the Pictish taste. She refers to the Northumbrian works such as the Jedburgh slab, Croft and York 1 as being particularly relevant but believes ideas were carried north by other media. She concludes (1983, 267):

> The versions at Hilton of Cadboll and Tarbat preserve vinescroll at a stage which cannot be paralleled in surviving English sculpture but which can be accounted for satisfactorily in English manuscripts, ivory and metalwork of the late eighth and ninth centuries.

The Thornhill dragonesque animal interlace

The examples just discussed show that the animals existed over a wide area in vine-scroll. Now the mirror-imaged designs of Thornhill can be established (figure 6d). The paired pattern, with animals either confronted or addorsed, is not entirely new but rare in early work. The corner and finial patterns in the Lindisfarne Gospels, for example on folio 138v, are pairs but ones which are well bound together with crossings. The dragonesque animals at Thornhill are placed either side of the vertical axis in heraldic pairs with few parts of the animal or even the lacing crossing the divide. Within even these restrictions many arrangements may occur.

The best design to start with is the confronted pair Aiv (plate 21, figure 7di) featuring the dragonesque animal described. The animals have their faces and chests touching the vertical axis, the legs here crossing diagonally, to form the pin on which the tails may lace. These tails slim to strand-size in half a turn and form spiralled loops then turn up and make asymmetrical loops around the wings, to finish with little curls or flowers at the top by way of terminals. A floral terminal will be found to be not without precedent, there is also an example on the Hedda shrine (appendix plate 5).

A grid placed through the interlace also governs the animals which slip around the points and through the squares with ease and grace. Only the wing base covers a major grid point (plate 20 B, figure di). The panel is 43cm by 36-4cm and the grid is slightly rectangular in that the seven units in length are 6cm, and

five units in width are 7cm. The designer clearly is one who can set out his patterns to cope with size and taper.

This artist appears to have a good knowledge of the construction used in interlaced animal designs, as the design contains a few features of the concept of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Firstly, the curves and diagonals of both animals and lacing follow the rules for interlace, and there are no obvious missed crossings to leave gaps in the pattern. Secondly the animals, even if they mainly keep to their own side of the vertical, do integrate with their lacing: the spirals are formed around legs, the asymmetrical loops are around wings and most importantly, no lacing does space filling by itself.

Two patterns on side C are related to this design in their use of spiralled loops, although they differ in details. The lowest pattern on the side C, (plate 22, figure 7dii), also has a tail spiral which winds around the opposite leg and stops above the furled wing, while the tongue strand (the little animal's leg) forms a swirled loop around the neck and terminates in the centre. This is an arched panel 47cm long and 36-34cm wide. The units and unit measure are the same as those of the pattern discussed, except that half a unit is added for the animal to extend into the arch.

The pattern above, Ciii has both concave and convex arches entering the design (plate 23 and figure 7diii), 40cm in length and 33-2cm wide. The heads are again at the central axis but this time each neck arches in a horse-like manner to fill the space and the nose seems to curve under. Each animal has two legs, the one curving around its partner on the central vertical, the other moving back into the long corner with a pointed toe. The tail spirals around this leg and then loops around the wing to come back to join or lie beside the diagonal tongue strand.[4] The use of the extra leg necessitates six units across, and the units are roughly 6cm both ways.

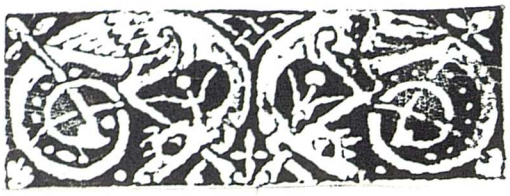
The lowest pattern on side A heralds something different, according to the parts that can be seen (plate 24, figure 7div). Alas, the lower part of the design has flaked away below the grass level, only some vague strands and crossings can be

traced and punch holes, then it is cut off by what seems to be moulding or plinth.[5] The dragonesque animals are addorsed, faces to the outside edge with the usual curves and an extra ear present on the head. The floppy tongue is short. Curved necks can be followed down, then wings can be seen rising diagonally to the central vertical at the top of the design. Strands, which must logically be the tail, rise up from the ground level to form "U" bends around each opposite wing and return to terminate by the body or continue moving around the body and turning up to the tongue strand.

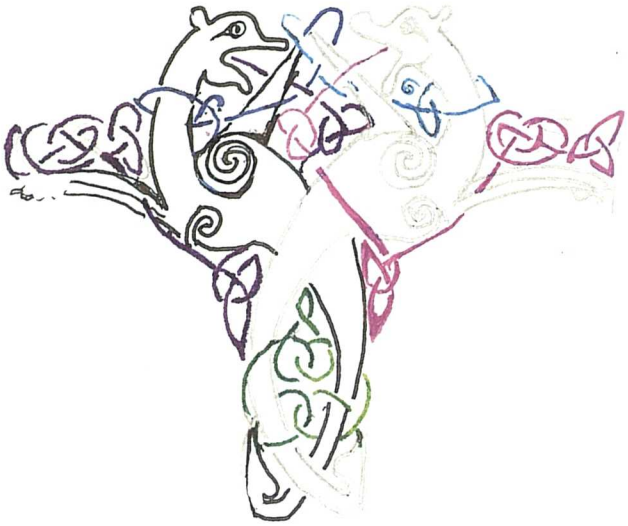
There is little choice in completing this design, cut off as it seems to be, by the plinth. Since the tails drop to the bottom in the centre each tail must then go on to swirl around leg or legs before journeying upwards until it becomes visible again. The design is reconstructed two ways: with one leg raised (plate 24), it compares with Ilkley 3Ciii (appendix plate 7A) or it may have two legs below and the tail strand turning up to meet the tongue. There are six units of 6cm across 38-6cm width and three and a half units of about 10cm up the vertical axis (plate 24B, figure 7div). If the patterns were half a unit longer a more interesting solution could have been produced, but as it is, it appears to be cut off short. If the length of the designs on face A reduced in an even fashion it could be expected to be 4-5cm longer, that is a panel of 41-42cm.

The uppermost pattern on side A has a different conformation from the others but here it is the bottom part only which is clear as the top is caught up in a badly weathered area and also the cusps are cut into it. Plate 25B (figure 7dv) shows my interpretation. The animal heads face out with the ears to the top centre but there is a muddled area around the upper neck which may be the composite area of the two animals (figure 7aii). After that the design is clear as each neck curves down along the central axis, and the body swells out with the tail, wing and leg all sweeping off in one direction diagonally downwards. These thread through their opposite partner forming plain weave, not lacing. Here the design is regular but units are less easy to measure since there is so little lacing but it seems rather the reverse of the lowest pattern. The three units across seem almost 10cm wide since the design is nearly 30cm at its base while about eight vertical units (with an extra half for the arch) are about 6-7cm over 52cm.

Figure 7e



i. Barberini Gospels, fllv.



ii. St Petersburg Gospels, f12r.

iii. Witham pins (central pin).

iv. Maaseik embroidery, arcade A.

One leg points upwards ending in bird feet, the other which threads ends in a bell-flower. The bird feet are interesting, the upper one is like those of the pattern directly below (plate 21, figure 7dvi) with two claws and a pad between. The lower foot, which, is like a flower may represent a closed claw but there might be resemblance to the flowers of the Jedburgh slab, or the flower- like foot on the Cundall/Aldborough piece, where foot and flower seem ambiguously interchangeable (appendix plates 3 and 4). Altogether this work is also somehow reminiscent of embroidery and the drop like filler at the bottom of the centre may represent a bead or pearl.

The dragonesque animal designs in other media

These then are the dragonesque designs of Thornhill but the theme seems both ubiquitous and in all media, the examples here are the ones seem most relevant in building up a picture of the range of design. Manuscript artists should be the freest of all designers and their freedom should aid inventiveness. Two manuscripts stand out in their fluency and variety on the theme of this winged biped: these are the Barberini Gospels (Alexander 1978, catalogue 36) and the St Petersburg Gospels (catalogue 39). Alexander dates them both to the late eighth century and allows that there is a chance that their provenance is Northumbria.

The typical animal of the Barberini Gospels is a biped with furled wings but long legs and on the St Matthew page, folio 11v (plate 7), the lowest panel has animals with spiralled tails (figure 7ei). The animals reverse, neck curved from neck, furled wings and each biting its own leg, while its ear strand pins the spiral of the tail. The pattern which results is not like the Thornhill designs, but there is a sparse simplicity and gridded elegance which is very akin to the sculpture and the little flowery terminals add to that idea.

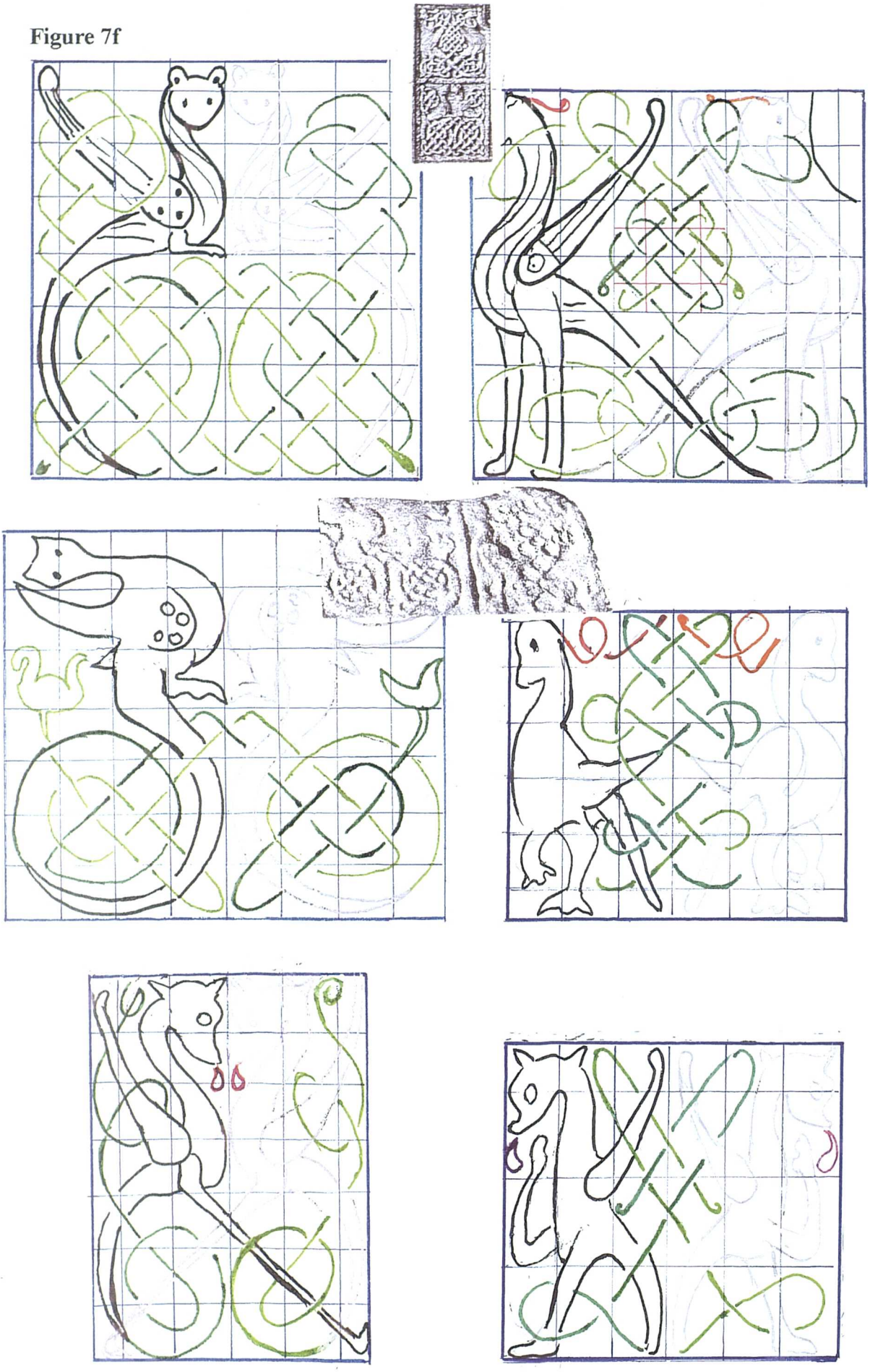
The St Petersburg Gospels have numerous panels featuring the dragonesque animal always in joyous frivolity as on folio 12r (plate 8, figure 7eii), these cavort in every conceivable contortion in the most impossible spaces. The animal has the typical four extensions, but the conformation is expressed somewhat differently, since the curved neck with head, the rounded mango-shaped body and long tail with leaf tassel, together make one fluid dominant

shape from nose-tip to tail-tip, and are coloured gaily in matt colour as one block. The opposing wing is raised on a spiral and is shortish, the legs also with spiral joints are very slender and take a minor role. Then the interlace is quite apart, fine white lines on a dark ground, extending from the finished ear, wing and tail, and often the tongue is used. It is decorative and space filling and occasionally entwines with the animal in orthodox loops or swirls.

Metalwork has many imaginative versions of the dragonesque creatures. The nearest in type to Thornhill is on the middle member of the Witham pins (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 184), where single, confronted and addorsed animals are featured. The addorsed pair (figure 7eiii) are compact animals with shorter than usual necks and tails, and bulgy bodies. The minute wings begin in the curves of the bodies and are raised, with feather patterns indicated by two dots and a dash. The legs extend opposite to the wings with pads and claws, clear even on this small scale. The interlace flows from the completed tail, as it does in the St Petersburg Gospels (figure 7ei). It appears to be well planned and controlled in the manner of metal designs, which frequently have to fill odd spaces. The date is thought to be late eighth century (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 184). This work and others like some designs on the Pentney hoard (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 187) shows the dragonesque animal was popular in metalwork but following the requirements of that medium, not connected with sculpture.

Embroidery, the medium sometimes credited with bringing the hybrid to England from overseas, is not often preserved but the beautiful Maaseik casula is attributed to the Anglo-Saxons and it too is dated to the eighth to early ninth century (Budny and Tweddle 1985, 384). The silk embroidery in its bright array of spring colours, yellow, rose pink, sky blue and leaf green with details picked out in gold couching, is now sadly worn away even to its linen base in places. Nevertheless birds and beasts in arcades and roundels can be traced out. Figure 7eiv (Wilson 1984, figure 109), shows a confronted pair, a simplified version of the animal under discussion. It has the round forehead, ear, nose and tongue strand, set on a curved neck. The chests touch and the curve of each body allows its wing to rise diagonally and the leg to cross its partner and continue on the

Figure 7f



i. Confronted designs.

ii. Addorsed designs.

Gandersheim casket (top), Hedda Stone (middle), Thornhill cross (bottom).

diagonal course. The tail, however is short and lacing, from the tongue or ear, loops and swirls in a rather irregular fashion. There are many other animals which could be mentioned but all have an air of freedom and irregularity which perhaps is integral with the medium.

One may conclude that designs in all media were influenced by the same creative sweep but the expression is varied according to the advantages or restrictions of the techniques used. However, it is in sculpture that we find designs related to the Thornhill panels.

The Gandersheim casket

The minute whale bone box, the Gandersheim casket (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 135) has many overall similarities, but alas the striking details so sharply portrayed on the casket are all but missing on the large sculpture. A variety of faces, particularly the "cat" heads peering out in full face, and magnificent textures, of feather and scale, which attract the eye to the casket animals, are missing on the weathered shaft. There the interlace weaves in many units which allow the creation of complex designs.

The regular interlace on the casket bespeaks the use of a grid and indeed this can be put through from panel to panel, vertically and horizontally allowing half a unit for cable mouldings. The two patterns on the left side of the back, are most relevant to this work. They are shown diagramatically in figure 7fi and ii (top), where the centimetre grid represents 4.5mm. The panel with the confronted pair from the lower range, is divided into seven units across and seven and a half units vertically, while the addorsed pattern is seven units both ways. However the enclosed interlace of the latter is clearly finer than any other on that side of the casket and uses the secondary grid (red lines). The panels are visually balanced to about half animal, half interlace.

It can be observed that the necks have the same curves as those of Thornhill, and the bodies slim gracefully into the tails which likewise drop down to strand size in half a turn. The wings, rising by the neck in the hollow of the back, form curved slim blades, with pellets for short feathers, striations for the flight

feathers. The legs of the spiralled design however are short and do not join the wing in a counter diagonal, but rest on top of the interlace.

Since the interlace is on a wide grid the spirals of the confronted pair prove to be complex with much mingling of the tails (figure 7fi, two greens). Whereas there is one simple asymmetrical loop around the wing at Thornhill (plate 21, figure 7fi, lowest), on the casket there are double symmetrical loops, all correctly placed on the grid. In the addorsed pattern the strand crossing the wings goes on to form double swirled loop around the neck (figure 7fii) and a complex swirled loop around the paired legs, but there is a intricate "U" bend pattern between the animals. The space made available by the use of a wider grid allows this greater adventurousness but there is one change in concept which has been noted namely that the legs in the spiriliform design are very short. The animals therefore frame the section of interlace and do not integrate with it.

The Hedda Stone and Mercian works

One larger work parallels the Gandersheim casket in many respects and that is the Hedda Stone at Peterborough. It is imitating a casket in form, something like the Gandersheim casket itself, for on the "roof" we see cat faces, short legs and much interlacing with the tails. Appendix plate 5 and figure 7ei and ii (middle in reverse order) shows two of the Hedda Stone designs, which are on "lid" above the main face (Plunkett 1998, figures 64 and 65e). These small designs 22cm high, 24cm wide, have grids with a five unit measure of 3cm on one and 4cm on the other.

The designs of the Hedda Stone are placed between the Gandersheim casket and the related designs from Thornhill (figure 7ei and ii). However they add another version of the spiralled design for a confronted pair, and a "U" bend design with swirled loops for an addorsed pair. It may be noted that the wing or tail on the Hedda Stone pattern animals (figure 7eii) drops to the bottom of the design like Thornhill Av and does not cross its partner. On the patterns on the Hedda Stone there are similar feet, the one toed type and the two toed bird foot such as are seen at Thornhill (Ai and ii). There may well be flower terminals, too, on the spiralled tail.

The Thornhill designs, lowest of figure 7fi and ii, are clearly related both to both these the spiraliform confronted design and the addorsed design featuring "U" bends. The Thornhill patterns are simpler but they are equally accurate and confident. The legs are used as pins for the lacing in the spiralled design. It has been noted that on both the Hedda Stone and the Gandersheim casket the animals have short legs framing the interlace not pinning it. This is a feature in other Mercian works on cross-shafts. The Elstow shaft design (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 207), and the shaft of St Oswald's, Gloucester, number 2 (Webster and Backhouse 1991, figure 25) have large animals above bold interlace which of necessity has a low unit measure and in each case the legs are short and do not enter the lacing (figure 7gi and ii). D. Tweddle (Corpus IV, 34-40) describes these animals an "enmeshed" in interlace, whereas they frame it.

However, the examples of works in other media already mentioned, the Barberini and St Petersburg Gospels, the Witham pins and the Maaseik embroidery (figure 7e) have the legs pinning not framing the interlace. Only a few northern animal interlaces of this type have survived but these also have long legs used as pins for the interlace.

The dragonesque design in Northumbria

There are on the lowest band on the column of Masham (register D) prancing quadrupeds except for one design of a confronted pair of winged bipeds Div (appendix plate 6, figure 7giii). The eroded holes of this badly preserved work eat into both forms and strands but even so the animals are slim to the extreme with small heads on long necks, dagger-like wings and spikey legs with pointed toes. The lacing swirls from tongue and tail extensions. The tongue lacing here is like that of St Oswald's Gloucester (figure 7gi) but also Thornhill Civ (plate 22, figure 7dii). This would be hard to explain had there not been an exchange of ideas over a large area but executed by each sculptor according to his individual manner. However, of all works this Masham panel seems closest in mood to Thornhill.

At Ilkley too, there is an array of cross-shafts with plentiful animal designs which are not lacking in long legs. The largest shaft, here called Ilkley 3

(Collingwood 1927, figure 63) on side C^6, has its own version of the confronted winged pair (appendix plate 7, figure 7giv). It is in fact a single animal with its leg bent backwards and paw on the wrong way, indicating that it was drawn from a template for a pair, and that the leg belongs to an opposite animal in a pair (figure giv, red centre line). The design is huge and Collingwood (1927, 49-50) says:

> And the animals below (the figure), bold as they are, have lost all charm and nobility of the fine style. We must place this at the end of the Anglian period proper; it shows no sign of Danish influence.

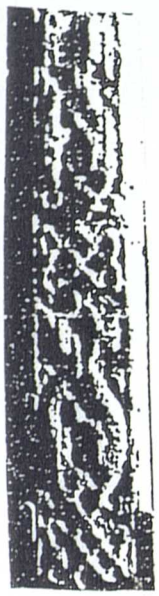
This is plausible considering the size and awkwardness of the work. Professor Cramp (1978, 10) also believes that the animal "lead straight into the Anglo-Scandinavian types."

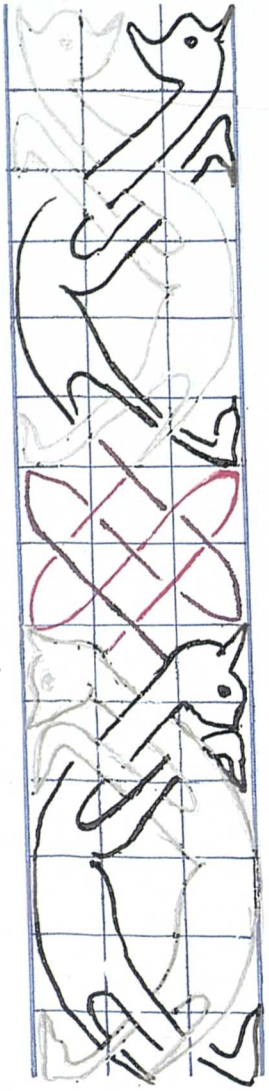
This work is on a par with a large and muddled work in western Bernicia at Waberthwaite, number 2A (plate 26, figure 7gv). Here again is a confronted dragonesque pair, which is unfortunately broken at head level. The animals can be seen to have long legs or that appears to have been the intention, but the legs became drawn into and confused with the spiralled interlace. The lacing continues with a loop around the wing as on Thornhill Aiv but another loop at the break suggests Thornhill Civ (figures 7di and ii). The contour lines, small wing feathers as holes and scale-like tooling on the tail, are perhaps helpful in showing what detail may have been lost on its high quality northern neighbour, Thornhill. R. Bailey (Corpus II, 152) sees this panel as Anglian in the Viking period (tenth century).

Collingwood (1927, 54-55) bracketed Thornhill with Ilkley, not seeing the "charm and nobility," of the former and Professor Cramp (1959-60, 17-18) also saw affinities between Thornhill and Ilkley. It is Ilkley and Waberthwaite in their bold size and clumsy confusion which should be linked. Thornhill with its precision, finer unit measure, unified surface could be bracketed rather with Cundall/Aldborough or Masham even though these are still partly connected with plant-scroll.

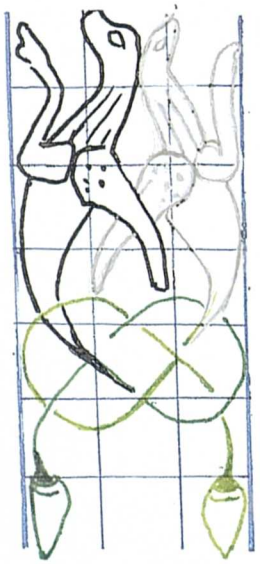
Figure 7h

Medallion designs relevant to Thornhill B.

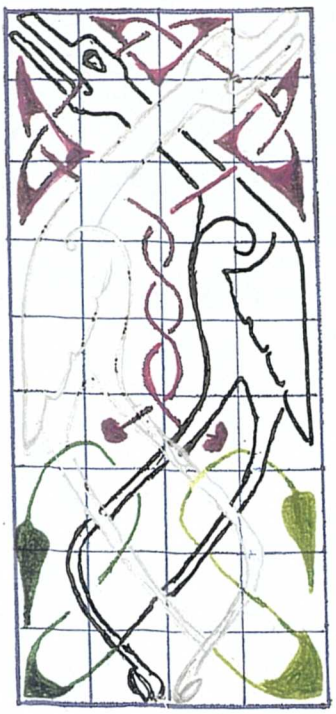




i. Thornhill B.

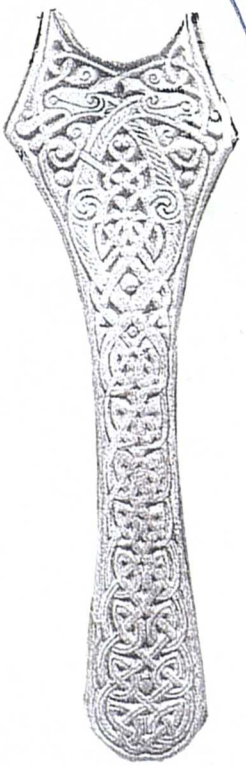


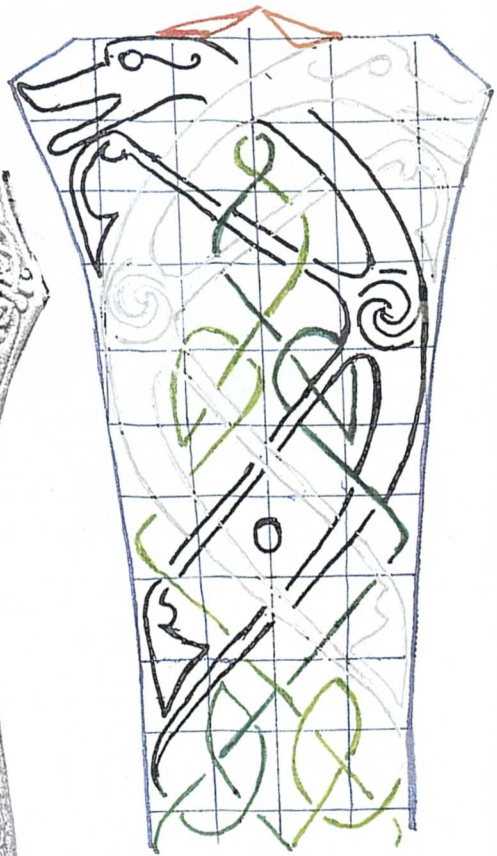
ii. Melsonby B.



iii. Barberini gospels, f.11v.

iv. Coppergate helmet.





The medallion design

One paired design, which must be considered before the conclusion, is the medallion pattern on Thornhill, side B (plate 18, figure 7hi)). The animal itself was demonstrated as a natural type (figures 6eii and fi), and it was mentioned that it related to medallion plant-scroll (figure 6dii), but it also has a place with other medallion designs with dragonesque animals. The Thornhill design itself could not be simpler, as each bent animal has its front leg and neck whether crossing on turned back on one diagonal, back leg and tail on the other. The tail makes a simple "U" bend pattern and joins the lower motif as lappet. There are five registers (the upper two are in the reverse direction). Each register is three units in width and eight in length, with a unit measure of 5cm (horizontally) and 6cm (vertically), in line with the other patterns on the shaft.

The repeated chain is a lone expression, but there is single register of a medallion design on the Melsonby octagonal IB (Corpus VI, illustration 655, here appendix plate 8, figure 7hii). This single register has out turned animals markedly like those of Thornhill Aii (plate 20) but with the tails joining their partners in a simple Carrick bend.

The two manuscripts which have the dragonesque design also have medallion shapes, namely the St Petersburg Gospels (plate 8, figure 1jiii) and the Barberini Gospels (plate 7, figures 1ji and ii, here 7hiii). This type of design with elaborate lacing can also be seen often in fragmentary condition in Mercian sculpture (Corpus IV, figures 9-11). The late muddled version at Steventon manor and an even more muddled design on Aycliffe 2 show design in a degenerated phase (plate 55 and figure 12 c-e). The most spectacular form is, however, in metalwork, the nasal piece of the Coppergate helmet (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 47, here figure 7hiv), mentioned here because it gives a clear picture of a well finished work, such as is not seen in the damaged pieces of sculpture. The bipeds legs are diagonal spun off the one spiral, the one following the neck, the other the tail so that the Coppergate animal has almost the same pose as the little Thornhill animal.[7]

From this scattered evidence the Thornhill chain may have inherited its form from these pattern types and from any medium. On the other hand such a simplified version, so plain and uncluttered may have arisen when the artist was forming the natural animals into patterns.

Conclusion

The Thornhill cross, as a whole has such a variety of mirror-imaged designs used with enormous precision and variety, together with excellent technique. The animals sit well on interlace grid, although the motifs are very different from those of the Lindisfarne Gospels. The dragonesque animal itself is presented in an individual and sophisticated manner, from its exaggerated forehead to its pointed toes, without conviction or necessity of realism. Yet the use of curves and diagonals still are of the former concept, which itself is now clearly widespread The dragonesque designs were cleverly unified with the designs of natural animals with this strong curving line and diagonal movement.

However, the dragonesque animal has relationships which spread far and wide. If foreign ideas, seen so obviously in the Otley griffin, came into the country on small portable objects consisting of manuscripts, metalwork, ivory and textiles, it is in these very media one sees them developed into an indigenous form: the manuscripts, most relevant are the St Petersburg and the Barberini Gospels; metalwork has the Ormside bowl; the Witham pins and the Coppergate helmet; while the whale bone box, the Gandersheim casket and the Maaseik embroidery are representatives of two further media. In stone sculpture the dragonesque animal found its first expression in plant-scrolls: the Jedburgh shrine and the Cundall/ Aldborough shaft with Pictish Hilton of Cadboll are all forms of the type.

Yet there is close affinity with other works of sculpture: not only the Gandersheim casket but also the Hedda Stone, which itself drew on something like the Gandersheim casket. These together with other sculpture of Mercia, portray the beast in imaginative patterns.

One could say that the sculptors drew on these ideas and had no need to follow manuscripts nor other media closely to form the dragonesque animal into designs suitable for simple rectangular shapes. The Mercian sculptors seem to have looked to the Gandersheim casket-type using short legs, while Northumbrian sculptors, both Deiran and Bernician, favoured another type with long legs. The Thornhill sculptor has his own variations of the basic ideas and keeps the designs five or six units wide with a unit measure of 5 or 6cm so there is no loss of clarity.

The date of the Thornhill work, like most stone sculpture cannot be pinpointed. The small works in the other decorative media, manuscripts, ivory, metalwork and embroidery, have few fixed dates but most have been noted as placed in the second half of the eighth century, although each its own controversies associated with dates. David Wilson's lament (1984, 108) seems appropriate:

> If there is an element of despair in what is written here about the dating of sculpture it is because, although we can roughly date sculpture in eighth-or ninth- century groups, any attempt at accurate dating can only be on the basis of judgement of ornament diverse in quality and geographical location, executed by masters who might be old fashioned perfectionists, experimental innovators, incompetents or journeymen.

In the case of Thornhill, Collingwood (1927, 54-5) saw the cross as tenth century because he perceived decadence, although he may not have seen it in favourable conditions, as he tells us (1924-5, 57) he based his drawing on Allen's (ECMS II, figure 469). Professor Cramp (1959-60, 17) follows Collingwood in this but her description (1978, 5) of phase V (820-865/75) suits this cross better. Dr D. Craig (1992, 148) observing the eighth century influences of works like the Gandersheim casket or Barberini Gospels and various sculpture says it could not be later than mid ninth century, adding that it would not have been "conceivable following the fragmentation of monastic culture in the mid ninth century." I see the work as an innovative masterpiece and would place it close to the turn of the ninth century. There is, however, one more panel to be discussed.

NOTES

1. Metalwork, owing to the odd-shaped panels, frequently has wings, tails and legs in a different conformity. This can be seen on designs on the Witham pins and Pentney Hoard (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 184 (upper left, number 187 c and d). A strap end (Webster and Backhouse 1991, number 142) has a raised leg similar to Thornhill Ai.

2. Radford (1955, 44, figure 1) reconstructs the shrine with a gable which would have allowed room for several volutes. There is no triangular space of this sort used in Bernician, but arches are known. A round arch would allow one more volute only (appendix plate 3).

3. Recent discoveries at Hilton of Cadboll and Tarbat (2001) have broadened this range too, but do not invalidate what is said of the animal type.

4. Tongue to tail on lappet to tail interlace is found in later works: Jedburgh (plate 31); Monks Stone (plate 38) St Oswald's, Durham (plate 58) Aycliffe 2 (plate 52) are examples.

5. The grass has hollowed the bottom few centimetres, the plinth may simply be sound stone protected by the socket.

6. Collingwood (1927, figures 61, 2 and 3) numbered the faces of three crosses at Ilkley a-l. He dated the tallest, latest, here so I am calling it number 3. The shortest seems similar (number 2) and the other seems earliest (number 1). The symbol side is here called side A and the animal designs are on side C.

7. Tweddle (1992, figures 579-81) shows designs related to the nasal piece feed but he does not mention or show this Thornhill design.

CHAPTER 8

THORNHILL TO JEDBURGH: THE TALL HORSE

Introduction

The natural animal was frequently placed alongside of the fantastic in Anglo-Saxon sculpture: natural birds and four-footed beasts coexisted with a variety of hybrids on many works of art. At Bewcastle on the one hand, all kinds were endowed with vitality, so that they could climb or eat in a convincing environment; at Thornhill on the other hand, all were reduced to a simplified formula where rhythmic grace moulded them into pure decoration. The final panel from Thornhill to be discussed now, is a horse-like animal with long legs and well interlaced. This horse has an ornamental quality equal to the dragonesque or squirrel-like creature on the same cross but the animal was popular all over England and it is derived from a natural quadruped which is not a native of either plant-scroll or interlace. In this chapter an interrelated northern group of this animal, now more horse-like than just a quadruped, will be plotted to throw light on the order in which work was executed and connections between sites.

The origin of the quadruped

Single or paired, standing or walking, dog or horse-like quadrupeds consistently appear in the various media during the late eighth and ninth centuries. Perhaps the most impressive of these is the quadruped on the St Matthew letter page of the St Petersburg Gospels, folio 18r (Alexander 1974, catalogue 39). Here it is a big space filling brown animal: the legs are in parallel pairs, with paws not hoofs, and the head is up. There is little lacing to interrupt the silhouette and what there is, is not integral but space filling. These Gospels are dated to the end of the eighth century by Alexander.

In some of the Canterbury group of manuscripts there are standing, single or paired dog-like animals in odd spaces. The Vespasian Psalter, folio 30v (Alexander 1974, catalogue 29) has two examples of tall dog-like animals standing with their heads up or turned back, on column bases. On the Canterbury

Bible, folio 4r (Alexander, catalogue 32) a spotted dog struts in a capital. Such animals are unadorned by vinescroll or lacing but fit their space in a decorative manner. They are dated to the second quarter of the eighth century and the later eighth century respectively by Alexander (catalogue 29 and 32).

Such manuscript animals are not unlike some animals found in the metalwork known as the Trewhiddle style. The best example is the Strickland brooch (Wilson 1984, figure 115) where dog-like animals with longish legs crouch with their heads turned back. This brooch is dated to the middle of the ninth century. Queen Aethelswith's ring (Wilson 1984, figure 118) has a walking quadruped, this time it is the *agnus dei*, in the same style. This ring is from the middle to late ninth century according to D. Wilson (1984, 96), who remarks here on the discrepancy between manuscript and metalwork dates for animals in such a similar style.

In stone sculpture too, there is the same walking or striding animal with head turned forward or back. The great Wolverhampton pillar has a band of single strutting dog-like animals. These perhaps belong to the late ninth or early tenth centuries (D. Wilson, 1984, 105, plate 124). In Northumbria there are numerous animals of this kind, paired or single, often in vine-scroll ornament but not part of it, as were the bipeds which were discussed in chapter 7, another indication that the animal was a separate entity introduced into the milieu. Sometimes they show little respect for the volutes as ornaments have for a Christmas tree. Examples are seen on Easby 1C or Croft 1C (Corpus VI, illustrations 198-9 and 152) or at St Andrews Auckland on Rothbury (Corpus I, illustrations 14 and 1219).

Some animals, often paired, walk or prance on the ground in a natural manner, on Cundall/Aldborough 1Bvi where there is still vinescroll, or in just a little plant ornament on the lowest arcade at Masham 1D (Corpus VI, illustrations 181 and 625-31 here, appendix plate 9). Near Marsham, at West Tanfield on face 1A (left) there are winged horses with feet like bunches of grapes and tongues with a leaf terminals (Corpus VI, illustration 889). At Ilkley, especially on the shortest shaft, here called 2 (chapter 7, note 6) large and muddled quadrupeds are

arranged in strange ways with entanglements of loops (Collingwood 1927, figures 61, here appendix plate 10).

In Bernicia this walking or strutting quadruped, mostly in an interlace setting, develops with longer and finer legs which often have the bone structure of horses and hoofs rather than paws, and with heads, like the others mentioned, either turned back or held high on an arching neck. These become more decorative in form. We look first at the Thornhill tall horse where the designer uses it as the centre piece on side A. Here it is formalised to accept interlace as a counterfoil so that the motif is in keeping with the other designs on the cross. Several works which are related in various ways, will be discussed, leading to the Jedburgh cross-base a work of a different concept.

The Thornhill horse panel

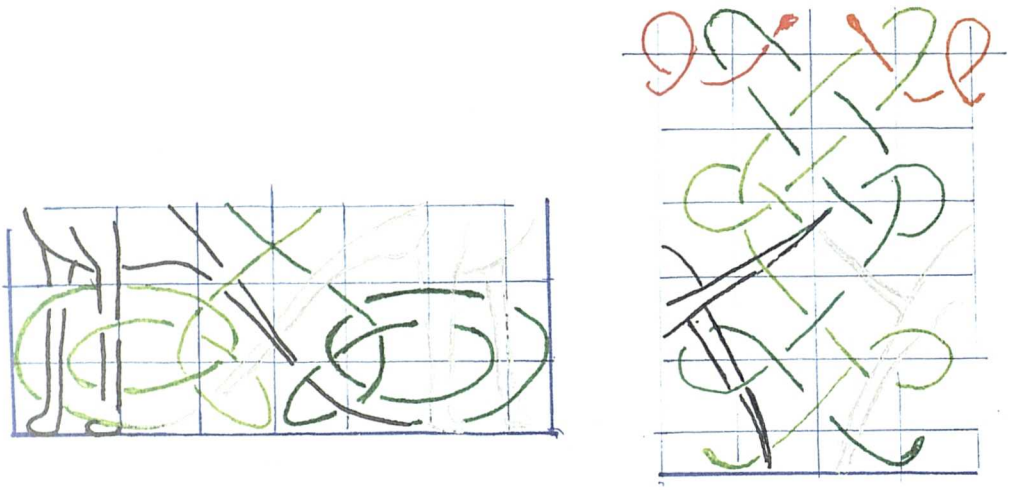
The Thornhill horses occupy a panel which (without mouldings) is 44cm long and 32-31cm wide, and is centrally placed on the A side (Aiii). Figures 6a, b and c show its position. Like the accompanying dragonesque designs, the horses are paired on either side of the vertical axis. The confronted horses stand chest to chest but only the tails crosses the central line.[1] They each have two legs, as is appropriate for a pattern with the simplified motif in profile.

The slim bodied horses (plate27, figure 8ai) scarcely have ~~little~~ greater mass than their dragonesque or squirrel-like companions but they do stand high in the panel, touching in the centre and necks bent back until their heads reach the outside edge of the design. The ears can thus fit the top corners and their faces are parallel to the outside mouldings with the typical ear/forehead/nose double curve. The tongues curl back to fill the space between neck and body so that they appear to be playfully nibbling their rumps. All this occupies less than half the upper half, since the horse, unlike the dragon does not have a long neck.

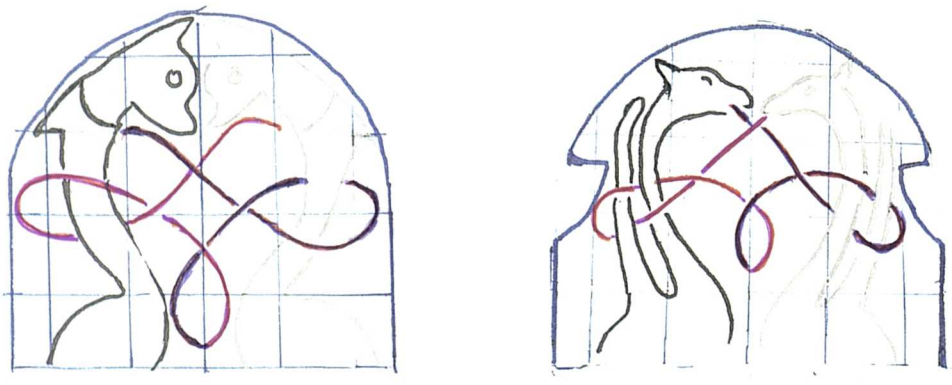
One very strange feature is a set of fins around the neck as it starts its backward curve (plate 27, figure 8ai). The purpose could be a simple space filling device so that one fin may come like an ear to the top of the vertical axis. As well as this, it may have been a decorative ploy to fill an empty area. The fins, on the other

Figure 8a

i. The horse design with swirled loops: Thornhill Aiii, and Masham (lowest arcade).



ii. The dragonesque animal with swirled loops: the Gandersheim casket (back, left); the Hedda Stone (left).



iii. The dragonseque animal with swirled loop: Thornhill Civ and Masham (lowest arcade).

hand, can be also read as a head with an ear and an open mouth from which the real head extends. In fact the tongue or tongues come from either head ambiguously. Even an eye can be seen on the smaller head on the left (plate 27A). This reading gives a fantastic touch to the otherwise normal but simplified animal. It was noted (chapter 7) that the lowest dragonesque animal on side C has a squirrel like animal exploding from a type of mouth part way up the neck, and the same appears to happen on Ai (plates 22, and 25, figure 7aii). Why should the artist make composite animals? It can perhaps be explained as a fashion, since similar adaptations appear in the animals to be discussed. These touches of fantasy have not been noted by Romilly Allen (ECMS II 469, here 6bii) nor Collingwood (1927, figure 68, here figure 6biii).

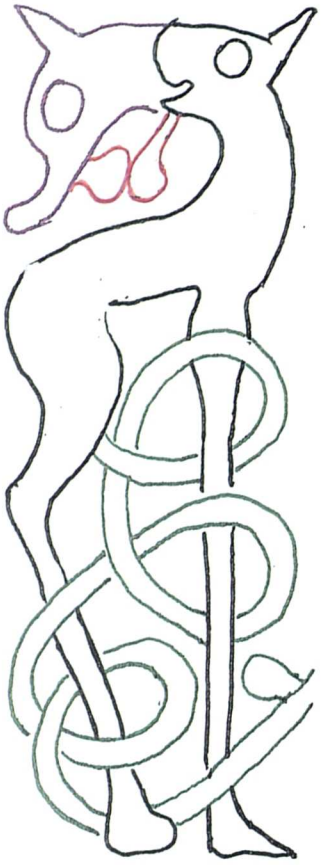
The body is set high in the panel so the legs must then fill the lower area and perhaps for this reason they are extremely long in proportion. The back leg of the horse is shaped in a natural manner, while the front leg drops straight to the bottom of the panel. The feet or hoofs are weathered also and have no pertinent detail remaining, except the back legs seem to have hooves, the front legs perhaps a longer foot.

The lacing

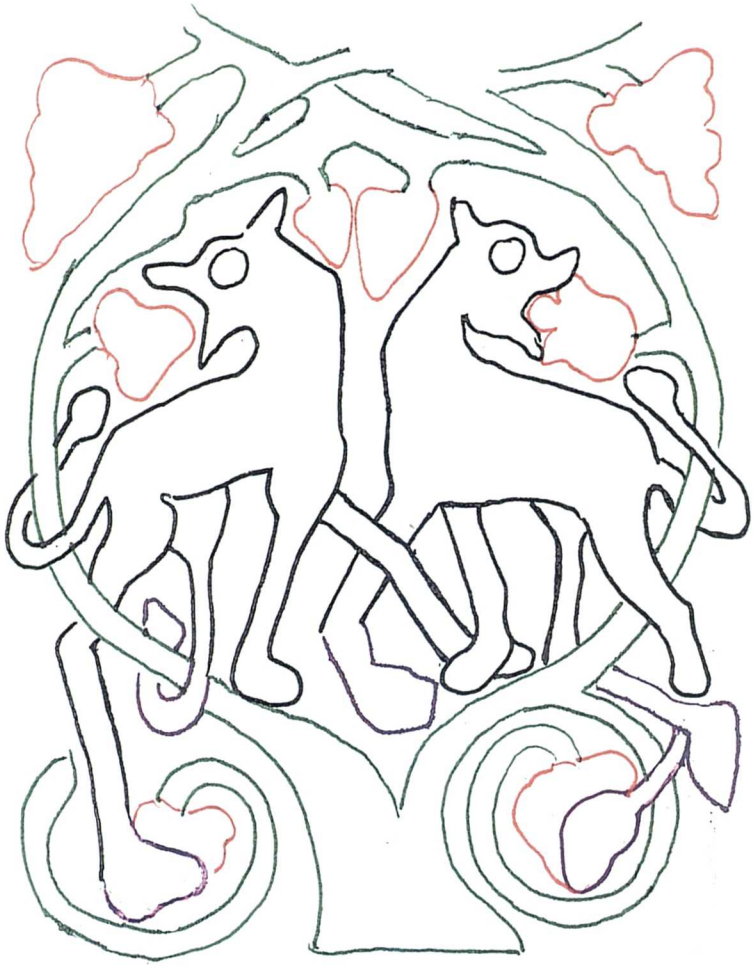
Since the upper section of the panel is filled with the animal, the tail only can move and work around the two vertical legs. It begins in a diagonal course and forms two swirled loops side by side around the front leg, then dives diagonally back to form a loop around the back leg and comes forward to finish in a flourish at the centre (figure 8ai). Such lacing is simple, legible and interesting. The loops swirl around vertical legs since the normal diagonals are not present. This lacing would appear to be the innovation of the designer to gain the same fluency as his other patterns. No other horse design is laced like it but there is something of the concept of these tall horses on a design at Masham Dvi (appendix plate 9) but there the lacing decorated an overlong neck with swirling loops (figure 8ai).

Although this Thornhill panel has swirled lacing, it has the regularity of a grid structure, in that the holes and loops are evenly spaced. The vertical lines seem to fit best at 6cm apart making five units and the horizontals 6cm apart forming six

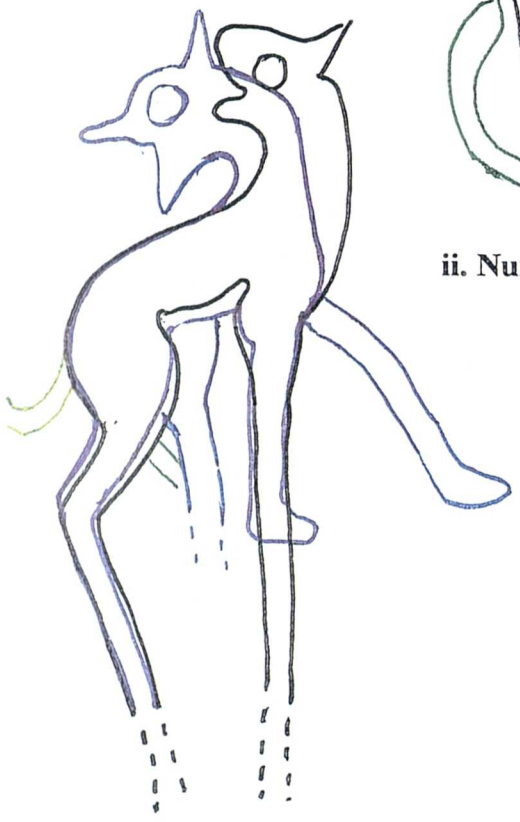
Figure 8b The horse motif .



i. Thornhill Aiii: horse motif.



ii. Nunnykirk A (lower): the paired horses.



iii. The motifs superimposed.

and a half units with a unit measure of about 7cm (plate 27B, figure 8ai). This grid, if this is correct, is similar in its intervals to the other designs on the cross, especially those designs on either side of it.

The elegant lacing on the Thornhill design is of significance since such refined lacing is more appropriate to the designs discussed in chapter 7, when lacing was part of the scene for the dragonesque animal (plates 21-24). Swirled loops were used sparingly, around vertical features, and the Gandersheim casket and the Hedda Stone (here figure 8aii) display the type used on the addorsed design. Figure 8aiii shows the neck designs with swirled loops on the Thornhill cross itself and also Masham. It would appear that this horse design was worked out while the dragonesque designs were at their zenith because the horse, without any incumbrance of its own, picks up the style with which is associated. Later work at Ilkley (appendix plate 10) shows a degraded form, using swirled loops.

Horse motifs of Bernicia

i. Nunnykirk 1A and Thornhill Aiii

The Thornhill designer would appear to be alone in his expression of this double-headed, interlaced quadruped. There are connections however, and the relationship with pair of quadrupeds on the Nunnykirk shaft 1A is enlightening as to the methods of the Thornhill designer. Nunnykirk is but a few kilometres from Rothbury, and this Nunnykirk shaft has plant-scroll on all four faces. R. Cramp (Corpus I, 215) notes that the shaft is related to the Hexham school although quite late, for plant-scroll. She dates it to the early ninth century.

Side A has a medallion-scroll in two registers. In the lower one there are confronted quadrupeds, chest to chest, with their heads turned back and legs striding (appendix plate 11, figure 8bii). They appear to stand on the vine framework with their foremost legs crossed. However, very long legs extending out of the volute can partially be seen (figure 8bii, purple), as if the artist was following a pattern which had long legs and that he felt obliged to cut them off as only if there were no space. So the legs then are at odd lengths ambiguous with the plant and the ambiguity is furthered by feet which are like bunches of grapes.

This is not different from the attitude of other artists in Deira and southern Bernicia which have been mentioned.

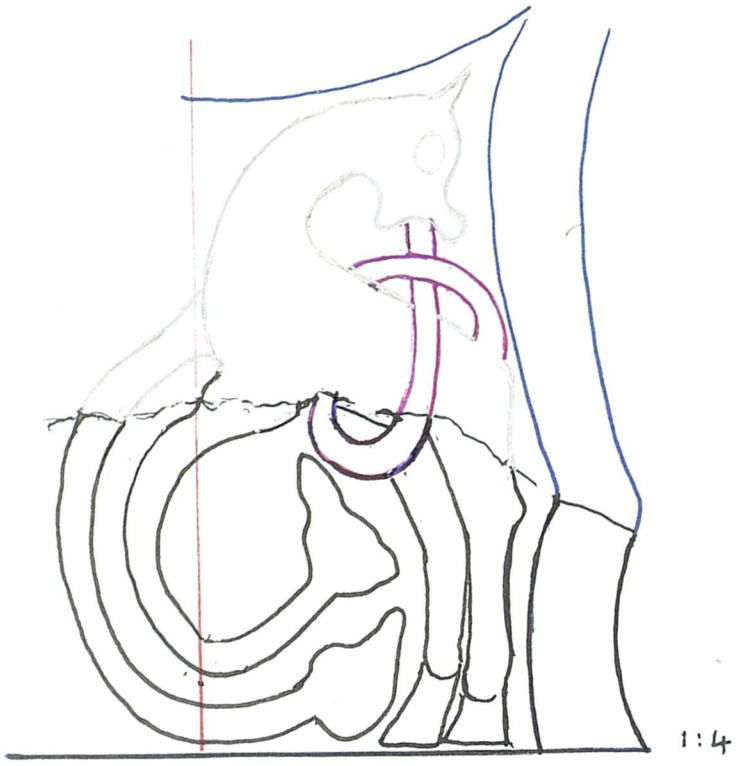
Placed beside the Thornhill animals in figure 8bi and ii, both at 1:4. If there are interesting correlations in size and mass, but when superimposed (figure 8biii) it becomes clear that the animal bodies and the two legs pretty well coincide. The Nunnykirk heads coincide with the fins on the Thornhill design except that the ears at Nunnykirk are pushed out of the centre by a bunch of grapes. The two legs of the Thornhill design correspond to two of the four Nunnykirk legs, although the Thornhill legs are longer again. There would seem to be some common pattern which both artists had in hand, consisting of just the animal motif. It was apparently not a stencil-like pattern with holes for interlace (figure 5a and b) but a simple outline to trace around.

It has been demonstrated that the Thornhill designer was one who could adjust his units in size either way to fit his panels, but here he seems to use a pattern "off the hook." The simple answer would be that the pattern fitted his needs. To the basic outline he added the second head, with its ear to the corner, and his typical face pointing outwards, also he characteristically reduced four legs to two, lengthened them to suit his panel and placed them so his interlace loops could have room to turn. This odd method of working with templates and adding to them would be unbelievable had it not been for something similar with the dragonesque designs of Ai and Civ (plates 25 and 22, figure 7aii), and equally strange occurrences in some patterns to be discussed.

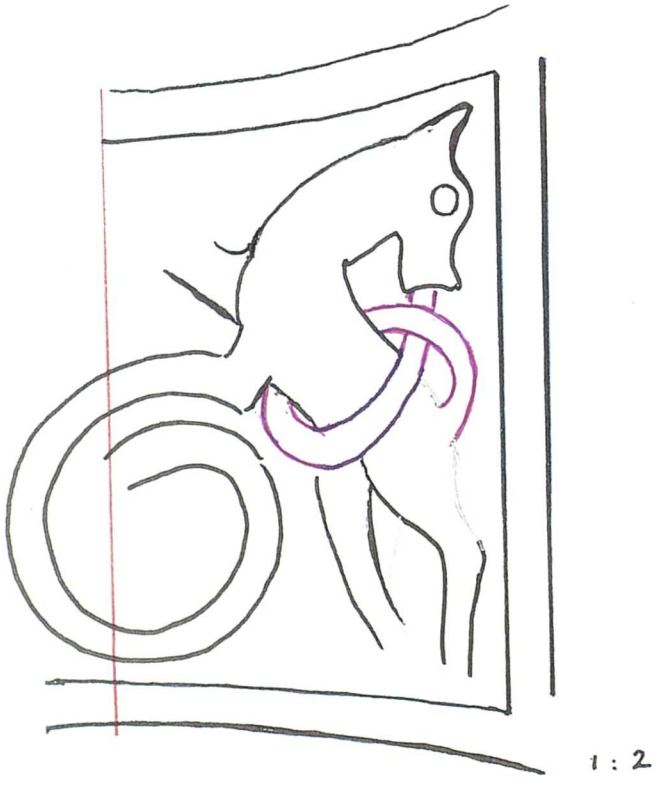
ii. Nunnykirk 1A: the lower cross-arm.

There are three cross-arm designs which have the "horse" theme. The first is a previously unrecognised pattern[2] on the lower cross-arm of the Nunnykirk shaft (plate 28) above the medallion scroll with the horses just discussed. The cross-arm starts dramatically with a collar of bosses not unlike those of the Roman altars with which it now resides.[3] The design shows the paired back legs, and the knobbly bones of horses which can be seen clearly in a good light, now fitting neatly into the shape of the lower arm (plate 28 figure 8ci). The horses are

Figure 8c



i. Nunnykirk cross-head A: the rearing horse.



ii. Norham cross-arm 14A: the apparent rearing horse.

rearing and as they rise traces of interlace loops are seen wound around their bellies, and the front legs lace to form an attractive feature.

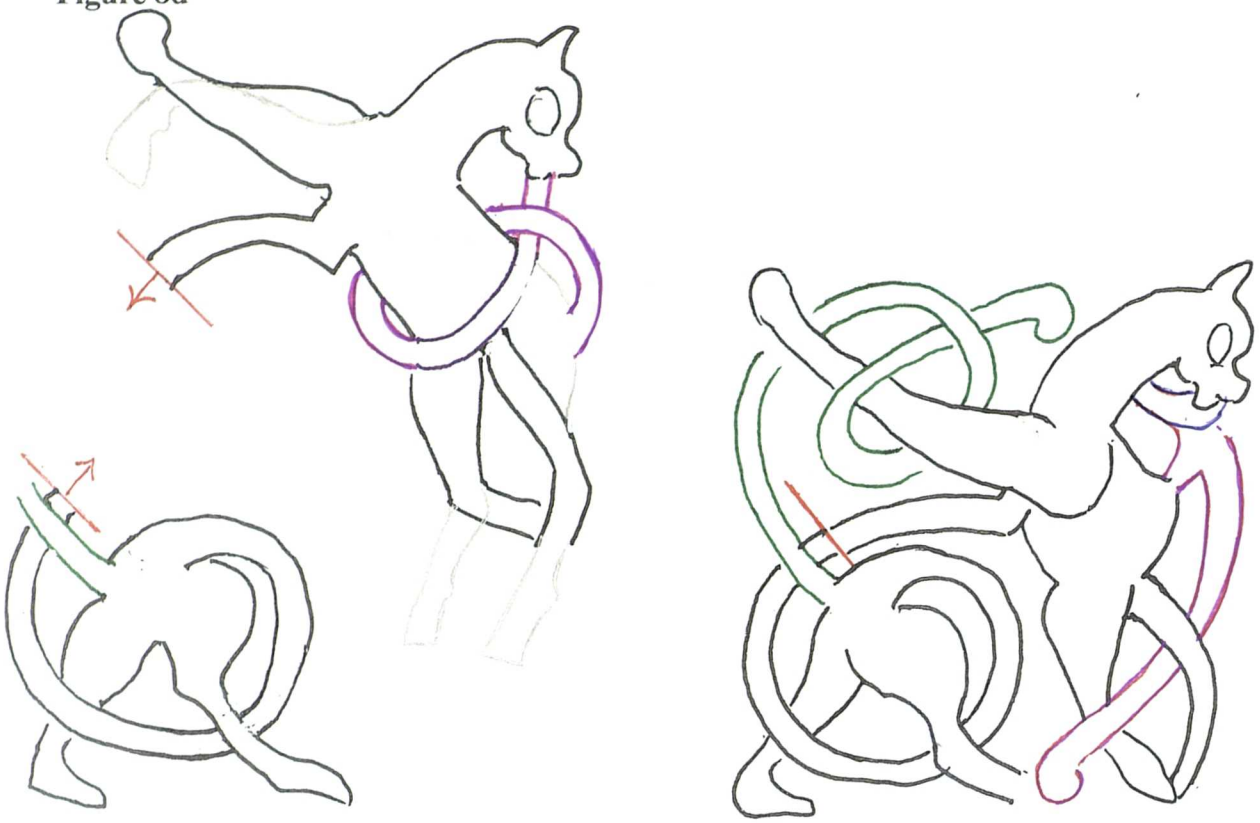
The interest of the design is in the paired parallel front legs which lace together as they curl around. These are very much longer than the back legs which presumably have been cut off to fit (plate 28, figure 8ci). The horses' heads are missing but they would have fitted best if they were turned out so there ears could slip into the corners by the roundel (plate 28B). The ear lappet, or more likely a tongue would have made the loop and then become tail such as is seen later at Jedburgh (plate 31). It is the feet, which are extremely large and shaped like bunches of grapes, that have linked the design with plant scroll, although none is present.

iii. Norham 14A: a cross-arm.

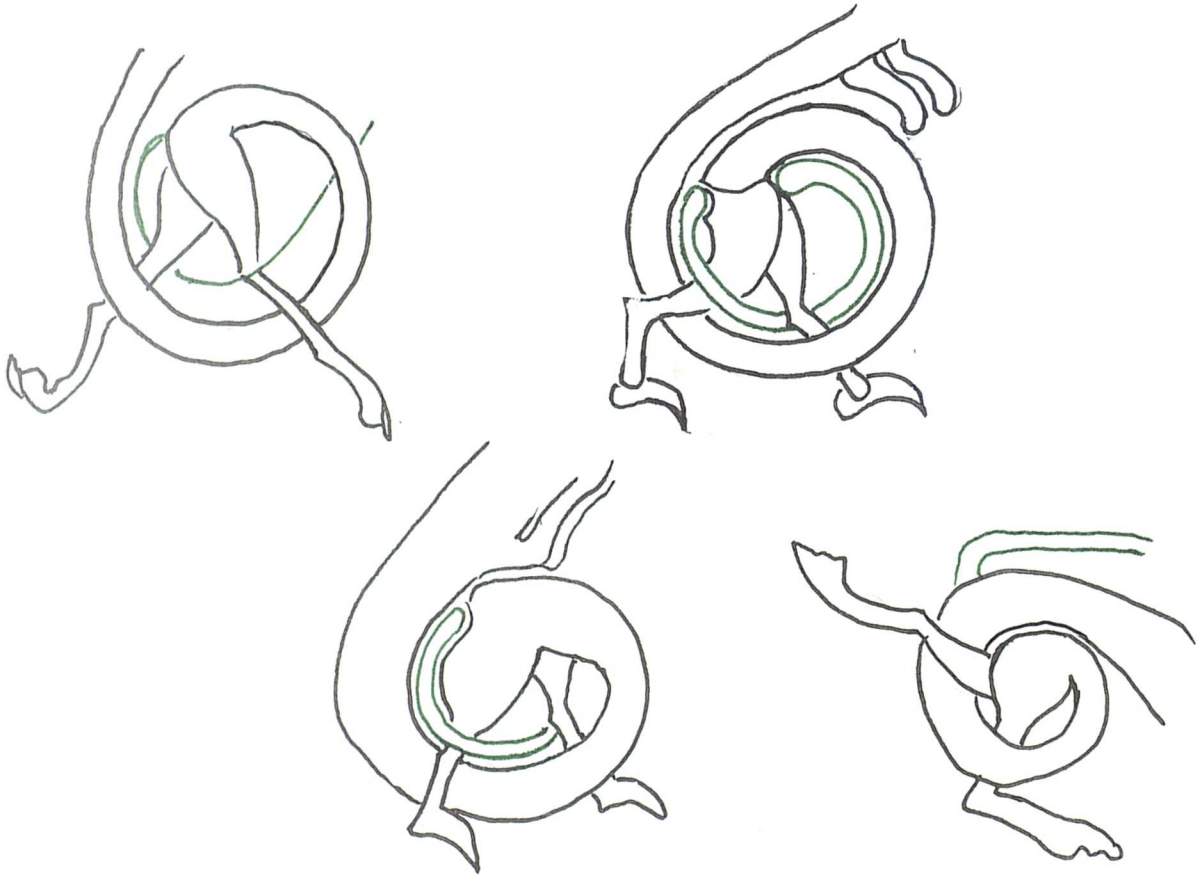
The second cross-arm design, the one from Norham (plate 29A and B), is worn and damaged but it has a fine, high strand which is a smaller version of the Thornhill technique. The cross-arm is divided into two panels with the blade divided from the area of the arc and here the design is in the blade. The single horse is easily read as a rearing animal like those of the Nunnykirk head, which is not the final interpretation, but the one which clearly lies behind the design. This rearing animal has one leg spiralling, again like the Nunnykirk design and the head is turned back. The correspondence between the two designs is shown on figure 8c with Norham 1:2, Nunnykirk 1:4 placed on the same axis. From the trail of punch marks across the body it can be surmised that a loop was intended which comes from the tongue area and went to the tail.

This rearing animal is visually dominant but the spiralling leg is actually turned into a thin body with two further legs walking through (figure 8d i and ii). The other front leg now is seen as a wing, common to the dragonesque animals, which has a loop around it from the tail in the manner of Thornhill Aiv and Ciii (plates 21 and 23). The former back legs become front legs and the former rump is as an overlarge chest. All this is on a grid of four units each way at a unit measure of 3.5cm or 4cm.

Figure 8d



i. Norham cross-arm 14A: the components. ii. Norham 14A: the combined design.



ii. Turned bodies with walking legs: Lindisfarne Gospels (f26v); Aberlemno 2A;

Meigle 1A; St Ninian's Isle (bowl 2).

The designer has used his motif playfully and the technique and rhythm is like that of Thornhill, where animals had composite heads, just as this design has composite bodies. The strange idea too, must have been widespread as it can be seen in a naively drawn up design on the degraded cross-shaft, Ilkley at (appendix plate 10), where head and tail are on the wrong end and there is no doubt that a new form of "monster" was made by the unexpected arrangement of parts of templates.

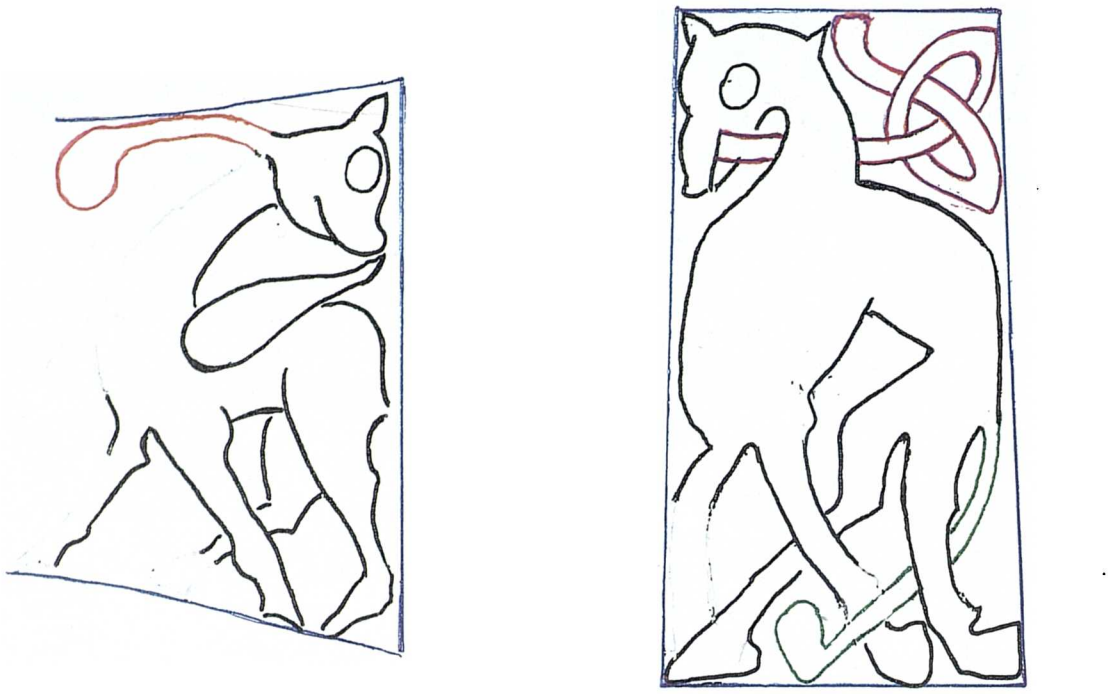
The Norham design provides another feature to pursue and that is the spiralled body with legs walking through it. This idea was used as part of the grand motif of folio 26v of the Lindisfarne Gospels (plate 1). The same idea of legs walking through a body loop also appears on Pictish slabs: in a geometrical version on Aberlemno 2A and one more realistically portrayed on Meigle 1 (ECMS II, figures 227A and 310A). It is repeated in various ways on the metalwork of the St. Ninian's Isle hoard (Small, Thomas and Wilson 1973, figures 21, 22, 31 and 32). Examples are shown in figure 8aii of the various forms. The Norham carving is the simplest but Anglian sculptors tended to simplify designs while keeping the concept while the Picts attended to detail. Nearby Lindisfarne itself could as well have been the source, and not the distant Pictish places.

The Norham piece is dated to the second quarter of the ninth century (Corpus I, 214). Professor Cramp (1978, 11 and 12) gives various grounds for this, including the royal endowment of Norham in 830. If the piece was carved close to this date it would be not much later than Thornhill (chapter7, conclusion) or Nunnykirk (Corpus I, Cramp, 215), if both were of the first quarter of the ninth century and may explain the close connections with the motif and also help to explain similarities in line and technique seen in the three works.

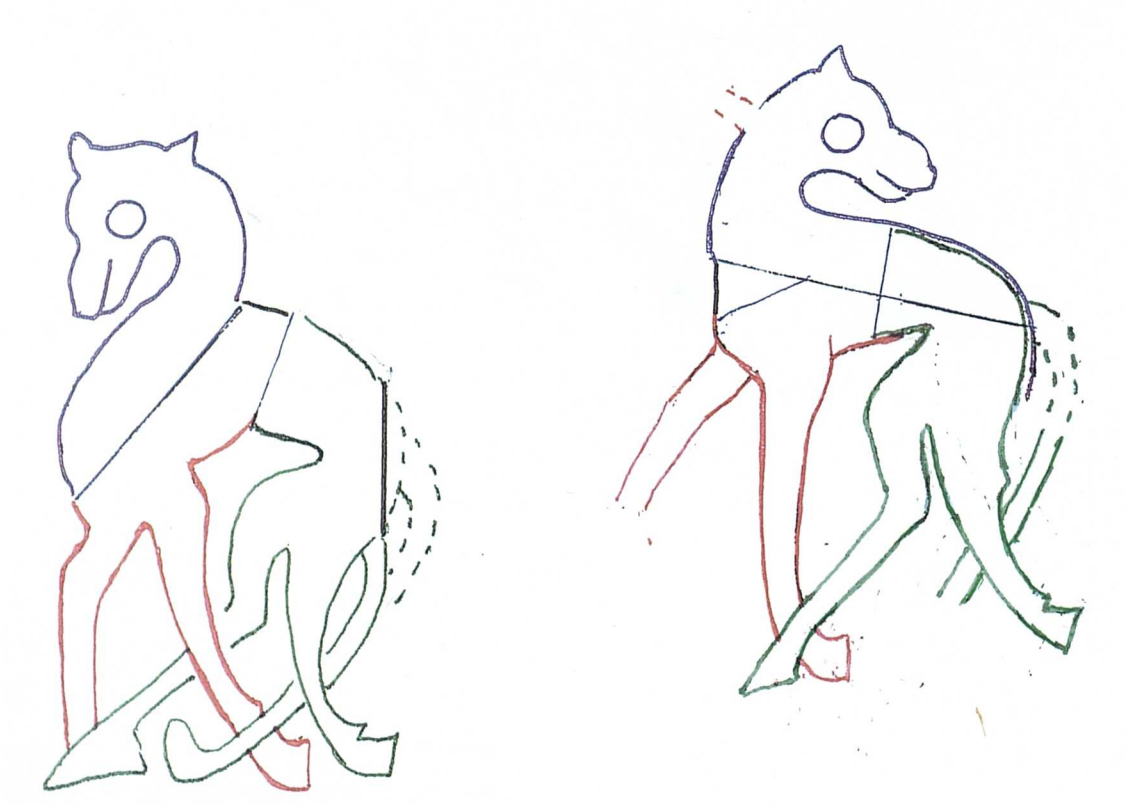
iv. Hoddom 1A: cross-arm.

The third cross-head piece is from Hoddom. The Hoddom piece (number 1A) cannot be given exact measurements,[4] plate 29 is a composite plate made up from two photographs, joined as if the pieces touched, as this makes sense of the legs. W.G. Collingwood (1927, figure 51) also reconstructed this arm but leaving a greater gap between the pieces so that he had to add vine-scroll. From the

Figure 8e



i. Hoddom cross arm 1A: a strutting horse. ii. Closeburn Cii: a strutting horse.



iii. The three parts of the Closeburn design. iv. The design straightened.

photographs it can be seen to have been deeply carved, well modelled with curved lines and much surface detail. The pair of horses are as symmetrically placed as their cusped panel allows with chest to the centre and necks stretching to fit in the outer corners. Each head has a small ear, firmly rounded facial lines, closed mouth and a bulging eye. What appears to be a second ear I believe is a lappet strand billowing off to the centre (plate 29B). A wing, long and dagger-like like those of the dragonesque animals extends from well within the body like that or the Norham design (plate 20). The wing may have round pellets for feathers and long flight feathers. The interest lies in the criss-crossed legs of natural strutting horses and the billowing lappets (plate 29B and figure 8ei). The Hoddom cross-head has figures in the sterner rather monumental style akin to Ruthwell the animals curve vigorously but not the rhythmic flowing of Thornhill.

v. Closeburn Cii.

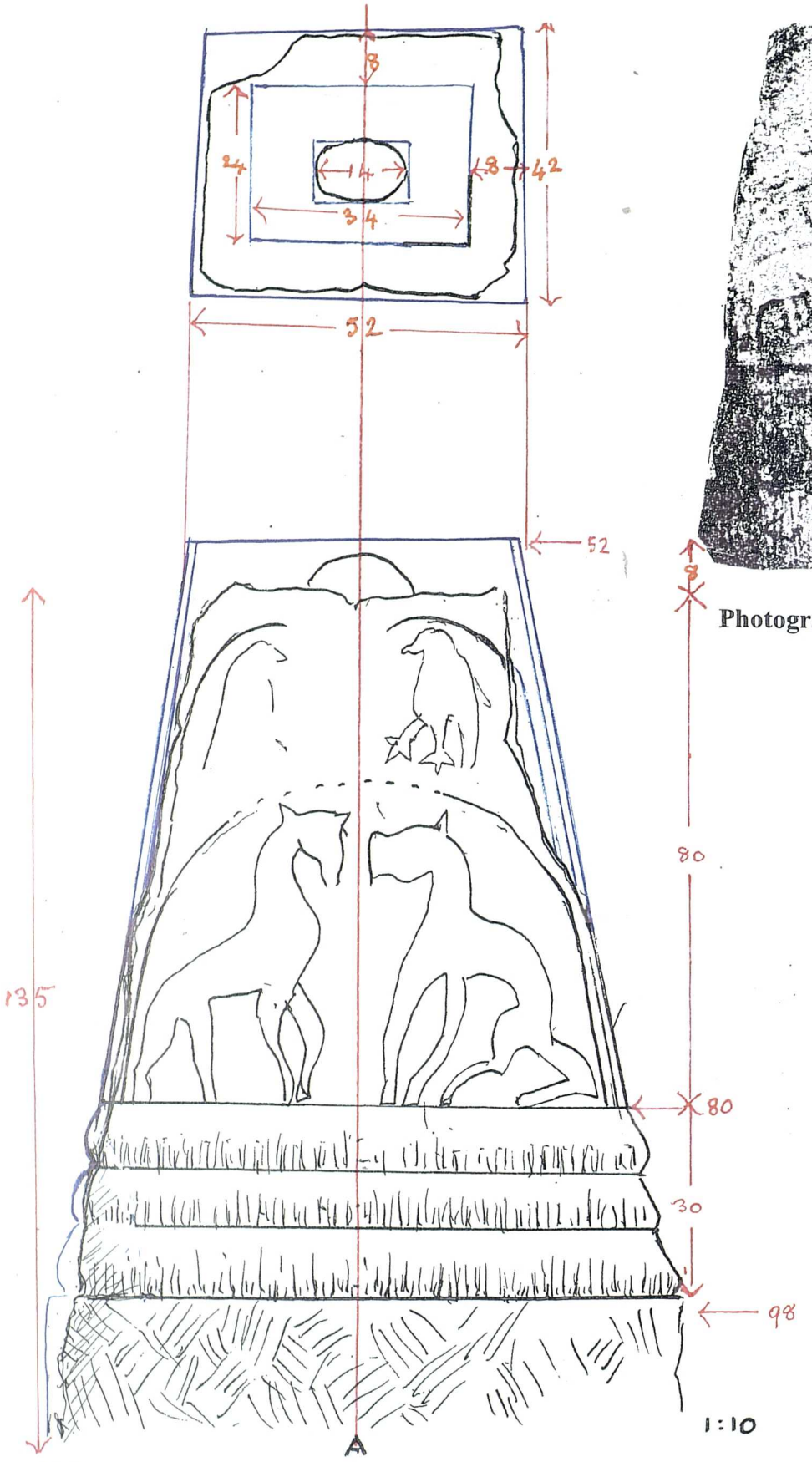
Another tall horse is on the Closeburn shaft (plate 30, figure 8eii). This shaft is often bracketed with Thornhill, because of its proximity, but not its style which is static and crowded. The cross was connected with Thornhill in chapter 6 by the use of natural birds (plate 19, figure 6fii). It is the panel above the birds which contains a single horse, tall indeed, with criss-crossed legs in the manner of Hoddom but clumsy and inelegant. The wisp of fine interlace from its mouth forming a Stafford knot, has the purpose of space filling rather than enhancing the horse. D. Craig (1992, II, 32) describes it well:

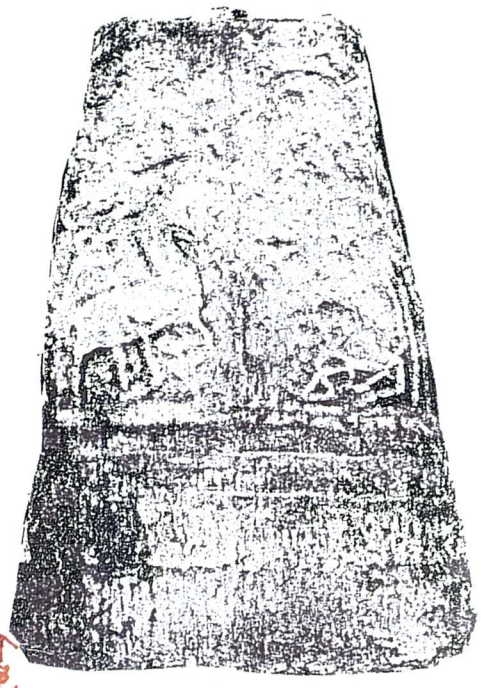
> The animal has a compressed arched body with hind quarters folded beneath .... and an arched tapering neck almost to the centre of the back

Being a single animal in a narrow panel the legs could not stride out, which accounts for their squashed and cut off appearance. The legs make an interplay of diagonals like those of Hoddom (figures 8ei and ii) but still there is clear distortion.

The design (figure 8eii) with its unnatural lines seems to have been drawn up in three parts, as if a template in outline form was turned three ways. Figure 8eiii shows the front part turned under instead of out (red), the back legs pushed further under so that the line of the body is crumpled (green), and the bulging

Figure 8f





Photograph: Laidlaw (1905).

Jedburgh base A and plan of top.

chest with the head forward (blue). A horse which is rather like that of Nunnykirk (appendix plate 11) about the same size is created when these three components are realigned (figure 5iv).

So far a group of horses has been discussed interlink with each other in one or several features. The major link is of course, between the horses of Thornhill, Nunnykirk (shaft) and possibly Closeburn shafts where outline templates of similar size appears to have been used, perhaps passed around. The Hoddom panel and Closeburn may be an early and late version of the one idea: the strutting horse. The little Norham design is about half the size of the rearing animals on the Nunnykirk head and has much in common with that piece. The making of composite animals at Thornhill and Norham is a further link of the concepts. All this demonstrates the use of templates in the formation of composite animals and designs, which is very important in explaining the work on the Jedburgh cross-base.

The Jedburgh cross-base

The Jedburgh cross-base with all faces first published well by Laidlaw (1904-5, figure 5),is an enigmatic and individual piece[5]. It now stands in the garden of the house of Mary Queen of Scots, close to the centre of Jedburgh. So many vicissitudes has it suffered, that it is amazing to see designs surviving on it at all. The fine-grained, sandy-limestone from which it is made is tough and able to accept a smooth finish and sharply carved detail. Now that this surface has weathered to a coral-like texture its detail is often tenacious and still quite clear in part.

The base is like a large truncated pyramid over 135cm in height and is in itself an impressive monument. Its taper however, is exaggerated by the more worn surface on the upper half which tragically has lost it all but shadowy traces of the design there. Figure 8f is a tentative reconstruction.

The work was ambitious, impressive but not regular. Each side is a different width. The lowest part is roughly chiselled to be sunk into the ground, then, there are three large, well-rounded and finely smoothed mouldings totalling 30cm in

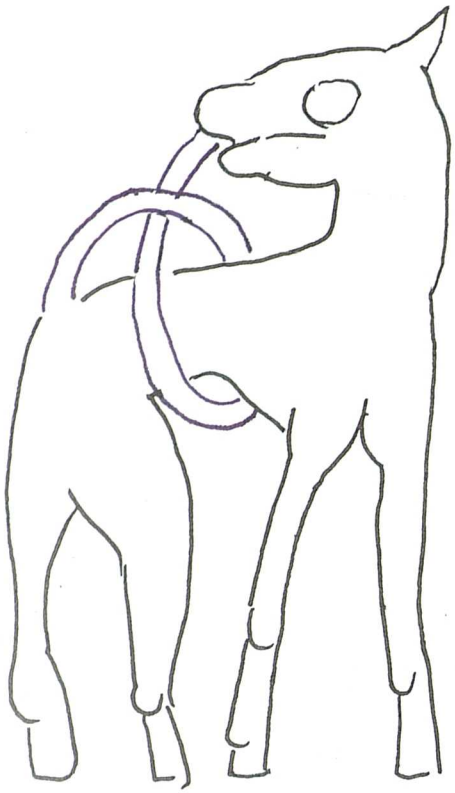
height (figure 8f). Another such monument may have existed at Norham where a very small fragment of the same type of moulding survives (Norham 6).[6] Above this grand foundation there is a length of design about 80cm in height and if the remains are read aright, this is in two registers. There is a side moulding, possibly double, and a curved moulding or vine stems, on two sides at least, dividing the registers. A tenon on top, now a rounded hump may have once held the shaft but there could have been a socket chiselled off of which only a shallow hollow remains where the cross fitted. If the walls of the socket were 8cm thick then it could have held a shaft about 34cm by 24cm (figure 8f). This would be smaller in comparison to the Thornhill cross which is 44 by 24cm at the base, or Nunnykirk, 44 by 28cm but a little larger than St Oswald's cross Durham 30 by 22cm (figure 13b). However the height of the base would make even a middle-sized shaft look impressive.

It was the lower register of the base which was decorated all around with various forms of the tall horse but the upper register has only a few vague masses, possibly birds, one of which is fairly clear on face A (plate 33B). The Nunnykirk shaft had paired quadrupeds below and birds above, as seems appropriate. It could be noted too that the column at Masham has mainly prancing horses on its lower level (appendix plate 9)

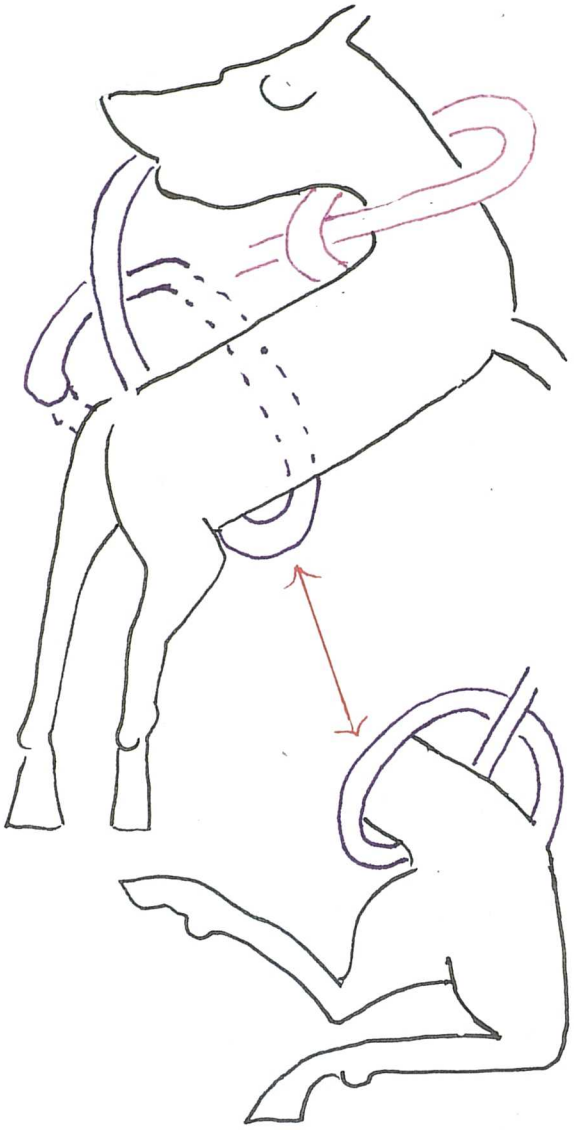
The Jedburgh horse designs

The clearest design is on the narrowest face, face D, which is 52cm wide at the bottom of the design. Here two horses stand chest to chest with their heads turned back (plate 31, figure 8gi). Once more these animals are about the size of those of Nunnykirk and they have the same knobbly bones (plate 28) but the heads are longer and more horse-like and each long slit of a mouth allows the tongue to come out, to twist once around the body and become the tail. The interlace is thin when this is compared with the mass of the body, but appropriate for limestone. Here is evidence of a tongue to tail loop, which may have been seen in the fragmentary strands on the Nunnykirk head and the Norham cross-arm (plates 28 and 29). The legs are apart but rather poorly shaped and do not seem to stand but yet they are scarcely walking.

Figure 8g

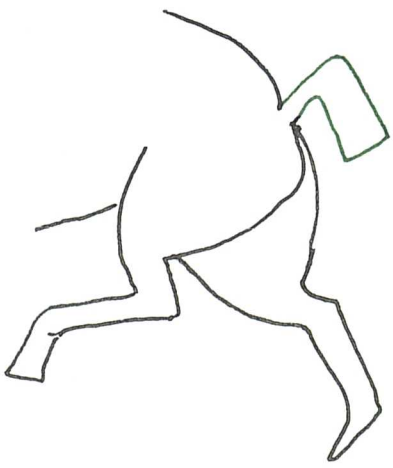


i. Jedburgh base D: the simple horse.



ii. Jedburgh base B: the components.

iii. Jedburgh base B: the combined motif.



iv. Pictish horse: Meigle 5 (back).

Side B is wider than side D, estimated 62cm at the bottom of the designs. Much of the right side is broken away but enough is left to see that symmetry was intended on either side of the vertical axis (plate 32). The design is more elaborate than that on side D, and it seems at first a rearing animal, like the one at Norham, looking over its shoulders. This horse could even have been drawn by using the outline from side D placed in several positions.

Beneath the rearing animals are the legs of what seems to be another animal (figures 8gii and iii). The engraver of figure 457 in J. Romilly Allen's work (ECMS II) seems to have seen this as a suckling animal. The mistakes in interpretation are caused because, like the Norham panel, the rearing horse is the foundation, and hind quarters have been added. The addition is completely unexpected by the eye. So once more the rump and back legs become front legs and chest, and the hefty back is to be thought of as a neck, while the front leg of the "rearing horse" disappears into a strand of interlace. The legs beneath, the new back legs, are attached to the rearing horse by a slim body, not curling like the one at Norham (plate 29A and B) but equally fine. These back legs here are as a strutting Pictish horse not like the other lethargic legs used on side D. Figure 8giv illustrates the back legs of Meigle 5 (ECMS II, figure 314 B) for comparison.

These two different horse pieces, which have been used to make up the motif, appear to have had the same interlace as side D, that is a loop from tongue to tail. When the animal was combined into one, the resulting interlace looks interesting and complex but lacks logic (plate 32, figure 8giii).

This repeated use of simple forms or templates helps to explain the design on broad face A (plates 33, 34 and 35) the widest face, about 72cm without mouldings. The designer has not enlarged the animals to fit but rather rearranged them and left a gap between them to be filled by interlace. The new pair looks forward[7] and not back but each animal differs as if the sculptor was struggling to fit the design to the space. Laidlaw (1905, figure 5, here figure 8f) illustrates this with a retouched photograph showing the heads forward but at a different angle from my reconstructions.

The animal on the right (plates 33 and 34) may have the heavy head of the animals on side B or D. It has a straight chest and ill shaped front legs, it is tempting to think that the designer may have actually turned the whole front portion of his pattern backwards just to turn the horse's head. From here the body slants down, so that the horse squats on the same well shaped legs as the lower legs on side B. On the left hand side, a horse with a fine arched neck, head dropping forward, well rounded chest and front legs in a prancing position, is the most convincing passage on the base (plates 33 and 35), so it is disappointing then that the back slopes a little and uninspiring back legs seem cut off short.

As a pair, these are not unlike the confronted horse-like creatures with folded back legs which appear on the cross-slab Meigle 2. These are woven with fine interlace and snake like symbols (ECMS II, figure 311 A), and are indeed strange creatures although realistic animals are on the back of that very slab (ECMS II, figure 311B). Perhaps there is interaction here, in that the Jedburgh horses may have gained some shapely Pictish legs, while the Picts gained an element of fantasy which their natural more literal approach lacked.

The interlace of Jedburgh face A is complex and impossible to follow. The difficulty is partly because of weathering but also partly because it lacks logic. If the simple lacing on side B failed to join up, then the sculptor with two different animals to deal with appears to have become very confused. Loosely swirled loops moving from limb to limb in the manner of the interlace on the Thornhill panel, but without the precision or any obvious grid.

Side C, the remaining broad face, has little ornament remaining due to various forms of damage. On the far right are some poorly shaped longish legs and a rump, which in this context may well be front legs and a rounded chest. Towards the centre are more crouching legs with swirled loops. The design is so damaged that it may be one rearing animal or a pair, but apart from noting that the design has interlace wound around an animal form this face will not be discussed further.

To sum up the four sides of this lowest register, there is a variation from simple design to almost theatrical grandeur; from the common form to some quite ingenious and fantastic combinations. This type of fantasy may have inspired the Meigle artist of slab 2 (ECMS II, figure 311) to produce the mysterious sets of paired animals. Yet the Jedburgh animals have faults and irregularities which may indicate that Meigle was inspired by a better model now missing.

The shapes of the horses of Jedburgh, poor and clumsy though they may be, were technically well modelled in keeping with Anglian work. The interlace is fine and crisp though muddled in expression. Such fineness occurs with designs on similar finer limestone. The work may be later than the others discussed since it shows more roughness in the drawing up of forms and interlace following the appearance but not the construction of works like Thornhill.

If the horse panel at Waberthwaite 2A (Corpus II, illustration 582, here plate 36), the one below the dragonesque panel (plate 26), is compared to the Jedburgh work, then one can see in the fine chest arched neck and head an echo of the work on side A. However, the Waberthwaite horse not only has three legs muddled into the lacing, but the lacing bifurcates swirls and throws unpinned loops. R. Bailey (Corpus II, 151-2 and 1980, 73-4, figure 8) uses these and other reasons to date it in the Viking period of the tenth century, although asserting that the "motifs derive from the vocabulary of Anglian art" as in the works discussed, especially the Jedburgh base. Designs from Thornhill to Jedburgh could be that "vocabulary" which has no influence of the Viking-era.

Conclusion

The strangest part of the tall horses of Bernicia has been the dependence of sculptors on pattern; outlines or templates for what would be for us the simplest of drawings. When oddities occur, such as the Closeburn horse with the legs turned under or the back to front legs of the horse on Jedburgh base A, these features can be easily seen. Thornhill Aiii and Norham 14A are excellent designs in every way, yet their sculptors also have used the same method of drawing up designs, to gain interest, mystery or even ambiguity. The patterns

used in this manner must have been simple shapes, around which outlines could be drawn and not complex stencils with holes, as each design is different.

At a time when riddles were enjoyed, the ambiguity, mentioned often in this chapter and chapter 7, may have been a visual counterpart; that is a play on visual forms. Ambiguity has been observed in vine-scroll ornament where animals have had leaf terminals; when the vine-scroll has had tassels; or the legs which turn into branches and the feet which are like grape bunches. It also takes the form of composite animals so that what is seen first, is changed into something quite different on closer observation. Both these forms have been seen in Deira but particularly the work discussed here in Bernicia.

The use of pattern templates forges the links between the designs themselves and enables us to trace the "tall horse" over a wide area of Bernicia by the various relationships. A large distribution could not be seen with the dragonesque designs as they were limited by natural attrition but the horse designs lead around a wide area even to Norham, now close to Lindisfarne and raises the question, at the moment without answer, as to whether this style was also favoured there.

To date these works is difficult, one tends to place the excellent works in which the designers understand the designs first, and the bungled works later. However, Hoddom, believed to be a great monastic centre[8] with fragments of monumental sculpture matching Ruthwell in type, has one pair of horses on a cross-head. Small though they are they have vitality, boldness of carving, strength of line, and a simplicity which indicate that this design may be the earliest in the group, even carved in the eighth century[9]. If Hoddom had been the monastic centre which received the style from the south into a workshop already well stocked with natural forms, and had considerable technical expertise, it may have passed on the style around its own area to places like Thornhill. It equally could also have been in contact with places like Abercorn, Jedburgh, Norham and Lindisfarne.

The horses on the Thornhill cross seem to have been created at the peak of the dragonesque period, as the horses are keyed in with the other designs in a baroque type of elegance. Although the horse design indicates the use of templates, it has been adapted to fit the panel on the grid and imaginatively laced. The small Norham design with similar technique, rhythm and composite form, links with Thornhill. While the Nunnykirk shaft on the one hand, has horses in the medallion scroll which appear to have had a common template or at least similar one to that used at Thornhill and on the other hand, the cross-arm has rearing horses like those on the cross-arm at Norham. If Thornhill, Norham and Nunnykirk were carved before the middle of the ninth century, the innovative Thornhill seems the most advanced of these.

One interesting feature has been that at Thornhill all designs have been carefully placed on grids, mostly square but sometimes rectangular and the horse design is no exception. Although the surface is so warn as to inhibit exact measurements it seems that the designer had a graded scale or ruler with measurements about a centimetre or a small half inch apart, with 5cm and 6cm common measures. This does not seem the same scale as was used in the Lindisfarne group discussed (3cm, 4.5cm and 6 cm), but more data is needed.

The sculptor of the Jedburgh base, although maintaining technical skill but using similar designs in strange composite forms with has swirls of irregular ungridded interlace is perhaps working at a later time. This competently carved but irregular work may be linked to the well carved but clumsy Closeburn and both could be towards the tenth century, without Viking influence. Waberthwaite, muddled, tangled with bifurcating strands is later still since it has indications of Viking-age taste and may be of the tenth century. This then concludes an interesting and long lived sequence of exotic animals. In the east of Bernicia there is now a different approach to fantasy.

NOTES

1. D. Craig's photograph (here plate 27A) shows that the ends of the tails cross. This is a case of a photograph picking out a detail more correctly than the observer.

2. Collingwood (1927, figure 45) drew plant ornament. Cramp (Corpus I, 214) describes the ornament as tangled scroll. This is animal interlace and there would be no room for plane ornament. The animals in plant ornament , as on the Nunnykirk shaft, are by definition placed among the appendix plates.

3. Roman altars with bosses from the Roman wall are in the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle. The designer of the Nunnykirk shaft could have seen Roman Altars existing especially if he was ever based at Hexham.

4. The cross-head is the larger and is numbered I. I have called the face with horses "A". O.G.S. Crawford took photographs of the Hoddom pieces reproduced in Radford (1952-3 plates 1-4): plate 3 shows hands supporting the stones and this gives a rough scale: plate 14A may be close to the size, reduced for 1:2. Clapham (1927, plate 36, figures 2 and 3) reproduces photographs of this same head from the records of RCAHM, Scotland.

5. Smith (1872-4, 451-453, figure on 452) published side B. Laidlaw (1904-5, 26-27, figure 5) first published all faces but his photograph of face A can be seen to have been retouched (figure 8f). RCAHMS, Roxburghshire (1956 I, 222, number 439, figure 284) gives historical facts and descriptions, but illustrates the work with poor drawings. Cramp (1983, plates 17A-D, here plates 31-35A) illustrates the work but side A was photographed on an angle because it could not be taken directly from the front at time.

6. Walton cross-base, Yorkshire (Collingwood, figure 63) is a base with large mouldings at ground level but with no other similarity.

7. This face is badly weathered offering different interpretations in various lights. The drawing plates 33-35B, were done over several occasions but there is no guarantee of correctness.

8. Lowe (1991, 11-35) reports in the recent archaeological survey. Hoddam was a large monastery which could have been the central monastery in the area.

9. Cramp (Corpus II, 21-2) gives the date of the Ruthwell cross as around 685 or after 730.