Lecture Summaries 1995–6

The Castle Complex revisited: recent research on the Atlantic Iron Age

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The archaeology of Atlantic Europe, at various times and in varying degrees, from the Neolithic to the period of the Norse settlements, shows characteristics which distinguish it from the continental cultural sequence of Central Europe. This is not to claim cultural unity nor even yet a distinctive Atlantic identity for these regions, since there are marked regional variations, even within distinctive traditions like megalithic tombs or the Iron Age tradition of monumental building in stone. Within Atlantic Scotland, Childe sixty years ago in his *Prehistory of Scotland* recognized a *Castle Complex* in which brochs and duns were complementary elements of a unitary cultural grouping; Piggott later formalized this geographical zone into a single *Atlantic Province*. How valid is the concept of an Atlantic province today?

In the half-century since *Scotland before the Scots*, field research has considerably advanced our understanding of the major field monuments of the Iron Age, their origins and chronology rather more than their social and economic functions. Childe saw his Castle Complex as the direct product of immigrants from south-western Britain, based upon comparisons in material culture. Piggott equally thought it narrowly parochial to interpret the Scottish Iron Age other than in the context of southern Britain and continental Europe. Few archaeologists would now accept the need for intrusive settlers to explain the Atlantic roundhouse phenomenon, and fewer still would accept the retarded chronology for the appearance of brochs which is dependent upon historical episodes in southern England and their presumed consequences at the end of the first millennium Bc. As a framework for this review, we may divide the Iron Age into an Early (later prehistoric) Iron Age, c500 BC – c AD 200 and a Later (early historic) Iron Age, c AD 200 – c AD 800.

Until recently, the most important advances in research have resulted from fieldwork in Orkney. Excavations at Bu and Howe have shown that broch or Atlantic roundhouse origins must go back to the mid-first millennium BC, even if fully developed broch towers come later in the sequence. Notwithstanding debate on the dating of external structures at Gurness and elsewhere, the Orcadian brochs are distinctive for their nuclear layout, which superficially stands in marked contrast to the western brochs. Brochs in Argyll and Skye, nonetheless (and indeed some dun houses), may display outworks, possibly enclosing ephemeral external structures, and recent discoveries of (secondary) external walls at Berie in Lewis suggest that the contrast may in part result from a lack in the west of fieldwork expressly designed to address this issue.

Wheelhouses, too, have been subject to review as a result of recent research. Though undoubtedly secondary to the broch at Jarlshof, wheelhouses in the Outer Hebrides could be much earlier if results from Cnip in Lewis and Hornish Point in North Uist are indicative. Their apparent absence on Orkney is striking in view of Shetland examples, though the internal radial divisions in several of the Orkney brochs perhaps points to a similar social or functional use of space, and serves as a warning against too rigid an application of architectural typology alone as a model for analysis.

A striking contrast in the overall distribution of field monuments in Atlantic Scotland is the concentration of forts (excluding promontory forts and related types) in Argyll and the Inner Hebrides. Apart from nuclear forts of the Dunadd class, it is generally agreed that forts should be assigned to the Early Iron Age. Radiocarbon dates from Balloch Hill and elsewhere endorse the evidence of material remains like the saddle querns from Duntroon for a later prehistoric date. If, following Piggott, we took a less than parochial view, we might expect forts to have their origins in the later Bronze Age. A prime candidate for review in this regard is Dunagoil on Bute, ignored by some commentators on Iron Age communities in Britain, but outstanding in Atlantic Scotland for the wealth of its material assemblage. A re-assessment of the site is currently in progress.

Dating of duns is more controversial, however, with persuasive evidence adduced by Alcock and Nieke from excavated examples for their occupation in the first millennium AD. A major impediment to clarification of this confusion seems to be the arbitrary and catch-all definition of duns, which embraces a number of sites which are quite unlike any known sites of prehistoric date and whose dating through excavation to the first millennium AD is therefore hardly definitive. The only excavated example of a typical 'dun-house' is Rahoy, which Childe showed to have been occupied in the Early Iron Age.

There remains the possibility of secondary occupation (for which there is considerable evidence) obscuring the date of original construction, particularly in the case of older excavations, where the complexity of the structural sequence may not have been understood. This is not helped by the character of the Early Iron Age material assemblage, which is frequently insufficiently diagnostic to stand out from the more distinctive assemblages of later periods. (It has even been argued that this reflects a positive shift in the expression of identity and status away from monumental buildings and towards personal wealth.) A case in point is Dun Cuier on Barra, where an Early occupation was plainly conflated with a Later characterized by distinctive pins and composite bone combs. For west Lewis the site at Berie has the potential to serve as a model sequence, with a relatively deep stratigraphy from the broch construction to the immediately pre-Norse abandonment of the site. The major phases include successively a roundhouse (or possibly a wheelhouse) built within the derelict broch, followed by a sequence of smaller, corbelled cells, and finally a pictish-period occupation culminating in a figure-of-eight structure. The site not only offers a real prospect of establishing a ceramic sequence over the best part of a millennium, but also, because of the waterlogged nature of its lower deposits, is yielding timbers preserved in situ which in the primary phases could cast light on the vexed issue of how brochs were furnished internally.

With regard to the social role of Atlantic roundhouses, it is hard not to see developed broch towers like Mousa as the top of a social hierarchy. But it is difficult to sustain the general contention that brochs, duns and wheelhouses represent descending levels in the social order. Even if they could be shown to be contemporary, their distributions are not co-terminous. Forts presumably served as community centres, and elsewhere in Britain and Europe show elements of architectural display. But domestic buildings seldom show evidence of social distinction, and if brochs and duns are indicative of highter social status, then in significant parts of Scotland we have a case of all chiefs and no Indians. Nieke has argued that duns represent a superior level in society, on the grounds that their construction required resources and manpower that only a social élite could command. But can we assume that the élite would only exercise that control on their own behalf, or might they do so for others in a client relationship? If so, are there implications in this for the concept of inheritance, of wealth or of obligations and debts?

In answer to the question, 'can Atlantic Scotland be regarded as a distinctive cultural entity?' our answer might well be an enigmatic 'yes' and 'no' in the sense that it is made up of several regions which display distinctive and even contrasting characteristics, 'yes' in the sense that it has little in common with or derived from the Iron Age in southern Britain. However we choose to characterise the Iron Age cultures of Atlantic Scotland, they are certainly not La Tène. Yet this does not mean that Atlantic Scotland was not technologically as 'Iron Age' as lowland Scotland or southern Britain in the first millennium BC, nor should we preclude on these grounds the probability that its population was Celtic-speaking. For too long Atlantic Europe has been seen as peripheral to the mainstream cultural sequence of Central Europe, from Urnfield through to Hallstatt and La Tène, a diffusionist view of prehistory in which Britain was only ever an ultimate recipient of diluted cultural innovation. What we should be concerned with is the articulation of the cultural distinctiveness of Atlantic Scotland within Atlantic Europe; only then can its reciprocal interactions with neighbouring regions be properly evaluated.

The Newstead excavations: a Roman frontier post and its people revisited

Simon Clarke

An extensive programme of survey and excavation at the military complex of Trimontium has lead to the complete revision of the site's chronology and a much improved understanding of social and industrial zoning, both within the fort and the surrounding annexes. These are interpreted as having been primarily civilian settlement areas.

The first fort, with an irregular step-sided plan, came into use shortly after AD 80 as a campaign base in Agricola's conquest of southern Scotland. The earliest phase of West Annexe, and perhaps also the mansio building, were also constructed in this phase. The second, Domitianic fort was constructed shortly after AD 86 with a larger area and more conventional playing card shape. Two small annexes were added to the south and east at about this time. Little is known about the interior arrangement of either the fist or second fort. The site appears to have been abandoned c AD 100, probably with an orderly withdrawal, beginning a hiatus in occupation of c 40 years.

Renewed activity at the site c AD 140 was associated with the Antonine reconquest of southern Scotland. The fort's defences consisted initially of a simple refurbishment of the Domitianic rampart, which had never been properly slighted, and the cutting of two new ditches. This probably represents a hurriedly built and short lived campaign base, constructed during the initial conquest phase. Neverthe-less the renewal of the West Annexe defences and the creation of greatly enlarged annexes to the east and south suggest that substantial extramural occupation had already begun or at least was anticipated.

After the completion of the Antonine Wall, Newstead found itself in a secure rear area; its role changed accordingly to that of headquarters and supply centre. The fort's defences and buildings were rebuilt in stone, its new curtain wall enclosing a reduced area, leaving the western third of the old fort as the Industrial Annexe, an area devoted exclusively to large scale production. Geophysics suggests a highly orderly arrangement of kilns and ovens implying the army's close involvement, and perhaps even operation by military personnel. Civilian settlement, characterised by less ordered smaller scale structures, reached its maximum extent during this

period. The largest settlement, the South Annexe, consisted of an estimated eighty to one hundred strip buildings lining a well developed network of streets. This community of perhaps five to six hundred people included at least two contrasting sub-groups. The smallest one-roomed buildings (20-40 sq m) seem to have been associated with a relatively poor, agriculturally orientated population. Low levels of artefact deposition were probably partly due to the poverty of the inhabitants and partly due to the deliberate removal of debris to manure the surrounding fields. A more genuinely urban orientated population is represented by larger buildings (50–100 sq m) with internal partitions and a close association with industrial activity. This population seems to have enjoyed access to a wider range of high status items, particularly glass and metal work, but paradoxically sat within a squalid environment surrounded by large quantities of unpleasant refuse, most notably butchery waste. The character of occupation in the East Annexe appears to have been different again, excavation and geophysical survey indicating a relatively clean environment free from domestic or industrial debris. At least one building was very different from anything known in the South Annexe. With an area of at least 200 sq m it was considerably larger, and it appears also to have had a much more complex floor plan. The most startling aspect of the area however was the associated finds assemblage. This was quite sparse, but included very high proportions of nails, suggesting that much of the assemblage came from the decay of the structure rather than from ordinary rubbish disposal. This low level of rubbish accumulation was probably the result of the deliberate removal of rubbish rather than an indication of the inhabitants' poverty, as what was allowed to accumulate included significant proportions of higher status items. A quarter of the pottery was Samian, and there was almost as much vessel glass. Decorative glass (bangles, beads and counters) and non-ferrous metal were also relatively common. The overall impression is of an exceptionally clean, well-housed community enjoying unusually easy access to higher status goods.

This heyday period, during which Newstead's population reached 2000 or more, probably lasted for about 15 years. Shortly before c AD 160 the Antonine frontier appears to have become unstable and Newstead was again modified in response, acquiring a much enlarged garrison, presumably for front-line service. The Reducing Wall was demolished and the curtain wall extended round what had been the Industrial Annexe, which was cleared to make way for barracks. In the early AD 160s the Antonine Wall was abandoned altogether and Newstead saw a drastic reduction in both its military and civilian populations, as it adapted to its final role as outpost fort. The principia was probably demolished and its role taken over by a new structure, the so-called exercise hall. The newly built barracks in the western third of the fort were demolished, and the space left largely vacant. Population reduction in the South Annexe was even more drastic. The defences and probably most of the buildings went out of use as the sounding field system encroached on previously densely occupied areas. The site was probably finally abandoned not long after the deposition of the latest coin find, dated AD 180.

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The Iceman – a mountaineer of 5000 years ago

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The unexpected discovery of a human body of more than 5000 years ago in a glacier on the border between Italy and Austria in September 1991 sent a shock-wave through the world. Here was a man fully equipped, not only with his clothes, but with hunting gear, preserved in the ice as he was when he died. Never before had it been possible to get such an immediate impression of man's use of all kinds of perishable material and his already highly developed technical capabilities. These show not only in the choice of the different materials such as wood, bone, antler, hides and skins, tendons and feathers, but also in the way these materials were manufactured.

The find recovery was, from an archaeological viewpoint, a disaster. The body had been exposed to wind and weather and the curiosity of more than 20 people in the five days after it was found by a German couple that had wandered off the indicated path across the glacier. When finally the salvage operation took place, it was conducted without the presence of an archaeologist, in a rough and careless way, breaking off the bow, and throwing all his clothing in a heap. However, a reconstruction of the find circumstances has been possible despite this treatment. Once delivered to the Department of Forensic Medicine at the University of Innsbruck, Professor Konrad Spindler estimated the age of the remains at c 2000 BC, based on the presence of what he thought to be a bronze axe. Later, radiocarbon-dating and analysis of the axe showed that the body was 1000 years older than that. The axe, consisting of 98% pure copper, belonged to a short, late Neolithic copper horizon, well known from the eastern Alps. Calibrated radiocarbon dates from grass, bone and tissue were all centred 3200 BC.

The body was of a man, probably 35-40 years old, excellently preserved. Although mummified and severely shrivelled, all the organs were intact. He suffered from several ailments, including arthritis, ribs broken twice (the second time shortly before his death) and periodic attacks of a chronic disease at about 16, 12 and 8 weeks before his death.

His equipment was totally adequate for a man planning to make a tour in the high mountains. He had with him a ruck-sack or at least a wooden frame, a waist pouch and two birch bark containers. These contained the tools for making fire, manufacturing flint, bone or antler implements, and a medicinal and sewing kit. For hunting he possessed a quiver with arrows, a bow and tendons. Various flint implements consisted of a knife, scraper, flake and borer.

His clothing, although only consisting of animal skins and a grass cape, gave him maximum protection against cold and rough weather and enough freedom of movement for a mountaineering tour.

Where did this man belong? Although he suffered a lonely death, he belonged certainly to a community during his life. The use of goatskins for his clothing and the presence of some cereal grains and pollen from the wheat species Triticum monococcum point to a farming community. The culture to which this community belonged and the location of his homestead are outstanding questions. Anthropometric and DNA studies have so far not produced definitive answers; neither have the archaeological material, for example the origin of the flint used, or the typology of the various implements. Pollen analysis of the fur clothing points to a village situated in a heavily wooded landscape, between 800 and 1800 m height in the northern or central eastern Alps.

Enclosing, planting and building: the contribution of the Montgomery Act of 1770 on the agriculture and landscape of the Border counties

Kitty Cruft

The Montgomery Act of 1770 owed its progress through Parliament to Sir James Montgomery, son of William Montgomery of Macbie Hill, Lamancha, Peeblesshire. He studied law at the University of Edinburgh, became an Advocate and was one of the first Sheriffs appointed by the Crown in 1747 or '48, when the heritable sheriffdoms were finally abolished. He owed his early advancement to William Douglas, 3rd Earl of March and 4th Duke of Queensberry, known as Old Q, but it was through his friend Robert Dundas of Arniston, who had just become Lord President, that in 1766 he became Solicitor General, finally succeeding Lord Garden as Lord Advocate. At the same time he took over Garden's Parliamentary seat for Dumfries Burgh, which he exchanged at the General Election in 1768, for the constituency of Peebles, a seat he retained until he was raised to the bench. He was Chief Baron of the Exchequer from 1775 to 1801, and in 1801 at the age of eighty he was made a Baronet and resigned his various posts.

Sir James, like his father, was skilled in farming methods, and took every opportunity in advancing his patriotic intention of improving the agriculture of his native country. He purchased the Whim Estate from the Duke of Argyll in 1763, which enabled him to continue the reclamation of the boggy land and experiment with new types of drainage tiles. His next purchase in 1767 was the sequestrated estate of Sir David Murray, which included the lands of Stanhope, Stobo, Drummelzier and Tweedsmuir, consisting principally of hilly sheep walks. On this extensive area of land he carried out improvements, building enclosures and planting tree belts. He granted long leases which influenced the tenants to layout capital and reap the rewards from their considerable outlay, but which also maintained a steady supply of produce through his estate mill. Sir James was succeeded by his son, also James, an Advocate and MP, who, with the advantage of his father's 1770 Act of Entail, carried into practice further large-scale improvements, including the building of Stobo Castle, a new mansion house.

The existing statute was Sir George Mackenzie's Act of 1665, under which so many Deeds of Entail had been registered that the practical management of land on the entailed estates had been hampered, particularly by the limitation of inheritance of certain heirs, and the short length of leases allowed. The short leases prohibited tenants, successful in their farming practices, from expanding and experimenting, and who were therefore of less benefit to their landlords. The proprietors demanded reform and the Faculty of Advocates passed a number of resolutions to move forward the process of change. Under Lord North's administration Montgomery introduced a new provision in March 1770 which passed into law in May of that year. The Act considerably enlarged the powers of the heir of an entail in respect of leasing and improving entailed lands, and also provided an excambion of land, in spite of an entail, which made holdings more convenient and viable.

Under the 1770 Act proprietors were authorized to encourage the building of villages and houses upon entailed estates by granting long leases not exceeding 99 years. The development was confined by defining the arrangement that not more than 5 acres should be granted to any one person, and that the lease should be declared void if one dwelling house to the value of 10 pounds or over, had not been erected within 10 years. Half-an-acre of ground was allowed for each dwelling house which should be

kept in good repair. In this way a village of tradesmen could be established, but it had its appropriate place. Any building activities had to be 300 yards outwith the manor house, its park and appendages. The intention under the provisions of the Act was that the landowner would be a creditor to his succeeding heirs of entail for three-quarters of the money laid out in making improvements on his lands. In simple terms, if £20,000 was spent on improvements, £15,000 of that money would be used towards providing for the younger sons and daughters. Consequently the landowner and his tenant who wished to lay out money on enclosing, planting and draining, erecting farmhouses, offices and outbuildings for the improvement of their holdings could be assured of recovering reasonable payment. Some protection was provided to tenants and others by the condition that until the heir paid off a debt, no proprietor could go beyond improvements to the value of four years' rent.

The landholder intending to layout money on improvements had to lodge his notice of intent in the form of a letter with the Sheriff Clerk in the county in which the lands were located. Annually an account of the money laid out supported by vouchers, and the notice of intent, were recorded in a book, which was open for public inspection for the cost of sixpence. The usual fees for recording and giving out extracts were to be paid to lawyers for their trouble.

The heirs to the estate could be sued by those with rights to the money laid out, in any other property than the entailed estate which was inviolable. Moveable goods or unentailed property, such as estates in the East Indies, could be seized by the creditors, but the heir had some protection by the provision that if he paid one-third of the sum due each year until it was discharged, he could retain the other two-thirds. With the time limit set on claims from succeeding heirs, and all other legal work involved, the coffers of lawyers and the Sheriff Courts were greatly improved.

The Act provided for the building of, or additions to mansion houses, where there was no house suitable to the estate, either having been lost through fire, or ruined through lack of use, a situation noted by Dorothy Wordsworth during her visit to the Borders in 1803. The money permitted to be spent on mansion houses was to be no more than two years' rent of the estate, and the money spent on enclosing, planting and building no more than four years' rent.

The provisions of the 1770 Act of Entail were used by landowners for about 100 years, or as long as there were sufficient funds to carry on. The success of the provisions depended on enlightened landowners, specifically wishing to provide for their sons and daughters, but who, in the second half of the 18th century, were becoming more aware of good land management, with the professional tenant farmers able to improve the growth of their capital and security of their leases. The labourers became more skilled as they remained in the same employment, women labourers in the borders were often considered more dexterous at planting than men, though their wages remained half that of men and boys. Many landowners in the rich areas in the valleys and by the principal rivers in south Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, and Tweeddale, were quick to take advantage of the clauses in the Act. Throughout much of the 19th century both the Trustees of the Duke of Roxburgh and Lord Alfred Douglas on his Jedforest estates. found it profitable to expedite improvements and changed the aspect and economy of vast tracts of Roxburghshire and south Berwickshire.

It is through the recording by the Sheriff Clerks in the Improvement Registers of the notices to improve, in the form of letters, vouchers and receipts for work carried out, often with contracts and estimates, that we learn of the architects and craftsmen, masons, wrights and labourers employed and the seedsmen and nurserymen who supplied trees and plants, the cost of labour and materials. and the processes used, add to our understanding of the agricultural life of the Borders.

The Improvements Registers, however, are social documents reflecting the interest of the landlords materially interweaving with the security and success of their tenants, already quite advanced in the Border region before the act was implemented in 1770.

The Auld Stane Man

A V B Norman

Until relatively recently the study of medieval sepulchral monuments in lowland Scotland has been neglected. Early Scottish antiquaries seem largely to have ignored them, while Scottish heralds, unlike their English counterparts, did not make visitations recording heraldry and pedigrees. As a result it is not until the 19th century that the recording of our lowland sepulchral effigies began. The first survey of any sort appeared in the *Proceedings* of this Society for the years 1894–5. Since then there have been several articles about medieval effigial slabs and in 1976 Dr Greenhill published a complete list of all those then known. Although a little was written in the same period about effigies carved in the round it was not until 1981 that Mr Philip Lankester and Dr Margaret Scott published an interim list of the 131 lowland effigies surviving from before 1560, about fifty of them military. Since then four more have been added to the list. Finally, in 1987 Dr Margaret Scott published her thesis Dress in Scotland 1406-1460, which described almost all the relevant Scottish lowland efficies of lay people. It is a model of how these things should be done.

My talk is really an exploration of how a survey of the remaining military effigies might be organized, suggesting how they should be described, dated and where possible identified. This is followed by a brief survey of the more important groups of figures. Further fieldwork will be required before it becomes possible to separate the various carvers involved in making closely related effigies, for instance those in Borthwick Kirk and those in St Nicholas Kirk, Aberdeen.

A typology of the equestrian chase motif in early medieval Pictish sculpture

Ann Carrington

Summary of a paper presented at the Celtic Studies Conference and Celtic Colloquium, held at UCLA, Los Angeles, California, in April 1996, for which the author received a Young Fellow's Bursary from the Society.

The paper presented considered the mounted chase motif in early medieval Pictish sculpture. A typology for the motif was proposed and its iconographical significance briefly presented. It was argued that the chase motif can be grouped according to the number of horsemen, hounds, deer and additional elements such as musicians. It was suggested that the Pictish chase motif may be divided into groups based upon composition and symbolic content. The paper was divided into two sections: a description of the types of chase motif and a brief discussion of the multivalent iconography of the chase motif.

The equestrian chase motif consists of scenes in which mounted huntsmen pursue deer with their hounds. Although some of the hunt scenes have complex compositions, the basis of these scenes is simple. All the hunt motifs are made up of the common elements of a horseman, hound and deer and hound groups. The Pictish hunt scene is characteristically arranged with a procession of horsemen in the top register and the hounds pursuing deer in the lower register.

The chase motif may be divided into types or groups according to its composition. The first type is the elaborate hunt which includes additional elements such as footmen, musicians or falcon (ie St Andrews Sarcophagus, Fife; Aberlemno no 3; Hilton of Cadboll; Nigg, Ross & Cromarty; Elgin Cathedral, Morayshire). The second type is the developed hunt in which there are more than one horseman, and usually more than one deer and hound group (ie Scoonie, Fife; Largo, Fife; Mugdrum, Fife; Kirriemuir no 2, Angus). The third type is the simple hunt which consists of a single horseman and a single deer and hound group (ie Inchbrayock no 1, Angus; Monifieth no 3, Angus).

It was possible to determine that with the passage of time the quality of the chase motifs generally declines and their forms degenerate. Class II cross-slabs are generally seen as beginning in the mid-eighth century, perhaps as the result of the importation of Northumbrian masons by King Nechtan of the Picts (Henderson 1978). Examples with the most elaborate chase scenes such as the St Andrews Sarcophagus are usually dated to the early ninth century and developed hunts are generally attributed to the mid-ninth century. If we support this assumption, it would appear that Pictish hunt and equestrian motifs degenerate in quality of drawing and complexity with the elaborate and developed type hunts having the higher quality renditions. Details of decline begin to be noticed within the developed group and is most evident in the simple hunts. The most usual indicator of this decline is that the equestrian figure becomes altogether more clumsy. These signs of degeneration in quality of drawing mark late class II and class III examples of mounted huntsmen and equestrian figures. Similar features of decline may be noted in the drawing of the deer and the hounds,

Part of the purpose of the paper was to demonstrate that the chase motif has a multivalent iconography and can meaningfully be regarded as simultaneously Christian and secular in meaning. The information reviewed suggested that the symbolism of the Pictish chase motif is based on ideas of divine and wordly sovereignty and victory current in Western Europe during the early Medieval period. The chase appears to be associated with the status of the horsemen portrayed in the composition as well as the Christian symbolism of the pursuit of the soul by Christ. The mounted chase motif may be divided into two basic groups based on symbolic content: (i) hunts without direct association with Christian imagery; and (ii) hunts associated with the image of David Rending the Lion's Jaws. Chase scenes without direct association with a known Christian motif on the same side or face of the sculpture include the monuments such as Inchbrayock no 1, Monifieth no 3, Largo, Scoonie, Mugdrum and Kirriemuire no 2. These chase scenes are not accompanied by Christian images such as David Rending the Lion's Jaws as on the St Andrews Sarcophagus, Nigg or Aberlemno no 3. This has caused the secular meaning of these hunts to be emphasized over any Christian interpretation.

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