

## THE BADDEN CIST SLAB

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### I. DISCOVERY

ON 18th March 1960, a carved stone was ploughed up in a field (Nat. Grid Ref. NR 858890) on the farm of Badden by Mr H. Mitchell, brother-in-law of the owner, Mr D. R. Campbell. The field lies on a gravelly slope through the 50-foot contour, the stone having been found at about 30 feet above present datum; the slope marks the south-easterly end of a former fresh-water loch which extended to Cairnbaan before the construction of the Crinan Canal (fig. 1).

Mr M. Campbell, Ministry of Works Custodian of Ancient Monuments, was consulted and identified the stone as an important pre-Christian carving, and on 21st March I was invited to the farm and saw the stone lying where it had been found. The carvings were strikingly fresh and sharp, consisting of a series of diamonds and lattice-patterns, each of several concentric lines, cut at either end of the stone by grooves. The stone itself is of a greenish-grey schistose rock, probably Ardrishaig phyllite, readily obtainable locally,<sup>2</sup> and measures 5 ft. by 1 ft. 9 in. by 3 in. The carvings extend over almost the whole length and over half the width, and the remaining undecorated part has been dressed away to form a V-section, probably to facilitate setting the slab upright in the ground. The grooves, 2 in. wide by 1 in. deep, are 7 in. from either end (Pl. VIII).

The slab had been caught by the plough as it lay at a depth of 10 in. below the soil, and had been thrown out and scarred. This was the first occasion that the field had been tractor-ploughed, the former owner having worked with horses; he is known to have ploughed not more than 8 in. deep. This was confirmed as we worked at the findspot, ashes and recent household rubbish being traced to 8 in., below which lay clean soil for 4 in., and at one foot we reached pure sharp river gravel containing (unusually for this area) a few small flint pebbles. No sign of a cist was found, but sunk into the gravel was a setting of rounded boulders covering an area 17 ft. × 8 ft. and extending downward to 2 ft. below present ground level; among the boulders were patches of dark earth with small deposits of charcoal, and some dressed flints including one well-made triangular scraper. No shells of any sort were found on the site, which however suggested a dwelling-site rather than a grave.

A number of dressed flints (some water-rolled) and some struck cores were also recovered from the surface of the field between the site and the Badden Burn to the south-west.

Information was obtained by chance that a 'flat stone like a small hatch-cover'

<sup>1</sup> Part I, describing the discovery of the stone, is contributed by Miss Campbell, Part II, discussing the British setting, by Mr Scott, and Part III, discussing the continental affinities, by Professor Piggott. The first report of the discovery appeared in *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland*, 1960, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Examined by Dr S. M. K. Henderson, of Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum.

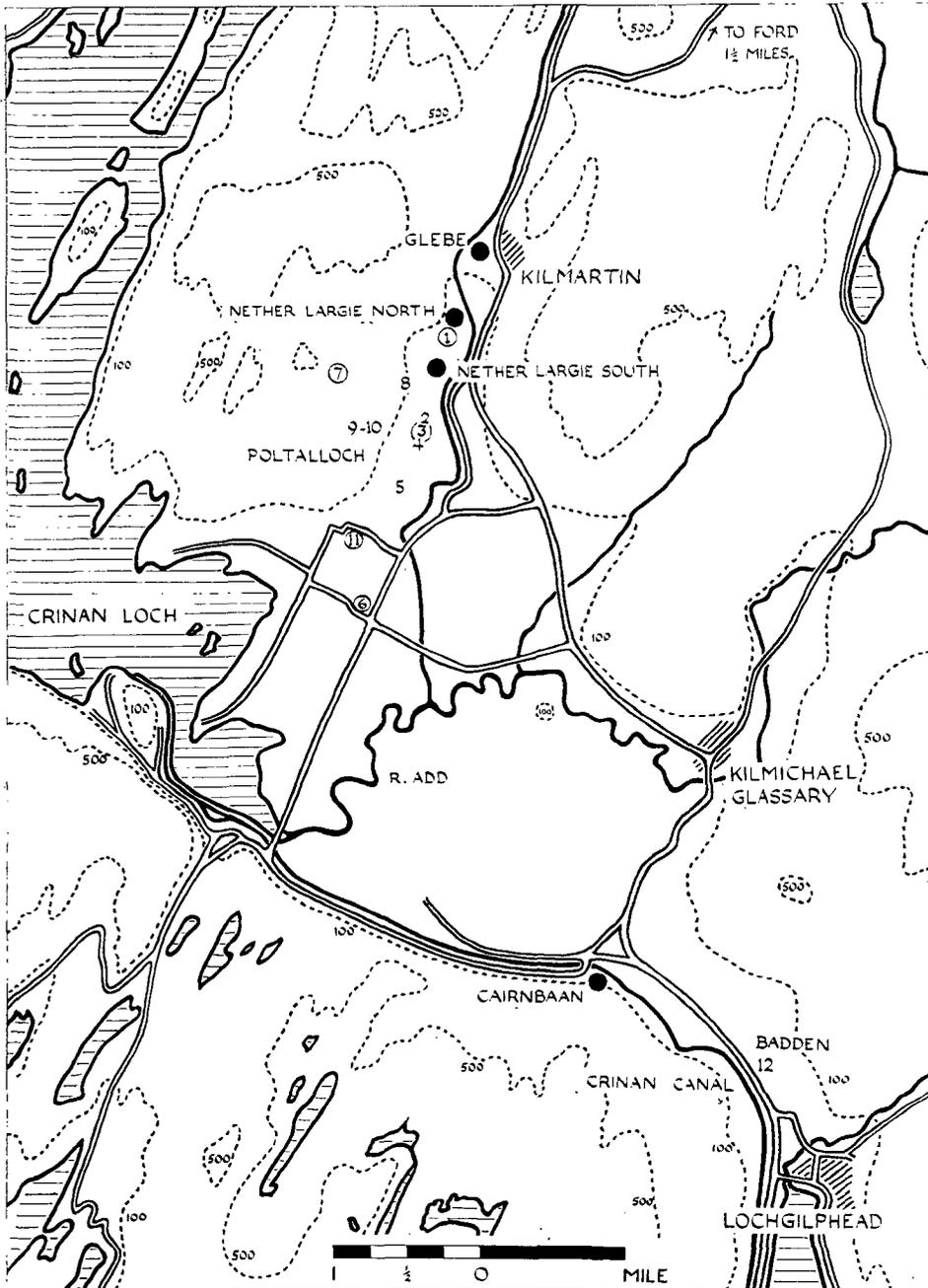


FIG. 1. Grooved and rebated cists (1-12) and linear cemetery in Mid Argyll. Cairn (open circle) with or (solid circle) without grooved and/or rebated cist. For details of cists see pp. 59-61.

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had been found higher up the field about thirty years before, but had been buried by the farmer who feared it might be a gravestone. There was no mention of this slab's having been carved.

Whether this was the same stone or not, it seems possible that the carved stone had been forced out of the subsoil by pressure from tractors (including a large crawler-tractor hauling pylon girders shortly before the ploughing) and by contact with the setting of boulders.

The only known stone with similar carvings in the area is the end-slab of a cist at Cairnbaan, 840907,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles NW. of Badden at the other end of the former loch (fig. 1). This slab is now in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (catalogue no. IA 7); it is described in *P.S.A.S.*, VI, Appx., 30 Pl. XIII, 4 (see below, fig. 2).

The Badden stone has been presented to the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum by Mr D. R. Campbell (reg. no. A6045).

## II. THE BRITISH SETTING

The importance of the Badden short cist slab lies in the association on one stone of applied carpentry techniques – grooving and rebating – with decorative carving. Whereas grooving and rebating have a restricted distribution within the British Isles and abroad, the connections of the lozenge design range much further. The cultural and chronological equations which can thus be established have a vital part to play in assessing the Early and Middle Bronze Age in Argyll and the west of Scotland.

Fourteen short cists having grooved or rebated slabs are now known in Britain, one in the Isles of Scilly,<sup>1</sup> the rest in Scotland. Of these one was discovered in 1960 on the island of Inchmarnock, off the W. coast of Bute.<sup>2</sup> The remaining twelve are all in Mid Argyll, Badden being near Lochgilphead and the other eleven all within a radius of a mile of Poltalloch, in the Parish of Kilmartin, near Crinan (fig. 1). Attention was first drawn to the Kilmartin series by J. H. Craw. Details are given in summary on pp. 59-61, from which it will be noted at once that decoration is exceptional on grooved or rebated slabs, being confined to cup-marks except at Badden where, in addition to the carved lozenge design, there may be a cup-mark on the back of the slab (Pl. VIII).

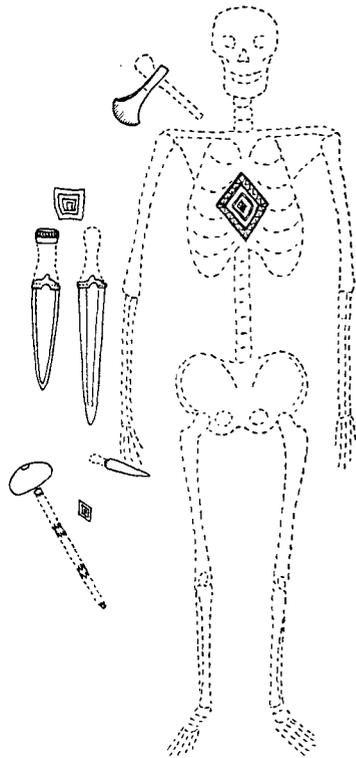
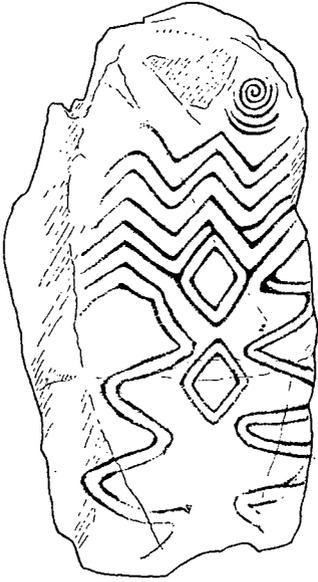
On the Badden slab the grooves and rebate are boldly carved, and impress as functional. It is possible to visualise the original cist as a stone box with the sides fitted together in the manner of a jointed wooden chest. The grooves slight the lozenge pattern, showing that the decoration was carved before the grooves; the slighting may be merely incidental to the construction of the cist, and should not be taken to imply that the slab had been adapted as the side of a burial cist from an older and different monument.

On Cist 11 at Kilmartin one groove slighted one of two cup-marks. There is little doubt that in this cist, as well as in Cists 1 to 8, the grooves or rebates were functional. But in Cists 9 and 10, at Poltalloch, the grooves, though present, were not used for the insertion of the end slabs. Craw suggested that in Cist 10 the

<sup>1</sup> *Antiquity*, xv (1941), 81-83.

<sup>2</sup> *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland*, 1960, 24.

BARCLODIAD Y GAWRES

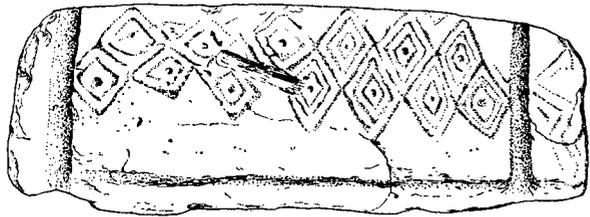


GOWARD

after O. Davies  
and E. Evans

BUSH BARROW

after P. Ashbee



CAIRNBAAN

BADDEN

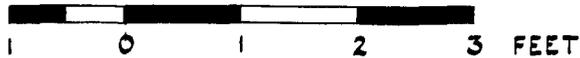


FIG. 2

grooves may have been used for a wooden lining. A possible alternative explanation is that by the time Cists 9 and 10 were constructed the grooves had become symbolic rather than functional. This explanation receives some support from the additional and unnecessary, perhaps symbolic, grooves found on some of the other cists; in Cists 1 and 11 two grooves are only 8 in. long. The possible chronological significance of this is discussed later.

Cists 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11 at Kilmartin were certainly or probably covered by cairns of stones, in three cases with stone kerbs, but it seems possible that in all cases the cists were eccentric. Cists 9 and 10, at Poltalloch, were evidently part of a flat cemetery of the Middle Bronze Age.

The translation into stone of the carpentry techniques of grooving and rebating in cist construction recalls the use of similar techniques at Stonehenge. It does not seem to have been generally recognised that four of the Kilmartin sites with grooved or rebated cists form part of a linear cemetery (fig. 1, table), of the type seen most impressively near Stonehenge.<sup>1</sup> The 'Founder's Barrow'<sup>2</sup> of the cemetery would certainly be Nether Largie south cairn, which has a burial chamber of Clyde-Carlingford type. To the N. are Nether Largie mid cairn, with its grooved cist, then Nether Largie north cairn, which has axe- and cup-marked cist slabs, and finally the Kilmartin Glebe cairn, with a central cist which contained an Irish Bowl of Abercromby's type A, with beads from a jet necklace, and an eccentric cist with a Tripartite Bowl Food Vessel.<sup>3</sup> To the S. of Nether Largie south cairn the cemetery is continued by the Ri Cruin cairn, with its grooved and rebated cists, axe and possibly halberd carvings, and by the Rowanfield Cottage and Crinan Moss cists, both grooved. Thus the cemetery, as at present known, has a total length of nearly three miles. The impression of linearity is not lessened by the siting of the three Ri Cruin cists, all eccentric, yet in line from N. to S.; indeed the cairn may even have been enlarged so as to accommodate the largest cist, with the carved slabs.

The Badden cist, of course, had no part in this complex, but it can hardly be without significance that the nearest parallel to its multiple lozenge design occurred on the end slab of a short stone cist at Cairnbaan, only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the NW. (figs. 1, 2).<sup>4</sup> This cist was reopened by Craw in 1929, and found not to be grooved.<sup>5</sup> No other decoration is known at Cairnbaan, unless some faintly incised markings observed late in 1960 on top of the cover slab, and reminiscent of 'fir tree men', are indeed artificial and contemporary with the cist (fig. 3, Pl. IX: 2).<sup>6</sup>

It is noteworthy that at Badden and Cairnbaan the lozenge design appears alone, and not simply as an integrated element in the Passage Grave repertoire. Other such

<sup>1</sup> Ashbee, P., *The Bronze Age Round Barrow in Britain* (1960), pp. 34-35. V. G. Childe was the first to draw attention to the alignment of four of the cairns: *The Prehistory of Scotland* (1935), p. 119, fig. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ashbee, loc. cit., p. 34, quoting Grinsell, L. V., *The Ancient Burial Mounds of England* (2nd ed., 1953), p. 256.

<sup>3</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, LXXXV (1950-1), 40-41.

<sup>4</sup> Now in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (reg. no. IA7), *P.S.A.S.*, III (1857-69), 488. I am indebted to the Keeper, Mr R. B. K. Stevenson, for a photograph of this stone.

<sup>5</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, LXIV (1929-30), 138, with references.

<sup>6</sup> *P.P.S.E.A.*, VII (1934), 297, fig. 8. A rather more convincing parallel is on an engraved stone (M 26) found by A. E. P. Collins and D. M. Waterman in a curious late Neolithic cairn at Millin Bay, Co. Down: cf. *Archaeological Research Publications (Northern Ireland)* No. 4 - Millin Bay (1955), 39, fig. 13. The Cairnbaan cover slab design had previously and independently been noticed by Mr D. D. A. Simpson.

instances may be noted. A stone incised on its flat face with seven lozenges is said to have been found lying on the cover stone of a cist at Kilchattan, Colonsay.<sup>1</sup> A loose stone slab with engraved multiple lozenge ornament was found on the surface of the Clyde-Carlingford cairn at Goward, in Co. Down (fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> The last example no doubt once accompanied a secondary burial; the others are all unequivocally associated with short cist burials, and it may be that the lozenge had a special meaning

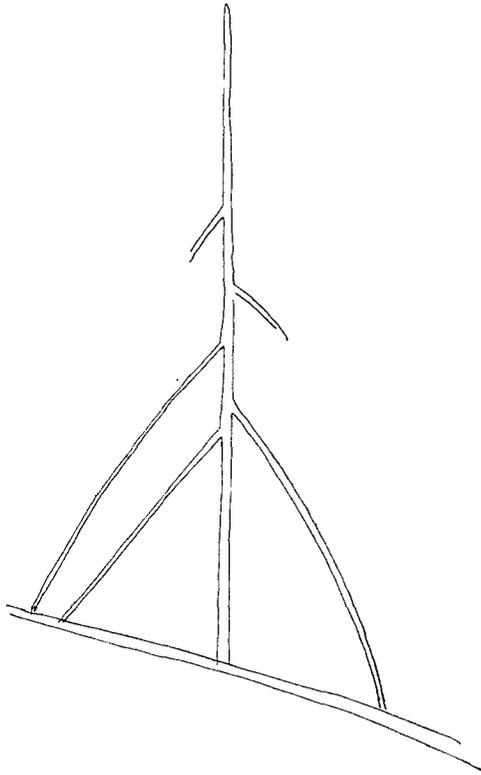


FIG. 3. Scale 1/2

to people with a tradition of single grave burial in Argyll in the Early and Middle Bronze Age. Perhaps it is no accident that the large cover slab, 8 ft. 4 in. by 6 ft. in size, of the grooved cist in the Nether Largie mid cairn was lozenge-shaped.<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly the most spectacular use of the lozenge as a decorative device occurs in the gold plates found in the Wessex culture graves at Bush Barrow, Normanton (fig. 2), in a linear cemetery, and at Clandon Barrow, Dorset.<sup>4</sup> The dominant position which this plate must have had is well brought out by P. Ashbee in his recent reconstruction drawing of the Bush Barrow burial (fig. 2)<sup>5</sup>; in this

<sup>1</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, xli (1906-7), 450. I am indebted to Mr R. B. K. Stevenson for this reference.

<sup>2</sup> *P. Belfast N.H.S.* (1932-3), 8-9 and Pl. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, lxiv (1929-30), 128-9.

<sup>4</sup> *P.P.S.*, N.S. iv (1938), 105 and Pl. X; Stone, J. F. S., *Wessex* (1958), p. 113 and Pl. 44.

<sup>5</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 77, fig. 24.

burial the plate was found on the chest of the skeleton of a 'tall and stout' man, suggesting its use as a dress ornament, as Piggott points out.<sup>1</sup> In view of the possible interpretation of the Badden design as a patterned textile hanging,<sup>2</sup> it might not be too fanciful to imagine the gold plate as once attached to a cloak woven in a matching lozenge design. In any event another link between Badden and the Wessex culture seems to be established.

Further connections between Wessex and Mid Argyll at this period may be shown. In his discussion on the grooved cist at Samson, in the Isles of Scilly, Piggott has pointed out the association in the Ri Cruin cists of grooving and rebating with carvings of flat axes and of a boat or halberd.<sup>3</sup> Included in the same linear cemetery is the Nether Largie north cairn, which contained a cist, not grooved, just N. of the centre of the cairn, with one end bearing flat axehead carvings, and the cover slab bearing both axehead carvings and cup-marks.<sup>4</sup> Piggott has compared the Ri Cruin carvings with the carvings of two daggers, two axes and five cup-marks on a kerbstone from the barrow at Badbury, in Dorset.<sup>5</sup> The carvings of axes and a dagger from Stonehenge may also be cited.<sup>6</sup>

The Kilmartin grooved and rebated cists have unfortunately produced few finds, but in Cist 9 at Poltalloch was a crescentic jet necklace, and in the adjoining Cist 10 was a Tripartite Bowl Food Vessel.<sup>7</sup> It will be recalled that under the Glebe Cairn, the northernmost of the linear cemetery, two cists were found, one with part of a jet necklace and the other with a Tripartite Bowl Food Vessel.<sup>8</sup> Finally in the rebated cist found on Inchmarnock, Bute, in 1960 there was a very fine crescentic jet necklace.<sup>9</sup> The link between necklaces, linear cemetery and grooved and rebated cists thus indirectly strengthens the Wessex connection, for Piggott would derive the crescentic jet necklace of Scotland from the amber space-plate necklace of Wessex.<sup>10</sup>

A further discovery in 1960 which may reflect Wessex influence in Mid Argyll is that of a polished stone cup,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  in. in diameter and  $1\frac{7}{8}$  in. high, which was found after the scarping of a bank during road construction, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile NNE. of Ford, Lochaweside (fig. 4, Pl. IX: 1).<sup>11</sup> The cup is made of a chloritic epidotic schist, obtainable locally, and has almost straight sides separated by a carination from a rounded base. Decoration consists of a zigzag scored line between two horizontal scored lines just below the lip, and of a similar design at the carination. The cup is carefully made, the outside highly polished, the inside slightly so. No signs of a burial nor of habitation could be seen at the site. Although all trace might have been removed by the construction of the road, it is unlikely that a cairn existed at the place where the cup was found.

No real parallel to this cup can be quoted from Scotland, and it is suggested that, in view of the evident Wessex influence in Mid Argyll, it may be regarded as a northern version of the Wessex shale or amber cup, in much the same way as the jet

<sup>1</sup> *P.P.S.*, N.S. IV (1938), 79.

<sup>2</sup> *infra*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiquity*, xv (1941), 81.

<sup>4</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, LXV (1930-1), 269-74.

<sup>5</sup> *Ant. J.*, XIX (1939), 291-9.

<sup>6</sup> *P.P.S.*, XVIII (1952), 236-7.

<sup>7</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, LXIII (1928-9), 154 ff; LXXXV (1950-1), 40-41.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, LXXXV (1950-1), 40-41.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 48, note 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Inventaria Archaeologica*, GB 25 (1958); jet necklace and bronze armlet from Melfort, Argyll.

<sup>11</sup> *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland*, 1960, 7; Nat. Grid ref. NM 866039; now in Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum (reg. no. A609).

necklace is a version of the amber necklace. The Ford cup, of course, lacks the handle which features in the Wessex cup, but it compares approximately in shape and size with the amber cup from the Hove barrow, Sussex,<sup>1</sup> whilst a double zigzag scored line decorates the inside of the lip of the shale cup from Farway Down, Honiton, Devon.<sup>2</sup>

The Wessex Mid Argyll connection seems to find a counterpart in Brittany, in the Armorican Barrow Culture.<sup>3</sup> The round barrows of this culture have been divided into two series by J. Cogné and P.-R. Giot.<sup>4</sup> In some barrows of the earlier series the burial chamber seems to have been of wood, whilst grave-goods might be enclosed in small wooden boxes. In one at Saint-Fiacre, Melrand, was found an amber space-plate, whilst in another, at Kerguévarec, Plouyé, was a jet space-plate

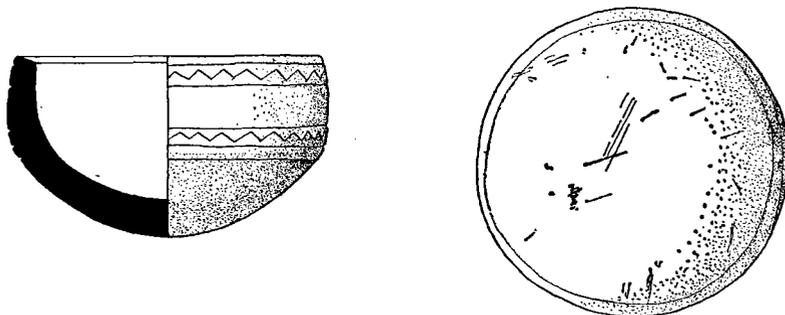


FIG. 4. Cup from near Ford, Kilmartin. (1/2)

from a crescentic necklace.<sup>5</sup> Among the barrows of the second series there are at least five sites with slab-built grooved cists.<sup>6</sup> In this series, too, engravings, including cup-marks, are occasionally found on the cist slabs.<sup>7</sup> The connection between Brittany and Wessex at this period was, of course, originally pointed out by Piggott,<sup>8</sup> and it was he, too, who saw the contemporary link between Wessex and Mid Argyll.<sup>9</sup> However, that the Breton sites are not in themselves sufficient to explain the lozenge design on the Badden slab will appear from what he says below.

Mention must be made of the lozenge designs on the carved stones found by T. G. E. Powell and G. E. Daniel in the Passage Grave at Barclodiad y Gawres, in Anglesey.<sup>10</sup> In the most convincingly anthropomorphic of these carvings, on Stone 22, there are two double lozenges, one of which occupies a place approximately on the 'chest' of the figure (fig. 2). Each of the other two stones considered by the excavators to be anthropomorphic included lozenges in its design, Stone 5 having a single and two double lozenges, Stone 6 having a triple lozenge. The multiple lozenges on

<sup>1</sup> Stone, J. F. S., *Wessex* (1958), Pl. 51.

<sup>2</sup> *P.P.S.*, N.S. iv (1938), Pl. XI.

<sup>3</sup> Giot, P.-R., *Brittany* (1960), pp. 128-45.

<sup>4</sup> Briard, J., and L'Helgouach, J., *Chalcolithique, Néolithique Secondaire, Survivances Néolithiques à l'Age du Bronze Ancien en Armorique* - Travaux du Laboratoire d'Anthropologie de la Faculté des Sciences de Rennes (1957), 47. I am indebted to Mr T. G. E. Powell for drawing my attention to this work.

<sup>5</sup> Giot, P.-R., *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>6</sup> Briard, J., and L'Helgouach, J., *op. cit.*, 49 and Pl. 28. I am indebted to Dr P.-R. Giot for kindly giving me detailed references to these sites.

<sup>7</sup> Giot, P.-R., *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>8</sup> *P.P.S.*, N.S. iv (1938), 52 ff.; v (1939), 193-5.

<sup>9</sup> *Antiquity*, xv (1941), 83.

<sup>10</sup> *Barclodiad y Gawres* (1956).

all three carvings occupy prominent positions in the centres of their designs, and it is clear that they were considered important. It may not be too much to suggest that they represent gold plates of the type which accompanied the Bush Barrow and Clandon Barrow burials.<sup>1</sup>

The lozenge occurs in Passage Grave art in Ireland, as is well known,<sup>2</sup> but there takes its place merely as one of the many symbols employed. Powell and Daniel compare with their Stone 22 the design on the roofing slab of the E. side chamber at New Grange, which incorporates two double lozenges, and suggest that the New Grange design may represent a degenerate profusion of the motifs on Stone 22.<sup>3</sup> If this is so, and if the Wessex connection of the Barclodiad lozenges be admitted, then it would appear that the Passage Grave art at New Grange, if not New Grange itself, could hardly be earlier than the Wessex culture. There is, of course, nothing unusual in this dating, which has been put forward by Powell and Daniel among others.<sup>4</sup>

In summary, it may be said that the discovery of the Badden stone, and to a lesser extent of the Ford cup, reinforces the evidence for Wessex influence in Mid Argyll already implicit in the results of Craw's work of thirty years ago, but perhaps somewhat overlooked since because his excavations were published *seriatim* and without a distribution map. The Kilmartin linear cemetery indeed suggests not only influence but actual settlement, with the introduction and maintenance for perhaps some generations of an alien tradition of burial. The Badden and Cairnbaan stones show that a similar pattern of settlement probably prevailed in the Lochgilphead area.

It is hardly to be supposed, however, that this phase, with its exotic burial tradition – the linear cemetery and the grooved and decorated cist – would persist for more than a few generations. Indeed, the non-functional grooves in the Poltalloch cists suggest a quick degeneration from the fully functional Badden type of grooved cist. Since the period of contact between Wessex and Mid Argyll is therefore likely to have been brief, it is especially valuable to have three manifestations of the Early to Middle Bronze Age in Mid Argyll so firmly placed in that period, namely the crescentic jet necklace, the Tripartite Bowl Food Vessel and the carved cup-mark.<sup>5</sup> If, as on the whole seems likely, the Mid Argyll cist engravings are representational rather than magical or strictly religious in origin, then the cup-mark, too, may represent an actual object, possibly a cake of copper or tin. Such an explanation would accord with the obvious attraction of the deposits of copper in Mid Argyll in the early part of the Bronze Age, and with the high status of the first men to exploit them.

### III. THE CONTINENTAL AFFINITIES OF THE CRINAN DECORATED CISTS

The newly discovered decorated slab from Badden raises afresh the question of the affinities of the massive cists in the Crinan region which at Ri Cruin and Nether

<sup>1</sup> The parallel was drawn by Corcoran, J. X. W. P., *Arch. News Letter*, vi, No. 8 (1958), 184.

<sup>2</sup> Piggott, S., *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (1954), pp. 208-18.

<sup>3</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> It will not have escaped notice that not one of the cup-marks mentioned in this account is associated with rings to form cup-and-ring-marks. It may be that the latter, more elaborate forms are a development from the simple cup-mark in the full Middle Bronze Age.

Largie North have ornament including representations of metal axes, and at Cairnbaan and the destroyed cist implied by the Badden stone, lozenge patterns.<sup>1</sup>

Previous comment on these cists has assumed that the decoration was in some sense a part of the general province of rock-cut, or rock-pecked art represented on the passage graves and allied structures of the Boyne Culture, and by the carvings generally of 'cup-and-ring' type usually found on living rock surfaces both in Ireland and in northern Britain.<sup>2</sup> MacWhite some years ago made a distinction between the Passage Grave style and what he called the Galician series, the cup-and-ring carvings coming almost wholly within the latter group, though some showed a mixture of motifs derived from the Passage Grave style.<sup>3</sup> Childe looked to south-western origins for the art of the Crinan cists, and Lindsay Scott even more emphatically referred the cists and their decoration to a broadly Iberian source. But one may note straight away that the motifs on the Crinan cists, although they include cup-marks, do not show ringed cups in the manner of such local sites as Achhabreck, Kilmichael Glassary or Baluachraig, nor do they show any of the distinctive curvilinear forms characteristic of the art of the Boyne passage graves.

Recent work in East Germany, following the discovery near Halle of a remarkable decorated cist-grave, has led to a discussion of the affinities of this and other similar monuments in the same region, and the points at issue have been admirably summarised and reviewed by Mr T. G. E. Powell.<sup>4</sup> Four cists in the Saale valley have ornament, to a greater or less degree, on their internal walls, and of these the most significant and highly decorated are those at Göhlitzsch and on the Dölauer Heide, the side stones of which are covered with pecked, incised or painted geometrical designs (mainly zigzags, chevrons, lozenges and similar motifs), and also more or less naturalistic representations of tools and weapons, such as hafted metal axes, a bow, and a quiverful of arrows. To these cists may be added a stone from a grave of *steinpackungsgrab* type at Hornburg near Querfurt, 30 kilometres to the west, with roughly incised decoration including the representations of a number of hafted metal daggers.

Although this and allied art on other graves and on standing stones in the same general region has been claimed as an easterly outpost of the general West European province of 'megalithic' art of which the Boyne style is a component, Powell has shown that this view will not bear scrutiny. He points out that, as has more than once been suggested in the instance of the Göhlitzsch tomb, we seem to be dealing with the representation on the cist walls of the patterned textile hangings and everyday equipment which would adorn the walls of the man's house in life: the stone cist representing the timber building in durable and relatively monumental form. The concept continued into the Late Bronze Age in the same general region of Northern Europe, where painted wall-plaster on the inside of the tomb-chamber at such sites

<sup>1</sup> *Ri Cruin*, metal axes and object described as a 'boat' or alternatively a halberd (Atkinson in *Excursion Guide Prehist. Soc. Scottish Meeting 1954*, 13): *P.S.A.S.*, viii (1870), 378; *ibid.*, lxxiv (1929-30), 131. *Nether Largie North*, metal axes, one allegedly but very dubiously hafted: *P.S.A.S.*, lxxv (1930-1), 269. *Cairnbaan*, lozenge pattern with multiple outline: *P.S.A.S.*, vi (1864-5), Appendix (1867), 29, Pl. XIII, 4.

<sup>2</sup> So for instance Childe, *Prehist. Scotland* (1935), 115; Lindsay Scott, *P.P.S.*, xvii (1951), 49.

<sup>3</sup> *J.R.S.A.I.*, lxxvi (1946), 59.

<sup>4</sup> *Antiquity*, xxxiv (1960), 180, with refs.

as Baalberge and Gross-Wirschleben, Kr. Bernburg, and the 'King's Grave' at Seddin, is comparable with similarly decorated plaster from contemporary settlement sites, as at Rottelsdorf and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> It is an expression of a familiar sentiment, dramatically represented in, for instance, Egyptian or Etruscan tombs, or in the Roman sarcophagus of the third century A.D. from Simpelveld in the Netherlands, that 'astonishing projection of hopes and expectations in the after-life in which curiously little is left to the imagination', where the appurtenances of a well furnished room are carved in low relief on its inner walls.<sup>2</sup>

Powell indicates the importance of this tomb-house concept in prehistoric Europe, and looks to the Ukraine and the Caucasus for ultimate origins, districts archaeologically consonant with the likely affinities of the Saale cists in cultures such as that of Bernburg, or more especially of the Single Grave/Corded Ware cultures. To the examples he quotes, one might add Häusler's study of the extraordinary decorated stones from the Kamennaya Mogila near Melitopol,<sup>3</sup> though these are of uncertain date: one may note, however, that the treatment of one of these is not unlike that of the Hornburg stone, and that representations of human feet, singly or in pairs, also appear.

The Saale cists are for individual burial, even though the Dölauer Heide measures 4 by 1 metres internally. Göhlitzsch measured 2.19 by 1.25 metres, and many analogous but undecorated cists in the same region are of this size or smaller: they are large, but not disproportionately large for a single inhumation. We need not think that the translation from house to tomb always involved the use of stone, in view of the records of wooden cists or massive sarcophagi in the Saale Corded Ware culture, and these may well have been decorated internally in carving or paint or both.<sup>4</sup>

In the light of this Central European evidence, it is apposite to reconsider the Crinan cists, and to ask whether perhaps they may be better connected with the Saale region than with the Atlantic shores of continental Europe. The use of cist burial in general among the British Beaker, Food Vessel or allied cultures need be no more than the intermittent use of a form of lining to a burial pit so frequent as to have hardly any cultural significance, but its similarly intermittent use among Corded Ware and Beaker groups in northern Europe is probably significant. Massive cists (such as those under discussion at Crinan), often with an extended rather than a crouched inhumation, are a distinctive and recurrent feature in the British series of cultures mentioned above, and the extended burial has its best antecedents in the Funnel Beaker cultures of the north European plain. The use of a cairn or barrow to cover the cist is characteristic of the Saale Corded Ware graves, and becomes a firmly established tradition there persisting into the Early Bronze Age Leubingen Culture, where the barrow covers a wooden mortuary house as at Leubingen itself,

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Müller, *Ausgrab. und Funde IV* (1959), 15.

<sup>2</sup> Richmond, I. A., *Arch. and the After-life in Pagan and Christian Imagery* (1950), 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Wiss. Zeitschr. Martin Luther Univ. Halle-Wittenberg*, VII (1958), 497. Cf. also M. Ya. Rudinsky, *Kam'yana Mogila* (Kiev, 1961).

<sup>4</sup> Fischer, U., *Gräber der Steinzeit im Saalegebiet* (1956), 117; note also the timber-built grave chamber of the Walternienburg Culture at Dittfurt, Fischer, op. cit., 92, Pl. 25, 5.

and Helmsdorf, which may itself well be the descendant of the stone cist of Döläuer Heide type.<sup>1</sup> The wooden prototypes implicit in the tongue-and-groove jointing on several of the Crinan cists (and well exemplified by the grooves on the Badden slab) have been commented on by Mr Scott earlier in this paper: one has also been recorded from Bute and there is another on St Martin's in the Isles of Scilly,<sup>2</sup> and they also occur in Brittany.

As we have seen, the motifs carved on the Crinan cist-walls are not as a whole those characteristic of the western styles of the Boyne or Galician group, though Mr Scott has indicated analogues for the lozenges in Boyne Culture art. In their rectilinear patterns, they are at least just as comparable, if not more so, with the patterns of the Saale group of tombs, and the representations of axes, even if without hafts at Crinan, again have their counterparts in Central Europe. There is a tendency, at both Göhlitzsch and the Döläuer Heide, to fill only the upper part of the stone with ornament, in a manner comparable with the Badden slab, and the working of the bevel on the lower part of this stone is exactly comparable with the similar treatment of one end of the larger slab forming the north side of the Göhlitzsch cist.<sup>3</sup> There seems a case for perceiving in Britain a 'cist art', of presumed Central European affinities, and distinct from the occasional appearance of patterns of Boyne or Galician affinities on cist-covers.

If this is admitted, the decoration of the side slab of the Pool Farm cist in the Mendips, with its representations of human feet, may also have a significance in a Crinan context.<sup>4</sup> Such representations, and those of hands which either accompany them or occur separately, seem to be distinctively North European in concentration and probably origin: Kamennaya Mogila may hint that prototypes or counterparts may exist further east.<sup>5</sup> The recent discovery of a pair of hand representations on a rock in Crinan could then be taken in conjunction with the features of the cists already discussed to indicate an origin in Central and Northern Europe for cultural elements present in Argyll at a period of prehistory marked by the first use of metals in the British Isles. The Saale cists date from late in the local Neolithic cultures, and radio-carbon readings suggest that we must give this an absolute date in the late third millennium B.C.<sup>6</sup>; Beaker cultures of broadly Low Countries origins were established in Britain by at least 2000 B.C. It would be at the beginning of the second millennium B.C., therefore, that we would have to date these presumptive contacts between Argyll and North-Central Europe, at a time when the first copper and gold was being worked in the British Isles, even if the critical tin alloy of bronze had not yet been achieved. The persistence in North Europe of the tradition of the internally decorated 'house cist' into the Late Bronze Age implies however that second millennium examples may well have existed on the Continent.

<sup>1</sup> Fischer, op. cit., 186; Otto, K. H., *Ethnog.-Arch. Forschungen*, III, i (1955). <sup>2</sup> *Antiquity*, xv (1941), 81.

<sup>3</sup> Illustrated for instance in Behrens *et al.*, *Arch. Kostbarkeiten Landesmus. Halle/Saale* (1958), 20; *Jahresschr. Mitteldeutsche Vorgesch.*, XL (1956), 50, Pl. II.

<sup>4</sup> *P.P.S.*, XXIII (1957), 231. The presence of representations of feet on the Calderstones (loc. cit., 20) may indicate a mixture of sources in the art there; cf. the lozenge pattern on Stone A.

<sup>5</sup> Foot representations in North Europe cited in *P.P.S.*, loc. cit.; note too hands on the Bunsöh stone (*Altschlesien*, v (1934), Pl. LXXVI) and Danish examples in Brønsted, *Danmarks Oldtid*, II, (1939), fig. 133-5.

<sup>6</sup> *Jahresschr. Mitteldeutsche Vorgesch.*, XLVI (1962), 41.

It is in this context that contacts of the kind we have assumed become inherently probable. The early presence of Hiberno-British copper, gold and probably bronze types in Northern and Central Europe has long been recognised by both British and Continental archaeologists, and although the trade which these objects imply cannot on available evidence be taken back to the beginning of the second millennium, it was certainly a going concern by the middle. The study of the decorated flat or hammer-flanged axes of Hiberno-British types made by Megaw and Hardy,<sup>1</sup> and supplemented for Scandinavia and the Maas-Rhine region by Butler,<sup>2</sup> has shown the broad lines of distribution, with the finds in the Saale valley having a special significance to us in the present enquiry, and the same goes for the halberds studied by O'Riordáin whatever the ultimate origin of the type.<sup>3</sup> It is indeed in this Saxo-Thuringian region that some at least of the formative elements in the Wessex Bronze Age culture derive, and the presence of halberds and an axe decorated in the Irish manner from the Dieskau hoard near Halle is matched by the miniature torc-pendant from a Wessex Culture barrow at Normanton in Wiltshire, which has its best counterpart in another object from Radewell in the same region of Germany, and is wholly exotic in Britain.<sup>4</sup>

It is suggested therefore that the cist-graves under cairns in the Crinan region, with their distinctive features of grooved side-slabs and internal decoration on their walls, have affinities with the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age cists of Corded Ware and contemporary cultures in the Saale valley, rather than with anything within the West European cultures and their characteristic art styles. A connection between the two regions is rendered inherently probable when the distribution of early Hiberno-British copper and bronze objects on the European continent is considered, and also the rôle of the Saale region in the genesis of the Wessex Culture. The presence of copper ore in the Crinan-Loch Fyne area is well known, and the Crinan-Lochgilphead valley offers a classic trans-peninsular route whereby sea traffic could avoid the heavy seas and tide-races round the Mull of Kintyre. By the time tin was a second necessity in the metallurgy of tools and weapons, the Cornish sources must have played an increasingly important part: could the grooved cist on St Martin's possibly be connected with such trade?

<sup>1</sup> *P.P.S.*, iv (1938), 272; map, p. 280, fig. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Kuml.*, 1955, 36; *B.R.O.B. Nederland*, ix (1959), 191.

<sup>3</sup> O'Riordáin's original thesis (*Arch.*, LXXXVI (1937), 195) was based on the view that the Central European halberds were derived from those of Ireland, but the situation may in fact be reversed. J. D. Evans suggests a Saxo-Thuringian origin for the halberd series (*Inst. Arch. Univ. Lond. Ann. Reports and Bulletin*, XIII (1955-6), 66n) and H. Case, partly on the grounds of metal analyses, has suggested an origin for the Saale halberds in North Italy, followed by the transmission from the Saale to the British Isles (*P.P.S.*, xxiii (1957), 103). For further aspects of the problem cf. von Brunn, *Bronzezeitliche Hortfunde*, I (1959), 25 ff; Junghans, Sangmeister and Schröder, *Metallanalysen kupferzeitlicher und frühbronzezeitlicher Bodenfunde aus Europa* (1960), *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> The Dieskau axe is Megaw and Hardy no. 250: its analysis shows it to be bronze, with a high (14 per cent) tin content, Junghans *et al.*, 136, no. 0.397, of Group EOI. It corresponds closely in typology and composition with a decorated axe from Bushmills, Co. Antrim (*P.P.S.*, xxiii (1957), 103), itself of Group F1, probably of Tyrol origin: Junghans *et al.*, 138, no. Ca. 37. The Radewell ingot-torc pendant is illustrated in *Reall.*, II, Pl. 192, g, and its Wiltshire counterpart in *P.P.S.*, iv (1938), 80, Pl. IX, no. 8; Ashbee, *Bronze Age Round Barrow in Britain* (1960), Pls. XXVIII a and b.

## KILMARTIN: GROOVED AND REBATED CISTS IN THE LINEAR CEMETERY

<i>Number</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference</i>
1	Nether Largie mid cairn	Almost circular cairn, 109 by 101 ft., with partial kerb, containing two eccentric cists, one grooved and covered by a lozenge-shaped slab, 8 ft. 4 in. by 6 ft. in size, the other not grooved but with an end slab bearing a single cup-mark on its inner face; loose in cairn material a flat slab bearing five cup-marks  <i>NOTE</i> : side slabs grooved for end slabs; at one end of one slab two additional grooves outside cist, the outer cut for only 8 in. at top of stone	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIV (1929-30), 127-30
2, 3, 4	Ri Cruin	Cairn, 65 ft. in diameter, with some kerb-stones visible and three eccentric cists, one grooved, two grooved and rebated; one of the latter has one end slab carved with representations of flat axheads and a slab at the other end with a design variously interpreted as a boat (if horizontal) or as a halberd with streamers (if vertical, as found)  <i>NOTE</i> : in each cist grooves or groove and rebate in side slabs at one end; no grooves at opposite end; end slab inserted in grooves and rebates in two cists; end slabs missing in other cist	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , VIII (1868-70), 378-81; LXIV (1929-30), 131-4; both corrected by Atkinson, R. J. C., <i>Excursion Guide Prehist. Soc. Scottish Meeting (1954)</i> , pp. 12-13
5	Rowanfield Cottage	Grooved cist, without trace of cairn  <i>NOTE</i> : one side slab grooved at one end, with end slab placed in it	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIV (1929-30), 143
6	Crinan Moss	Probable site of cairn with partial kerb and ruined grooved cist  <i>NOTE</i> : side slabs grooved at each end; on one an additional groove 8 in. to the inside of the adjacent groove	<i>ibid.</i> , 137

## KILMARTIN: OTHER GROOVED AND REBATED CISTS

<i>Number</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference</i>
7	The Lady's Seat, Slockavullin	Cairn, 55 ft. in diameter, in which were found remains of two cists and some burnt bones, with a skeleton between the cists; one cist grooved, the other not examined  <i>NOTE:</i> side slabs of grooved cist grooved at one end, chamfered at the other	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIV (1929-30) 143
8	North Lodge, Poltalloch	Grooved and probably rebated cist, without trace of cairn  <i>NOTE:</i> probable rebate at one end of one side slab; opposite side slab grooved at same end of cist	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIII (1928-9), 189; Miss M. Campbell of Kilberry <i>in litt.</i>
9	Poltalloch	Cist A, grooved, in a probable flat cemetery, containing partially incinerated human bones and teeth, with a crescentic jet necklace, a flint knife, charcoal and small lumps of ochre  <i>NOTE:</i> single shallow groove on one side slab 2 in. in from place where end slab met side	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIII (1928-9), 158-60
10	Poltalloch	Cist B, grooved, probably in same flat cemetery as no. 9, containing inhumation, Tripartite Bowl Food Vessel, bronze fragment, piece of flint, charcoal and fragments of ochre  <i>NOTE:</i> side slabs grooved at each end, one, in a concave slab, cut for 3 in. only at top and bottom; end slabs not placed in grooves but outside	<i>ibid.</i> , 160-2
11	Barsloisnach	Probable site of cairn, with two cists, one grooved  <i>NOTE:</i> one side slab has three grooves, two at one end being only 7 in. apart, the outer only 8 in. long; the opposite slab has a groove at one end, slighting one of two cup-marks	<i>P.S.A.S.</i> , LXIV (1929-30), 136-7

## BADDEN, LOCHGILPHEAD: GROOVED AND REBATED CIST

<i>Number</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference</i>
12	Badden Farm	Single slab from grooved and rebated cist found by itself; no trace of cairn; slab decorated with pecked multiple lozenge design  <i>NOTE:</i> slab grooved at sides and rebated at bottom; grooves slight lozenge pattern	Present paper



The Badden Slab



1. The Ford cup (1/1)



2. Design on cist cover, Cairnbaan