

## THE PICTISH ANIMALS OBSERVED

by C. A. GORDON, F.S.A.SCOT.

THE animals to be examined are those depicted in the few freestanding animal portraits, contained in Class I of Romilly Allen's *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* with another, executed at a much earlier date, the deer engraved on a rock in Glen Domhain, Argyll.<sup>1</sup> The Pictish design commonly called 'The Elephant' will also be considered.

### ROEDEER

The Glen Domhain roedeer is immediately recognisable for what it is from the outline of the body and antlers (Pl. XXVIII, 1). The foreface, however, is drawn nearly twice as long as it is in nature. This is a characteristic already seen in much more ancient representations of deer and is to be met with later among the Pictish designs.

All the published drawings show the Glen Domhain animal with a tail, a member which roebucks do not possess, but which had been clumsily retouched when the stone was seen in 1954. In any case it occurs at a point in the anatomy where no animal ever had a tail. The published drawing also shows a tine sticking out from the forehead, which is perhaps an original fissure in the stone, or, like the alleged tail, a deliberate 'improvement' in later times.

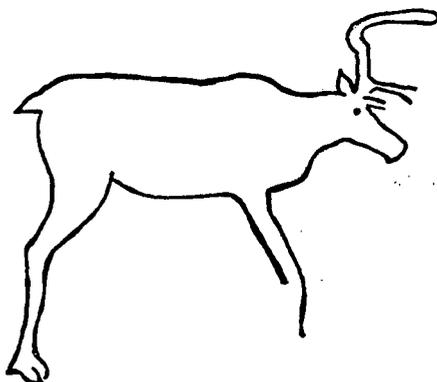


FIG. 1. Rock carving of reindeer from Nord-Trøndelag, Norway

This blurring of the roedeer's identity has been taken a stage further by a local legend to the effect that the figure commemorates the 'last reindeer killed in Scotland'. Apart from the late and romantic aspect of the story, this is no reindeer. Fig. 1 shows a Norwegian rock carving of a reindeer,<sup>2</sup> of much earlier date, it is true, but carrying conviction as to the identity of the animal represented. Here are the

<sup>1</sup> *Antiquity*, xv (1941), 290.

<sup>2</sup> Hagen, A., *Rock Carvings in Norway* (1965), 15.

reindeer's shoulder hump, spreading horns and pointed tail as well as the characteristic carriage of its head.

### RED DEER

The Ardross red-deer head (Pl. XXVIII, 2) may well be among the earliest of our Pictish stones.<sup>1</sup> The identity of this animal as a red deer<sup>2</sup> is made probable by the lower lip and jaw which are those of a ruminant, rather than a horse, but certainty is arrived at from the clearly indicated infraorbital gland. Dr Fraser Darling, who has kindly examined the photograph, writes that an incised mark below the eye is a better indication of identity than either of those just mentioned.

Very luckily there is a red deer set up in the Royal Scottish Museum which has a striking resemblance to the Ardross deer, even including the extreme, and what may seem the unnatural length of the foreface. This is the feature which has led to the description of the Ardross animal as a horse, but here is an actual deer with the foreface very nearly as long. This is a character very much admired by the Picts and many peoples before them and one which we have already found in the Glen Domhain deer. The lower part of the Ardross carving ends in straight lines which may probably have been completed as a square base, comparable to that which is visible on the stone at Rhynie, described later, and to certain other Pictish designs.

### DOG

It is characteristic of the unconsciously romantic temper in which these designs have been studied that the animal depicted on the other carved stone from Ardross has always been referred to as a wolf.<sup>3</sup> Wolves, however, have prick ears which they never depress except to lay them back in anger. This is a dog and has lop ears, not very large ones, but clearly to be distinguished, lying on the head above the conventional shadow curve, which crosses the neck (Pl. XXVIII, 3). It also has round eyes, while wolves have sideways-glancing slit eyes. In short, after due consideration and a comparison of the Ardross animal with members of the modern canine population of this country, I would affirm it to be a dog of the variety *Canis familiaris intermedius*, a division of the dog family which includes the hound. It is, in fact, a deer-hound.

We have several representations of wolves' heads in the Pictish bestiary: the head of the composite animal at Manbean<sup>4</sup> may stand as the type (Pl. XXIX, 1). They all stem from the numberless wolves and wolf-heads found in both Celtic and Scythian art such as the beak flagon from Lorraine,<sup>5</sup> or the little animal in appliqué from a burial site near Kiev.<sup>6</sup>

### BOAR

The wild boar is celebrated for its ferocity and has often in early times appeared on carved stones and in other media with the intention that this quality should be

<sup>1</sup> Romilly Allen, *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 54.

<sup>2</sup> This was first suggested to me by Miss M. O. MacDougal, formerly curator of the Museum at Inverness.

<sup>3</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 134.

<sup>5</sup> Jacobsthal, P., *Early Celtic Art*, II, No. 381.

<sup>6</sup> Minns, E., *Scythians and Greeks*, fig. 77, No. 407.

emphasised and communicated. A striking example is seen on the figure at Euffigneix,<sup>1</sup> perhaps of the first century B.C., where the aggressive attitude is unmistakable, though the tusk is missing, having perhaps presented difficulties of representation in low relief – in any case there is a break in the surface of the stone where it should come. Another wild boar, equally aggressive and with no mistake about the tusk, is from a coin of the Second Legion (Parthica)<sup>2</sup>: the head of Carausius on the obverse, dates it, to the third quarter of the third century A.D. The legionary boar shown in relief carving on distance slabs from the Antonine Wall<sup>3</sup> also illustrates a deliberately aggressive animal.

It would be easy to find many other examples of aggressive or quasi-heraldic boars such as the famous ultra-stylised design on the Witham Shield and one in Pictland itself, the fierce boar mask on the Deskford carnyx,<sup>4</sup> intended to augment the terrifying effect of the battle-music which this trumpet produces at the top of its long, erect stem. We must not, however, expect that all representations of this animal were intended to display the qualities of brute force and aggressiveness.

All the boars mentioned so far belong to a time well before the earliest date suggested for the two Pictish boars from Knocknagael and Dunadd. First, Knocknagael<sup>5</sup> (Pl. XXIX, 2): here one immediately seems to recognise the wild pig familiar from pictures of Indian pigsticking and clearly comparable to the wild boar and wild sow from the Wiener Wald illustrated by Zeuner.<sup>6</sup> There is an apparent absence of ears in some of these animals. In nature the ears lie flat on the head and are not seen in profile, so they are not represented by the Pictish artist. All published drawings of the Knocknagael boar show ears projecting forward in the line of the forehead, the modern artist having mistaken the prolongation of a natural fissure in the stone and a chance diagonal flaking, for the ears which he was expecting in that situation.

'People do not breed wild boars' it has been said, but Zeuner in his *History of Domesticated Animals*<sup>7</sup> shows that it is very nearly what they in fact do. 'The European domesticated pig', he says, 'was the descendant of local wild forms almost everywhere. This is not surprising since in spite of its physical strength, it is easily tamed. . . . With its omnivorous habits there is no difficulty in getting it accustomed to the food available in a settlement. In many places it was independently and repeatedly raised from wild stock.'

The Dunadd 'boar' (Pl. XXX, 1) so called, with its downcast appearance, can hardly have been intended to inspire ideas of ferocity or even of courage, and both it and the Knocknagael animal, crested along the back and modestly tusked though it is, suggest to me, and I believe suggested to the Picts, valuable hogs rather than the fury of the battle charge. At Dunadd we see the 'hero's portion' after the capture of the citadel, a milk-fed hog, an animal like the Pigs of Mannanan, 'to protect the warriors from old age, to be killed for food and yet to survive for their sustenance'.

<sup>1</sup> Powell, T. G. E., *The Cells*, Pl. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Zeuner, F. E., *A History of Domesticated Animals* (1963), 271.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Collingwood and Wright, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, 1, Nos. 2184, 2197-9 and 2208.

<sup>4</sup> *Antiqu. J.*, xxxix (1959), 24 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 108.

<sup>6</sup> *op. cit.*, 268 f., figs. 10, 15 and 16.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, 267.

I am not suggesting that the Picts did not hunt the wild boar; we know that they did from the Class II stone at St Vigean's.<sup>1</sup> Such a hunt would be naturally combined with the capture of piglets for domestication.

#### OTTER

The otter at Rhynie has been described as a 'seal or otter', but the long foreface may give one pause.<sup>2</sup> However, I believe that, here again, the foreface is exaggerated in the Pictish manner. In any case, there is no reason to drag in the seal, when we find the Rhynie animal within a hundred yards of a small river, the Bogie, still today inhabited by otters, while the nearest seal is nearly 40 miles away. The design shows a square base like that already indicated on the Ardross red-deer carving.

#### BULL

Pictish cattle are represented by the famous Burghead bulls<sup>3</sup> of which there are six, with two outliers of coarse execution from Inverness. One other outlier, the animal from the fort on Lomond Hill, Fife, relates to Burghead. It, too, is a rough drawing, but instinct with life, and showing considerable directness of vision.

It would be wrong to say, with Romilly Allen, that these designs are 'highly conventionalised': the representations are drawn within the Pictish convention, it is true, with the familiar overemphasised indications of shadows, inherited from far earlier sources, but in other respects, when compared with the calf in the Book of Durrow for example, the degree of conventionalisation is not high. Here indeed are bulls directly observed, very much alive and all in different poses.

The extreme shortness of the horns of the Burghead bulls led James Wilson in 1909, followed in 1950 by John Hammond,<sup>4</sup> to believe that some of them at least were polled cattle, imported by the Vikings, who had ultimately obtained them from southern Russia. This would be in convenient agreement with the old suppositions of Scythian origin for Pictish art, but it cannot be sustained. The projections, which Wilson must have mistaken for ears, are very short, but unmistakable, horns, and the inference that we have here one of the ancestors of the polled Angus must be given up. That these animals were imported from Scandinavia is, however, not only possible but likely and demands investigation.

The origins of the present-day breeds of cattle have not been exhaustively studied and it is not necessary for our purpose to assign the Burghead bulls as ancestors to any of them. It suffices to make two points:

(1) These animals are domesticated; they have no resemblance to the aurochs or *Bos primigenius* in its wild state.

(2) The bull mask at Mortlach<sup>5</sup> stems from a different source; its background is that of the bull masks with long horns in the same plane as the face, and pointed cow-lick, of which an ultimate predecessor is visible in an Ordos bronze illustrated by Minns (*Art of the Northern Nomads*, Pl. XIX, 5).

<sup>1</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 250b.

<sup>3</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, figs. 123-8.

<sup>4</sup> Wilson, J., *Evolution of British Cattle*, 63; Hammond, J., in Whitehead, G. K., *Ancient British Cattle and their Descendants*, 92.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, fig. 198.

<sup>5</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 162a.

Other Pictish cattle are to be seen on the recently published and enigmatic Class II stone from Reay.<sup>1</sup> These have no natural connection with the Burghead bulls but are domesticated animals, in appearance much like the long-horned 'Highland cattle' of our own day.

### HORSE

There is only one horse among these naturalistic animal portraits, that on a stone in Inverurie churchyard.<sup>2</sup> Though there is no means of being certain of the size of the animal represented, it has the appearance of a lively small horse or pony (Pl. XXX, 2). Sixty years ago J. Cossar Ewart distinguished three main varieties persisting among living horses, the wild horse of the Gobi desert known as the Prejevalski horse, the Norse horse and the Celtic pony. Of these the Prejevalski is ruled out by its characteristic Roman or arched nose, the Norse by its heavier character and eyes set a good deal further forward than the Celtic pony.

It is true that the concave or 'dished' face of the Inverurie horse has suggested some Iranian or 'Arab' influence, but it is unnecessary to call in such later introductions when we had and have still from Wales, a Celtic horse which forms a near counterpart to our Pictish horse and is known today as the Welsh mountain pony. The Inverurie artist has had to do what he can in his unaccommodating medium to portray the mane, which is long and heavy, the fore-lock, also heavy, and even the tail-lock, individual to the Celtic breed, and giving valuable protection against snow.

### FISH

Let us now consider 'the fish'. These drawings are of salmon, identifiable with certainty from the adipose fin on the back near the tail.<sup>3</sup> The family of the Salmonidae alone has this fin and its other members, the trout and grayling, are of comparative insignificance. The omission of the adipose fin from the Dunrobin salmon<sup>4</sup> is a mistake caused by the artist's having carried on the line of the back behind the dorsal fin at one operation, after which the addition of the adipose fin would have been a botch. It is possible, alternatively, that a pike is represented here; it seems rather too round for a pike (Pl. XXXI, 1).

There are sixteen representations of salmon among the Pictish or presumably Pictish stones, ten of them in Class I. All of these except one were found within a few hundred yards of quiet and easily fished rivers, the single exception being the fragmentary stone from Percylieu,<sup>5</sup> which is a mile or more from the Bogie. No salmon stones are found near the Nairn, the Findhorn, the Spey, the Deveron below its confluence with the Bogie, or the Dee, all of them either large or rapid rivers or both. This distinction may indicate that representations of salmon were desired near the places where they could be easily secured by the means at the disposal of contemporary fishers. These were:

1. *The Cruive*. A basket or wooden crib (the words 'cruive' and 'crib' are not

<sup>1</sup> *P.S.A.S.*, LXXXIV (1949-50), 218.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. the Kintore salmon, *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 185.

<sup>4</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 182.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, fig. 196.

distinguished in North-eastern vernacular) fixed at the upstream end of a narrow diversion in, or narrowing of, the river channel, and in which ascending salmon are recoverable by hand.

2. *The Leister* or fish spear, a 3- or 4-pronged fork for use in shallow water.

3. *Nets*. It is customary to say that 'all early peoples had nets'. The only direct evidence for prehistoric nets known to me is in the plate in J. G. D. Clark's *Prehistoric Europe*, showing a fragment of a mesolithic net. The Picts grew flax and nets can be made from other materials, but I know of no evidence that nets of a size and strength for use in rapid rivers were available, and the evidence we have goes to show that contemporary fishers were exclusively interested in smallish and more manageable fish. None of the carvings represent the larger fish, which have grown the 'kype' on the lower jaw: in every case these are fish whose upper jaw extends slightly beyond the lower, grilse or young salmon in the pink of condition.

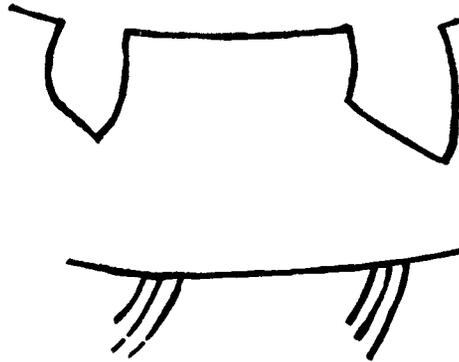


FIG. 2. Comparison sketch of ventral fins of salmon on the Percylieu (Aberdeens.) stone, above, and the Borthwick Mains (Roxburghs.) stone, below

There is one salmon carving far to the S. of all the others, whose original location was certainly near Commonsides on the upper Teviot, but which now stands in the garden of Borthwick Mains, 4 miles W. of Hawick.<sup>1</sup> Though there is no reason why the artist's intention should have been different from that of the Pictish artists, he was not trained in their school, and indeed cannot be claimed as a trained artist at all. His fish is shown as a pair of compass-drawn arcs ending in front in an unmodified acute angle: the fins look like groups of parallel hairs. Fig. 2 shows the gill and ventral fins as shown on the Borthwick Mains stone, and above, the same fins drawn from a rubbing of the stone from Percylieu, Aberdeenshire. The Teviotdale salmon also lacks the median line shown in all Pictish representations of salmon.

#### GOOSE

The only Pictish goose, of which a complete image remains among the Class I monuments, is the finely drawn bird from Easterton of Roseisle. It has been included by Mr Thomas in his suggestive study of the bird/fish group in Asiatic and other art.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R.C.A.M., *Inventory of Roxburghshire*, No. 855.

<sup>2</sup> E.C.M.S., III, fig. 130a: Thomas, *Arch. J.*, CXX (1963), 72.

Zeuner<sup>1</sup> illustrates a link in the descent joining Thomas' Pazirik goose with Easterton, namely a goose in the same posture, on a Macedonian silver obol of the fifth century B.C. He considers that the goose has been domesticated since the Bronze Age, but notes Caesar's statement that the goose was considered a sacred bird in Britain and not eaten by the natives. This may or may not be true of Pictland, where the grey lag nested and still nests, the nestlings being easily domesticated, as are chance-caught adults.

So much for the animals bred or captured for food. There are three others, the eagle, the snake, and the famous 'elephant', all of which must have been portrayed for different reasons. I do not attempt to explain what these reasons were, but would point out that all three, in contrast to the food animals, stem from the distant Central-Asiatic background described by Ellis Minns and later writers.

#### EAGLE

The Strathpeffer eagle<sup>2</sup> and the rest of those north of the Mounth such as that in Inveravon churchyard,<sup>3</sup> though they vary in detail, have much of the Pictish naturalism. Yet their ancestry is clear in the round head, staring eye and much overemphasized hooked beak seen in an eagle from south Russia,<sup>4</sup> which may serve as an example.

Much further south than the rest of our Pictish eagles, at Walton in Fife, there is an exception, conspicuous in having the flatter skull, and more moderately hooked beak of the eagle, not only in nature, but in representations of eagles from Roman sources. I suggest that the Walton eagle is a copy of a Roman Legionary emblem, whether or not the artist were a Pict.<sup>5</sup>

#### 'ELEPHANT'

The Pictish animal known as 'the elephant' belongs to an order of design quite different from all the foregoing. As has been suggested by Charles Thomas, it has a likely ancestor in the leaping stag from the Pazirik mounds.<sup>6</sup> Still more significant, perhaps, is the very similar ram design from the same source.

In both these predecessors and still more in the 'elephant' itself, we see the artist yielding to a temptation known to beset the uninhibited designer at all times in the history of art, namely to draw curves and still more curves, only dimly remembering, or not remembering at all, the object which originally set him at work. In Celtic art a good example of this tendency is seen in the Heidelberg Janus head, on the reverse side of which the human face has been reduced to what Jacobsthal calls 'an ornamental variation on the theme "face"'.<sup>7</sup> A much earlier rock carving from Norway illustrates the persistence in other ages of this tendency to draw in curves. Two birds are here combined in a pattern of curves elegantly transcending nature<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, 467, fig. 24, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, fig. 158.

<sup>3</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 358: for possible native copying of classical eagle on Roman parade helmet found in R. Wensum, Norfolk, cf. *J.R.S.*, XXXVIII (1948), 120, Pl. III.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas, *Arch. J.*, CXXVIII (1961), 53 ff. and fig. 16.

<sup>5</sup> *op. cit.*, 9 f.

<sup>6</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 57.

<sup>7</sup> Minns, E., *Art of the Northern Nomads*, Pl. II.

<sup>8</sup> Hagen, A., *op. cit.*, 17.

(fig. 3). Even so in Scotland a pattern at Mortlach (Pl. XXXI, 3) found on the same stone with a very ordinary Pictish elephant, shows a decorative variation on that theme.<sup>1</sup>

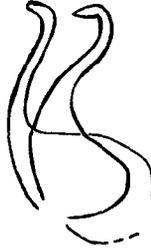


FIG. 3. Rock carving of 'swans' from Leiknes, near Tysfjord, Norway

### CONCLUSIONS

To return to the naturalistic animal portraits. For what purpose were they made? They were included by Romilly Allen in his *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* and were considered to have a religious significance. To that extent I feel sure that he was right, though the significance was not a Christian one.

The nineteenth-century examination of the Pictish stones was made at a time when most Christian churches including the Episcopal Church in Scotland and, after some interval of time, the Church of Scotland itself, was beginning, to some extent under the influence of the romantic movement, a revival of ritual and liturgical practices. As a result, it was readily accepted that, St Columba having crossed Drumalban and converted King Brude in 565, the Pictish designs, presumably of later date, must have had some Christian significance as symbols or otherwise. Joseph Anderson was non-committal about this and Francis Diack incredulous, but on the whole the position was accepted.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, we, who still live in a strongly heraldic atmosphere, when many burghs, many families and many public companies display crests and arms assigned to them by law, are conditioned to an acceptance of insignia of symbolic import and thus, it may be, are ready to attribute a quasi-heraldic significance to these animal portraits, which (apart from those depending on eastern origins) represent farm animals or the quarry of the hunter or the fisherman, not only desirable but urgently necessary for the preservation of life during the months of winter and early spring. It is probable that all of these creatures have at the same time a religious significance, but only one, the eagle, appears as perhaps a badge of rank.

That the animal portraits, and the symbol stones which accompany them in Class I, are often found in churchyards does not necessarily imply, as has been suggested, that they are funerary monuments, though it does indicate that they are religious or magical ones, as is confirmed by their appearance, along with the Christian cross, on the elaborate monuments in Class II.

<sup>1</sup> P.S.A.S., LX (1925-6), 274 f.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times* (1881) *passim*; Diack, F. C., *Inscriptions of Pictland* (Spalding Club 1944), 23.

It is noticeable that the five animals of the Pictish bestiary, deer, hound, ox, pig, horse, are the same as those mentioned by writers on Celtic religion as 'holy animals'. There is also the salmon, which has, in Ireland, a well recognised mystique. We know nothing about Pictish religion but the Picts were, partly at any rate, of Celtic origin and it looks as if the mystique behind the animal carvings may have been of a Celtic cast. It is not necessary to import the Celtic gods, Cernunnos, Teutates, and the rest, of whom there is not the least trace, unless it be the more than doubtful presence of the birds of Esus in what may be a triskele at Corrachree.<sup>1</sup> Our animals reflect a hunting and agricultural society unconcerned with anthropomorphic gods and by no means such an urbanised society as that which, in Gaul, turned Cernunnos into a banker with sacks of coin. There is no Cernunnos figure at Ardross or in the Pictish repertoire at all, but the occurrence of these two animals, the deer and the hound, close together, at a place where a useful arable exposure is backed by vast spaces of hill and forest, suggests interest in the hunted animal and its hunter, rather than the chance interment of two men, one of whom had a hind and the other a dog for his tribal emblem.

Representations of rams or sheep are absent from the Class I monuments, though Cassius Dio makes the earlier Caledonians mainly dependent on their flocks.<sup>2</sup> The only certain Pictish sheep appears on a Class II monument at Nigg.<sup>3</sup> It is of interest to note there that the clearly indicated curly fleece shows its status as a wool-bearing animal, rather than an edible one. So do the references to sheep in early Irish literature, where monks may offer mutton in hospitality, but kings and heroes must have beef or pork. The sheep, indeed, has always been, and still is, a creature despised by country people in the North-east, who do not even concede it the name 'animal', that term being confined to cattle.

The Picts were by no means a primitive people. The available evidence from pottery impressions suggests that they were turning over to the cultivation of oats, which, as a food grain, has nearly twice the protein content of barley, or bere, previously the staple crop. Judging by the location of the carved stones, their chosen area of inhabitation was primarily the rich and easily worked lands of the Garioch, though their political commonsense had enabled them to form a nation holding the whole of the best land north of the Mounth (what they held south of it is mostly not relevant to the present enquiry.) The scarcity of Pictish evidence in Buchan is probably due to the unprofitable nature of the land there before its clearance of stones at the turn of the eighteenth century, though other considerations could be advanced.

While noting and gratefully accepting most of what Charles Thomas<sup>4</sup> has to say on the reasons for retention of animal art in Scotland in the early centuries A.D., I feel sure that all the Class I animal portraits have behind them a mystique which was traditional and of a kind which had, and still has, deep instinctive roots in country-bred humanity.

These portraits are *magic art*, working magic, of a sort which is to be distinguished

<sup>1</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, fig. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Cassius Dio, LXXVI, 12.

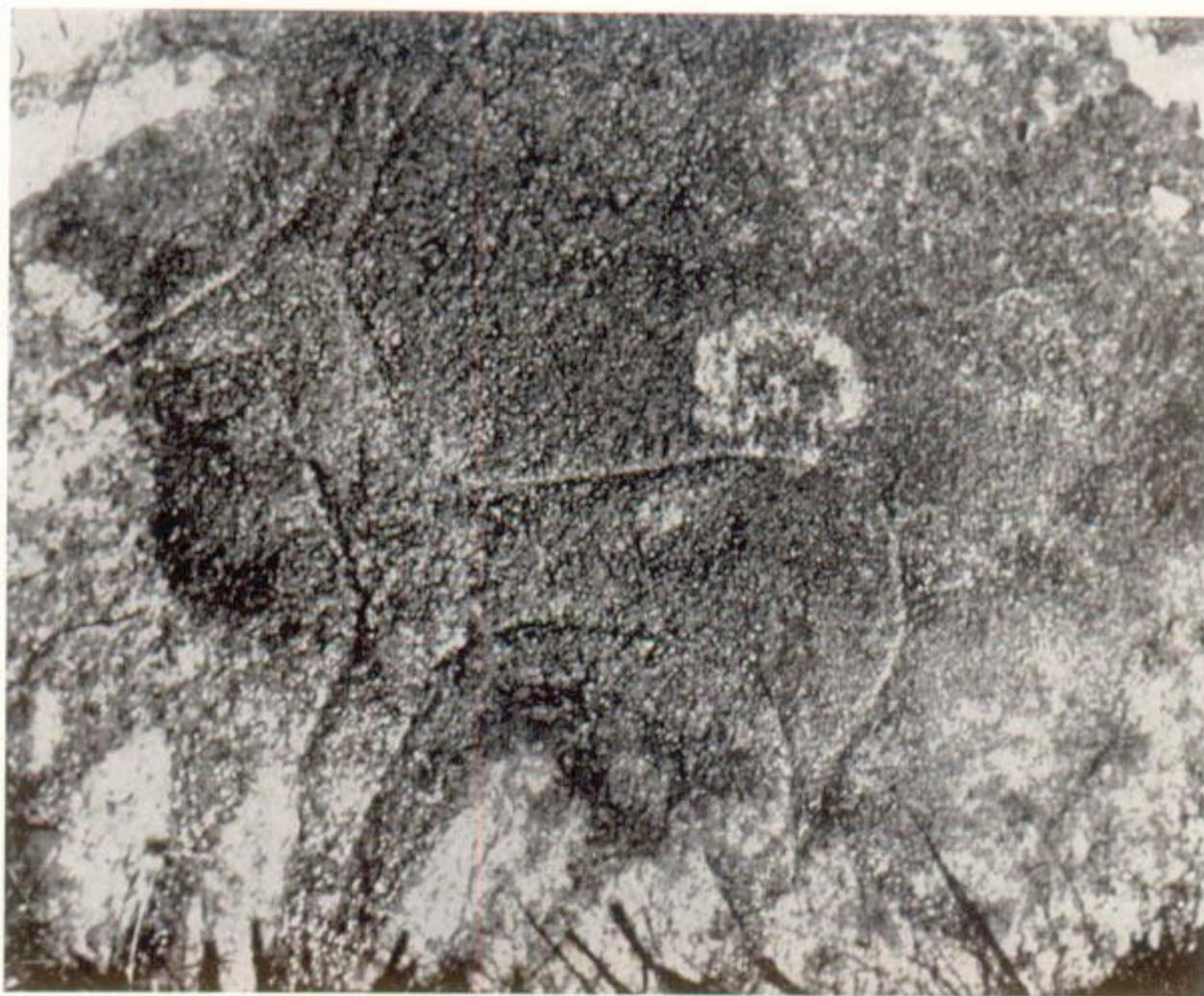
<sup>3</sup> *E.C.M.S.*, III, figs. 72 and 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Arch. J.*, CXVIII (1961), 39 ff.; *ibid.*, CXX (1963), 62 f.

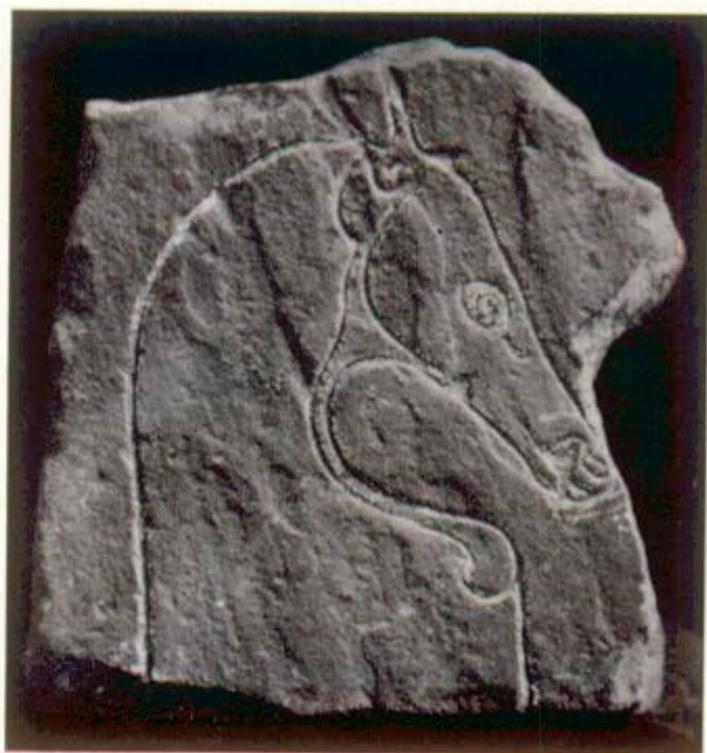
from the magic of fairies and giants: there is a serious purpose behind our stones and it is a magical one. Working magic is not pseudo-science; that is to say, the exhibition of designs such as these is not directed, as scientific procedures are, immediately to effect results such as the germination and growth of crops or the productivity of animals. Nor is working magic a neurosis, an irrational way of thinking, which makes people believe that certain practices achieve their ends directly. Both of these interpretations of magic are still acted upon in Scotland, I am informed on good authority, but they are marginal and calculated to impose upon credulous people. The essential function of *working magic* was, and still is, for it is far more widespread today than is commonly realised, to develop and conserve morale. This has been suggested by Malinowski and others, and a farming society like the Picts expresses its attitude towards the animals to which it owes its survival, in these magical designs. The animals of the Class I stones are, then, Objects of Power, a useful term borrowed from Turville-Petrie's *Myth and Religion of the North*. That author uses it as the name for a set of objects, some of which are magical incitements to piratical bravery. Our mild-looking animals, on the other hand, are Objects of Power designed to sustain hunting and agricultural morale. There need be no fear that this interpretation is drawn, as Annette Laming puts it in writing of the Lascaux paintings, from some preconceived idea of what a society is likely to have been interested in. We can tell with certainty from the habitat the Picts chose that they were farmers, and, in the parts of their country where deer and otters were to be found, hunters, and we know from these life-like portraits what their daily occupations were.

*Editor's note*

The photographic record of Pictish symbol stones which was built up by the late C. A. Gordon and was the source of many of the plates illustrating this paper, will be lodged with the National Monuments Record of Scotland, 52/54 Melville St., Edinburgh, 3.



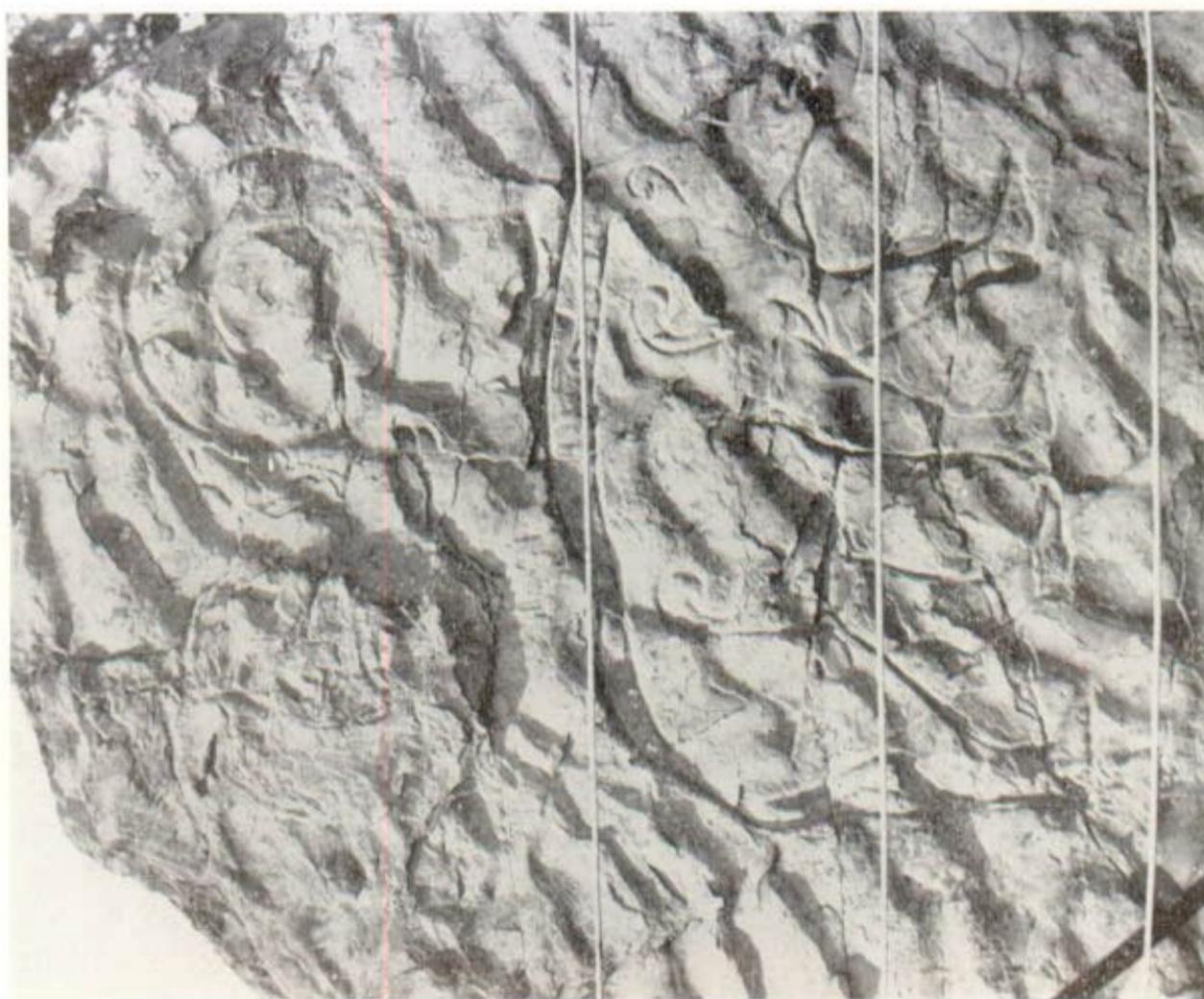
1. Roedeer carving, Glen Domhain, Argyllshire



2. The Ardross red-deer head



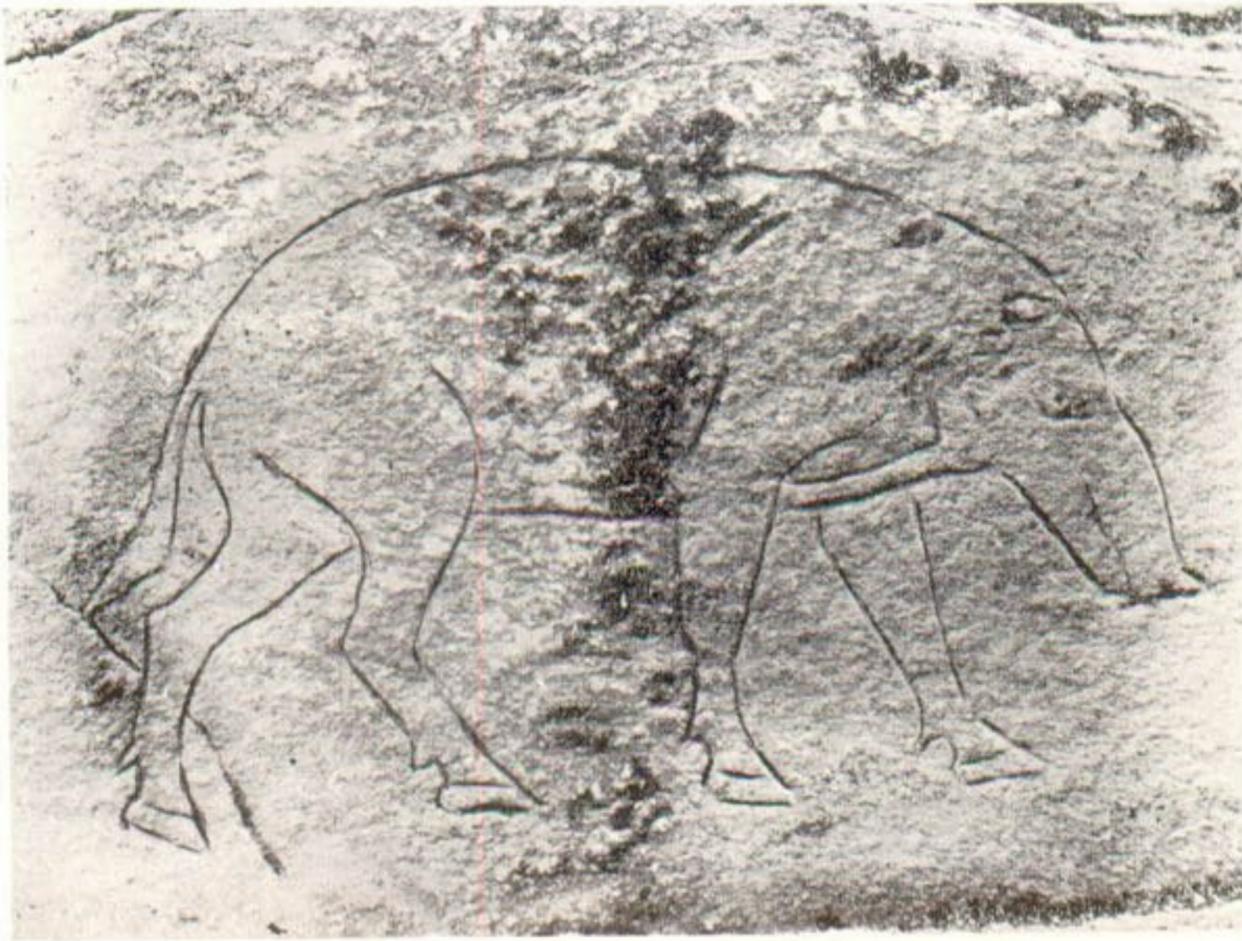
3. The Ardross dog



2. Boar at Knocknagael, Inverness-shire



1. Composite 'wolf-fish' carving seen on Upper Manbean stone above mirror and below carved initials; wolf-head on extreme right-hand edge of stone



1. Boar at Dunadd, Argyllshire



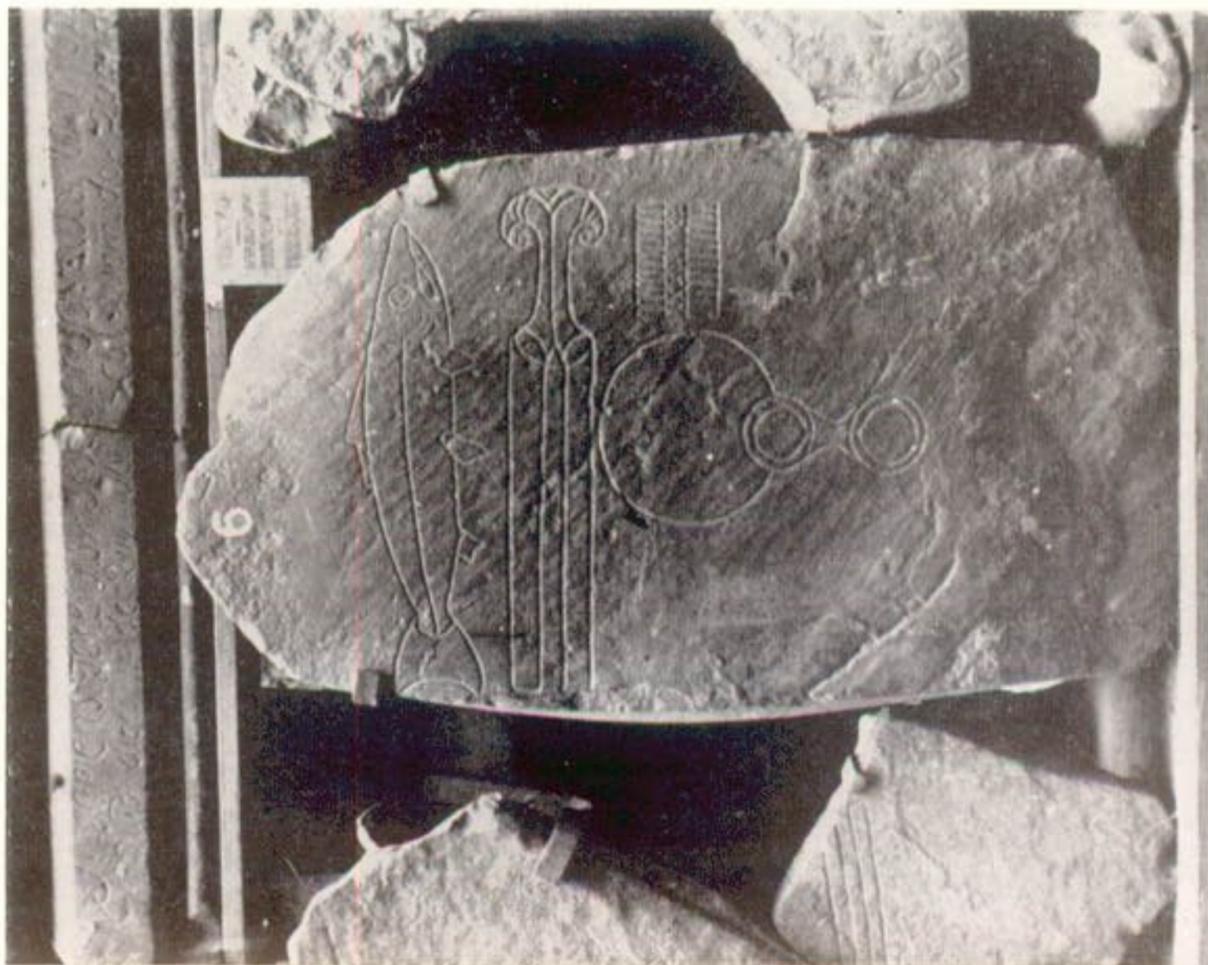
2. Carving of horse in the churchyard, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire



2. Upper part of stone from Mortlach, Banffshire, showing 'elephant' theme



3. Lower part of Mortlach stone showing possible variation on 'elephant' theme



1. Salmon carving from Dunrobin, Sutherland