

Early Ecclesiastical Sites in Scotland: a Field Survey, Part II

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INTRODUCTION

This paper continues the work started by the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments in 1967 (see *PSAS*, c (1967–8), 123–34), and represents fieldwork carried out in 1968 and 1969. What was said in the first paragraph of the introduction to Part I applies here, but the restrictions necessarily imposed by other commitments within the Ancient Monuments Department has meant that the geographical distribution of the sites listed and described below is somewhat haphazard. Again, visits had to be brief and so features may have been overlooked or misinterpreted. Again, also, it is not urged that surviving structural remains are of the Early Christian period. The drawings are sketches based usually on the OS 25-in sheets and the titles are usually those which appear in the OS 6-in sheets.

Sources frequently referred to have been abbreviated and listed in alphabetical order below. Other references appear in full under the relevant entries.

A brief discussion, with references, of the word which appears in the sources as *abthania*, *abthein*, etc, sometimes in translation as *abbatia*, and which is taken to denote the existence, at the time of writing or formerly, of a monastic community of Early Christian type, will be found under Dull. The placename element *nemed* is similarly treated under Fortingall. On Abernethy, Rosemarkie, Dunkeld, Dunblane and Mortlach in particular, Professor G Donaldson's 'Scottish Bishops' Sees Before the Reign of David I', *PSAS*, LXXXVII (1952–3), 106–17, should be consulted. And for Abernethy, M O Anderson in *Scottish Historical Review*, 28 (1949), 35 ff. and 29 (1950), 13 ff is a key source.

We have made some slight attempt to put these sites into a context and perspective of sorts by noting, where evidence was readily available to us, the existence of prehistoric (especially Iron Age) and contemporary secular occupation in the close vicinity of the church site under review. This information is taken from the OS Archaeology Division's 6-in working-sheets, with permission.

Our best thanks are offered once more to the Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey, Edinburgh, for their unfailing generosity in allowing us to use and to quote from their field-maps and records, and for their helpful comments and discussion. Without their active support, it would have been very difficult to proceed with this survey.

ABBREVIATIONS

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>ACD</i> | Mackinlay, J M <i>Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland</i> (scriptural and non-scriptural), Edinburgh (1910 and 1914), 2 vols. |
| <i>J Anderson</i> | Anderson, J <i>Scotland in Early Christian Times</i> , 2 vols. (1879 and 1880). |

- Arbroath* Liber S. Thome de Aberbrothoc, 2 vols, Bannatyne Club (1848).
Bain Bain, J (Ed) *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, 4 vols (1881–8).
CPNS Watson, W J *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, Edinburgh (1926).
Early Sources Anderson, A O *Early Sources of Scottish History, A.D. 500–1286*, 2 vols, Edinburgh (1922).
Easson Easson, D E *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*, London (1957).
Eccl Arch Scot MacGibbon, D and Ross, T *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, 3 vols (1896–7).
ECM Romilly Allen, J *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, 3 parts, I vol., Edinburgh (1903).
Macfarlane Macfarlane, W *Geographical Collections Relating to Scotland*, ed Sir A Mitchell, Scottish History Society, 3 vols, Edinburgh (1906–8).
NSA *New Statistical Account* (1845).
ONB *Old Name Book* (OS).
OPS Innes, C (Ed) *Origines Parochiales Scotiae*, Vols 1; 2, I; 2, II. Bannatyne Club (1841–5).
OSA *Old Statistical Account* (1794).
RCAHMS Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland: *Inventories* by counties.
REA *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis*, 2 vols, Spalding Club (1845).
RMS *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum, 1306–1424* (1912).
St Andrews *Liber Cartarum Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia*, Bannatyne Club (1841).
Stevenson Stevenson, J *Documents Illustrative of the History of Scotland, 1286–1306*, I (1870).
Stuart Stuart, J *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, 2 vols, Spalding Club (1856 and 1867).

PERTSHIRE

1. *Abernethy Parish Church*. NO 189164

Garbled and conflicting accounts of foundation. Two main traditions. (1) *Early Sources*, I, cxx, cxxi: according to versions A, B and C of the Chronicle of the Picts, Nechtan Morbet, King of Picts (in second half of V AD from position in King lists), gave Abernethy to God and St Bridget of Kildare early in his reign. But the paragraph containing this statement and the next two paragraphs in A containing (a) the extent of the grant to Abernethy (see also loc cit, I, 122) and (b) the reason for the grant, are insertions in the original text. St Bridget died traditionally c 524: abbess Dairludach in text is anachronism to that extent. (2) *Early Sources*, I, 121–2: according to versions D & H of Chronicle of Picts and Fordun, Abernethy founded by Gartnait, King of Picts, who died? 601–2 (Irish Annals); version F attributes this foundation to Gartnait's successor Nechtan, who died? 621 (Irish Annals). In Chronicle of the Picts, Gartnait is son of Domelch (A), Domech (B), Domnach (C), Dormath (D), Dompneth (F), Donath (I), Dompnach (K, Fordun): loc cit, I, cxxiv. (Chronicle of the Picts is essentially a king-list with a few notes). The *Brev Aber* appears to have a conflation of the two traditions: Grauerdus son of Domath, King of Picts, warned divinely to call Bridget from Ireland. She founds a church at A. and the King and all his household are baptised. For Grauerdus, cf Garnard(e), Gernernd, variant forms, mainly in DFIK and Fordun, for Gartnait of ABC; with transposition of 'r' and 'a', and 'n' misread as 'u'?

The latter half of the fifth century is too early for a *monastic* foundation here. But cf Nechtan's connection with St Buitte (died trad. 521) and the tradition of the foundation of a church at Fordun by Palladius 432 (loc cit, I, cxx, cxxi): persistent, if vague and, by themselves, unreliable literary traditions of very early Christianity in this part of southern Pictland. Here the distribution of long-cist cemeteries in the Forth-Tay region becomes significant (*PSAS*, LXXXIX (1955–6), 266). There may then have been some sort of Christian site here in the late V or VI AD. See also A C Thomas in Barley and Hanson (Eds), *Christianity in Britain 300–700* (1968), 105–8. But the

monastic foundation, if early, probably belongs to the period of the second trad.: late VI or early VII AD. Version F's attribution may be due to confusion with story of versions A, B and C. Note in this connection that Nechtan Morbet is son of Er(i)p; son of Wirp in A's insertion: *Early Sources* I, cxx, cxxi. Gartnait's successor Nechtan is Uerb's grandson (Uerd (A), Uerp (C), Irb (F, Fordun)): loc cit, I, cxxiv, 145. Perhaps connected with Kildare; but equally, perhaps originally different St Bridget.

Easson, 190: Culdees here mentioned 1189–99. Abbot of A. who appears in this record was probably a layman, holding office which had become secularised and hereditary. Prior and Culdees in controversy with Arbroath before 1214. Prior of Culdees on record 1235 and 1239. Culdees became, or were replaced by, Augustinian canons 1272 or 1273.

For lands etc belonging to Abernethy by this time see *Arbroath*, I, 25–7, 147–9. Chronicle of Picts insertion interesting as possible record of what Abernethy claimed at an earlier date.

See also *Easson*, 74, 174.

E.C. incised and sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 282, 308–10 and figs on 311, 312.

Irish-type round tower: probably mid XI AD. For description, etc, *Eccl Arch Scot*, I, 175–8; *J Anderson* (1879) 42–5.

In 1821 excavation inside base of tower exposed skeleton and 'fragments of a light green urn, with a row of carving round the bottom of the neck'. (Probably a medieval deposit: for possible explanations of presence of pot, see *PSAS*, xcvii (1963–4), 252–3 and *PSAS*, lvi (1921–2), 27–32). Below this were thin broad flagstones with many more human bones below, including seven skulls, all adult male according to sexton who dug up most of the bones: Rev Andrew Small, *Roman Antiquities in Fife* (1823), Appendices 12–16. Not said whether any of skeletons underlay foundations of tower, if this was even noticed during the digging. Skulls are unsatisfactory for sexing. So nothing can really be made of this account (Small's work is extremely uncritical even for its time and totally unreliable in most respects).

Old church ruins removed 1802: *ONB*. 'A great church with pillars' survived 1722. *Macfarlane*, I, 117. 'Extensive foundation lately discovered' beyond present church: Small, loc cit, 168.

Monastery situated on N side of graveyard and part of its walls still stood c 1780. The school was kept in monastic buildings earlier in XVIII AD. Nothing remained in 1823: Small loc cit, 165, 167.

These references must be to medieval buildings, but may give an indication of the position of earlier structures.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen by us.

Iron Age fort on Castle Law at NO 182153. Site of Roman fort at Carpow not far away at NO 208178. Several 'pit-' names in the immediate vicinity of Abernethy.

Dedication: St Bridget (*ACD*).

2. *Dull*. NN 806491 (Parish Church)

St Ninian's Chapel (Site of) NN 809489; Sanctuary (Site of) NN 808490; Cross (Site of) NN 804489, 810489 and 812489.

Supposed St Ninian's Chapel: *PSAS*, xcii (1958–9), 74; *Discovery and Excavation*, 1966, 35; 1967, 37–8; 1968, 28.

The three crosses still survive: one is now set up in the centre of the village, the other two in Weem Church (NN 842497) since c 1850 (OS). Traditionally sanctuary crosses, but doubtfully Early Christian. For these, and fragment of E.C. sculptured stone found in graveyard before 1867: *ECM*, III, 315, 342; *Stuart*, 2 (1867), 11–12, pl xvii. Also two E.C. incised cross-slabs found in village in last few years; cross socket-stone in old graveyard. (See also below, Appendix).

Appin: Old & Middle Irish *apdaine, abbdaine, apthaine*, 'abbacy', hence 'abbey-lands': *CPNS*, 124; *Early Sources*, I, 576-7. Latinised as *abthanya, abthania*, etc, appears frequently in XIII and XIV AD documents. See here *St Andrews*, 296-7 (charters of Hugo de Sigillo, bishop of Dunkeld c 1214-1229); *Stevenson*, 248, (262), 291, 312, 336 (1291-2). '... the farms of the land of Glenlionn and the "Apithania" of Dul . . .' (1304-5): *Bain*, II (1884), 439; '... totam terram de Estirfossache cum pertinenciis, in abthania de Dulle . . .' (1370): *RMS* 355, p 125; also 1273, Appendix 2, p 598. *Chamberlain Rolls*, I, 353, 361, 371, 381, 391, 399, 531 (1359-70).

Placename 'Tegarmuchd' (NN 7948): probably means 'sanctuary', with reference to girth of Dull: *CPNS*, 259-60.

Fordun calls Crinan of Dunkeld (see under Dunkeld) 'abthanus' (a title invented by himself from 'apthaine-abthania') of Dull: *Early Sources*, I, 576-7.

Dunkeld ceded Dull to St Andrews, saving certain revenues from the 'abthania' etc (1203 × 1210): *St Andrews*, loc cit; *Early Sources*, II, 652-3.

'Andrew, son of Gillemuire *Clerech*, of Dull' mentioned in *St Andrews* in 1270: *Early Sources*, II, 652-3. Apparently lay tenant from context.

The 'city' of Dull is mentioned in the Irish Life of St Cuthbert, cap xxiv: 'Veniens itaque in urbe, quae Dul dicitur, . . .' *Urbs* here probably has the same meaning as Irish *cathair*, in the later sense of 'monastic city'. See Skene's *Fordun*, II, 413 (Historians of Scotland series, vol IV, Edinburgh, 1872). No date is given for this Life.

Cumulative evidence convincing that an E.C. monastic settlement of some sort existed here, at some period closely associated with Dunkeld. Probably secularised before it appears first in the documentary record, but possibly one original clerical family survived in 1270.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen in or around old graveyard and parish church, presumably the focus of the early settlement.

As at Fortingall, surviving evidence of much prehistoric and Dark Age occupation in the area.

Dedication: St Adamnan. Well at NN 803490 in manse garden is 'Tobar Eódhnain'. Also Muileann (Mill) Eódhnain and Magh (Field) Eódhnain near Bridge of Balgie in Glen Lyon; Fuaran (Well) Eódhraín (dialect for Eódhnain) near Grantully in Strathtay; Ard-Eódhnaig on S side Loch Tay. Glen Lyon tradition that St Adamnan stayed a great plague by planting his crozier at a spot near Craiganie. Near this spot is a small upright slab with a cross on either side. Knoll on which it stands is 'Tom a' Mhóid', the 'moot-knoll': *CPNS*, 270-1. Termon cross? The story suggests it.

3. *Dunblane Cathedral*. NN 781013

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 315-17.

Early Sources, I, 177, 288, (403): St Blane of Kingarth's chief seat (*Mart. Oengus*). Burnt by Britons 843-58 (*Chron. Kings*).

Statement in *Mart. Oengus* is a gloss in Franciscan MS and in *Lebor Brecc*. Apparently no other source connects Blane of Kingarth with Dunblane (*Early Sources*, I, 176-7). Moreover, glossator apparently uncomfortable about the equation and reasserts Blane's Kingarth origins immediately. Probably had no definite knowledge to go on and was simply trying to explain the placename.

Easson, 193: lists of religious houses given by Gervase of Canterbury and Henry of Silgrave (see under Dunkeld) show Culdees under bishopric of Dunblane. Unreliable evidence, but Muthill, with its Culdee community (*Easson*, 191), was within diocese of Dunblane. See also *Easson*, 168.

Placename 'Dunblane': *Mart. Oengus* has 'Dul Blaán' (Franciscan MS) and 'dun blaán'

(*Lebor Brecc*): ‘? Blane’s meadow’ and ‘Blane’s fort’ respectively. Other early forms (XII AD on) seem to have ‘Dun-’ consistently. See also *CPNS*, 164.

Nothing potentially Early Christian seen.

Fair amount of prehistoric material in and around Dunblane. Roman temporary camp sites at Hillside, centred on NN 7700.

4. *Dunkeld, St Columba’s Cathedral*. NO 023425

Early Sources, I, 262, 279, 296, 305, 471, 472–3, 569, 576–7, 581, 583, 584: apparently founded by Constantine King of the Picts (died 820): (*Chron. Picts* DFK(H), Fordun). Kenneth mac Alpin built a church and transferred some of Columba’s relics here, 849 (*Chron. Kings*). Obits of abbots at 865, 873 (Irish Annals). Burned by Norse 903–4 (*Chron. Kings*). Abbot Duncan killed 965 (*Chron. Kings, Annals of Ulster*). Completely burned, 1027 (Irish Annals). Crinan abbot (*Prose & Verse Chrons.*, Irish Annals, *Chron. Kings*, Fordun) killed 1045 (Irish Annals). *Early Sources*, II, 56: Ethelred, son of Malcolm III, abbot 1093–1107.

Abbot Duncan was possibly ancestor of Crinan. Crinan was apparently father of King Duncan.

Easson, 192: Culdees mentioned by Gervase of Canterbury (–1216) and Henry of Silgrave (c 1272). Litany supposedly used by them only survives in XV–XVI AD version. According to Myln (XVI AD), David I superseded Culdees by bishop and canons c 1127, bishop for a time being also abbot. Rights of ‘abbacy’ reserved in charter of David I, c 1150.

Monastery possibly secularised, with lay abbots, during XI AD. No good evidence for Culdees here at all.

E.C. incised and sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 317–19, 342; *Stuart*, 2 (1867), pl 16 no. 2; pl 68.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Possible fort (site of) on King’s Seat at NO 008429.

5. *Fortingall, Parish Church*. NN 741470

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 508–10.

E.C. bell, (extant): *J Anderson* (1879), 180–81.

Placename ‘Duneaves’ at NN 748468 in bend of R. Lyon on opposite side: *CPNS*, 247–8. Contains Old Irish *nemed*, Gaulish *nemeton*, etc, originally pagan sanctuary – tribal meeting place; taken over by early Church. Appears in early Irish literature meaning ‘church’, ‘sanctuary’. For useful brief discussion and other instances: *CPNS*, 244–50.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen in or around graveyard.

Surviving evidence of occupation of all periods around Fortingall.

Dedication: perhaps Coeddi, bishop of Iona, died 712: *CPNS*, 314.

SUTHERLAND

1. *Dornoch Cathedral*. NH 797896

Easson, 94, 167, 193: earl of Orkney and others ordered by David I to respect monks of Dornoch, 1127–53. No record of monastery here at this date otherwise known. Possibly reference to Celtic foundation, whose (former) existence may have been reason for placing see of Caithness here. Lists of religious houses given by Gervase of Canterbury and Henry of Silgrave (see under Dunkeld) show Culdees under bishopric of Caithness. But unreliable evidence.

Original parish church dedicated to St Barr. Still existed in whole or part in late XVI or early XVII AD, when removed or destroyed. Stood about middle of town ‘beside the cross still standing’ and on site of former council-house and prison removed 1813. St Barr’s cemetery

mentioned in XVI and XVII AD bounding charters: partly or wholly gone. St Barr's Fair still held here in XVII AD :OPS, 2, II, 597, 623. See also *Macfarlane*, II, 439-40; III, 103-4.

Cathedral churchyard at one time unenclosed: public road passed through it at end of XVIII AD: OPS, loc cit, 645.

Vague case: apart from Easson's references, only further possible evidence is dedication of old parish church, which may have preceded Cathedral, to E.C. saint.

Oval shape of cathedral graveyard modern and coincidental (see above). Nothing potentially E.C. seen otherwise.

2. *Old Burial Ground, Grumbeg, Loch Naver.* NC 634383

Two probable E.C. cross-slabs: RCAHMS, Sutherland, nos 250, 251.

Burial ground of Mackays of Aberach: RCAHMS, loc cit.

Grumbeg depopulated township just to N mentioned (name only): *Macfarlane*, I, 188. Shown as patch of arable with no distinguishable buildings on Roy's map of 1747 (OS). Marked quite prominently on NSA map of Sutherland (1845). 'A shepherd's House situated in the N side of Public Road SE of "Carn Gruama Beag"'; ONB (1873).

Burial ground on rocky knoll, littered with slab-covered graves. Nothing potentially E.C. seen. Cross-slabs not seen.

Surviving remains suggest substantial Iron Age population on Loch Naver and in Strathnaver.

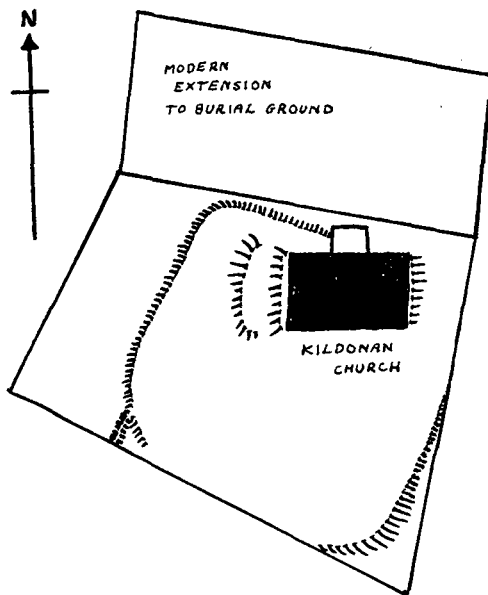


FIG 1 Kildonan Church, Sutherland no. 3

Tobar Clais Mhartain or Tobar Martain at NC 633385: Rev A Mackay, *History of Province of Cat*, (1914), 34; PSAS, XLII (1907-8), 94. Shepherd at Grumbeg did not know it and it was not found (OS 1961).

3. *Kildonan Church, Strath of Kildonan* (fig 1). NC 909207

Placename: Kelduninach 1223-45; Kyldonach 1226; Kyldonane 1332; Kyldonan 1371, etc: *OPS*, 2, II, 734-42.

Parish church had apparently always stood on present site; existing building apparently c 1786. Was prebend of abbot of Scone as canon of Dornoch: *OPS*, loc cit.

'Crois' at NC 901234: site of cross incised on projecting rock on E side of road up strath. Cross said to have existed formerly on SW face: now entirely obliterated. Said to have marked N boundary of sanctuary of Kildonan: *RCAHMS, Sutherland*, no. 376. No trace (OS 1961).

'Clach na h-uaigne' (cross-incised monolith) at NC 910210: *RCAHMS* no. 377. Doubtfully E.C.

Large hollow stone, destroyed in XVIII AD, stood 'halfway between Kildonan and Helmsdale' and was known as Donan's Chair or Seat: *OSA*.

Figure of rudely carved stone head, called the 'Abbot's Head', in garden wall of manse: *NSA*. Now no trace (OS 1961, 1968).

'Tigh an Ab' at NC 906210: indeterminate remains under turf: presumably connected with abbots of Scone, if ancient.

Within older half of present graveyard are distinct traces of an earlier, irregularly shaped enclosure, having church in NE corner. Visible on N and W as well-defined, raised ledge about 1 ft high; on E and SE as slope, quite pronounced in SE corner, S side lost under modern wall; SW corner vague, with what appears to be subsidiary ridge running off to S. Raised area at E end of church suggests earlier occupation.

Slight evidence for other (?)E.C. occupation in vicinity: Coille Cill a'Mhuire at NC 903228: no definite information; supposed chapel site SW of Kildonan station; Kilearnan or Kilournan at NC 929189: no site known; cross-incised standing stone at NC 89252349: *RCAHMS* no. 380.

Considerable Iron Age and later (pre-Clearance) occupation in Strath of Kildonan.

St Donan's Fair held at Kildonan in XVII AD: *Macfarlane*, III, 104.

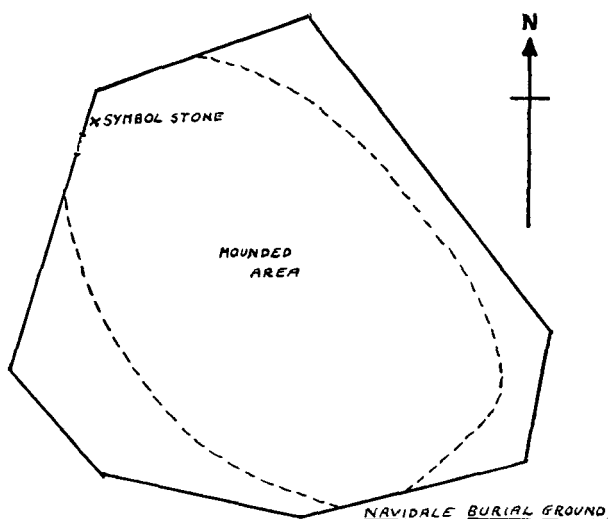


FIG 2 Navidale burial ground, Sutherland no. 4

4. *Site of St Ninian's Chapel and burial ground, Navidale* (fig 2). ND 042161

Placename 'Navidale': Gaelic 'Neimhe' dail'; Nevindell 1563: *nemed* and Norse *dalr*, 'dale': *CPNS*, 250.

Was sanctuary here: Sir Robert Gordon, *Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (1813), 3. (XVII AD MS)

Chapel burnt 1556: *OPS*, 2, II, 737.

Supposed to have been St Ninian's Well on pasture stretch on shore nearby. No trace (OS).

No remains of chapel, but apparently burnt stones turned up while gravedigging within recent past (local information – no further details). Roughly oval mounded area (dotted line in fig 2), extending over much of interior of modern hexagonal graveyard (with whose walls it merges on NW and SE), may represent outline of an earlier enclosure. (Modern walls clearly built to obtain maximum area on promontory.) Slab leaning against wall inside graveyard bore one recognisable Pictish symbol and traces of another. Now in Dunrobin Museum. (See below, Appendix.)

5. *St Columba's Chapel (Site of), Oldtown, Loch Brora*. NC 850090

Chapel at 'Kilcalmkill' in Strathbrora: Sir Robert Gordon, op cit, 3.

Was village called Kilchalumkill on N side of Loch Brora. In digging some ground there a cemetery was found, containing large human bones. 'At some little distance from it, a year or two ago', stone cross found on line of high road; set up where found and still to be seen: *OSA*.

Nothing remained in 1872. Stone with cross and 'other fragments sculptured upon it' found in vicinity of site c 1825. Also mention of cist with cover in which large human bones found, adjacent to site: *ONB*.

St Columba's chapel and well: Rev A Mackay, *History of Province of Cat* (1914), 33.

Attack on authenticity of name as given by Gordon, loc cit: A B Scott, *Pictish Nation* (1914), 384. No refs.

Name accepted by Watson: *CPNS*, 280.

No definite traces of supposed chapel found. No trace cist, but remains of cairn in position of siting symbol (OS 1961).

Remains of footings of two rectangular buildings and other walling, much trampled by cattle. Character of remains very doubtful: probably steading. But, in view of reports of human bones and cross(es), probably was burial ground, if not chapel, here at one time, whatever its name. Watson, loc cit: only site in east called 'Cill Chaluim Chille'.

6. *Burial Ground and Red Priest's Stone, Skail, Strathnaver*. NC 714472

Cross incised stone: *RCAHMS, Sutherland*, no. 256; *ECM*, III, 55. Illustrated in *PSAS*, v (1862–4), 359.

PSAS, loc cit refers to grave slabs. Cross-stone stood at E end of burial ground. Apparently a chapel here: *OPS*, 2, II, 708. See also *PSAS*, VII (1866–8), 271–2.

'Red Priest's Temple' nearby: *RCAHMS, Sutherland*, no. 233. Denuded chambered cairn. Example and warning of how local tradition can disintegrate.

Burial ground is small, uneven grass area in corner of arable field. No significant shape, and no sign of an enclosure. A few stones, possibly land-gathered, visible and, now in middle, is cross-stone. Much has clearly been washed away by river and also been ploughed out.

Two brochs in vicinity, on other side of river.

Dedication: probably St Maelrubha. Founded monastery of Applecross, *c* 673: *Early Sources*, I, 181, 183. Died 722: loc cit I, 219–20. Confusion of second element of his name with Gaelic *ruadh*, ‘red’.

ROSS AND CROMARTY

1. *St Bennet’s Chapel (Site of), Navity*. NH 791650

Placename ‘Navity’: *CPNS*, 249–50: *nemed*. Was church land: *CPNS*, loc cit.

‘The only vestiges are a heap of stones and a grassy mound. Near it stood a stone trough . . . destroyed about the year 1745’: *OPS*, 2, II, 560.

Nothing known. No local knowledge of it. St Bennet’s Well at NH 792650. Still used as rag-well (OS 1966).

No trace of anything at OS 6-in siting symbol. Landowner knew of site but had found nothing.

2. *Rosemarkie, Parish Church*. NH 737576

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 63–8, 85–8.

Early Sources, I, 19, 95, 205, 211: St Moluag of Lismore buried in St Boniface’s church here, *c* 592 (*Brev Aber*). St Kiritinus built ‘a notable temple’ here in reign of ? Nechtan IV, King of Picts *c* 706–24 (Life of Kiritinus in *Acta Sanctorum*; cf *Brev Aber*). Possibly same as bishop Curetan (who attended Synod of Birr, 697), who in turn may be Curitanus of Irish martyrologies. Later writers: Curitanus = Boniface (Kiritinus, Curitanus and Boniface have same feast-day on 16th March).

Early Christian pin from Rosemarkie: Stevenson, R B K, ‘Pins and the chronology of brochs’, *PPS*, XXI (1955), 282–94; pin illustrated in fig A, no. 21, p 284; probably VII AD.

Easson, 193: lists of religious houses given by Gervase of Canterbury and Henry of Silgrave (see under Dunkeld) show Culdees under bishopric of Ross. Cf Tain. But unreliable evidence. See also *Easson*, 170.

Bishopric of Ross sometimes called bishopric of Rosemarkie down to middle of XIII AD: *OPS*, 2, II, 568.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Dedication: St Peter (? and St Boniface): (*ACD*).

3. *Shandwick, Balintore*. NH 855747

E.C. sculptured stone ‘Clach A’Charridh’ (*NSA*): *ECM*, III, 68–73. Apparently *in situ*.

Walls of chapel here nearly entire towards end of XVIII AD: *OSA*.

Burial ground last used 1832. Ploughed down *c* 1885: *PSAS*, XXIII (1888–9), 442. But *NSA*, 1836: not used within fifty years. Stone coffin with skull and other human bones found *c* 1954 while laying pipe at NH 8557463 (OS).

No trace of anything now except stone, which still stands.

Dedication: unknown.

4. *St Duthus’ Chapel, Tain*. NH 785822

Early Sources, II, 10: ‘Dubthach the Scot, the chief confessor of Ireland and of Scotland’, died at Armagh 1065 (Irish Annals). ‘St. Duthacus, bishop and confessor’, of noble Scottish birth, educated in Ireland, made chief bishop of Scotland. Church of city of Dornoch (St Barr’s) mentioned in legend. ‘. . . he is held in the very greatest honour and veneration in the church of

Tain . . .' (*Brev Aber*). May be one and the same, but no definite connection. Dubthach a not uncommon early Irish name.

Girth of Tain, marked out by four crosses, appears to have been roughly co-extensive with bounds of parish. 'Clais na Comraich' – 'Hollow of the Girth or Sanctuary' – at the 'Canary' on S boundary of parish towards Scotsburn, may have been site of one cross. 'Crois Caitrion' – 'Catherine's Cross' – to N of Loch Eye, may have been another: W J Watson, *Place Names of Ross and Cromarty* (1904), 32–3. See also *OPS*, 2, II, 428–32.

St Duthac's bell: keeper paid 1505 when James IV made pilgrimage to Tain. St Duthac's Crozier: borne before James IV at Tain 1506. Neither survive, so whether E.C. or not unknown: *J Anderson* (1879), 213, 226.

For Culdees under bishopric of Ross, see under Rosemarkie.

Evidence for this being an E.C. foundation not conclusive.

Ruined XIII AD parish church (*Eccl Arch Scot*, II, 537–8) within graveyard, on top of natural knoll – of which several more in dunes here – shaped by burials. Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

5. *Tarbat Parish Church*. NH 914840

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 73–5, 88–95.

Viking silver hoard associated with line of hewn stones at 5–6 ft depth and apparently laid nearly E–W (i.e. parallel with walls of both church and churchyard) in churchyard, a few yards from E gate: *PSAS*, XXIII (1888–9), 314–17; H Shetelig (ed), *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, Pt. II (1940), 109–10.

Description in *PSAS*, loc cit suggests that remains of an earlier enclosure wall found.

XVIII AD church in very uneven graveyard. Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Dedication: a St Colman: (*ACD*).

ANGUS

1. *Benvie Church*. NO 328314

E.C. sculptured stone: *ECM*, III, 247–9.

Parish church dedicated 1243: *Early Sources*, II, 524.

W wall of church partially standing; outline visible as platform on N side of roughly square graveyard. Graveyard probably rationalised portion of earlier enclosure, since church platform nearly reaches wall on E.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Dedication: unknown.

2. *Eassie Church*. NO 352474

E.C. sculptured stone: *ECM*, III, 218–19.

Parish church dedicated 1246: *Early Sources*, II, 526.

Ruined church, probably partly or wholly rebuilt in late XVI AD (Hay, *G Architecture of Scottish post-Reformation Churches* (1957), 32), and burial ground, on point of spur overlooking Eassie burn.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Dedication: St Brendan: Forbes, *Kalendars of Scottish Saints* (1872), 287; St Fergus: *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, 5 (1925), 259; *ACD*, 212. Possibly discrepancy due to union of Eassie

with Nevay: dedication of Nevay now lost, but one of two saints may originally have belonged there: see under Nevay.

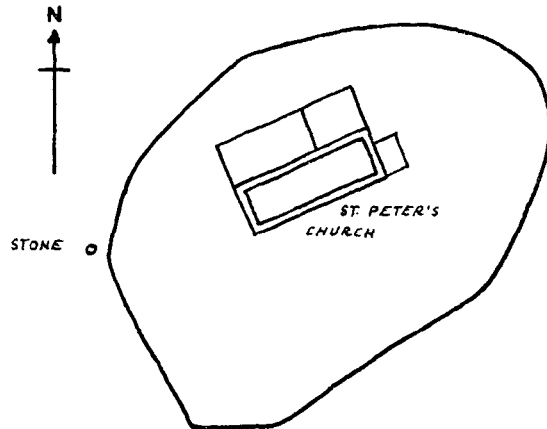


FIG 3 St Peter's Church, Angus no. 3

3. *St Peter's Church, Invergowrie* (fig 3). NO 350301

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 255–7.

Ruined XVI AD parish church (*Eccle Arch Scot*, III, 454–5) on top of low natural knoll, with burn running close by to N. Ground configuration suggests occupation build-up under church. Knoll enclosed at base by wall to form roughly oval graveyard. This possibly the outline of E.C. enclosure, though no E.C. structural remains seen and wall modern. Cf Nevay.

4. *Monifieth, Parish Church*. NO 495323

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 228–30, 265; *Stuart*, 2 (1867), pl 123; *PSAS*, LXII (1927–8), 226–7. *ECM* no. 1, originally Class II gravestone sculptured on both broad faces, has secondarily been intended to serve as corner post for corner-post shrine. Slot in narrow side has been completed, but that on broad face apparently has not: may have been cause of fracture at base of this face.

Easson, 191: charter of 1242–3 refers to the land which the Culdees held (c 1214–42) on S side of church of Monifieth. Implies recent disappearance of Culdees. Nicholas 'abbot' of Monifieth was a witness. He had been granted 'abthein' of Monifieth 1220.

'Michael de Monifuth' is 'dominus' of 'abbathania' of Monifieth 1310: *Arbroath*, I, 278.

When old church pulled down 1812, some remains of 'Culdee edifice' discovered when laying new church foundations. A few yards N of glebe is huge block of stone (estimated at four tons), in top of which a cross-socket. One of E.C. stones formerly stood in it: *NSA*.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

This part of Angus coast and hinterland has been occupied since Mesolithic times. Dedication: St Regulus (*ACD*).

5. *Cemetery, Inchbraoch I, Montrose*. NO 709567

E.C. sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 223–4, 254–5.

Parish church dedicated 1243: *Early Sources*, II, 524. Site of church understood to be

where present vault stands: foundations have been discovered round it: *ONB* and local information (*OS*).

Nothing potentially E.C. seen in or around cemetery.
Dedication: St Brioc (*ACD*).

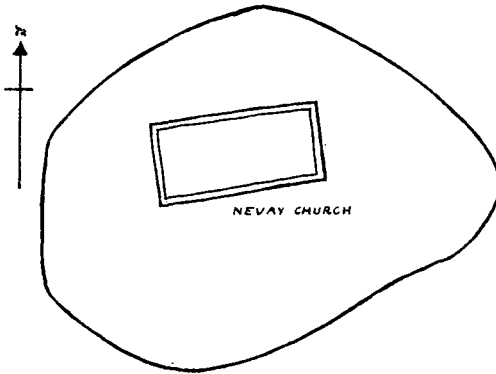


FIG 4 Nevay Church, Angus no. 6

6. *Nevay Church, Kirkinch* (fig 4). NO 312441

Placename 'Nevay': 'Nevyth': *CPNS*, 247: *nemed*.

Ruined parish church, probably partly or wholly rebuilt in late XVI AD (Hay, loc cit), on top of natural knoll enclosed at base by wall to form roughly oval enclosure. Ground configuration at E end of church suggests earlier occupation. N slope of knoll has been artificially scarped, probably when trees were planted along N side of wall, and all headstones removed here. Comments as for Invergowrie.

Placename 'Nevay' scattered liberally on ridge running NNE from Henderston Hill and around W slopes of that ridge and on the ground sloping down to N and NW from Kinpurney Hill: N, E and W Nevay, Kirkton of Nevay, Nevay Park, Gateside of Nevay, etc. Unfinished hillfort on Kinpurney Hill at NO 322417: *RCAHMS, Stirling*, I, xxv. The *nemeton* probably lay in general area indicated by modern placenames.

Dedication: the St Neveth or Nevydd given by e.g. *Fasti Eccl Scot*, 5, 259 is, of course, ghost arising from old form of placename: see *CPNS*, loc cit. See under Eassie.

MORAY

1. *Birnie Parish Church* (fig 5). NJ 206587

E.C. incised and sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 118, 136-7.

E.C. bell (extant): *Joseph Anderson*, I (1879), 177-8.

In XII AD Birnie was apparently one of the seats of the bishop of Moray.

The XII AD church stands on top of natural knoll in centre of oval enclosure which forms old graveyard. Wall of this intact, except on N side, where removed when graveyard extended, but traceable here as bank. Wall in question modern and no sign of earlier structural remains, but possibly preserves outline of E.C. enclosure.

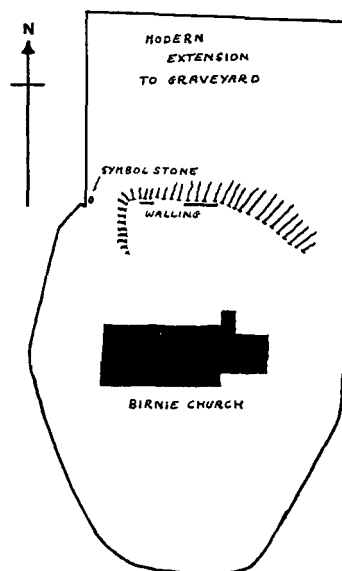


FIG 5 Birnie Church, Moray no. 1

Dedication: St Brendan postulated probably on analogy of Kilbirnie etc. Doubtful: Birnie is 'Brennach' before 1200: Gaelic *braonach*, a moist place: *CPNS*, 189. Surrounding land flat and fairly low-lying.

2. *Church (site of), Pulvrenan, Knockando*. NJ 202421

E.C. incised stones said to be from here: *ECM*, III, 127-8.

Now no certain traces of site on ground, but natural ledge in sloping ground has probably been artificially levelled.

Pulvrenan (OS 6-in sheet: 'Pool Veriner') probably 'Poll Bhreunainn' 'St Brendan's Pool'.

INVERNESS-SHIRE

1. *Annat, Beauly*. NH 506438

Placename 'annat': *CPNS*, 250-4. Discussion and other instances. 'Groam' (of Annat): 'bog, marshy ground': *CPNS*, 379-80.

No church site or old burial ground known locally. Farms continue name.

Fort at NH 514448.

2. *Supposed site of St Ninian's Chapel, Temple Pier, Urquhart*. NH 529300

E.C. cross-slab from here: Mackay, *Urquhart and Glenmoriston* (1893), illus. 385.

Hill above Temple Pier to N is Creag Nay: Gaelic 'Creag Neimhidh': *CPNS*, 249: *nemed*. 'Temple' suggests that chapel originally called 'teampull' in Gaelic.

Forms of placename in *Macfarlane* and *NSA* show that this not a genuinely early Kil- name.

Chapel in use till at least Sept 1556: *Transactions of the Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club*, 3 (1885), 103. 'Kil Saint Ninian' and its healing well: *Macfarlane*, II, 172. Ruins existed in 1763: Mackay, loc cit, 435. Was still a public burial ground at 'Cill-Santninian' 1835: *NSA*.

Near chapel were rag-well and two ash trees, still in operation 1885: *Trans. Inverness SS and FC*, 2 (1882), 166-7; 3 (1885), 103; Mackay, loc cit, illus opp 336.

No trace of site, but monolith by roadside said to mark site of finds made during road widening. Well still exists by roadside a few yards E of this. Site probably destroyed totally when road built.

ABERDEENSHIRE

1. *Dyce, Church (in ruins), formerly Chapel of St Fergus*. NJ 875154

E.C. incised and sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 163-4, 189-90; *PSAS*, XLV (1910-11), 333-7.

Ruined pre-Reformation parish church in use till 1872: *PSAS*, loc cit.

Site at W side of landward end of sharp bend in River Don.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

2. *Rhynie, Church (site of) (AD 1700)*. NJ 499264

E.C. incised stones from old church and neighbourhood of Rhynie: *ECM*, III, 182-4; *Stuart*, 1 (1856), pl 7, 8. All Class I stones, and not necessarily Christian. Only two of six came from inside old burial ground, and those from fabric of old church when demolished 1878: may have been brought in for building. Known provenance of other four (one still *in situ*) probably original sites and well away from graveyard. Suggests that site of old church represents Christian foundation which replaced earlier burial ground.

Old parish church of St Luag demolished 1823 (but see above: abandoned and unroofed?) when present church built. Supposedly built c 1700: *ONB*. But 1620 bell from church, now in school, indicates earlier church: *PSAS*, xci (1957-8), 102-3. Medieval grave and adjacent stone coffin against W wall of graveyard (OS 1967).

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Intensive prehistoric occupation from Neolithic onwards in and around Rhynie indicated by remains and finds. Tap o' Noth vitrified fort not far away at NJ 484293.

St Moluag's Stone at foot of Tap o' Noth at NJ 484290.

BANFFSHIRE

Cathedral (remains of), Mortlach Parish Church. NJ 323392

E.C. incised and sculptured stones: *ECM*, III, 155-6; *PSAS*, LX (1925-6), 274-8.

Malcolm II created bishopric c 1011-12 in gratitude for victory over Norwegians [1005] at place nearby (Fordun; also in Boece). Spurious or suspect Aberdeen charters attribute foundation to Malcolm III, 1063, and removal of see to Aberdeen by David I, 1125. See *Early Sources* I, 433, 525; *Easson*, 167; Hector Boece, *Lives of the Bishops of Mortlach and Aberdeen*, New Spalding Club (1894), XIII-XIV, 130 for discussion and refs.

'villam et monasterium de murthillach cum quinque ecclesiis et terris eisdem pertinentibus': *REA*, I, 6, 85: bull of Adrian IV, 1157, confirming possessions of church of Aberdeen: *Easson*, 195. Professor Charles Thomas has pointed out in conversation that '*monasterium*' at this period need only mean 'church'. But here only Mortlach and Cabrach are so called: other churches listed are called '*ecclesia*'. And fact that Mortlach has five churches attached to it suggests larger foundation.

Gilbert de Strivelyn, bishop of Aberdeen c 1228-c 1239, immediately after election had to

recover certain lands of Bras (Birse) and Cloveth (Cabrach), whose revenues had been lost to see 'per improbos quosdam montanos'. Richard de Potton, bishop *c* 1258–*c* 1272, had similar trouble from 'montani de Cloueth et Murthlac': Boece, *loc cit*, 11–12, 14. Boece's testimony by itself is highly unreliable, but Dr W D Simpson's suggestion (*Province of Mar* (1943), 108–9) that this is genuine record of trouble among Celtic population, where Celtic religious foundations had existed until comparatively recently and who still objected to ecclesiastical innovations, is attractive. But perhaps too long a time is involved for local feeling still to be running high: before 1157–after 1228.

Cumulative evidence strong for E.C. monastic foundation of some kind here. Story of pre-1100 bishopric has no reliable support, but may embody genuine tradition of such in area before foundation of Aberdeen: see Introduction.

Nothing potentially E.C. seen.

Dedication: St Moloch (?Moluag): John Leslie, bishop of Ross, *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, Rome (1578), 203. Priest's Well at NJ 322391 is St Moluag's Well: *J Anderson*, I, 193.

KINCARDINESHIRE

Church (site of), St Cyrus. NO 745639

Early Sources, I, 363–4: St Cyricus apparently regarded as patron saint of King Giric (878–89): church of St Cyricus at Ecclesgreig (now St Cyrus) may have been founded in his reign. A church of St Cyricus existed here in time of King William (1165–1214); a church was dedicated to St Cyricus here 1242. Cf the 'St. Englaciug, abbot, patron at Cerues in the diocese of Aberdeen' (*Brev Aber*). But see *CPNS*, 318–20.

'Terra abbacie de Eglesgig': *St Andrews*, 229, 230 (charter of King William). Same: *St Andrews*, 234 (confirmation of Alexander II). Presumably a (defunct) E.C. house having an 'apdaine': cf Dull, Dunkeld, Monifieth.

Parish church till 1632. Near the burial ground, a building ('from its dimensions, internal divisions and situation, it was undoubtedly the residence of the ministers in ancient times'), which had been covered by sand, was uncovered by erosion some years before 1794: *OSA*.

Well dedicated to saint near church: *Fasti Eccl Scot*, 5, 481. No local information about it (OS 1967).

Nothing potentially E.C. seen in or around old burial ground. Probable site of church indicated by a platform in turf, well covered by burial enclosures.

Dedication: 'ecclesiam sancti cirici de eglesgig': *St Andrews*, 218; 'ecclesia sancti Cyrici Martiris de Eglisgig': *loc cit*, 348.

APPENDIX

Three Early Christian Stones

1. *Navidale burial ground, Navidale, Sutherland* (See entry above) (pl 11)

Class I Pictish Symbol Stone. The stone is an undressed rectangular slab of local Red Sandstone, which has been split along the bedding plane, resulting in the appearance of a thin, dressed slab. The top of the stone is at an angle to the sides, and the base is fractured. The stone measures (on average) 3 ft 2 in by 1 ft 6 in. On it is incised a 'cauldron' symbol, and a possible unfinished 'Pictish elephant'. This, together with the fact that the stone shows traces of tooling towards the base, suggests that it is an unfinished work, produced at or near the site where it was found.

2. Kirkmuirhill, Lanarkshire

Fragment of cross-shaft. Sandstone, decorated on three faces. The back of the stone has been considerably damaged by tooling, but there are traces of deep drilling where interlace decoration has been removed (pl 12). The fragment measures 21 in by 17 in by 9 in (at its widest). As with no. 1 it is possible that this is part of an unfinished monument. The stone is local, and it was certainly carved near the site of its discovery. It was found while ploughing just below the surface of a low mound in a bend in the river Nethan about ten years ago by Mr T McGinley. No NGR is available.

The shaft has a pronounced entasis, and was probably fairly squat, surmounted by a solid wheel-head.

On the front is a panel of angular and not very competent interlace, between two bands of chain decoration of unequal widths. On one side there is a panel of similar interlace, and on the other a knot pattern, with traces of fine interlace between the cords.

For the closest parallel, see Collingwood, *W G Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (1927), fig 167, p 148 (Burnsall) where the same type of vertebral or chain pattern appears. It would seem to occur first in the mid-tenth century and to last for about a century. For other parallels see Collingwood, *op cit*, fig 75 (Hackness), fig 68 (Closeburn), figs 6-11 (Whithorn), fig 81 (Hexham), fig 57 (Jedburgh) and fig 217 (Kirkby Grindalythe).

Its main interest lies in the fact that there are no Early Christian stones of this type from this part of Lanarkshire, the only others from the County having been found to the N, notably the Govan Group. The Kirkmuirhill stone is closer in style to the Whithorn School, though the median groove of the strands of interlace, a common feature of the Whithorn stones, is absent. For a discussion of the comparable SW Scottish stones, cf Radford, C A R, 'The Early Church in Strathclyde and Galloway', *Med Arch*, xi (1967), 105-26, esp. 124-6.

3. Dull, Perthshire (See entry above) (fig 6)

Irregular slab of mica schist split along the bedding plane, and utilised without dressing as a cross-slab. On it is incised a simple cross, the lines forming it being pecked out with fairly broad irregular grooves.

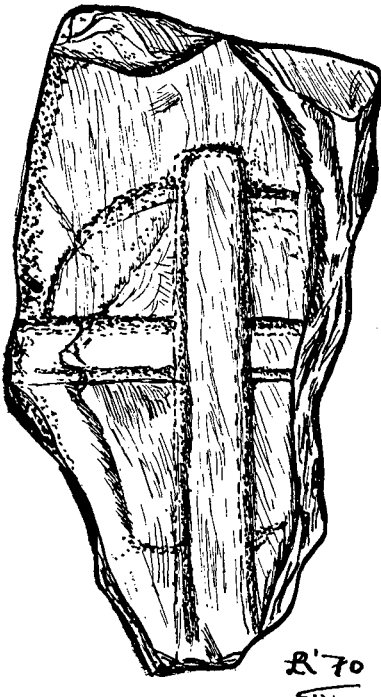


FIG 6 Cross-slab, Dull, Perthshire

Traces of a ring are discernible. This type of monument is notoriously difficult to date – for Wales Nash-Williams suggested a date between the VII and IX AD, but on not very adequate evidence (Nash-Williams, *Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (1950), 20). For a further discussion, see Thomas, A C ‘An Early Christian Cemetery and Chapel on Ardwall Isle, Kirkcudbright’, *Med Arch*, xi (1967), 127–88 passim.

The stone was found in a garden some couple of hundred yards from the church. It measures about 27 in by 12½ in, and is 3½ in thick on average.



Pictish symbol stone, Navidale



a



b



c



d

Fragment of cross-shaft, Kirkmuirhill; a, front face; b, back face; c and d, side faces