

charters for the monasteries at Bath (a grant by the king of the Hwicce) and Malmesbury date between that year and 688.⁴⁰ The latter relate to Mercian grants of estates at Tetbury, in Gloucestershire, and Long Newnton and Somerford Keynes in Wiltshire (the last also transferred to Gloucestershire in 1897), and to a West Saxon grant in Wiltshire at Kemble plus an exchange of estates in that county between one near Malmesbury and another east of Braydon Wood where the monastery already held land by c. 676/686.

The diocese of Worcester, which incorporated South Gloucestershire, was established around A.D. 680. Its boundary is recorded in full only c. 1291, when it followed that of the county of Gloucestershire as it existed until 1897. Its limit generally lay close to the Thames but coincided with the river itself only at South Cerney and from Kempsford eastwards (immediately east of the mapped area) — though the river may have provided a continuous division between the Hwicce and the West Saxons in earlier times.⁴¹ If this information is combined with that of the British boundary names, it is possible to argue that the only district which lay both on a British frontier in Augustine's day and on the West Saxon and Hwiccan boundary in the time of Bede was that around Kemble. Recent discussion of British sources behind Bede's account of the meeting at Augustine's Oak has drawn attention to their possible preservation, on account of their local interest, at Malmesbury, only some 11 km to the south-east.⁴² Around the year 600 a British territory which extended this far eastwards would indeed have been the closest to Canterbury, whence Augustine set out. Bede tells us that Æthelberht afforded the archbishop his protection; perhaps he made most of the journey along the Thames. Perhaps too his oak tree was in the wood of Kemble, which receives a mention in one of the earliest charters!⁴³

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank James Purves and Nick Griffiths, who kindly helped in the preparation of the map.

BRUCE EAGLES

THE RE-USE OF A FIGURATIVE PANEL FROM EIGG

This paper suggests that a cross-slab from Eigg, decorated on its rear face with a hunting scene, was originally part of a separate and distinct monument, the possibilities of which include a type of architectural fragment, a composite church furnishing, such as an altar, or most likely a shrine. Early-medieval shrines or fragments of shrines make up a small part of the sizeable corpus of sculpted stone monuments from Scotland. Most well known are the St Andrew's Sarcophagus (late 8th- or 9th-century), a composite shrine and the Govan Sarcophagus (10th- or 11th-century), a hollowed monolith of stone with four sculpted outward faces. Composite shrines are rectangular stone boxes with the long and short sides joined together. Charles Thomas has classified these monuments into three different types: grooved shrines where the slabs fit directly into slots on another slab; corner post shrines; and corner-block (or corner-slab) shrines where the panels fit into specially

⁴⁰ P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968), nos. 51, 71/73, 1169, 1170 and 231/234.

⁴¹ S. Bassett, 'In search of the origins of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms', 3–27 in S. Bassett (ed.), *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (Leicester 1989), at p. 9, fig. 1.2.

⁴² C. Stancliffe, 'The British Church and the mission of Augustine', 107–51 in R. Gameson (ed.), *St Augustine and the Conversion of England* (Stroud, 1999), at p. 128; cf. P. Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England 600–800* (Cambridge, 1990), 78. J. R. Green, *The Making of England* (London, 1885), 224, n.1, long ago suggested the Malmesbury area as a possible location for the meeting.

⁴³ Sawyer, op. cit. in note 40, no. 234.

made corner pieces.⁴⁴ At St Andrews there is both the sarcophagus and two end fragments of at least one other composite shrine. Besides St Andrews, pieces of composite shrines come from St Ninian's Isle, Papil, Houss, and Noss (all Shetland), St Boniface's on Papa Westray (Orkney), Burghead (Morayshire), St Vigeans and Monifieth (Angus), Murthly and Meikle (Perthshire), Rosemarkie (Easter Ross) and Iona (Argyll) with possible pieces coming from Portmahomack (Easter Ross), Drainie and Kinneddar (Morayshire), Dull (Perthshire), and Kilmahew (Dumbartonshire).⁴⁵ To this list can be added another probable panel fragment from Pittensorn Farm, Perthshire.⁴⁶ A panel from Dunkeld (Dunkeld no. 1), although it appears to be unfinished, and a lost fragment from Meikle (Meikle no. 10) had horizontally orientated figural scenes and may also be from composite monuments.⁴⁷

Shrines highlight the importance to the Early-medieval mind of keeping something or someone special in a visible and accessible place. Most shrines probably had some form of access, either removable lids used on occasions such as when relics were taken on a circuit, or an aperture to allow permanent access for pilgrims. The shrines probably held the remains of holy people — saints or saintly rulers. Shrines also imply a certain type of ritual practice involving the cult of saints and relics. Their rarity in the surviving corpus of stone monuments and their presumed use in cult or pilgrimage rituals suggest the presence of shrine-fragments indicates an Early-medieval foundation of some significance. The known fragments of composite shrines are concentrated in eastern and northern Scotland and this distribution is most likely a function of both popularity and archaeological survival. In the West, the probable corner posts from Iona and a variant of the corner-block from Kilmahew in Dumbartonshire represent the entire collection of composite shrines. Perhaps a later 10th-century development of shrine forms is represented by slabs from Govan, Inchinnan and Kingarth on Bute that have cylindrical ornamentation at the corners suggesting the vestigial traces of corner posts.⁴⁸

The publication of the RCAHMS corpus of *Early Medieval Sculpture in the West Highlands and Islands* has offered a new opportunity to inspect West-coast sculpture.⁴⁹ In looking through this volume, one particularly anomalous sculpted stone stands out. The slab comes from Kildonnan, Eigg, Small Isles parish (NM 490 851).⁵⁰ The Isle of Eigg, measuring only 5 km by 7 and dominated by the spectacular rocky peak of An Sgurr (Fig. 11), appears three times in the Annals of Ulster. These entries begin with the record of the martyrdom of St Donnan and 150 others when his monastery was burned in A.D. 617. AU 725 records the death of Abbot Oan of Eigg and AU 752 that of Cuiméne, a devout man of Eigg.⁵¹ These references suggest the monastery survived the burning of 617 and continued in existence until at least the mid-8th century. The probable site of the early monastery lies under the ruined medieval church at Kildonnan. There are two place-names near the church that describe the ecclesiastical landscape: Crois Mhor and Crois Bheag, suggesting that crosses once stood in these areas. A later medieval cross still stands in the churchyard.

⁴⁴ C. Thomas, 'Form and function', 84–96 in S. Foster (ed.), *The St. Andrews Sarcophagus: A Pictish Masterpiece and its International Connections* (Dublin, 1998).

⁴⁵ Ibid., 96, and I. Henderson, *The Collection of Pictish Sculpture at Groom House Museum, Rosemarkie* (Rosemarkie, nd.), http://www.scran.ac.uk/RB_licensed/docs/licensed/0018/00180118.pdf, p. 3. In accordance with the practice of *Early Christian Monuments in Scotland*, Allen and Anderson, op. cit. in note 57, place-names are cited in relation to the historic counties of Scotland.

⁴⁶ M. A. Hall, I. Henderson and S. Taylor, 'A sculptured fragment from Pittensorn Farm, Gellyburn, Perthshire', *Tayside Fife Archaeol. J.*, 4 (1998), 129–44, at p. 136.

⁴⁷ RCAHMS, *South East Perth: An Archaeological Landscape* (London, 1994), 96 for Dunkeld no. 1; and J. Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, Vol. 1 (Aberdeen, 1856), pl. LXXXVI for the lost Meikle slab.

⁴⁸ I. Fisher, *Early Medieval Sculpture in the West Highlands and Islands* (Edinburgh, 2001), 18; and R. N. Bailey, 'Govan and Irish Sea sculpture', 113–21 in A. Ritchie (ed.) *Govan and its Early Medieval Sculpture* (Stroud, 1994), at p. 114.

⁴⁹ Fisher, op. cit. in note 48.

⁵⁰ National Monument Records of Scotland [NMRS] no. NM48NE 24.

⁵¹ S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (eds.), *The Annals of Ulster (To AD 1131)* (Dublin, 1983).

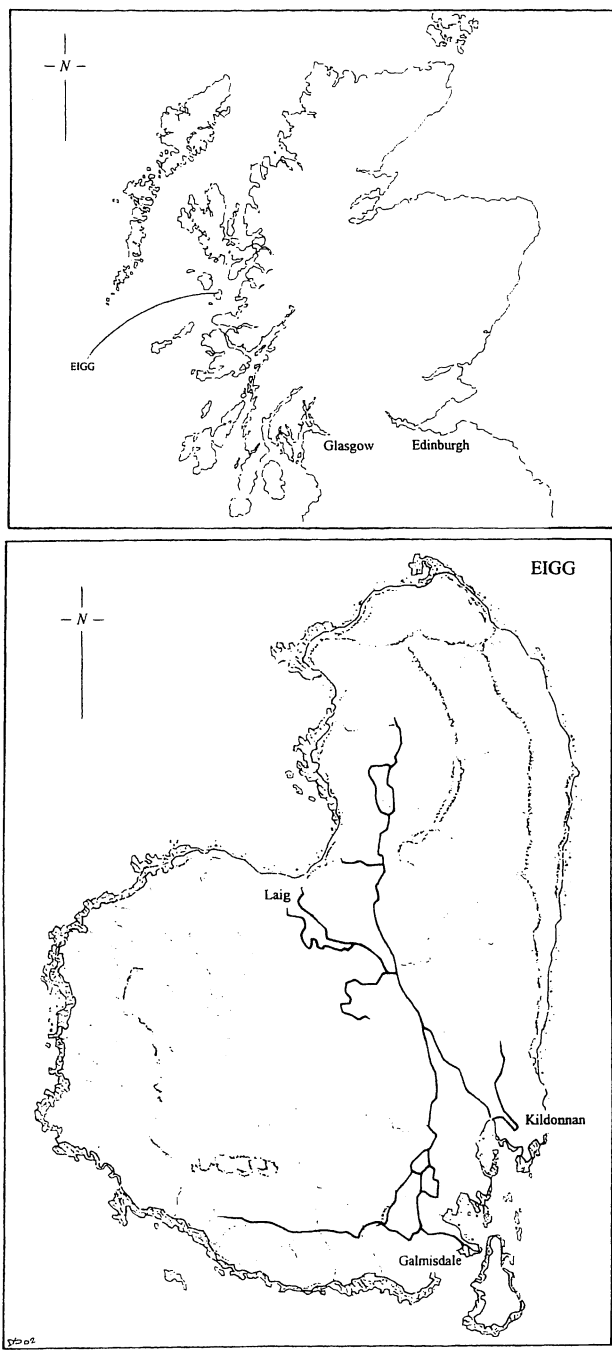


FIG. 11
Eigg, location map. Drawn by D. Swan.

Aidan Macdonald, in a walkover survey of the area in the 1970s, could find no traces of vallum or other Early-medieval structures, and suggests the topography surrounding the church site may have created a natural boundary.⁵² The churchyard contains several mounds and sits on a slightly raised terrace on a slope down to the sea. Within one of these mounds 'halfway between the chapel and the rocks to the east' an ornate Viking-period sword-hilt was found in the early to mid-19th century.⁵³ Information about the island in the Early-medieval period continues to accumulate. A recent Royal Commission for the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland survey of Eigg discovered linear groups of Pictish-type square-kerbed cairns near Laig Bay on the north-western side of the island (NM 4666 8793).⁵⁴

Six carved stones of Early-medieval date have been found in and around the church at Kildonnan.⁵⁵ The anomalous slab discussed here is in two fragments held together with modern concrete and is now housed in the porch at Galmisdale Lodge (Fig. 12). One face has a ringed cross in false relief. The top margin bears an incised inscription: IHU XPI, the Latin abbreviations for invoking the name of Christ. The other face bears a hunting scene also in false relief. It is this face that attracts our attention because of its anomalous orientation. The scene runs down the slab vertically, stopping short of the base of the slab, where there is a cleanly dressed flat surface. This orientation is not typical of representative scenes on Early-Christian cross-slabs. It would, however, be acceptable as part of a composite monument such as a shrine or altar. The significance of the orientation is not considered in the excellently illustrative entry in the new corpus. There is currently no interpretation of this anomaly apart from a footnote reference by Isabel Henderson which simply states that this is a panel 're-used as a cross-slab'.⁵⁶

Hunting scenes are common on Pictish cross-slabs (Class II), but are always presented running horizontally across the rear face of the monuments. They also appear on recumbent style monuments such as Meigle no. 26, where the orientation is horizontal. There is also a hunting scene, although not in the typical Pictish style, on the St Andrews Sarcophagus. The orientation of the Eigg hunting scene is a convincing argument that the slab originally had another use where the orientation was horizontal. The only vertical element on the figurative side is an incised cross of possibly early form, but of indeterminable date, near the horse and rider. The incised cross on the Eigg slab is unlikely to be an attempt to Christianise a pagan scene as such hunting scenes are often found on cross-slabs where the two faces are clearly contemporary. The difference in carving style and the way it respects the other elements in the scene suggests this cross was incised at a later date, perhaps to 'correct' the orientation of the monument. The depiction of crosses within stylistically Pictish hunting scenes is rare. The closest parallel to the Eigg slab is the figural scene on a slab from Dunblane, Perthshire, where a horse and rider are situated within a landscape that includes a small freestanding cross.⁵⁷

The cross side takes up virtually the full length of the slab, running just over 100 mm further down the slab than the hunting scene. While it is not unknown for stones conceived and executed as a single monument to have different extents of carving on their faces, the unequal extent of the carving between the faces of the Eigg slab could suggest they were carved at different times, potentially by different hands. The cross face also has a schematic

⁵² Aidan Macdonald, 'Two major early monasteries of Scottish Dalriata: Lismore and Eigg', *Scottish Archaeol. Forum*, 5 (1973), 47–70, at pp. 60–61.

⁵³ N. Macpherson, 'Notes on antiquities from the Island of Eigg', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scotland*, 12 (1876–8), 577–97, at p. 586.

⁵⁴ 'Archaeological finds', *Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust Newsletter* (Winter 2001); NMRS no. NM48NE 52.

⁵⁵ Fisher, op. cit. note 48, 92–4, for details of the collection at Kildonnan.

⁵⁶ I. Henderson, 'Primus inter pares: the St. Andrews sarcophagus and Pictish sculpture', 97–167 in Foster (ed.), op. cit. note 44, at p. 118, n. 15.

⁵⁷ J. Romilly Allen and J. Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1903), 315–17. Among the jumble of motifs on the hunting side scene of the Dunblane slab is a single horizontal figure.

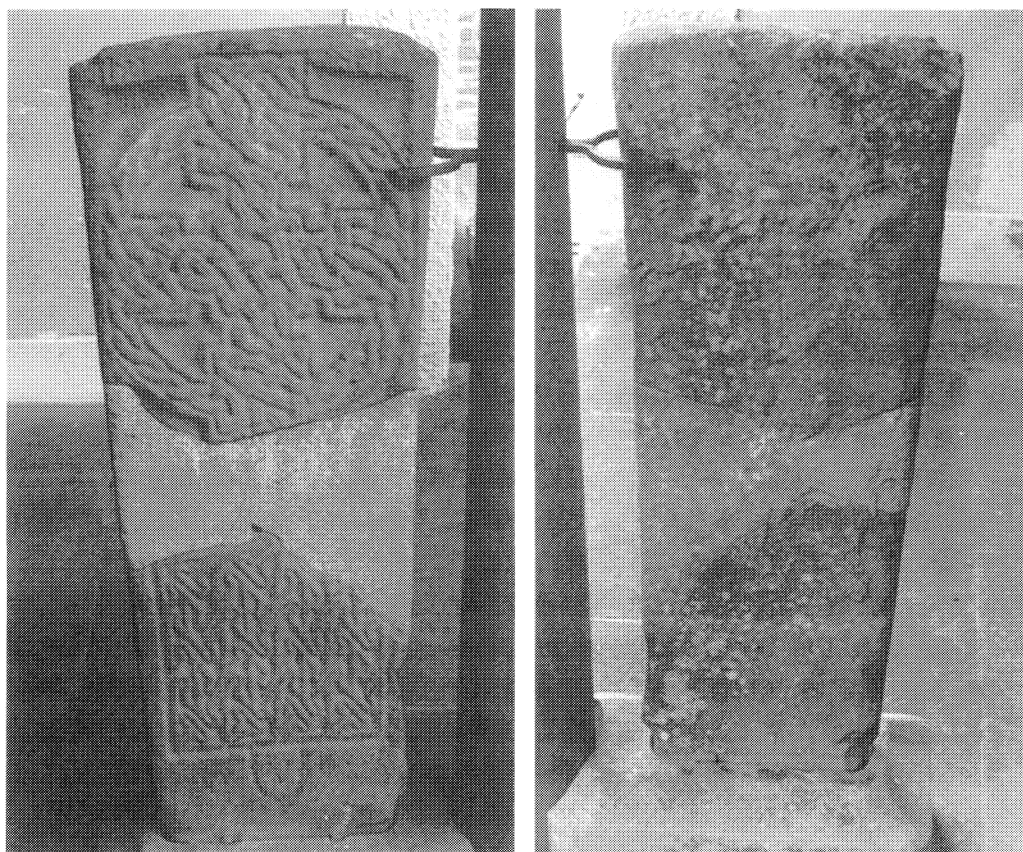


FIG. 12

The stone as it is currently displayed at Galmisdale House. *Photographs by the authors.*

representation of a 'tenon' extending a further 100 mm towards the edge of the slab. The schematic tenon and the blank areas flanking it each bear three pecked marks possibly serving some function in the planning and setting out of the carving. While these differences between the two faces may not definitively determine which side was carved first, the vertical element added to the figurative scene appears to support the notion that the vertical re-orientation and the carving of the cross face are later than the hunting scene. This difference was noted by D. MacLean who ascribed the cross to the 'last phase of Pictish sculpture' or the 9th century.⁵⁸ The hunting scene need not have been carved much earlier before the slab was re-used and could also be 9th-century.

Morphologically, the slab resembles other shrine panels. The panel is currently at least 1.10 m long and tapers from 0.36 m to 0.31 m in height. Other known long panels measure to just over 1 m long and around 0.3–0.4 m high.⁵⁹ The thickness of the panel is 75 mm, which compares well with panels such as the St Andrews Sarcophagus long panel

⁵⁸ Douglas Mac Lean, 'Maelrubai, Applecross and the Late Pictish contribution west of Druimalban', 173–87 in D. Henry (ed.), *The Worm the Germ and the Thorn: Pictish and Related Studies Presented to Isabel Henderson* (Balgavies, 1997), at pp. 181 and 187 n. 94.

⁵⁹ Hall et al., op. cit. note 46, p. 136.

which measures to between 70 and 120 mm thick. The taper of the monument along the long side also favours identification as a shrine panel. Although slight, such tapers are seen on both the St Andrews Sarcophagus long panel and the Govan Sarcophagus. Such tapers may even have provided an aperture for a form of access to the saintly remains within.

There is also a possibility that we are missing part of the left-hand side of the panel. Examination of the slab indicated that part of the left edge (i.e. the top of the cross face) is missing and has been re-dressed to its current appearance. This could not be confirmed from the cast held at the National Museums of Scotland as the casting technique did not accurately reflect uncarved surfaces, but it was more apparent from examination of the stone itself. In looking at the hunting scene, a noticeable dressed space is left between the heads of the two animals, possibly a deer and a lion, and the neatly defined border. Borders are lacking on the other three edges of the scene. The far-left figure, a horse and rider, extends his arm out behind him, but does not appear to be carrying a weapon. This outstretched arm reaches almost to the left edge of the panel. While not necessarily the case, it would not be uncharacteristic to have a more symmetrical aspect to this face and this could suggest another 200 mm or so are missing from the left of the panel whether carved or simply dressed (Fig. 13). It is possible that the slab was broken at this end before its re-use as an upright cross-slab, and that later dressing took place to provide a clean edge for the top of the cross face. The interpretation of this monument as a re-used shrine slab raises the question of the nature of the joins to the other shrine components. There are no other fragments known from Eigg that may have been sections of this shrine. However, as complete shrines rarely survive, the lack of additional fragments is not detrimental to its identification as a shrine panel.

It is possible to argue that if the slab is re-used, then it is a re-used recumbent slab or possible architectural piece, rather than a long panel of a shrine. The interpretation as a recumbent slab seems unlikely because of the lack of an original Christian motif, if we see the small incised cross as a later addition. While secular scenes do appear on a limited number of recumbent slabs, they are most often on the sides of the slab. The hunting scene depicted on the recumbent monument Meikle no. 26, is on the side, while the top has a stylised cross made of circular bosses.⁶⁰ Meikle no. 11, a recumbent stone with a socket for an upright cross, also has a side motif of a hunting scene.⁶¹ The Eigg slab itself would be small to be a recumbent monument, as it would have stood to less than 80 mm high compared to Meikle no. 26 which stood to 280 mm. If the Eigg slab is the side of a re-used recumbent monument, the thinness of the slab means that a large chunk of the original monument was removed, leaving the hunting scene, which seems unlikely. Another possibility is that the slab is the lid of a shrine. The lack of known surviving shrine-lids makes this a difficult theory to prove or disprove. However, the slabs from Govan, Inchinnan and Kingarth that show vestigial traces of corner posts and may be emulating shrines, have crosses, and zoomorphic and geometric designs, but do not have hunting scenes on the upper face. This may suggest that, as with recumbent monuments, hunting scenes were not traditionally placed on the lids of shrine monuments.

As an architectural piece of carved stone, the monument has few parallels. Perhaps the most similar, considering the orientation of the slab, is a monument from Great Cumbræ, Dumbartonshire. This slab is very thin (100 mm), 0.36 m wide at its maximum breadth, broken to its present length of 0.96 m, and is carved on one face and edge suggesting to Fisher that it was a door lintel.⁶² Although morphologically similar, the Eigg slab is substantially thicker and thus heavier than this presumed lintel. There is also no evidence that the thin edge of the Eigg slab, which would form the top of the door, was

⁶⁰ RCAHMS, *op. cit.* note 47, 101.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁶² Fisher, *op. cit.* in note 48, 71.

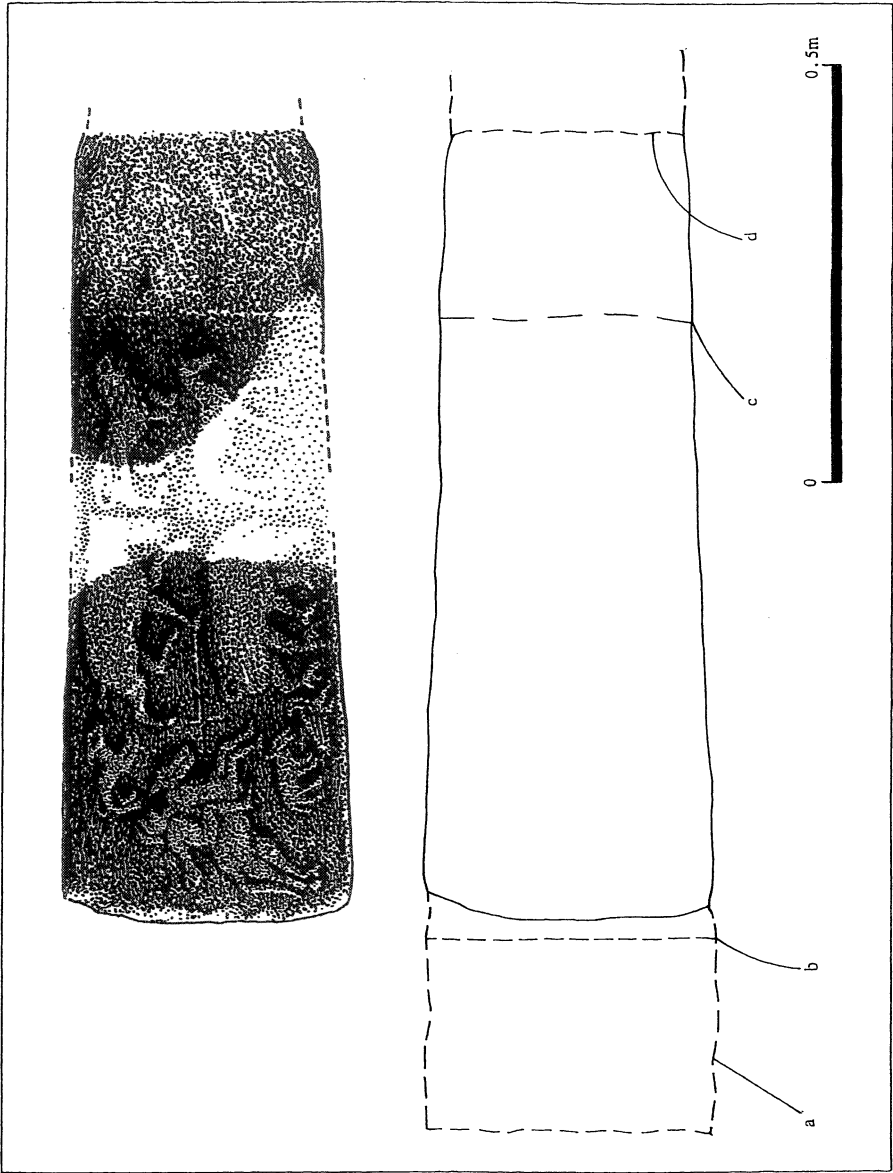


FIG. 13
Top, the panel in its suggested original orientation (*Crown copyright: RCAHMS*). Bottom, hypothetical reconstruction of the slab. a: The missing left-hand plain panel. b: The missing left-hand border. c: The right-hand border. d: The visible extent of the slab as it sits in its modern base. *Drawn by D. Swan.*

carved. Neither this lintel, nor the carved stone arch of a doorway from Forteviot, have hunting scenes. Cumbrae's decoration is interlace and knotwork and while Forteviot's arch has human figures and animals these are cloaked humans with staves and animals of biblical significance.⁶³ So little is known of Early-medieval stone church furniture, that the interpretation of the Eigg slab as part of an altar or chancel screen without parallels with which to compare it is problematic. This is compounded by the apparent inappropriateness of the hunting scene on such an object.

The final alternative interpretation to that of a shrine panel is that the slab is part of a composite cross base for a freestanding high cross. Two such box-like composite bases are found on Iona, one of which is for St John's Cross and has a construction similar to a corner post shrine. Another composite cross base comes from Kilnave, Islay, but this base has no corner posts.⁶⁴ None of these provide suitable parallels as the longer elements of their box structures are undecorated.

As a cross-slab, the orientation of the Eigg hunting scene marks it as an anomalous creation and one that has been 'fixed' by the later incised cross. It would appear that this slab from Eigg was originally intended for a type of shrine structure and was re-used in the 9th century for an upright cross-slab, probably taking advantage of a plain dressed surface which would have been the inside surface of the shrine. A cross was incised into the figurative face to correct the orientation and the ringed cross was then carved on the undecorated side.

The early church at Kildonnan is not well understood even though it does appear in the annals. The occurrence of a composite shrine in connection with the early church on Eigg may indicate an important foundation. A picture of Early-medieval Eigg is emerging, suggesting it held a relatively prominent place in both secular and ecclesiastical terms. The discovery of Pictish-type kerbed cairns on the other side of the island indicates the presence of a secular elite. The connection between burial cairns and Pictish elite is well attested. Adomnán related in *The Life of St Columba* how Columba met the Pictish leader Artbranan on Skye and, after he was baptised and died, a mound of stones was raised over his burial place.⁶⁵ The question arises of how the secular elite may be connected to the early church on Eigg. The depiction of the hunt on the panel may shed some light on this as the hunt is traditionally an activity of the secular elite, and suggests this may be the shrine of a noble or king.

Significantly for the corpus of Scottish stone monuments, the panel expands the geographic distribution of known shrine slabs. Not only does the slab contribute to our understanding of this type of composite shrine monument on the West coast, but it is the only known long panel from this region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank many people for their help, encouragement, and stimulating discussion: Dave Swan, Ian Fisher, I. G. Scott, Ewan Campbell, Stephen Driscoll and Kay Kirk. Many thanks are also due to Trevor Cowie and Jim Wilson of the National Museum of Scotland for supplying access to the casts of the stones from Eigg in their collection and to the editor and anonymous referee of this paper for their comments.

MEGGEN M. GONDEK AND STUART JEFFREY

⁶³ Leslie Alcock and Elizabeth Alcock, 'Reconnaissance excavations on Early Historic fortifications and other royal sites in Scotland, 1974–84. 5: A, Excavations & other fieldwork at Forteviot, Perthshire, 1981; B, Excavations at Urquhart Castle, Inverness-shire, 1983; C, Excavations at Dunnottar, Kincardineshire, 1984', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scotland*, 122 (1992), 215–87, at p. 225.

⁶⁴ Fisher, op. cit. in note 48, at pp. 16–17, 135 and 139. Although some cross bases, notably in Ireland, are decorated, these are of monolithic construction.

⁶⁵ Adomnán of Iona, *Life of Columba* (I.33), trans. Richard Sharpe, *Life of St Columba* (Harmondsworth, 1995), 136–7.