

ART. VI. – *The meaning of the Viking-age shaft at Dacre.* By RICHARD N. BAILEY, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.

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THE sculptured stone shown in plate 1 now stands firmly manacled to the south wall of the chancel in St. Andrew's church, Dacre (NY 460266). It was found amongst the building rubble of the east end of the church during restoration work in 1875 and local antiquaries then correctly identified it as the headless shaft of a pre-Norman cross.<sup>1</sup>

Three sides of the stone still carry carving but any ornament on the reverse had already been cut away when the stone was discovered in the nineteenth century. It is clear, however, that the shaft is otherwise complete and that it must always have had somewhat slab-like proportions.<sup>2</sup> The evidence for this claim can be seen on the narrow sides where the survival of the "spring" of the cross-head and of both the lateral and lower frames of the panels prove that the shaft was no higher, and only marginally deeper, than it now appears.

The panels on the narrow sides are decorated with three-strand plait but it is the ornament on the broad face which has naturally always attracted interest. Here there are three panels set one above the other within an incised framing line. The sculptor has given little modelling to either the humans or animals in these scenes; they merely stand out from a ground which has been cut back to a uniform depth. Even this cutting back has not been carried out consistently. Thanks to this style of carving it is now very difficult to distinguish details and much of the original effect must have depended upon painting after the sculptor had completed his work.

The lowest panel illustrates the Fall of Man. Adam and Eve stand on either side of a central tree whose stiff branches carry a prolific quantity of fruit. Adam is on the sinister side, possibly naked and apparently drawn in profile. Eve is clothed and reaches for the fruit whilst the snake coils in front of her. The ground behind both figures has not been cut back. Two wavering incised lines form the border at the top of this panel and separate it from a scene showing an animal leaping onto the back of a horned hart. Again the ground has not been completely cleared and a section of this uncut area partially divides these animals from a third scene at the top of the shaft. In this upper panel two human figures face each other across a rectangular object which appears to have two pellet-like legs. The smaller figure on the spectator's left reaches out to touch the other. Between their heads is a trefoil motif and above them is a backward-turning quadruped with a hollowed ear. There are traces of foliage around the scene.

### **Dating**

There is no reason to argue with Collingwood's dating of the shaft to the Viking period.<sup>3</sup> The fragmentary remains of the cross-head show that it must have been of the ringed type which was introduced to Northumbria in the tenth century and the slab-like proportions are also typical of this period. The contoured outline of the beast at the top

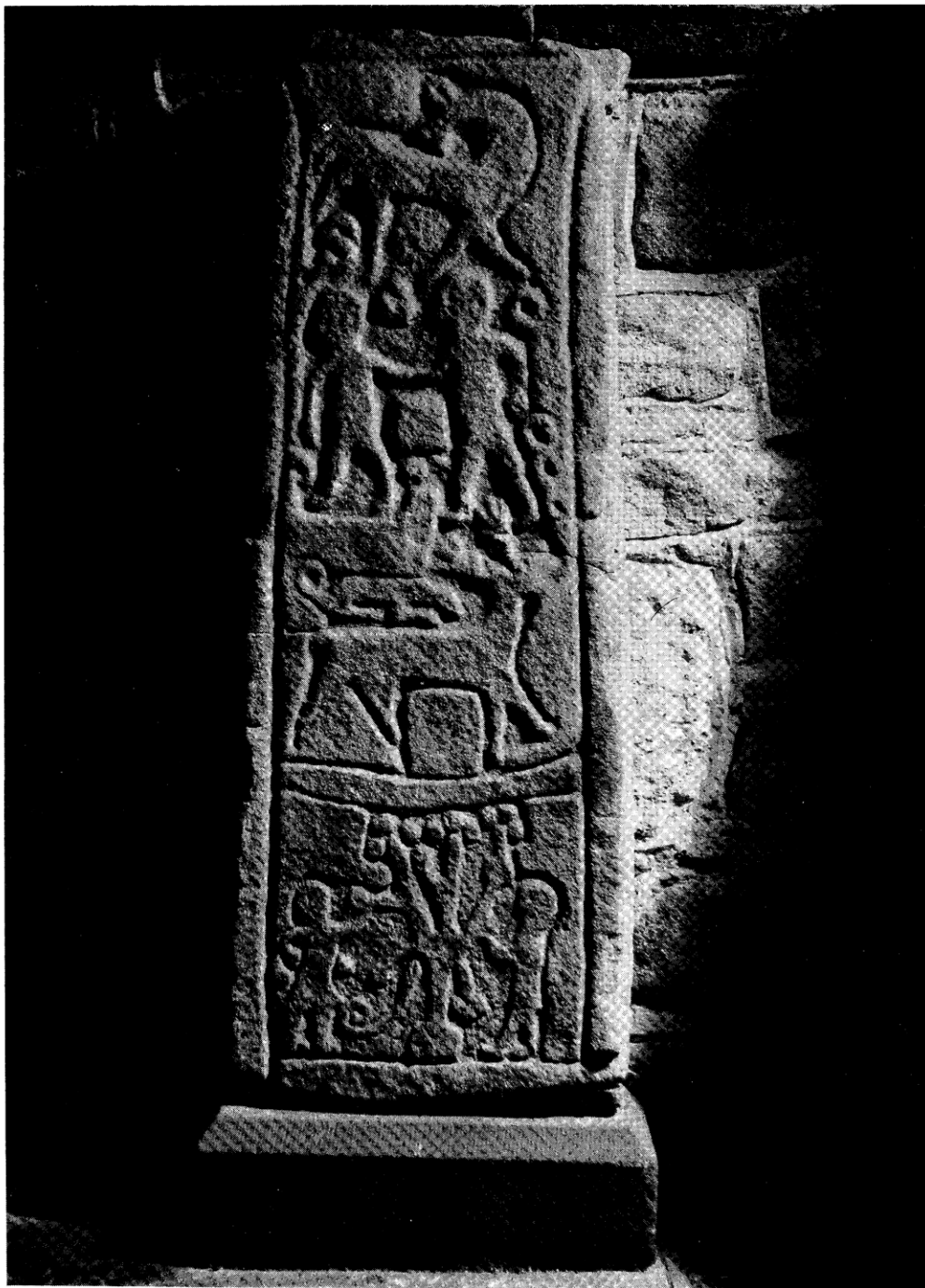


PLATE I. – The Dacre Shaft.

*(Photograph: A. Wiper)*

of the stone is a characteristic feature of Scandinavian-derived animal styles whilst the crude figure-drawing can be matched by other tenth- and eleventh-century work in Yorkshire. This date is further confirmed by the presence of the so-called "hart and hound" motif. The distribution and insular origins of this interesting theme are examined in an appendix to this paper: here it is sufficient to notice that the Dacre version is characteristic of a Viking-period rendering of the hunts known from earlier sculpture in Celtic areas of Britain.

### **The lower scene**

Our search for the meaning of the carving can best begin with the scene at the bottom of the shaft. There is no difficulty in recognising the subject; this clearly is the Fall of Man. Yet even the presence of this scene marks out the Dacre shaft as idiosyncratic because, like other Old Testament scenes, the Fall is rarely illustrated on surviving pre-Norman sculpture in England. There are, in fact, only two other English examples, both of the pre-Viking period. One is at Newent in Gloucestershire and the other at Breedon in Leicestershire.<sup>4</sup> None of the pre-Norman sculptures in Wales carries the scene and the only early medieval example from the Isle of Man is on a slab which is conventionally dated to the twelfth century.<sup>5</sup> Among the hundreds of early Christian carvings from Scotland the scene is found but twice, at Farnell and on Iona.<sup>6</sup> It is probably significant that both of these Scottish carvings are on the west coast, and that the Iona cross has strong Irish affinities, because it is only among Irish sculptures that the Fall is depicted with any frequency before the twelfth century in the British Isles. The earliest occurrence in Ireland seems to be on the eighth-century cross at Moone though the majority belong to the ninth or tenth centuries.<sup>7</sup>

The Dacre Fall is thus already interesting as a rare example of an English representation of the scene, and indeed it is the only Viking-period illustration surviving among English sculptures.

The general arrangement of the Dacre scene corresponds to the symmetrical patterning found elsewhere in Christian art. Individually most of the elements of the Cumbrian representation are known elsewhere but their combination is unique and may throw some light on the ultimate model which lies behind this particular rendering.

Eve is usually shown to the spectator's right but the Dacre positioning on the left does occur in early Christian art on the continent, on the Manx slab from Bride, on the Farnell stone and on several of the Irish high crosses.<sup>8</sup> This detail therefore need not be particularly significant. Nor perhaps is the fact that Eve is shown in the act of plucking, though the only insular parallel seems to be at Breedon. More important is the appearance of Eve in clothed form. Admittedly she is also clothed at Farnell and Graiguenamanagh<sup>9</sup> where she appears alongside a dressed Adam. All could be artists' aberrations. The possibility that it is something more than this at Dacre, however, is suggested by the extraordinary position of the serpent. In most representations it curls around the tree<sup>10</sup> but here it is on the ground. Such grounded snakes have been claimed in other contexts as a non-western type and this would obviously open up a rich field for speculation about an eastern model lying behind Dacre.<sup>11</sup> But the serpent also takes up this position in illustrated Genesis cycles<sup>12</sup> and these are perhaps a more likely source for the ultimate exemplar on which the Cumbrian sculptor relied, particularly when the clothed Eve is taken into account. Behind the Dacre depiction there probably lies an

assimilation of a picture sequence which, whilst retaining the symmetrical arrangement of the central Fall scene, has combined it with the grounded serpent and clothed figures which more properly belong to later stages of the narrative.

### The upper scene

Whilst the lower panel may have its iconographical peculiarities the subject is readily identifiable. This is not the case with the scene at the top of the shaft.

Calverley was the first to tackle its problems and he suggested that it showed the meeting in 927 between Æthelstan and Constantine which William of Malmesbury located at Dacre.<sup>13</sup> This identification would not be out of line with the art-historical dating of the stone. Collingwood was more cautious but, at first, followed Calverley and even suggested that the scene showed the baptism of the Scottish king's son which was associated with the agreement.<sup>14</sup> He later abandoned this interpretation but offered no substitute.

The discovery of the shaft at Breedon, shown in plate 2, justifies Collingwood's doubts about the Dacre scene recording a local Cumbrian event. On this Leicestershire carving, set directly above a Fall scene, are two figures separated by a rectangular object which has two legs. The taller figure is on the spectator's right and both of them seem to grasp a curving object held between them. In view of the identical association with the Fall and the similarity in the arrangement of the figures it is almost certain that the Dacre panel is a crude version of the event depicted at Breedon and that this event is Christian rather than secular/historical. If elements used in one scene are used to supplement those of the other then I believe that it can be demonstrated that both Dacre and Breedon show the sacrifice of Isaac and portray it in a manner which is characteristically insular. This further implies that all three pre-Norman carvings in England which depict the Fall also show the Isaac sacrifice because the stone at Newent mentioned above has a clear example of this scene occupying all of the side on the reverse of its Adam and Eve face.

The sacrifice of Isaac was a very popular theme in early Christian art. Not only do actual examples survive but we also have comments on its frequent depiction from writers like Gregory of Nyssa in the early fourth century and Augustine of Hippo in the fifth.<sup>15</sup> We have already seen that Old Testament scenes are not frequent in English sculpture and, as with the Fall, the majority of examples of Isaac found in the British Isles come from Ireland: Newent and (possibly) an Irish-linked cross from Iona provide the only exceptions to this statement.<sup>16</sup>

The iconography of the Isaac scene on insular sculpture has not been closely examined.<sup>17</sup> It was scarcely touched in van Woerden's recent study and completely ignored in a pioneering article by Moore Smith.<sup>18</sup> Yet, even in the absence of such a detailed study, one feature seems clear: the dominant type in the British Isles has the altar placed *between* the two figures.<sup>19</sup> This is very rare on the continent. The Breedon and Dacre arrangement of figures is thus typical of insular representations of the Isaac sacrifice theme.

It may be objected that the Irish and Newent versions of the central-altar arrangement show Isaac as leaning over the altar whilst the Breedon and Dacre figures are upright. This is not a damaging argument. The Irish sculptures at Galloon and the cross on Iona have figures which stand almost erect<sup>20</sup> whilst the rare continental central-altar types include both upright and leaning varieties.<sup>21</sup> Dacre and Breedon could, like Galloon,



*(Photograph: C. Roper and D. Farnsworth, Derby)*

PLATE II. – The Breedon Shaft.

have developed from the leaning type or derive independently from upright continental models.

The details of both Breedon and Dacre can be paralleled on Isaac scenes. The central rectangles at both Dacre and Breedon have two legs and are thus identical with the altars of the Irish crosses at Moone and Castledermot.<sup>22</sup> Smoke rises from the Breedon altar as it does on fifth-century continental sculpture and at Newent.<sup>23</sup> Behind the dexter figure at Breedon (and probably planned also at Dacre) are the faggots which are found in a similar position at Newent. The smaller (Isaac) figure is placed to the spectator's left just as he is at Moone and on some of the continental material. On both carvings however the two figures are almost the same size: this does not rule out the identification because it is a feature shared with other sacrifice scenes and reflects a long patristic tradition about Isaac's maturity at the time of the incident.<sup>24</sup> Only one detail is difficult to parallel and that is the fact that both figures at Breedon touch a curved object held between them. I initially interpreted this as a weapon, with Isaac's hand raised in defence, but am happy to accept Professor Cramp's suggestion to me that it is actually a faggot which is being laid upon the altar by both father and son.<sup>25</sup>

It is, of course, impossible to be certain that Breedon and Dacre *do* show the Isaac sacrifice. But it seems highly probable when (a) any insular example of this theme should have a central altar, (b) the only other English Adam and Eve at Newent is balanced by the Isaac sacrifice and (c) the details can be matched in other representations of the story.

### **The significance of the juxtapositioning of Fall and Isaac sacrifice**

If, as I have argued, Dacre and Breedon show the Isaac sacrifice then what is the significance of its combination with the Fall, both on these two shafts and at Newent?

One possible approach to an explanation is along a well-trodden path: the theme of the Helps of God. Studies of the early Christian sarcophagi by Le Blant, and of the Irish crosses by both Flower and Henry, have shown that their selection of biblical scenes was governed by a concept.<sup>26</sup> This concept was the illustration of God's intervention in human affairs to help sinful Man after his Fall. The catalogue of biblical examples derives from Jewish prayers which were early adopted and adapted to Christian use to illustrate the theme of Redemption. The sequence figures most notably in the prayers for the souls of the dead (*commendatio animae*) but also occurs in other contexts such as the Easter Saturday readings. God's intervention to save Isaac figures prominently in most of these literary and artistic sequences and the three English carvings could be seen as, admittedly abbreviated, versions of this Help of God scheme.

Whilst not wishing to deny the relevance of that theme there is another related approach to interpretation which is available. There is a certain amount of evidence which suggests that, for the Anglo-Saxons, Isaac's sacrifice was in some sense climactic, a completion of what the Fall had set in train. Thus the Anglo-Saxon poetic version of Genesis ends with the Isaac sacrifice.<sup>27</sup> Late in the Anglo-Saxon period the homilist Ælfric re-worked Alcuin's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi* but only drew on his source as far as the sacrifice.<sup>28</sup> Slightly less relevantly Ælfric's own translation of Genesis into English only went as far as Isaac.<sup>29</sup> These hints of an Anglo-Saxon emphasis upon the Isaac sacrifice reflect a more widespread attitude towards the Old Testament in general and this episode in particular.<sup>30</sup> It is an attitude summed up by St. Augustine when he wrote that the "Old Testament is but the New concealed".<sup>31</sup> The events of the Old Testament

were seen as 'figures' or 'types' foreshadowing the redemptive acts of Christ chronicled in the New Testament. St Augustine was merely voicing a long-established view when he claimed that what was written about Abraham actually happened but that it was at the same time a prophetic image of things to come.<sup>32</sup> It was not difficult to find in the Isaac sacrifice a "prophetic image" of Christ's own death and there was indeed a biblical basis for this link in St. Paul's explicit statements in *Hebrews*, XI, 17 and 19 and *Galatians*, III, 15-16. Christian commentators also saw a relevant allusion in *Romans*, VIII, 32. Following Paul's lead Christian Father after Christian Father commented upon the Isaac sacrifice and drew out its parallels with Christ's passion.<sup>33</sup> All can be summed up in St. Ambrose' words: *Isaac ergo Christi passuri est typus* (Isaac is a type of Christ's passion).<sup>34</sup>

It is against this patristic background that the Isaac sacrifice achieved a prominence in commentary, liturgy and art which it would not seem to merit from any purely narrative reading of the Bible. The emphasis given to it by its prefiguring or typological function is well highlighted by the fact that medieval sacramentaries, which carry little other illumination, often have a depiction of Isaac's sacrifice accompanying the first words to the Canon of the Mass, in whose prayers Abraham and his son are prominently invoked.<sup>35</sup>

It was not only Isaac who took on this forward-looking role. Other elements in the story were similarly seen as having typological significance. The thorn bush in St. Augustine's eyes, for example, foreshadows the crown of thorns worn by Christ.<sup>36</sup> But it is perhaps the ram who, along with Isaac, most catches the interpreter's attention. The early Fathers were careful to assert that the sacrifice of Isaac had a resemblance to the future reality of Christ's passion but did not accomplish it. Isaac, unlike Christ, did not die. But the ram *was* sacrificed and commentators recognised that it also was a figure of Christ, or a part of Christ's nature.<sup>37</sup> In spite of zoological problems the ram came to be identified with the Paschal lamb and the commentaries are full of such equations as the ram hanging by the horns (*cornibus haerente*) and Christ suspended between the extremities (*cornibus*) of the cross.<sup>38</sup>

Isaac and the lamb, then, in the words of Thomas Aquinas, were the most eminent figures of Christ's sacrifice.<sup>39</sup>

This roll-call of the Fathers of the Church may seem a long way from pre-Conquest Northumbria and village sculpture. Yet there is a surprising amount of evidence to show that this concept of Isaac was a commonplace which was firmly understood in England. Bede referred to pictures which were brought back by Benedict Biscop from Rome to Jarrow and describes these as being set up to show the concordance of episodes from the Old and New Testaments. As an example he took the figure of Isaac with the faggots and Christ carrying the cross.<sup>40</sup> His own commentary on Genesis follows the pattern of the earlier Fathers and includes such equations as the horns of the ram and the ends of the cross.<sup>41</sup> At the other end of the Anglo-Saxon period the homilist Ælfric, anxious that the Old Testament should be read properly, prefaced his translation of Genesis by saying that Abraham pre-figured or betokened (*hafde getacnunge*) the heavenly father who sent his son to death whilst Isaac betokened the Saviour Christ who was put to death for us.<sup>42</sup> Similarly in his sermon on the marriage at Cana he included both Isaac and the ram as types of Christ.<sup>43</sup>

The Fathers, the liturgy and a variety of Anglo-Saxon sources all suggest that the



selection of Isaac and Abraham would be full of significance for the medieval Christian. At Newent, Breedon and Dacre the Fall is set off against a scene of sacrifice which is (at one and the same time) a reminder of God's help to Man in need and, more importantly, a pre-figuring of the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, the second Adam. In the light of the commentaries also it would not be irrelevant to suggest that the backward-turning animal at the top of the Dacre shaft is a ram, that other type of Christ, though drawn in the crude free-style of Viking-age carvings.

### **The significance of the hart and hound**

If, in its medieval manner, the Dacre Fall and Isaac sacrifice present us with a significant Christian statement about Man's Fall and Redemption then what of the so-called hart and hound theme?

There is no doubt that there are numerous interpretations possible in terms of Celtic or Scandinavian paganism<sup>44</sup> but it should not be forgotten that the hart was also a familiar Christian symbol.<sup>45</sup> It was best known to Christian commentators for its enmity to the serpent, a feature of its activities which was popularised by such encyclopedists as Isidore of Seville and Hrabanus Maurus and which is prominent in the bestiaries: in this encounter it could signify both Christ and the Christian. And the combination of the hart with the hound also has a Christian meaning or, to be more precise, has several possible Christian interpretations.

The first is that it represents the Christian pursuit of the sinner. In the *Hortus Deliciarum*, a twelfth-century compilation of commonplaces, we are told that "the hunt of the Christian is the conversion of sinners. These are represented by hares or goats or wild boars or stags. We pursue these beasts with dogs when we arouse their fears by preaching the word."<sup>46</sup> Such an interpretation of the hart and pursuing dog, applied to Dacre, would make this an entirely appropriate symbol to place between the Fall and the Sacrifice.

But perhaps two interpretations based upon the Psalter are more relevant. The psalms were, of course, one of the most familiar parts of the Bible to the early Christian world through their daily use in liturgy and prayer, and meditation on them continually emphasised their prophetic character. It is therefore interesting for our purposes to see that the theme of a hart pursued by dogs is present in the psalms in contexts where exegesis saw the hunted quarry as the Christian soul. The point is dramatically illustrated in the drawings of the Carolingian *Utrecht Psalter*, a work which was eventually brought to England and copied on no less than three occasions. Its illustration of Psalm 41 shows the hart seeking the spring of water, a quest which writers like the influential Cassiodorus saw as a "figure" of the soul coming to the fountain of life.<sup>47</sup> The illustration shows the hart approaching the fountain but he is pursued by two hounds, animals for which there is no textual basis.<sup>48</sup> In this setting it is clear that they are symbols of evil. Similarly the psalmist's plea of Psalm 90 to be freed from the snare of the huntsman is portrayed in terms of a hart pursued by a horseman with two hounds: in a commentary attributed to Bede the symbolism of these hunters is made clear: *venantes vel venatores sunt diaboli* (the hunters are the devils).<sup>49</sup> Given these commentaries and the illustrations which reflect medieval interpretation it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the hart and hound at Dacre are a symbol of the soul attacked by the forces of evil.<sup>50</sup> This would fit neatly between the Fall and a scene which shows God's help to Man and the availability of redemption.



A second Psalter-based interpretation is even more attractive. It depends upon Psalm 21 (“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me”). Even within the much-used Psalter this psalm was thrust into prominence because its opening words were the ones which Christ invoked at the moment of his crucifixion. Inevitably therefore all commentators were united in interpreting its text in terms of the crucifixion and resurrection.<sup>51</sup> This psalm has its dogs: in verse 20 the psalmist asks for his soul to be delivered from the sword and his darling from the power of the dogs whilst in verse 17 the dogs surround him.<sup>52</sup> These dogs occur in passages which were taken as alluding to Christ’s passion: Cassiodorus, for example, opens his comments on verse 17 with the words *Hic mirabili proprietate passionis suae sacramenta describit*.<sup>53</sup>

The psalm also has its hart, though this fact is not immediately obvious to the reader who does not see the text in its medieval vulgate versions. In this setting, at the beginning of the psalm, is a note reading *pro cervo matutino* (according to the hart at dawn) which derives from Hebrew instructions concerning the appropriate tune for the psalm’s performance. But the commentary of pseudo-Jerome took this note in a very different way. And so also did Bede who followed pseudo-Jerome rather than Cassiodorus on this point. Jerome wrote *sed nos ceruum, qui interficiat serpentes et uenena consumat, nullum alium nisi Xpistum intellegimus*<sup>54</sup> (but by the hart, who kills serpents and drinks the venom, we understand nothing other than Christ). Bede took this a stage further in the prefatory *explanatio* in which he summarised the Christian interpretation and direction of the psalm:

*In Hebraeo autem scriptum est : Pro cervo matutino, quo eundem Dominum significari non dubium est, qui interfecerit serpentes et venena consumpserit, Judaeisque canina rabie persequentibus caelorum alta petierit.*

(Moreover in Hebrew it is written: According to the hart at dawn, by which there is no doubt that the same Lord is signified who killed serpents and ate poisons, and who, while the Jews were pursuing him with dog-like madness, made for the heights of the heavens).<sup>55</sup>

What was implicit in pseudo-Jerome is explicit in Bede. Jerome had identified the hart as Christ in a psalm where the attacks of the dogs were seen as a “figure” of Christ’s passion. Bede, the most influential English scholar of the early medieval period, draws both images together in his picture of the hart pursued *Judaeisque canina rabie*.

When seen against the background of this psalm explication the Dacre hart and hound can be interpreted as a Christological image, as a symbol of Christ’s passion. It is a symbol of that same redemptive sacrifice to which the Isaac scene alludes. Perhaps it is significant therefore that these two scenes are not separated by a panel frame. Together they provide the antithesis to the triumph of evil seen in the Fall of Man at the bottom of the shaft.

### Some implications

I have attempted to show that the ornament on the face of the Dacre cross could have been full of significance for the medieval Christian. If my arguments are acceptable then they carry implications for our picture of Viking-age Cumbria. It has long been recognised that the sculptures at Gosforth show a novel and thoughtful approach to Christian doctrine in the tenth century.<sup>56</sup> But elsewhere in Cumbria the crosses show little sign of interest in Christian iconography and no enthusiasm for using sculpture to

proclaim the faith in the manner of contemporary Ireland. What little Christian depiction there is seems markedly archaic.<sup>57</sup>

Dacre, in its crude way, seems to provide another exception to this pattern. It is not perhaps coincidental that this overtly Christian carving should come from the site of one of the three known pre-Viking monasteries of Cumbria. This is one of the places where one might expect some thoughtful Christian teaching to survive. One wonders also whether there might have been survivals in the tenth century of wall paintings, ivories or sculptures which could have suggested elements of the sculptor's iconography.<sup>58</sup> Like Gosforth, Dacre offers an unexpected insight into the nature of Christian activity in the area at a date when our documentary sources fail us.

## APPENDIX

### The hart and hound motif

F. S. Scott examined this motif in Northumbrian sculpture in an article published almost twenty years ago.<sup>59</sup> Some parts of his treatment now need correction and amplification.

Clear Northumbrian examples of the theme are known in north-west England at Dacre, Lancaster and Heysham and there are three more in Yorkshire at Kirklevington, Middleton and Ellerburn. Collingwood suggested other possible Yorkshire examples at Melsonby and Wath but only the latter really carries any conviction.<sup>60</sup> Scott's claim that Lythe could be added to the list is doubtful. At Heysham and Middleton the hart and hound are part of a larger hunt scene; in all other Northumbrian examples the motif is presented separately.

Four of the five certain Northumbrian occurrences, other than Dacre, are clearly of the Viking period. This is indicated by the type of monument, the form of the cross-head or the associated ornament. Only Kirklevington lacks direct evidence of date though its style of animal-drawing points to the tenth/eleventh century rather than any earlier period.

In contrast to this late occurrence in Northumbria the motif is found in earlier contexts elsewhere in the British Isles. Both in Ireland and in Pictish Scotland there are eighth- and ninth-century sculptures showing hunt scenes which incorporate the hart and hound theme.<sup>61</sup> The ultimate source in both areas is presumably the hunt depicted in early Christian Mediterranean art. It may therefore seem surprising that Northumbrian sculpture, which drew so heavily on similar Mediterranean sources, should not have adopted this particular form of ornament. It is all the more remarkable when we consider that a type of hunt scene is found in pre-Viking Mercian art<sup>62</sup> whilst a seventh-century carving from Hornhausen shows the acceptance of the hunt, with hart and hound, in another Germanic context.<sup>63</sup> There is, however, no evidence for pre-Viking usage in Northumbria and it would appear that the hart and hound was first introduced to the area in the tenth century. If the examples listed above had represented the continuation of an earlier Northumbrian usage then it would be very difficult to explain both the absence of the motif from the non-Scandinavian (and very traditional) parts of northern England and the general coincidence of its distribution with Norwegian-settled areas of the north.

The immediate source of the Northumbrian examples would seem, then, to lie in either Pictland or Ireland and in both of these areas we have evidence of the continued use of the hunt theme in sculpture of the Viking period. On distributional and historical grounds Ireland is the more likely source. There is certainly every reason to reject the model proposed by Scott's map and text which suggest that the Strathclyde Govan material is chronologically intermediary between Pictish examples and those found around the Irish Sea.<sup>64</sup> Govan's sculpture is much later than many of the Irish examples of the theme.

Ireland is presumably also the source for the other sculptured hunts around the Irish Sea which belong to the Viking period. But in examining these one clear fact emerges: the Manx and English examples share exclusive links. At Lancaster, for example, the ubiquitous spiral-hip of Manx animal-drawing is found but, more importantly, Man and England treat the hart and hound as a distinct motif, separating it from any accompanying men and beasts.<sup>65</sup> It is therefore an attractive hypothesis to suggest that the Viking-age sculptors of Man and England (who are closely linked in so many ways) abstracted the hart and hound from the more crowded scenes of their Celtic exemplars.

Unfortunately such a neat view has to take account of three points. The first is that a so-called "trial piece" from St. Blane's, Bute, carries an example of the motif.<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately its date cannot be fixed. If early (eighth or ninth century) then it could represent either a chance anticipation of the later Manx/English abstraction or perhaps an unfinished sketch whose accompanying hunt was never completed. If late then it would show that this abstraction was not so limited as the rest of the evidence suggests.

More important, perhaps, is a second occurrence of the hart and hound motif in a little noticed sketch under one of the boards of the Oseberg ship.<sup>67</sup> At a date early in the ninth century it could be argued that this represents a separate Scandinavian tradition, based ultimately on Mediterranean models, and that there is a Scandinavian development lying behind the Manx/English abstraction. This seems improbable for there is no other trace of this scene in earlier or later Scandinavian art: it is more likely to represent British Celtic influence on the art of Oseberg anticipating (but not directly connected to) the later sculptural abbreviation of Man and northern England.

Lastly it should be noted that a separate theme of lion attacking a stag was known in eastern Mediterranean art and it is at least theoretically possible that, perhaps *via* fabrics, this was copied in the west and was the source of some of the abbreviated hart and hound representations. In view of the distribution and dating of the Manx and English examples I think this highly unlikely.

The conclusion is that the hart and hound motif is probably a selection of two elements from hunt scenes which the Vikings encountered in insular art in Ireland. It would appear that, as far as the Northumbrian examples are concerned, this selection is a development shared between Man and northern England.

### Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> For the discovery see: H. Richardson, On an ancient sculptured stone at Dacre, Cumberland, *The Reliquary*,<sup>1</sup> XVI, 1875, 33-34; C. Mathews, The Dacre stone, CW<sup>1</sup>, XI, 1891 for 1890, 226-228. A full bibliography will appear in my Cumbrian volume of the British Academy's *Corpus of pre-Norman Sculpture in England* now in preparation under the general editorship of Professor R. J. Cramp.

<sup>2</sup> Height 96.5 cm. Breadth 37 cm. tapering to 29 cm. Depth 10 cm.

<sup>3</sup> *W. G. Collingwood 1927*, 151. Bibliographical abbreviations are listed at the end of the article.

- <sup>4</sup> For Newent see E. Conder's report in *PSAL2 XXI*, 1907, 478-479 and an iconographical discussion of its Fall scene in R. E. Kaske, A poem of the cross in the Exeter Book, *Traditio XXIII*, 1967, 66. For Breedon see R. Abbott, Some recently discovered Anglo-Saxon carvings at Breedon-on-the-Hill, *Trans. Leics. A.H.S.*, XXXIX, 1964, 20-23.
- <sup>5</sup> P. M. C. Kermode, *Manx Crosses* (London, 1907), no. 116.
- <sup>6</sup> J. R. Allen 1903, III, figs. 232 and 398.
- <sup>7</sup> For Moone see: *F. Henry 1964*, plate 16 and *F. Henry 1965*, 142. For other Irish sculptures see *F. Henry 1933*.
- <sup>8</sup> For early examples from Gaul see *E. le Blant 1886*, nos. 22, 87, 120. For an early Christian painting see P. du Bourget, *Early Christian Painting* (London, 1965), plate 93. For later examples from Spain see W. W. S. Cook, The earliest painted panels of Catalonia: V, *Art Bulletin*, X, 1927, figs 2 and 9. For Irish examples at Monasterboice, Durrow and Tihilly see *F. Henry 1967*, plates 81 and 100 and A. K. Porter, *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland* (New Haven, 1931), fig. 104. For Bride and Farnell see notes 5 and 6.
- <sup>9</sup> For Farnell see note 6. For Graiguenamanagh see *F. Henry 1933*, plate 50.
- <sup>10</sup> At Farnell the snake seems to be duplicated whilst at Bride and on Irish crosses at Graiguenamanagh, Kinitty and Durrow it is missing altogether: see *F. Henry 1933*, plates 50 and 92 and *F. Henry 1967*, plate 100.
- <sup>11</sup> For east/west distinction see E. W. Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton, 1951), 8.
- <sup>12</sup> J. Beckwith, *Early Medieval Art* (London, 1964), plates 46 and 136.
- <sup>13</sup> Calverley's argument is most accessible in *W. S. Calverley 1899*, 114. For William of Malmesbury see W. Stubbs' edition of *De Gestis Regum Anglorum in the Rolls Series*, XC (London, 1887), 147. The D version of the Chronicle merely locates the meeting "aet eomontum".
- <sup>14</sup> For Collingwood see *W. S. Calverley 1899*, 115. The local twelfth-century Bridekirk font demonstrates the appropriateness of an antithesis between Fall and Baptism.
- <sup>15</sup> *P G.*, XLVI, 565 and 601; *P L.*, XLII.
- <sup>16</sup> Most of the Irish material is illustrated in *F. Henry 1933*, *F. Henry 1964*, *F. Henry 1967* and *F. Henry 1970*. *F. Henry 1967*, plate 105 shows the Iona example. For Newent see note 4 above.
- <sup>17</sup> Though see a suggestive study of the ram element in M. Schapiro, An Irish-Latin text on the angel with the lamb in Abraham's sacrifice, *Essays in the History of Art presented to R. Wittkower*, ed. D. Fraser (London, 1967), 17-19.
- <sup>18</sup> A. Moore Smith, The iconography of the sacrifice of Isaac in early Christian art, *American Jour. of Archaeology*, XXVI, 1922, 159-173. I. S. van Woerden, The iconography of the sacrifice of Abraham, *Vigiliae Christianae*, XV, 1961, 214-255.
- <sup>19</sup> A clear exception is the cross from Graiguenamanagh: *F. Henry 1933*, plate 52. Note that the late Old English illustrated Hexateuch (B. M. Cott.CI.B IV) contains a central-altar type: see *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*, XVIII, 1974, f. 38r.
- <sup>20</sup> For Galloon see D. Lowry-Corry, The sculptured crosses of Galloon, *JRSAL.*, LXIV, 1934, 164-176. For Iona see note 16.
- <sup>21</sup> For a seventh-century leaning type from S. Pedro de Nave see T. Ulbert, Skulptur in Spanien (6-8 Jahrhundert), *Kolloquium über Spätantike und Frühmittelalterliche Skulptur*, ed. V. H. Elbern (Mainz, 1971), 31ff. and references. For upright types see: E. le Blant, *Nouveau recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule* (Paris, 1892), nos 43 and 44; J. Hubert et al., *Europe in the Dark Ages* (London, 1969), plate 20; J. Baum, *La Sculpture figurale en Europe à l'époque mérovingienne* (Paris, 1937), plate LXX.
- <sup>22</sup> *F. Henry 1964*, plate 12; *F. Henry 1967*, plate 66.
- <sup>23</sup> Compare Ecija's sarcophogus illustrated in Baum, *op.cit.*, plate LXX.
- <sup>24</sup> The ultimate source is probably Josephus: see *PL.*, CXCVIII, 1104. For discussion see M. E. Wells, The age of Isaac at the time of the sacrifice, *Mod. Lang. Notes*, LIV, 1939, 579-582.
- <sup>25</sup> Among the Irish carvings the Fall and Isaac are immediately juxtaposed at Moone, Arboe, Clones, Donaghmore and (in a different way) at Castledermot.
- <sup>26</sup> *E. le Blant 1878*, xxv; R. Flower, Irish high crosses, *Jour. Warb. Court. Inst.*, XVII, 1954, 87-97; *F. Henry 1967*, 142 ff.
- <sup>27</sup> G. V. Krapp and E. K. Dobbie (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*, I, (London, 1931), 87.
- <sup>28</sup> For the text see G. E. MacLean in *Anglia*, VI, 1883, 425 ff. and *ibid.*, VII, 1884, 1 ff.
- <sup>29</sup> Less relevant because Ælfric's text did not go beyond chapter 22 of the Isaac story in Genesis: see P. Clemoes' editorial remarks in *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*, XVIII, 1974.

- <sup>30</sup> An excellent study is found in J. Daniélou, *Sacramentum Futuri* (Paris, 1950).
- <sup>31</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, XLVIII, 1955, 531.
- <sup>32</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, XLI, 1961, 14-15.
- <sup>33</sup> For an invaluable collection of patristic references see J. Daniélou, *op.cit.*, 97-111 and Van Woerden, *op.cit.*, 216-220, 252-253. Note also F. Cabrol and H. LeClercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1907 ff.), s.n. Abraham, Isaac.
- <sup>34</sup> *PL.*, XIV, 469.
- <sup>35</sup> The relevant chapter of Genesis is also included in the readings for the Easter vigil. For other liturgical uses see Cabrol/LeClercq (note 33), s.n. *Abraham* and Van Woerden, *op. cit.*, 219-220.
- <sup>36</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, XLVIII, 1955, 537.
- <sup>37</sup> Daniélou, *op. cit.*, 97-111 and Cabrol/LeClercq, *op. cit.*, s.n. *bélier* give examples. Note, for instance, St. Augustine in *PL.*, XLII, 810.
- <sup>38</sup> So, for example, Tertullian: *Corpus Christianorum*, II, 1954, 1388-1389.
- <sup>39</sup> See Daniélou, *op. cit.*
- <sup>40</sup> C. Plummer (ed.), *Venerabilis Bedae Opera Historica* (Oxford, 1896), I, 373. This scheme is one which is known earlier in Rome and later at Charlemagne's Ingelheim.
- <sup>41</sup> *PL.*, XCI, 244-245.
- <sup>42</sup> S. J. Crawford (ed.), *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch* (*Early English Text Society*, CLX, 1922), 26.
- <sup>43</sup> B. Thorpe (ed.), *Catholic Homilies* (London, 1846), II, 60 ff.
- <sup>44</sup> For a Celtic background see A. K. Porter, *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland* (New Haven, 1931), 12-14; F. Henry 1965, 155; A. Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (London, 1967), 333. For Scandinavian significance see E. Ploss, *Siegfried Sigurd, der Drachenkämpfer* (Cologne, 1966), 109; E. O. G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North* (London, 1964), 199-200, 204-205.
- <sup>45</sup> See E. Kirschbaum, *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie* (Rome, 1970), II, 286-289. In general see: E. Kirschbaum, *op.cit.*, 362-363; H. Appuhn, *Die Jagd als Sinnbild . . .* (Berlin, 1964), 20-22; C. Pschmidt, *Die Sage von der Verfolgten Hinde* (Greifswald, 1911), 35-38.
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted in F. Henry 1965, 153-154. The horseman armed with a crosier in the hunt scene at Banagher shows that such a Christian interpretation of a hunt was known in insular contexts: see F. Henry 1965, plate 94.
- <sup>47</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, XCVII, 1958, 380. All psalm numberings are as the Vulgate.
- <sup>48</sup> E. T. de Walde, *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter* (Princeton, 1933), plate XXXIX. The assumption that the hart has been "heated in the chase" is shared by the later hymn writer. It may not be irrelevant to notice the image of *Beowulf*, lines 1369 ff.
- <sup>49</sup> de Walde, *op. cit.*, plate LXXXIV. For Bede see *PL.*, XCIII, 971.
- <sup>50</sup> Mr J. T. Lang points out that a graffiti in an early Christian chapel at Baouît showing a lion pursuing a gazelle has an inscription identifying this as the devil in pursuit of the soul: see O. Beigbeder, *La Symbolique* (Paris, 1961), fig. 21.
- <sup>51</sup> See, for example, St. Augustine in *Corpus Christianorum*, XXXVIII, 1956, 117 f.
- <sup>52</sup> The "dogs" of verse 17 may, in the original Hebrew, have been "hunters" as some early commentators realised: see *Corpus Christianorum*, LXXII, 1960, 199.
- <sup>53</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, XCVII, 1958, 198. His comments on verse 21, however, take the dogs as forces threatening the church – though still, of course, evil.
- <sup>54</sup> *Corpus Christianorum*, LXXII, 1960, 198.
- <sup>55</sup> For text see *PL.*, XCIII, 590. I am indebted to Dr A. Woodman for help with the translation. The commentary printed by Migne is not by Bede but the prefatory sections are accepted as genuine. For studies of this complex material see: R. L. Ramsay, Theodore of Mopsuestia in England and Ireland, *Zeitschrift f.celt. Philologie*, VIII, 1912, 453-465; P. Salmon, *Les "Tituli Psalmorum" des manuscrits latins* (Paris, 1959); B. Fischer, *Beda de titulis psalmorum liber*, *Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff*, ed. J. Autenrieth (Stuttgart, 1971), 90-110; M. McNamara, *Psalter text and psalter study in the early Irish church*, *PRIA.*, LXXXIII, 1973, 201-298.
- <sup>56</sup> K. Berg, The Gosforth cross, *four.Warb.Court.Inst.*, XXI, 1958, 27-43. See also R. N. Bailey and J. T. Lang, The date of the Gosforth sculptures, *Antiquity*, XLIX, 1975, 290-293.
- <sup>57</sup> R. N. Bailey, The Clogher crucifixion, *JRSAL.*, XCIII, 1963, 187-188.
- <sup>58</sup> A seventh or eighth century exemplar for the Fall scene might provide a plausible context for the eastern tradition of the grounded snake – if such it really is.

- <sup>59</sup> F. S. Scott, Pre-Conquest sculptures and the common seal of Hartlepool, *AA4*, XXXVII, 1959, 279-287.
- <sup>60</sup> For Lancaster and Heysham see *W. G. Collingwood 1927*, figs. 171 and 207. For Kirklevington see F. S. Scott, *op. cit.*, plate XXXIX (2). For Middleton see A. L. Binns, Tenth-century carvings from Yorkshire and the jellinge style, *Arbok for Universitet i Bergen*, 1956, fig. 9. I am indebted for knowledge of the Ellerburn example to Mr J. T. Lang (publication forthcoming).
- <sup>62</sup> *F. Henry 1933*, fig. 89; *F. Henry 1965*, plate 80; *F. Henry 1967*, plate 65; *J. R. Allen 1903*, III, fig. 228.
- <sup>62</sup> A. W. Clapham, The carved stones at Breedon on the Hill, *Arch.*, LXXVII, 1927, plate XXXI.
- <sup>63</sup> *J. Baum 1937*, plate LXVIII.
- <sup>64</sup> For dating see R. B. K. Stevenson, The Inchyra stone . . ., *PSAS*, XCII, 1961 for 1958, 49.
- <sup>65</sup> P. M. C. Kermodé, *Manx Crosses* (London, 1907), nos 66, 97, 104.
- <sup>66</sup> A. C. Thomas, The animal art of the Scottish iron age, *Arch. J.*, CXVIII, 1963 for 1961, fig. 5.
- <sup>67</sup> W. W. Brögger *et. al.*, *Osebergfundet* (Kristiana, 1917), I, fig. 116.

### Bibliographical Abbreviations

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|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>J. R. Allen 1903.</i>       | J. R. Allen, <i>The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland</i> (Edinburgh, 1903).   |
| <i>E. le Blant 1878.</i>       | E. le Blant, <i>Etude sur les sarcophages chrétiens antiques de la ville d'Arles</i> (Paris, 1878).                        |
| <i>E. le Blant 1886.</i>       | E. le Blant, <i>Les Sarcophages chrétiens de la Gaule</i> (Paris, 1886).   |
| <i>W. S. Calverley 1899.</i>   | W. S. Calverley, <i>Early Sculptured Crosses, Shrines and Monuments in the Present Diocese of Carlisle</i> (Kendal, 1899). |
| <i>W. G. Collingwood 1927.</i> | W. G. Collingwood, <i>Northumbrian Crosses of the pre-Norman Age</i> (London, 1927).                                       |
| <i>F. Henry 1933.</i>          | F. Henry, <i>La Sculpture irlandaise pendant les douze premiers siècles de l'ère chrétienne</i> (Paris, 1933).             |
| <i>F. Henry 1964.</i>          | F. Henry, <i>Irish High Crosses</i> (Dublin, 1964).  |
| <i>F. Henry 1965.</i>          | F. Henry, <i>Irish Art in the Early Christian Period to A.D. 800</i> (London, 1965).                                       |
| <i>F. Henry 1967.</i>          | F. Henry, <i>Irish Art during the Viking Invasions A.D. 800-1020</i> (London, 1967).                                       |
| <i>PG.</i>                     | J-P. Migne (ed), <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca</i> (Paris, 1857-66).                                      |
| <i>PL.</i>                     | J-P. Migne (ed), <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina</i> (Paris, 1844-64).                                      |