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Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Northumberland, 1: South West Northumberland

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INTRODUCTION

The cross slab grave cover is by far the most common type of medieval monument to survive in England, although one that received surprisingly little attention in the twentieth century. This is emphasised by the fact that the two principal works of reference to these slabs (Boutell 1849 and Cutts 1849) were both published a century and a half ago, by Victorian clergymen with an antiquarian bent, and each keen to put their own individual interpretation to the symbolism of the carvings. Whilst drawings of individual slabs, and collections of slabs, have appeared in volumes of the NCH, and in occasional articles in periodicals, no full-scale survey of the slabs of Northumberland has ever appeared.

There are around 660 cross slabs known in Northumberland, the great majority associated with the medieval parish churches. The following article covers *c.* 250 slabs in the Deaneries of Bellingham, Corbridge and Hexham, but excludes the collection of 51 slabs at Hexham Abbey which have recently been described and illustrated by the author (Cambridge and Williams 1995, 115–26). A second paper in this journal will cover material from the deaneries of Bedlington, Newcastle, Morpeth and Tyne-mouth (*c.*200 slabs); a third and final article will describe slabs from the deaneries of Alnwick, Bamburgh and Norham (*c.*160 slabs). This final paper will be accompanied by an analysis and discussion of the carvings.

The slabs were measured and drawn by the writer over the period 1984–1999; almost all have been revisited within the last two years or so, prior to the preparation of this article. The

vast majority of the carvings included in this survey are cross slabs proper, but a few allied monument types (e.g., slabs bearing emblems alone, or simple inscriptions) are included. The majority are of ‘medieval’ (i.e., late eleventh to sixteenth-century date) but a few may be Pre-Conquest and one or two post-medieval.

Unless otherwise stated all illustrations are at a scale of 1:20. A small number of slabs, however, which were recorded by earlier writers, are now lost. Illustrations of these carvings have been reproduced, or re-drawn, from earlier records; in such cases the scale of the original is not always clear but, where available, the dimensions have been noted in the text or illustration.

List of slab-sites discussed in the present paper:

Asheybank; Bellingham; Beltingham; Birtley; Blanchland; Bywell; Chollerton; Corbridge; Corsenside; Elsdon; Greymare Hill; Haltwhistle; Haydon; Heddon-on-the-Wall; Hexham Abbey; Knarsdale; Matfen; Newbrough; Ovingham; Prudhoe; Ryal; St. John Lee; Simonburn; Stamfordham; Thockrington; Warden; Whitfield; Whittonstall.

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CATALOGUE

Note: in the following descriptions 'right' (r.) and 'left' (l.) are as seen by the spectator

Asheybank

Asheybank (NY 787576), a seventeenth-century house, stands remote from any road on the east side of the West Allen valley c. 1km. south-east of St John's Church, Whitfield.

- (1) Re-cut slab, set upright into the external face of the north end wall, low down and now inside a small outbuilding; the floor has been cut away to allow its lower part to be seen. The upper third of the stone bears an incised cross with some other motif to the r.; the lower section appears to have been cut back, to allow the carving in high relief of a hooded and robed figure, with a shaft rising from the r. shoulder to align with that of the incised cross on the upper section. To the l. of this is a spherical object carved in high relief. The feet are shown in a somewhat stylised form sometimes seen on medieval effigial monuments. Date uncertain.

Bellingham (St Cuthbert)

- (1) Coped sandstone slab, known as the 'Lang Pack', lying outside the north aisle (fig. 1a). This is identified by a small wooden noticeboard, which links it to an incident in the early eighteenth century at Lee Hall, its decoration being held to represent a pedlar's pack which concealed a would-be robber. The slab has broad chamfered edges and roll mouldings at all angles. The central panel would seem to have carried some sort of motif; this is shown on an early twentieth-century drawing (Proceedings 1907, 151; reproduced here as fig. 1b) as a sword, but on what seems to be an older wash drawing in the Society of Antiquaries collection at the Black Gate, Newcastle (fig. 1c), it is represented as a

raised shaft with a fleur-de-lys at the head (*cf.* a slab at St James, Ormside, in Cumbria, and, more locally, the notably similar device at the base of Chollerton (1)) with an irregular leaf- or star-like object at the base. Both drawings seem to show this motif as being in relief but there is now no sign whatsoever of decoration in the centre panel. Both drawings show a pair of shears on the l. side panel, and the sunken areas of this motif are still (just) traceable. There is a virtually identical slab (without the emblems) in the Cathedral Yard at Durham (Ryder 1985, fig. 11). Twelfth or thirteenth century.

Slabs (2) and (3) have been re-used as the internal lintels of the window on the west side of the south transept:

- (2) Slab of brown sandstone, now serving as an internal lintel. The only visible decoration is an incised clasped book which, from its positioning, would appear to have been the only motif, at least upon the central section. Date uncertain.
- (3) Slab of fawn gritstone now serving as the innermost lintel, with faint traces of an incised cross head (of uncertain form) within a circle. Date uncertain.

The paper cited above (Proceedings 1907) also illustrates four other stones, described as being 'in a recess at the west end of the church'; they are again illustrated in the NCH (Dodds 1940, 230-1) where they are described as lying between the two large buttresses at the west end. Only one of these stones can now be found. This is:

- (4) The greater part of the head of a free-standing cross, probably a headstone (although its dimensions are almost appropriate for a churchyard cross), now cemented on top of a worn headstone 5m west of the west end of the nave. It is a monolithic wheel cross, with

Bellingham (St Cuthbert), cont.

the square-ended arms projecting beyond the ring; arms and ring have neatly-chamfered edges, and at the centre of the head is a five-petalled flower, carved in relief. At first sight it almost looks like a nineteenth-century piece, but the degree of weathering (and the fact that in 1902 the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries obviously considered it ancient) suggests that it is genuinely medieval. Fourteenth or fifteenth century?

The missing stones comprise:

- (5) (Proceedings 1907, no.1.) Slab, 1'9½" by 9" by 8". Cross paté variant with lower arm no more than a continuation of the cross shaft, shears on l. Twelfth century? (Illustration scale 1:10.)
- (6) (Proceedings 1907, no.2.) Slab, 1'9" by 8" by 7½". Cross paté with sword on l. Twelfth century? (Illustration scale 1:10.)
- (7) (Proceedings 1907, no.3.) Slab, 1'7" by 9½" by 7½". Bracelet cross carved in relief. Twelfth or thirteenth century. (Illustration scale 1:10.)

Beltingham (St Cuthbert)

Only one medieval monument is now forthcoming at this site though Gibson (1927) refers to 'tombstones' of thirteenth-century date as having been found in various restorations; a second slab which has been published is now missing.

- (1) Slab of fine-grained grey sandstone now set in the internal recess formed by the blocked doorway on the south of the chancel. It is of slightly-coped section, and bears a cross, carved in relief, with a broad shaft and circular armpits; the ends of the arms are worn, and there is a sunk panel, perhaps for a later brass plate indicating re-use, above the head.

This is evidently a monument of relatively early date; it could be pre-Conquest, or perhaps late eleventh century.

- (2) Slab, now lost, only known from a drawing by C. C. Hodges, dated March 21 1884, published by Gibson (1927, 79); the drawing also appears in Hodges (n.d.) along with a later note: 'now lost'. It depicts the mid-section of an untapered rectangular slab with an incised design of a cross, with a cross-bar at the top, and what looks like the blade of a sword on the l. There is a border inscription in late medieval black letter: the surviving sections appear to read:

'qui obiit xii die maii mcccc'. . .
'(o) rate pro aia necolas re d-yetilm et he.'

This would appear to be a late medieval floor stone cross slab of a type commoner further south. Mid-fifteenth century. (Illustration scale 1:10.)

Birtley (St Giles)

Most of the collection of medieval cross slabs and worked stones at this church seems to have come to light in 1883-4, when the east end was rebuilt from ground level. The majority of the slabs are considerably worn, as if they had lain outside for many years before being re-used (in the rebuilding of 1723?).

In addition to the grave covers listed below, there are a number of architectural fragments, mostly of twelfth-century character; these include, built into the internal face of the blocking of the priest's door on the south of the chancel, a cruciform stone with chamfered edges which might be a fragment of a headstone of the same type as Bellingham (4). On the east side of the tower is a slab with chamfered edges that may be another grave slab; it now seems to retain no trace of any design.

Birtley (St Giles), cont.

Slabs (1) and (2) are set in the internal face of the south wall of the west porch:

- (1) Upper part of slab of pinkish sandstone, with its design incised except for sunk panels in the cross head. Cross paté with a pair of shears on the r. of the shaft. Probably twelfth century.
- (2) Rectangular slab of a more coarse-grained fawn sandstone with relief design; simple straight-armed cross occupying only half the length of the stone, with sword on r. and an inverted axe beneath. This slab is illustrated by Hodges (n.d.) in a sketch dated Dec. 5th 1883 and is accompanied by a note: 'another small one decayed beyond recognition and fragments built into S buttress of the church'. No dateable features, but perhaps twelfth century.

Slabs (3)–(6) are set in the internal face of the north wall of the porch:

- (3) Small tapered slab of coarse fawn sandstone; there are remnants of an incised design, but the scheme is difficult to interpret: possibly a pair of shears with, perhaps, a sword below. Date uncertain.
- (4) Large tapered slab of coarse sawn sandstone, in two pieces. The only motif is an incised sword, set r. of centre, with a lozenge-shaped pommel and down-turned quillons. Date uncertain.
- (5) Large slab of coarse brown sandstone, in two pieces. Cross paté, rather more elaborate than most, with sunk segments between the arms. Incised cross shaft rising from stepped base, with sword on r. Twelfth century.
- (6) Large tapered slab of yellow/orange sandstone. Cross paté, the segments sunk between the arms, with broad tapering shaft rising from a triangular mount; sword on r. Twelfth century.

Stones (7) and (8) currently lie in the north eaves of the porch:

- (7) Discoidal sandstone headstone with cross paté of usual type, with sunk panels between the arms. The reverse feels similar but, perched as it is in the eaves, it is difficult to inspect the stone closely. Cramp (1984, I, 237) sees this as a 'round-headed grave marker' of the second half of the eleventh century.
- (8) Rectangular block, possibly either a headstone or a small conventional slab, very worn, but showing the sunk lenticular panels of the usual cross paté. Twelfth century?
- (9) Discoidal headstone, probably of limestone, now set in the internal recess of the blocked north door of the nave. Decoration consists of a splay-armed cross, with sunk panels between the arms, and a circular panel at the centre of the head. Cramp (1984, I, 237) sees this as a 'circular grave marker or dedication cross' and ascribes it to the second half of the eleventh century.

Slabs (10)–(12) are set in the external recess formed by the blocked priest's door on the south of the chancel, and are partly concealed by a wooden memorial cross (1914, to Captain B. Allgood) which itself is now a sepulchral monument of some interest:

- (10) Upper part of a slab of coarse yellowish sandstone. Cross paté, very worn, with shears on r. of shaft. Twelfth century.
- (11) Narrow slab of orange ferruginous sandstone. Incised bracelet cross within a circle on tapering shaft. Twelfth century.
- (12) Part of a slab of light fawn sandstone, very worn and with decoration in relief. The cross appears to have had fleur-de-lys terminals, with a sword on its r.; this has a discoidal pommel and square-set quillons. Date uncertain.

Blanchland (St Mary the Virgin)

A series of six medieval grave slabs, either cross slabs or allied monument types, are now set in the north transept floor. Most are of unusual

Blanchland (St Mary the Virgin), cont.

type, without close local parallels. Five are illustrated in the NCH (Hodgson 1902, 336ff.).

- (1) Large rectangular slab of coarse-grained orange sandstone (or grit), known as 'the Abbot's Tomb'. The design is incised, with some sunk panels at the head centre. The cross has expanded trapezoidal terminals, outside a ring, the individual quadrants of which extend to overlay the cross arms in a swastika-like manner. The cross rises from a stepped base; on the l. is a crozier, overlapping the l. arm of the cross, and on the r., above the r. arm of the cross, is a chalice with the host above.

Stylistic parallels for this slab is difficult are difficult to suggest. Its rectangular (rather than tapered) form, and the manner in which the host is shown above the chalice, suggest a late date; there is a similar chalice/host on a fine slab at Jervaulx Abbey which stylistically must be of later fifteenth- or even early sixteenth-century date.

- (2) Rectangular slab with an incised design. Within a border is a simple cross with fleur-de-lys terminals and the Sacred Monogram 'IHC' at the centre of the head; the cross rises from a stepped base, the lines of the steps being continued as 'tiers' across the front of the mount. Hodgson (1902, 337) identifies this as a canon's grave, though without citing any evidence. Probably later fifteenth or early sixteenth century.
- (3) Broad rectangular slab of coarse-grained buff sandstone, with an incised design. In the centre of a slab is a horn and baldric, the loop of the baldric enclosing a plain shield; to the r. is a large arrow and to the l. a sword. At the top and bottom of the slab are the letters 'T' and 'E'. This is probably another late medieval slab. Perhaps fifteenth or early sixteenth century.

- (4) Tapered slab of blue limestone. At the head is a small equal-armed cross with splayed terminals, above the black letter inscription 'Robtiis Eglylston'; below are a horn-and-baldric, a small bow-and-arrow, and a sword. Hodgson (1902, 337) suggests that a 'William and James Eggleston' (surely an error for Robert and ?Thomas?) were 'no doubt foresters of the abbot and convent'. Perhaps fifteenth or early sixteenth century.

- (5) Tapering slab of fawn sandstone bearing an incised pastoral staff, now rather faint. Date uncertain.

- (6) Tapering slab of orange-brown sandstone bearing an axial line of inscription, the Lombardic letters being inlaid in lead. Following a splay-armed cross, the inscription reads:

CECILIA: HAYBUN.

On the l. side is incised a small pair of shears. The style of the slab is reminiscent of the collection of canons' grave covers at Hexham Priory, although the conjunction of inscription (to a woman) and a single pair of shears is seen again on the 'Matilda' slab at Hexham and the Anne Harbottle slab (d.1517) at Horton, near Blyth. Later medieval.

Bywell (St Andrew)

The building was heavily restored in the nineteenth century and it was probably at this stage that the majority of the notable collection of cross slabs came to light; ten of these were illustrated in the NCH (Hodgson 1902, pls. facing 244). A number of the slabs which had been set in the external north wall were suffering the effects of weathering, and have recently (c. 1990) been re-set inside the building; plain blocks of stone mark their former positions in the external walls of the north transept. Unless otherwise stated all designs are incised, and the stone used is a local sandstone.

Bywell (St Andrew), cont.

Slabs in external walls:

- (1) Intact slab of coarse-grained sandstone set in the external face of the east wall of the north chancel chapel. Four-circle cross head, with pointed buds; cross-bar near head of shaft, which rises from a stepped mount. On the l. of the shaft, near its base, is a pair of shears. The simple cross may indicate a relatively early date: twelfth century?
- (2) Gritstone slab set in the external face of the north wall of the north chancel chapel, near east end. The design is deeply incised; the l. edge has been cut away, presumably at some period of re-use. Slab with cross botonée head, the terminals having round leaves and sharply-pointed buds, rising from a stepped base, with a sword, having a large discoidal pommel, on the r. The base is of a distinctive local form (hereafter termed the 'Bywell type') being initially cut as a triangular mount, and then indentations made so as to produce the effect of steps, in this case acutely pointed; the overall effect is reminiscent of a child's drawing of a Christmas Tree. Difficult to date: thirteenth century?
- (3) Intact slab of brown sandstone with incised border, set in the external face of the north wall of the north chancel chapel, near the west end. Interlaced diamond cross with trefoil terminals, on a broad cross shaft that tapers upwards from a two-stepped base. Later thirteenth century.
- (4) Fragment of the tegulated side of a coped slab, set high up near the north end of the west wall of the north transept. This is a type more common in County Durham (Ryder 1985, 40) and is probably of twelfth-century date.
- (5) Stone with a moulded edge and a line of dog-tooth ornament, set close to (4). It is not clear whether this is part of a sepulchral monument; it may be a

fragment of one edge of an elaborate slab. Thirteenth century.

- (6) Part of the head of a slab; round-leaf bracelet cross carved in relief within a sunk circle. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (7) Small slab of orange sandstone, set low and half way along the wall, and perhaps lacking its base; much worn. Cross either with simple trefoil terminals or of cross crosslet form; *cf.* Bywell St Peter (7). Vestiges of a pair of shears on the r. Twelfth or thirteenth century?
- (8) Very small slab, lacking its base, set high in the wall, between the windows; when complete it can only have been *c.* 0.60m-0.70m in length. Round-leaf bracelet cross, its head carved in relief within a sunk circle. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (9) Small portion of a slab of grey sandstone set near the south end of the wall. Cross shaft with a pair of shears on the l. Date uncertain.
- (10) Slab, lacking its head, of fawn medium-grained sandstone, set alongside (8). A slightly-tapering cross shaft rises from a stepped base; at the top is a cross-bar, and then an expansion (at the broken edge of the stone) which is probably the beginning of the lower terminal of the cross head. Date uncertain.
- (11) Slab of fawn sandstone, lacking its head, set at the south end of the wall. Cross with stepped base, of the 'Bywell type' except that the steps are here right-angled. On the r. of the cross shaft is a sword, and at the top of the surviving section of the stone there is a cross-bar, or just possibly the remains of a cross-arm of a simple cross head. Date uncertain.

Slabs re-used in the internal walls:

- (12) Slab re-used on its side as the internal head of the south door. Simple cross with a chevron pattern on its shaft, and a crude base of the 'Bywell type' with

Bywell (St Andrew), cont.

very angular steps. There is a pair of shears on the l. of the shaft. This may be an 'early' stone, possibly of c. 1100.

- (13) Slab re-used as the internal inner lintel of the south window of the south transept. The cross head (partly concealed in the wall) appears to have had eight arms of simple petal-like form with a rounded end. Stepped base, and sword on the r. of the shaft. Twelfth century?
- (14) Slab re-used as the head of the same window, its face flush with that of the wall, and its r. edge partly cut away by the segmental rear arch of the opening. Cross botonée head of the same form as slab (2), cross-bar high on the shaft, and 'Bywell type' base with square steps. On the r. of the shaft, and partly cut away, a pair of shears. Thirteenth century?
- (15) Slab, virtually identical to (14), re-used as the head of the north window of the north transept; unlike (14), however, the base is here a simple semicircular mount. Thirteenth century?
- (16) Slab with a round-leaf bracelet head, re-used as the inner lintel of the same window and in a corresponding position to (13) in the south transept, carrying a semicircular mount, and a sword on the r. of the shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (17) Head of a slab re-set in the spandrel over the pier of the two-bay arcade on the north side of the chancel, facing into the chapel. Cross botonée head of exactly the same form as (2), (14) and (15). Thirteenth century?

Slabs now fixed to the internal face of the east wall of the north chancel chapel ((18) high at the north end; (19) and (20) above (21) and (22) at the south end):

- (18) Slab of coarse-grained grey sandstone, lacking its base, with the head carved in

relief within a sunk circular panel. A form of round-leaf bracelet cross head carrying a central disc, with a disc near the head of the shaft, flanked by a pair of petalled rosettes (*cf.* Ovingham (4)). Below this, on the r. of the shaft, a sword with a multi-lobed pommel, and on the l. a horn and baldric. Probably thirteenth century.

- (19) 'Half size' slab (0.84m long, as opposed to the usual c. 1.80m; for the type see Ryder 1985, 6). The cross has unusual terminals, like fleur-de-lys with the leaves curling backwards to meet the arm, but without any central bud; it rises from a semicircular mount with a sword on the r. of the shaft. Twelfth century?
- (20) 'Half size' slab. Cross with large and crude trefoil terminals (none to lower arm) and a triangular mount, with a hint of some motif carved within it. On the r. of the shaft is a pair of shears. Twelfth century?
- (21) Impressive tapered slab. The cross head is similar to that of slab (22), except that it has a larger central disc, from which radiate ten arms. There is the same shield overlying the shaft, and sword on the r., but here the shield is carved with a rampant lion, on the body of which are two small birds (popinjays?). The NCH account (Hodgson 1902, 245) notes that the Lion rampant was the arms of the family of de Insula (Lisle) of Newton. Perhaps c. 1300.
- (22) Rectangular slab, cracked in two pieces. The cross has a disc, with concentric incised rings within it, at the head, centre and terminals, consisting of three lozenge-shaped leaves; the broad cross shaft rises from a three-stepped base and is overlain by a (blank) shield. This shield also overlies a sword, with a large discoidal pommel, on the r. of the shaft. There are obvious stylistic links with slab (21); the two may be near contemporary. Perhaps c. 1300.

Bywell (St Andrew), cont.

Slabs now fixed to the internal face of the south wall of the south transept:

- (23) Slab of brown/grey gritstone; its design is virtually identical to slab (20). Twelfth century?
- (24) 'Half-size' slab of yellowish sandstone; simple cross with slightly expanded terminals and a triangular mount. On the r. a sword, overlain by a disc (a buckler?), while on the l. an emblem which resembles a pair of tongs. Twelfth century?
- (25) Head of a slab of fawn gritstone. Round-leaf bracelet cross. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (26) Slab of coarse-grained brown sandstone, lacking its base. Round-leaf bracelet cross (carved in relief within a sunk circular panel), on an unusually broad shaft (*cf.* Corbridge, Vicar's Pele (8)); on the l. of the shaft is a small square emblem (possibly a work box) and on the r., only faintly visible, a tall looped emblem. The drawing in Hodges' notebook (Hodges n.d.) is accompanied by the suggestion that the emblem might be a hair pin; if this is the case then the mason had little concept of scale. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (27) Slab of grey sandstone, lacking its head; there is a cross-bar high up on the shaft, and a stepped base, with a pair of shears on the l. of the shaft. Date uncertain.

Bywell (St Peter)

There are a number of cross slabs here; although the collection is of less importance than that at the neighbouring St Andrew's, slab (11) is of some significance.

- (1) Small complete slab of coarse-grained sandstone built into the internal face of the north wall of the north chapel between the central two windows, 1.5m above floor level. It carries a relief design

of a simple bracelet cross rising from a stepped base, and a sword on the r. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.

- (2) Slab re-used as the internal lintel of the two-light window on the north side of the chancel. Incised design; the cross is a derivative of a round-leaved bracelet type, with the bracelets so open as to produce an almost botonée form. 'Bywell type' base, with rather acute angles to the steps, and a clasped book on the r. of the cross shaft. Late thirteenth century.
- (3) Fragment of sandstone built into the internal east jamb of the low-side window on the south of the chancel (now opening into the organ chamber). Incised design, probably part of a four-circle cross head. Twelfth century?
- (4) Small complete slab built into the internal face of the east wall of the porch, with an incised design on orange sandstone. Cross with expanded arms and stepped 'Bywell type' base, with a pair of shears on the l. Twelfth century?
- (5) Fawn sandstone slab with similar incised design to (4), set in the same wall. The cross head, however, differs from (4) in having rather more trefoil-like terminals and being incised in a circle; the base is of the conventional stepped form. Twelfth century?
- (6) Part of a fawn sandstone slab, set in the same wall, with a round-leaf bracelet cross carved in relief within a sunk circle; there is a sword on the r. of the shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (7) Complete slab built into the internal face of the west wall of the porch. Incised design on whitish sandstone; cross crosslet rising from a stepped base of the 'Bywell type'. Twelfth century?
- (8) Upper part of a slab of very coarse-sandstone or grit, set in the same wall. A bracelet cross is carved on a broad tapering shaft, its head having sunk panels within the bracelets and at the centre. The four bracelets all open at right angles to the shaft, rather than diagonally in the more conventional

Bywell (St Peter), cont.

- manner. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (9) Part of the lower half of a slab, re-used as the internal head of the small window in the west wall of the porch. Coarse-grained fawn sandstone. Incised cross shaft rising from a semicircular mount. Date uncertain.
- (10) Slab re-used as the external head of the two-light window on the north side of the chancel. Incised design on fawn sandstone, very weathered. Traces of cross shaft with a pair of shears(?) on the r. Date uncertain.
- (11) Slab now set north-south in the pathway outside the east end of the south aisle. Relief-carved design on fawn sandstone. Splay-armed cross rising from a triangular mount, with a pair of shears on the r. and a running chevron design (perhaps a geometric variant on interlace) on the l. Above the cross head is what looks like the lower half of an animal, perhaps a lion rampant. The very top of the slab, and one lower corner, are missing. This is a slab of some importance, and its current position in a gravel path raises cause for concern. As its orientation demonstrates that it is not in situ, it should be moved to a safer place. The running chevron pattern is seen again, in a rather different context, on Bywell St Andrews (12) and a rampant lion (presumably some early type of heraldic device) on Bywell St Andrews (21). Its date is difficult to assess, but could be c. 1100.
- (12) Part of a slab forming the internal jamb of the southern opening of the belfry. Incised sword with a D-shaped pommel, on the r. side of the slab; any other design destroyed by weathering. Date uncertain.
- (13) Upper part of a slab forming the projecting footing beneath the buttress at the north-west corner of the nave. Cross head set within a circle, with sunk

lenticular segments between the arms, and a circle at the centre. Twelfth century?

- (14) Lower part of a slab used as the footing of the south-west buttress of the south porch. Incised cross shaft with a stepped base having acutely-pointed steps, a variant of the 'Bywell type'. Date uncertain.

Chollerton (St Giles)

The church preserves a large collection of medieval sepulchral monuments, representing an interesting range of different types and dates. A number are illustrated in the *NCH* (Hodgson 1897, 261-2).

Slabs (1)-(3) are in the sanctuary floor, (1) and (2) against the south wall and (3) against the north:

- (1) Limestone slab with bracelet-derivative cross, the head carved in relief, with an unusual foliate base; shears on l. of cross shaft. Mid-thirteenth century.
- (2) Very worn limestone slab, with remains of relief design. Cross shaft with ogee arch base, sword on r. and traces of shield overlying shaft. Cross head completely worn away. Probably fourteenth century.
- (3) Complete double slab, of a brown fine-grained stone, perhaps limestone. This is an important piece whose design is carved in relief. Decoration consists of two round-leaf bracelet crosses with shields overlying the shafts. Sword to r. of r. cross, rectangular object (book or work-box?) to l. of l. cross; trefoil arch bases. A drawing in Hodges' notebook (Hodges n.d.) shows rather more detail than is visible now, including a trefoil-ended clasp on the book/workbox; Hodges also shows more detail of the armorial bearings, which he suggests may be those of Swinburne of Capheaton. Thirteenth century

Fragments (4)-(6) are built into the internal face of the west wall of the south porch, with (7) and (8) in the east wall:

Chollerton (St Giles), cont.

- (4) Fragment of yellow sandstone slab with small bracelet cross head and sword pommel (?) to r. of shaft. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (5) and (6) Very similar pieces with roughly-circular cut-outs made cruciform by inturned projecting fleurs-de-lys. Further incised fleurs-de-lys flank the cut-out. It is difficult to parallel these stones. If the cut-outs were merely sinkings, and not cut through the whole thickness of the stone, there would be an affinity with the semi-effigial monuments popular in the fourteenth century. It is not certain, however, if these stones relate to sepulchral monuments at all.
- (7) Small limestone slab with incised pair of shears; it is not clear whether this is a portion of a larger stone, or a complete slab in itself. Date uncertain.
- (8) Yellow sandstone slab, lacking its base, with a marginal Lombardic inscription:
 CI(GI)TE DAME ELIZABET DE...
 ...PRIEZ PUR SA ALM(E)
- There does not appear to have been any design within the inscribed border; an axial groove is presumably secondary. The NCH (Hodgson 1897, 265–6) describes this as ‘a fragment of an important thirteenth century slab’.
- (9) Headstone cross, a variant on a cross paté with square-ended arms, set on a horizontal base rather than the usual upright, and now built into the wall above the south door. Probably twelfth century.
- (10) and (11) Fragments built into the buttress to the east of the porch. Both are probably parts of twelfth- or thirteenth-century cross slabs, but neither is easy to interpret.
- (12) Part of the head of a slab, built into the next buttress to the east. Bracelet cross head and shears l. of shaft. Twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (13)–(16) are a group of four headstones built into the north wall of the chancel (along

- with a moulded architectural fragment), above the boiler room stair. (13), (14) and (15) are seen by Cramp (1984, I, 239) as of late eleventh-century date. I would be tempted to see them as rather later; some features, such as the chamfered edges to the shaft of (15), look thoroughly ‘medieval’.
- (13) Greater part of a discoidal headstone, with a simple splay-armed cross with a boss at its centre. Perhaps twelfth century.
- (14) Complete headstone with a discoidal head, whose splayed arms have small sunk panels between them, set on a tapering shaft. Perhaps twelfth century.
- (15) Part of a headstone (presumably only half survives) set at right angles to the wall. The head is rather like that of (9), discoidal with projecting square-ended arms, but in this case it is set on a shaft with chamfered angles rather like Hexham (16) (Cambridge and Williams 1995, 119, fig.39). Perhaps twelfth century.
- (16) Stone (with one corner obscured by the boiler house roof.) with possible remnants of an incised design, perhaps a splay-armed cross. This could either be a headstone or, perhaps more likely, a piece of a conventional cross slab. Date uncertain.
- (17) Small slab lying loose in south porch, and an important example of the ‘Early Geometric’ style. Elaborate design with cross paté, sword and chip-carved patterns. Twelfth century. (Illustration scale 1:10.)
- (18) Complete slab built into the internal face of the east wall of the south aisle. Simple incised Latin cross with slightly-expanded terminals below inscription:
 HIC IACET HENRICVS WIDRI
 NTON DE COLWELL OBIT VS
 XII AVGVSTE 1637 ET CIARA
 VXOR EIVS ORATE PRO EIS

Despite its date, both design and inscription are still in the Pre-Reformation

Chollerton (St Giles), cont.

tradition. The figure '7' of the date seems to have been amended to (or from?) a '3' at some time. There is a very similar slab to Robert Widdrington (1632) in Kirk-whelpington Church.

- (19) Narrow slab with steep chamfered sides, with a small incised cross above a pair of shears, built upside-down into the internal face of the west wall of the churchyard, due west of the south aisle, partly buried. This is cited in the NCH (Hodgson 1897, 265) as lying, 'in the churchyard' and bearing a 'cross pate' and a pair of shears. Twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (20) Slab of grey sandstone (0.52m by 0.24m), set in the external face of the south wall of the chancel, decorated with a pair of incised lines — ?perhaps a cross shaft. Date uncertain. Not illustrated.

Corbridge

Outside Newcastle, Corbridge and Hexham have the largest collections of medieval cross slabs in Northumberland. Within Corbridge the principal collection is in (and around) St Andrew's Church. In addition to the medieval stones described below there are two further pieces, on window sills in the south transept of St Andrew's church, which Cramp (1984, I, 240–1) assigns to the eleventh century. These consist of a splay-armed cross with various incised patterns, and a fragment inscribed in Anglo-Saxon capitals [T]YRIC.

Corbridge (18–22, Front Street)

- (1) Fragment of a slab of fawn sandstone built into the internal face of the east wall of the (present) 'Al Ponte' restaurant. Pair of shears on l. of cross shaft, with part of what appears to be one trefoil terminal of the cross head still visible. Thirteenth century.

Corbridge (St Andrew)

- (1) Six fragments comprising the greater part of a slab of light fawn, fine-grained sandstone, recently re-set in the floor of the south transept of St Andrew's Church. Relief design, badly damaged. Cross with trefoil shoots forming a quite elaborate head design, two cross bars with a disc between on the shaft; three-step calvary base. Shears to l. of cross shaft; incised marginal inscription:

HIC IACET ALIC(1)A UXOR WILLMI
DE TYNDAL (O)RATE

Probably late thirteenth century.

- (2) Complete slab of light orange sandstone set at the rear of the tomb recess in the north wall of the north transept. Incised design but with sunk panels in cross head. Cross with expanded arms and broad fleur-de-lys terminals, the leaves uniting to enclose heart-shaped 'bracelets'. Stepped calvary base, inverted shepherd's (or pastoral crook) on r. of shaft. Late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.
- (3) Worn slab of brown sandstone, set in the floor in front of the tomb recess in the north transept. Badly-drawn bracelet cross head with the bracelets and head centre sunk. Broad cross shaft, with the head of an axe set across it. The centre part of the design is worn away; towards the base of the slab is a faint incised pattern which is difficult to relate to that of the upper part of the stone. The cross head form and broad shaft (*cf.* Corbridge, Vicar's Pele (8)) suggest a relatively early date, perhaps mid-twelfth century.

- (4) Complete slab of smooth brownish limestone, set in the chancel floor. Relief design. The cross appears to be of Tau form, with a disc (paten?) and chalice on the shaft, and a cross bar a short distance above the three-step calvary base. The cross head form, although paralleled at Hulne Priory, is unusual, and may indeed be illusory; the 'cross arms' may

Corbridge (St Andrew), cont.

- in fact be those of a second cross bar (*cf.* Corbridge, St Andrew (1)) and the actual head, above this, may have been worn away. Difficult to date; perhaps thirteenth century.
- (5) Slab of coarse brown sandstone, set immediately south of (4), its centre part replaced by a later stone. Only the sunk portions of the head design remain visible, showing it to have been a cross, probably enclosed within a circle, with clustered trefoil terminals. Late thirteenth century.
- (6) Slab of brown sandstone, now forming the internal lintel of the low-side window on the south side of the chancel. Incised design except for the head which is carved in relief within a sunk circle. Cross with clustered trefoil terminals; cross bar on shaft just below head; shears on l. of shaft. Later thirteenth century.
- (7) Part of a sandstone slab built into the internal face of the west wall of the north transept beneath the sill of the southern window, 0.8m above the floor. Bracelet cross head carved in relief in sunk circle, tapering shaft, shears on l. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (8) Base of a slab of brown sandstone forming the lower part of the internal south jamb of the northern of the two windows in the west wall of the north transept. Incised stepped calvary base. Date uncertain.
- (9) Base of a slab of buff sandstone, badly weathered, forming the lower part of the west internal jamb of the western of the triplet of lancets in the north gable of the north transept. Two-step calvary base. Date uncertain.
- (10) Upper part of a slab of brown sandstone, badly weathered, built into the wall directly beneath slab (7). Incised design, bracelet or four-circle cross head, sword on r. of cross shaft. Twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (11) Lower part of a slab of coarse-grained, fawn sandstone now forming part of the internal west jamb of the eastern of the two windows in the south wall of the south aisle. Incised design; cross shaft with trefoil shoots rising from an unusual vase-like form set on a stepped plinth, sword blade on r. of shaft. Perhaps thirteenth century.
- (12) Fragment of a brown sandstone slab now forming the fourth step from the bottom of the staircase up to the tower in the chamber at the west end of the north aisle. Bracelet cross head within a circle, with sunk panels within the bracelets, broad cross shaft. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (13) Upper part of a fawn sandstone slab now lying against the external face of the west wall of the north aisle. Relief design, bracelet derivative cross head with clustered terminals. Later thirteenth century.
- (14) Part of a slab of coarse brown sandstone built into the exterior of the north wall of the west aisle of the north transept, 1m above ground level. Incised semi-circle; perhaps a simple rounded calvary (*cf.* Bywell, St Andrew (19)) from a twelfth-century slab.
- (15) Fragment of a sandstone slab set at ground level, to the right of (14). Incised cross shaft with blades of shears to l. Date uncertain.
- (16) Upper part of a sandstone slab now lying in the south porch. Cross head with clustered fleur-de-lys terminals, carved in relief within a sunk circle. Later fifteenth century.
- (17) Upper part of a small slab of brown sandstone, on the sill of the window on the east side of the south transept. Cross head carved in relief, the lower part of the design incised. Bracelet cross with cross bands, shears on l. of shaft. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (18) Fragment of a slab of coarse brown sandstone, on the same window sill as (17). Incised circle containing a simple

Corbridge (St Andrew), cont.

cross, with one edge of a second similar circle. It need not necessarily be a sepulchral monument: Cramp (1984, I, 240) sees this as 'possibly part of an altar' and dates it to the eleventh century.

- (19) Part of a fawn sandstone slab now forming the inner sill of the north window of the west aisle of the north transept. Incised design, possibly a coulter (*cf.* slabs at Middleton in Teesdale, Durham St Oswald and elsewhere); for an alternative interpretation as part of the wing or vestments of an angel, see Iley (1974, 207). Date uncertain.
- (20) Fragment of a sandstone slab now forming part of the internal sill of the northern window in the west wall of the north transept. Incised cross shaft. Date uncertain.
- (21) Large rectangular sandstone slab set in the chancel floor below the first sanctuary step, re-used as gravestone to Henry Guy, vicar, in 1708. At the foot of the stone the faint remains of a two-step calvary and cross shaft, incised, are visible. What little survives of the design seems to be poorly laid out. The fact that the stone is rectangular, rather than tapered, suggests that it is a late (fifteenth or sixteenth century) floor stone cross slab
- (2) Upper part of a slab of brown sandstone, rather weathered, now lying in the fire-place recess on the north side of the first floor. Bracelet cross head with cross bands, carved in relief within a sunk circle; broad incised cross shaft overlain by pommel and down-curved quillons of a sword. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (3) Base of a slab of coarse fawn sandstone, set in the northern of the recesses on the west side of the first floor. Incised design, roughly laid out, showing a single-step base with faint inner lines paralleling the outer. Cramp (1984, I, 239) dates this to the eleventh century, although it could perhaps be a little later.
- (4) Part of a sandstone slab, forming half of the inner lintel of the small window at the west end of the south wall of the first floor and visible only with difficulty. Relief design, mostly hacked away. Enough survives to indicate a cross head with clustered trefoil or fleur-de-lys terminals; cross band and disc on the shaft beneath, sword on r. of shaft and some other emblem on the l. This has been a good quality slab, similar in some details to, and perhaps by the same mason as, Corbridge, St Andrew (1). Perhaps late thirteenth century.
- (5) Small slab of grey sandstone, lacking its base, standing in the recess of the eastern window in the south wall of the first floor. Bracelet cross head with cross bands, carved in relief within a sunk circle, sword on r. of shaft and shears on l. — a relatively unusual occurrence of both emblems on the same slab. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (6) Slab of sandstone, standing with (5), quite weathered and with parts of its head broken away. Bracelet cross head with cross bands, broad tapering cross shaft, with sword on l. Three-step calvary base; cross head and sword carved in relief on r. side of shaft and base incised. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

Corbridge (Vicar's Pele)

The Vicar's Pele at Corbridge adjoins the churchyard wall to the south-east of the church; its construction utilises a large amount of recycled Roman stonework, as well as a number of cross slabs which were no doubt retrieved from the adjacent churchyard.

- (1) Large slab of fawn sandstone, broken into two pieces and lacking its base, now laid against the east wall on the first floor. Incised design; bracelet cross head with the cross bands linked to form a 'box', shears on l. of shaft. Perhaps late twelfth century.

Corbridge (Vicar's Pele), cont.

- (7) Sandstone slab now forming the internal lintel of the window on the north side of the first floor. The only decoration visible is an incised pair of shears near the l. edge of the stone. Date uncertain.
- (8) Upper half of a slab forming part of the roof at the head of the mural stair at second floor level. Incised broad cross shaft with four-circle cross head, carved in relief within a circle and apparently incompletely cut. Late twelfth century.
- (9) Slab set in the roof adjacent to (8); very faint remains of incised design. Cross probably having clustered fleur-de-lys terminals, cross band below head, sword on l. of shaft. Late thirteenth century?
- (10) Base of a slab lying on the small balcony at second floor level. Relief design, steep curved calvary, with incised lancet-like arch beneath enclosing an incised circle. Twelfth or early thirteenth century?
- (11) Fragment now set beside (10); relief design with stepped calvary base. Date uncertain.
- (12) Sandstone slab forming the passage roof at the foot of the upper section of mural stair. Relief design, badly flaked. Cross shaft with cross band. Date uncertain.
- (13) Slab, whitewashed over, in the roof at the head of the lower stair. The only motif appears to be an incised pair of shears close to the l. edge of the stone; *cf.* Vicar's Pele (7). Date uncertain.
- (14) Slab, whitewashed over, in the roof over the ground floor entrance lobby. Incised design; cross shaft with sword on l. Date uncertain.
- (15) Slab in roof adjacent to (9), with broad incised cross shaft, perhaps the lower part of (8). Late twelfth century? Not illustrated.
- (16) Slab in roof at head of lower stair. Faint incised cross shaft. Not illustrated.

Corbridge (Viney Cottage, Appletree Lane)

The illustrations of medieval cross slabs at Corbridge printed in the NCH (Craster 1914,

194) include several that could not be located in either the parish church or the Vicar's Pele when the collections of slabs in these buildings were drawn by the writer in the later 1980s, though they did appear in the unpublished drawings by Robert Blair (Blair n.d., IV) and Charles Clement Hodges (Hodges n.d.). Most of these stones have now been located in the garden of Viney Cottage, which is part of a group of former school buildings in Appletree Lane, Corbridge. It appears that some of these were at one time in the vicarage garden (as Blair noted) but found their way into a private museum which was part of these school buildings – a slab inscribed 'JOSEPH VINEY MUSEUM A.D.1928' still survives. Slabs (1) and (2) are built into an external wall on the north of the house; the others are lying loose in the garden nearby.

- (1) Sandstone slab bearing a vertical row of three incised roundels, each consisting of a central indent within two concentric circles. Cramp (1984, I, 240) dates this to the eleventh century and describes it as 'part of a decorative slab'.
- (2) Fragment of a cross slab of coarse-grained brown sandstone, with cross shaft and a pair of shears to the r., carved in relief; to the l. is incised: 'HIC:-IACE(T)..'. Perhaps twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (3) Fragment of a fawn sandstone slab with an incised design of three parallel shafts, with rings encircling their intersections with a horizontal band; pellets in the segments within the rings; at the (broken) foot of the stone are traces of what may have been another series of rings. A puzzling piece, which Cramp (1984, I, 240) suggests may have been part of the side of an altar or a tomb; she places it in the eleventh century.
- (4) Part of the r. side of a slab of coarse-grained orange sandstone. Remains of its incised design consist of a bracelet-derivative cross head with short round leaves and broad buds; a number of

**Corbridge (Viney Cottage, Appletree Lane),
cont.**

- rough diagonal incisions may be plough marks. Thirteenth or fourteenth century.
- (5) Upper part of a tapering slab of fawn sandstone, with relief design. Cross with disc at centre and trefoil terminals, with cross bar at head of shaft. Thirteenth or fourteenth century.
 - (6) Slab of coarse-grained fawn sandstone, lacking only its base. Incised design, except for a sunk circle around the head. Straight-armed cross with crude fleur-de-lys terminals to upper and transverse arms only, and cross-bar near top of shaft; emblem on l. of shaft, perhaps an open book. Twelfth or thirteenth century.
 - (7) Small slab of gritstone, with relief design, more or less complete but quite badly worn. Cross with broad fleur-de-lys terminals, linking to form ring head, with cross bar midway up shaft and three stepped base. The slab is quite thick, with a marginal chamfer and a second chamfered step at mid height. Thirteenth or fourteenth century.
 - (8) Complete, rather worn, sandstone slab. Design incised, except for sunk circle around head. Cross with disc at centre and fleur-de-lys terminals, rising from two-stepped base; faint traces of a pair of shears on l. of shaft. Probably thirteenth century.
 - (9) Corner of a large horizontal block. Though probably not part of a sepulchral monument, unless deriving from an elaborate tomb-chest, this is an important piece of early sculpture which merits inclusion here. Both external faces have sections of panels with deeply-cut coiling beasts in high relief. Cramp (1984, I, 241) sees it as an architectural fragment and 'Romanesque rather than Saxon', pointing out affinities to the Urnes style and suggesting a late eleventh-century date; Professor Richard Bailey (pers. comm.) also recognises this stylistic identification.

Corbridge (lost)

One slab illustrated in both the NCH and by Hodges (n.d.), together with a fragment illustrated by both Blair (n.d.) and Hodges (n.d.) have not been located. These are:

- (1) Complete slab with incised design (Craster 1914, fig. 11, no. 10). Cross with cross botonee head, trefoil terminals (*cf.* Bywell, St Andrews (2), (14), (15), (17)) and stepped base, with cross bar at the head of the shaft and chalice overlying the shaft beneath. Later thirteenth century?
- (2) Fragment bearing a bracelet cross with cross bands, with a sword pommel below and to the r. Hodges (n.d.), as is his wont, reconstructs the entire slab from a head fragment, without making clear the extent of his reconstruction. Probably thirteenth century.

Corsenside (St Cuthbert)

There are four cross slabs, set against the walls at the west end of the nave. Slabs (1) and (2) were drawn by C. C. Hodges (1889; n.d.) and slab (4) by the Revd. T. Stephens (Proceedings 1905).

- (1) Tapering slab of fine-grained, fawn sandstone with relief design, only about a third of which remains. This is now fixed upright against the north wall of the nave, near its west end, above a stone platform with chamfered edges (which might have been a font base). Cross fleury made up of naturalistic foliage (oak?) with further foliage sprouting from shaft. Hodges (1889; n.d.) shows this carving in rather better condition with acorns among the leaves. A high-quality slab, probably of fourteenth-century date.
- (2) Tapering slab of fawn sandstone, fixed against the internal face of the north wall of the nave at its west side. (Hodges n.d.) MS sketch of this slab, dated June 4th

Corsenside (St Cuthbert), cont.

1888, states that it was then re-used as the lower of the steps from the south doorway down into the nave.) Cross with splayed arms, within a circular panel, the panels between the arms being sunk; at the head centre is a small disc with a central circular sinking. Incised cross shaft rising from stepped base, with sword on r. The stone is quite badly worn. There are some irregular incisions, some overlying the l. side of the sword blade, and others at the base of the r. side of the stone, which might conceivably be remnants of an inscription. Twelfth century?

- (3) Small slab of fawn sandstone fixed against the west wall of the nave, to the north of the west window. Incised design; simple bracelet cross with a sunk panel at its centre, cross shaft rising from stepped base and sword or dagger on r. Later twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (4) Small slab of fine-grained, fawn sandstone, fixed against the west wall of the nave to the south of the west window. Rectangular slab with design carved in high relief. Short cross botonée with fleur-de-lys terminals rising from a cusped ogee arch base; above the cross is a human head, beneath a crocketed and trefoiled ogee canopy, topped by a finial with a petalled rosette on each side. Although small, this is a high-quality piece of work; it is a variation on the semi-effigial monuments of this period, a type not particularly well represented in Northumberland. Probably fourteenth century. (Illustration scale 1:10.)

There are two other interesting monuments in the church, although both are probably post-medieval. Lying just inside the south door is a segmental-headed slab (possibly intended as a headstone) carved with a low-relief effigy within a sunk panel. Fixed against the internal face of the south wall of the nave at its east end is a slab 1.86m by 0.81m, and 0.12m thick, having

a roll-moulded edge, and bearing an incised border, within which there are two diagonal lines in the form of a St Andrew's cross. Set in the pavement just outside the south porch is a tapered slab that may well be a medieval grave slab, but any design has been lost by weathering.

Elsdon (St Cuthbert)

There are a number of cross slabs here, most of which have been re-used in the fabric of the church:

- (1) Complete slab of brown sandstone now forming the inner lintel of the south door. Cross head with expanded five-lobed terminals, carved in relief within a sunk circle. The remainder of design incised, with stepped calvary base and pair of shears on l. of shaft. Twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (2) Complete but very worn slab of brown sandstone set alongside (1). Incised design, the only visible parts of which are one transverse arm of the cross head with a fleur-de-lys terminal and the pomel of a sword on the r. of the shaft. Fourteenth century?
- (3) Complete small slab of fawn sandstone built into the internal face of the east wall of the south transept. Plain Greek cross with sunk circle around head, 2-step calvary base, sword on r. of shaft. The design here is so simple as to be little help in dating; it might be as early as the twelfth century, although not necessarily so.
- (4) Upper part of a slab of yellowish sandstone set in the same wall as (3); the stone carries some reddening, as if burned. Similar design to (3), except that the cross head, with sunken panels between the arms, is enclosed in an incised circle, and the sword is placed on the l. of the cross shaft. Twelfth century?
- (5) Small brown sandstone slab forming the western part of the plinth of the central pier of the south arcade. Incised cross shaft, the very top of a triangular (?) base

Elsdon (St Cuthbert), cont.

- and possible traces of the cross head, largely tooled away. Date uncertain.
- (6) Slab of orange sandstone (but still bearing the remains of an old coat of white-wash) re-used edge-on as the internal lintel of the west window of the south aisle. Incised design. Cross shaft rising from semicircular-arched base, and some faint traces of what may be part of the head. Fourteenth century?
- (7) Complete slab of fine-grained, yellowish sandstone now standing against the north wall of the north transept. Relief design of cross with crosslet head, multi-stepped calvary base, sword on r. of shaft. Fourteenth or fifteenth century.
- (8) Complete limestone slab standing against north wall of north transept. Relief design of Greek cross, with head deliberately tooled away, rising from arched base. Sword on l. of shaft, shield on r. with some sort of animal (deer?) above. Fourteenth or fifteenth century.
- (9) Limestone slab, set beside (8), with its incised design rather badly decayed. There is no cross; on the l. of the slab is a sword, in the centre an arrow, and on the r. what may be a second broader-bladed sword. Date uncertain.
- (10) Fragment of fine-grained, grey sandstone built into the internal face of the east wall of the north transept, 1m above floor level and 1.5m from the north end of the wall. Incised design; possibly part of a cross base with a semicircular mount? Date uncertain.
- (11) Brown sandstone slab, roughly-finished and now forming the internal sill of the low-side window on the south side of the chancel. The only visible piece of carving is an incised pair of shears; slabs such as this and (9), bearing conventional cross slab emblems without an actual cross, are not uncommon in Northumberland. Date uncertain.
- (12) Brown sandstone slab re-used as the internal lintel of the window in the south

aisle on the east side of the porch. Incised design, partly erased by a later re-tooling. Cross with broad shaft and crude stepped base; the head is indistinct, but may have been of some sort of four-circle form. Sword on r. of shaft. Date uncertain.

- (13) Upper part of an orange sandstone slab which, until c. 1997, had been re-used above a ground-floor window on the west side of the eighteenth-century part of Elsdon Tower (the former rectory); it was removed when alterations were being made, and is now re-set lower in the wall within a recent porch. Bracelet-derivative cross within circle, with sunk panel at centre; shears on l. of shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.

Hodges (n.d.) made drawings of most of these carvings in the late nineteenth century and noted that the heads of all the square-headed windows on the south of the nave and chancel were formed from re-used slabs; these were either plain or had been 'tooled over and nearly obliterated' during the earlier nineteenth-century restoration.

Greymare Hill (St Andrew: NZ 045552)

Built into the external face of the east wall of the old parish church of Shotley, alongside a dedication stone commemorating an 1892 restoration, are two small stones which both came to light at the same time (Hodgson 1902, 307):

- (1) Slab of coarse fawn sandstone; with a simple equal-armed and expanded-arm cross, carved in relief. Possibly the head of a full-length slab or a piece of a headstone. Twelfth century? (Illustration scale 1:10.)
- (2) Slab of coarse fawn sandstone with an expanded arm cross (the lower arm broken across) carved in relief. Possibly the head of a full-length slab or a piece of headstone. Twelfth century? (Illustration scale 1:10.)

Haltwhistle (Holy Cross)

Holy Cross contains three fourteenth-century cross slabs of high quality, all carved in unusually high relief, perhaps by the same mason. The slabs, along with an accompanying effigy, were described in Blair (1929).

- (1) Slab, well preserved and perhaps *in situ*, set in the floor on the south side of the sanctuary. The cross has an ornate eight-terminal ring head with fleur-de-lys terminals, rising from a rather asymmetric elaborately-crocketed ogee arch base. On the l. are a sword and a shield bearing a fess between three sheaves, the arms of Blenkinsopp. On the r. are a pilgrim's wallet or scrip and staff or bourden. Blair (1929) suggests that this is the slab of the Thomas Blenkinsopp who received licence to crenellate Blenkinsopp Castle in 1340 and died before 1365, father of the Thomas Blenkinsopp commemorated by the late fourteenth-century effigy on the north of the sanctuary.
- (2) Slab set in the sanctuary floor adjacent to (1) on the north; this stone, along with (3), was found in the 1870 restoration buried beneath the eastern arch of the south arcade. The cross has a six-terminal ring head with fleur-de-lys terminals and six-foiled circle at the centre, and rises from a trefoiled ogee arch base. Sword on r. of shaft and shield with a chevron between three swine's heads coupé, on the l. The armorial bearings are those of the Thirlwall family. Blair (1929) conjectures that this slab and (3) commemorate two John Thirlwalls senior and junior, prominent between the years 1330 and 1386.
- (3) Slab, now set in the floor on the north side of the sanctuary, similar to (2) except that there is a six-pointed star at the head centre, and the positions of sword and bearings are reversed. The base is broken away. Fourteenth century.

One of the Robert Blair sketchbooks (Blair n.d., IX, 151) includes sketches, dated

24.6.1891, of slab (4) and another fragment (5):

- (4) Small tapered slab of brown sandstone, lying loose beneath a pew at the west end of the south aisle. Decorated with an incised sword, with a discoidal pommel. Date uncertain.
- (5) Slab, perhaps a headstone, with a round-leaf bracelet cross carved in relief. This cannot now be found. Twelfth or thirteenth century. (Size and illustration scale uncertain.)

Haydon Bridge (Haydon Old Church; NY 842653)

The nave, south aisle and west tower of the old parish church of Haydon were demolished c. 1796 to provide materials for the new church then being built at Haydon Bridge, half a mile to the south. The chancel and south chapel of the old church remained as a ruin until 1882 when they were restored by C. C. Hodges; he then published an account of the church and its monuments (Hodges 1885). A sketch of the building, apparently under restoration, appears in the Blair sketch book (Blair n.d., III), along with drawings of some of the cross slabs, and an appended note: 'the medieval coffin slabs above sketched are lying about the churchyard, some newly broken and one or two apparently newly tooled. . . '.

- (1) Complete limestone slab set in the floor of the chancel aisle. Hodges (1885) shows this slab in the same position on his 1882 plan, although his interpretation of the badly worn design is incorrect. Incised cross shaft and stepped calvary base; cross paté carved in relief within a sunk circle. There is a central sunk disc with a raised radial pattern. No emblem visible. Twelfth century.
- (2) Tapering slab re-used as the internal lintel of the south door, and whitewashed over (Hodges 1885, slab 'C'). Incised design; what appears to be an open book

Haydon Bridge (Haydon Old Church; NY 842653), cont.

is placed centrally with a sword on the r. Date uncertain.

Fragments (3) to (7) were re-set, during the 1882 restoration, in the recess of the blocked doorway on the north side of the chancel:

- (3) Incised slab in two pieces (Hodges 1885, slab 'B'). Straight arm cross with cusped arms and fleur-de-lys terminals, the leaves curled. Sword with ogival pommel on l. of shaft. Fourteenth or early fifteenth century.
- (4) Fragment of slab with incised cross shaft and the letters '... I O H A N...'. The carving here, and on fragment (5), looks suspiciously 'fresh'; in the light of Blair's comments (Blair n.d., III), it seems that Hodges (or at least his workmen) was happy to 'improve' stones he found. He was certainly prone to draw stones as in a less weathered or worn condition than they actually were, as can be seen by comparing his notebook drawings (Hodges n.d.) with the published end-product — or by comparing his drawings of slabs (3) and (6) with their actual condition.
- (5) Fragment of slab with incised cross shaft and pair of shears on the l. Date uncertain.
- (6) Upper part of a slab of fawn sandstone (Hodges 1885, slab 'D'). The cross head has stylised fleur-de-lys terminals with leaves curling back and sword on r. Hodges' illustration shows the slab as more complete, with the cross shaft terminating abruptly a little below the short cross-bar which remains just below the hilt of the sword. Thirteenth or fourteenth century.
- (7) Part of a slab with a simple incised straight-arm cross. Date uncertain.
- (8) Complete slab set on the south side of the sanctuary floor (Hodges 1885, slab 'A'). Incised cross with cusped arms and trefoil terminals rising from 4-step calvary base, with sword on l. of the shaft. Inscription at the top of the slab inlaid: in lead, now much decayed; Hodges gives the inscription as:

Hic iacet iohaner Elrington et
..ina uxor eius quae anima
bus ppicietur deus. . .

 and conjectures the name of John Elrington's wife to be Elina. Probably fifteenth century.
- (9) Small tapering slab (Hodges 1885, stone 'F') set in the floor on the north side of the west respond of the arcade between chancel and chapel. Incised border; within it the only motif is a small sword, though not set as skew as is shown in Hodges (1888). Date uncertain.
- (10) Small tapering sandstone slab, closely resembling (9), resting on a recent grave outside the east end of the chancel; this is not figured in Hodges (1885; n.d.) and was not seen on a 1984 visit. Decoration consists of a small sword within an incised border, the top of which is a double line with a line of simple ornament (perhaps a rustic attempt at nail-head). Thirteenth century?
- (11) Lower part of a tapering slab, now built into the external east jamb of the seventeenth-century three-light window on the south side of the chancel. All that is visible is an incised border. Date uncertain. Not illustrated.
- (12) Hodges (1885) illustrates a further slab (E), found re-used in the buttress at the south end of the west wall and already lost when he wrote. Six-arm cross with fleur-de-lys terminals carved in relief within a sunk circle. No conventional cross shaft but there is a sword below the head on the r. and, to the l., there are three roundels containing designs erased by weathering. The roundels are paralleled on a small slab from Hexham (Cambridge and Williams 1995, 122 and 124, no. 44). Late thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Haydon Bridge (Haydon Old Church; NY 842653), cont.

Hodges (1885, 30) refers to, but does not illustrate, a slab re-used as a lintel at Page Croft, a partly-seventeenth-century house to the south east of the church. This cannot now be traced.

Heddon-on-the-Wall (St Andrew)

- (1) Upper part of a slab, of relatively fine-grained fawn sandstone, set on the internal sill of the western window in the south wall of the chancel. Incised design. About half of the cross head survives, from which it appears to be a rather irregular expanded-arm form, within a circle and with a small disc at the centre. A sword lies on the l. of the shaft, its blade directly adjacent to, and its quillons overlying, the shaft; the pommel is discoidal. On the l. edge of the stone, at the level of the sword pommel, is an object which might be the end of a studded belt, or possibly the elaborate quillon of a second sword, lying on a part of the stone now cut away. Twelfth century?
- (2) Discoidal headstone, of coarse-grained brown sandstone, now set on the internal sill of the window on the north of the chancel. Expanded-arm cross with a central disc, the panels between the arms sunk; both sides bear the same design. Twelfth century?
- (3) Slab, now lost. A rough sketch of a slab, which in 1810 was 'fastened up against the wall of. . . Heddon Church', appears in a MS notebook compiled by the Revd. J. F. Hodgson (NRO, ZAN M15/A33). It shows a straight-armed cross with trefoil or fleur-de-lys terminals, rising from a two-stepped base with a sword or dagger to the r. Probably thirteenth or fourteenth century. (Size and illustration scale uncertain.)

Hexham Abbey

The large collection of cross slabs and other medieval monuments in Hexham Abbey has

been recently described and illustrated by the author in this journal (Cambridge and Williams 1995, 115–26); to economise on space, this material is not repeated here. Three additional slabs have, however, been located recently by Mr Colin Dallison, whom I would like to thank for bringing them to my attention. They have been numbered to follow on from the earlier sequence. They are:

- (52) Gritstone slab re-used, in the newel stair in the south-west corner of the central tower, as the ninth roof slab above the door into the ringing chamber. Incised design with the lower part and triangular point of a sword visible; its position suggests that it was perhaps the only motif on the slab. Date uncertain.
- (53) Tapering sandstone slab with incised borders now forming part of the roof of the lobby by which the newel stair enters the belfry. Decoration consists of a broad cross shaft tapering upwards from a stepped base which is positioned well short of the foot of the stone. Twelfth century?
- (54) Tapering slab of coarse-grained, fawn sandstone re-used as a lintel at the head of the stair in the north-east corner of the north transept. The slab has a big roll moulding on each edge, with a hollow chamfer below; the top surface is now much decayed, and has lost any design it may once have carried. Thirteenth century?

Knarsdale (St Jude)

The present parish church at Knarsdale is a building of 1833, replacing a more ancient structure. The old church had preserved some interesting early monuments; Hodgson (1840, 79) writes ' . . . at the east end there were two old tombstones, each with a cross on it; and one, having on one side of the cross, a sword, and on the other an arrow; and over the doorway of the porch, as a lintel, another gravestone, with a sword and crosier, neatly designed, but sadly mutilated'.

Knarsdale (St Jude), cont.

Two of Hodgson's slabs were located by the writer in 1984, lying in the churchyard beside the path to the south of the chancel, partly covered by moss and partly by a thin layer of soil:

- (1) Slab identifiable with that described by Hodgson (1840, 79) as being at the east end of the old chancel. It shows a cross head with fleur-de-lys terminals, the leaves linking to enclose heart-shaped panels (which are sunk) and below, to the l., an arrow (*cf* Blanchland (3)). Late thirteenth or fourteenth century.
- (2) Slab, of fine-grained sandstone, bearing a full-length cross with an ornate head of the 'interlaced diamond' type (perhaps what Hodgson terms a 'crosier'); there is a sword to the r. and a second emblem, too weathered to identify, on the l. Late thirteenth or fourteenth century.
- (3) Slab, which probably came to light when the church was enlarged in 1892, now built into the external face of the north wall of the new chancel, 2m above ground level. This bears a foliate cross of the common thirteenth-century 'bracelet' type with a pair of shears on the l. of the cross shaft. Thirteenth century.

Matfen (Matfen Hall)

One of the Robert Blair sketchbooks (Blair n.d., V, 253) has a page of rough sketches of stones simply labelled 'Matfen Hall'; as there was no medieval church or chapel in the immediate vicinity, they were presumably imported by someone with antiquarian tastes, probably from some other church in the area. A determined search of the gardens of the Hall, and conversations with local residents, have failed to reveal any trace of these stones.

The drawings show:

- (1) Fragmentary slab with cross botonée head (having terminals with pointed

buds and round leaves) and a cross bar on the shaft. Late thirteenth or fourteenth century.

- (2) Slab, lacking only its base, with cross botonée head (having terminals with pointed buds and rounded leaves) with a sword on the r. of the shaft and a pair of shears on the l. Late thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Newbrough (St Peter)

- (1) Tapering sandstone slab with chamfered edges, now in the south porch. The only motif is an incised sword with a discoidal pommel, set centrally. This piece is drawn in Hodges (n.d.). Date uncertain.
- (2) Part of a slab re-used in the base of the south-west face of the angle buttress at the south-east corner of the chancel. The surviving incised design is probably part of a sword blade. Date uncertain.

Ovingham (St Mary the Virgin)

There is an interesting collection of medieval cross slabs and slab fragments at this site. Apart from slabs (4) and (13), these lay, until recently, outside against the west wall of the south transept and the south wall of the nave; the majority have now been taken into the south porch, and clamped upright against the internal face of the west wall. All are relatively simple monuments, of local sandstone or grit.

- (1) Head and centre part of a slab, in two pieces. Round-leaf bracelet cross head carved in relief within a sunk panel; incised sword with down-turned quillons on l. of shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (2) Small complete slab. Incised Greek cross rising from a semicircular mount (*cf*. Bywell St Andrew (5) and Corbridge (14)); an incised triangle above and to the l. of the base may perhaps be intended as an emblem. The design is too simple to date.

Ovingham (St Mary the Virgin), cont.

- (3) Large fragment of a slab with a cross crosslet and shears on the l. of the shaft. Difficult to date.
- (4) Upper part of slab now built into the west wall of the south porch. The cross head, carved in relief in a sunk panel, is of quite an elaborate form, with eight arms with rings or bracelets between them, and pointed buds; the shaft below is flanked by a pair of petalled rosettes; below the l. rosette is the top of either a key or a pair of shears. Later twelfth or early thirteenth century?
- (5) Small complete gritstone slab with incised design. Cross with arms expanded into ball-like terminals. Simple stepped base, with shears on r. of shaft. Perhaps twelfth century.
- (6) Complete slab with incised design. Asymmetric cross head with fleur-de-lys terminals, sword on r. of shaft, and stepped calvary base. Fourteenth century.
- (7) Lower part of a gritstone slab. Incised design of cross shaft rising from stepped calvary base, with sword blade on r. of shaft and the lower part of a key on the l. Date uncertain.
- Nos. (8)–(11) currently lie loose within the south porch:
- (8) Badly damaged small double slab with simple four-circle cross heads. The l. cross has a sunk panel, to the r. of the shaft, containing a sword carved in relief whilst the r. cross has a similar panel (with shears?) now largely cut away. Irregular stepped bases. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (9) Upper part of a slab with a bracelet cross head, carved in relief, within a roughly circular sunk panel; slightly unusual in detail and perhaps late, i.e. later thirteenth century?
- (10) Slab with very worn conventional round-leaf bracelet cross head. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (11) Part of an unusual cross head, with straight arms (with short cross bars) and terminals with long leaves that join at the out-turned tips to enclose a form of 'bracelet'. Fourteenth century?
- (12) Slab with stepped base of an incised cross, faint, re-used as the south end of the west bench of the south porch. Ovingham (1) is now clamped above this stone, partly concealing it. Date uncertain.
- (13) Tapered gritstone slab found in Feb. 2000, at depth of 0.25m., when a drainage trench was being dug 0.60m west of the south-west corner of the south porch. The stone was weathered and had traces of reddening, as if burned; it was clearly not in situ. Since it was badly cracked and would have disintegrated if lifted, it was left in position. The stone had an incised border and its base was broken away. The only clear motif was a pair of shears, set r. of centre; there were slight indications of a possible second pair of shears above. Date uncertain.
- (14) Lost slab. In the Society of Antiquaries' collection in the Black Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, are some tracings made by C. C. Hodges 'from Dr Charlton's MS'; these include a drawing of a fragment of a slab from Ovingham with part of a cross head, of cross botonée or bracelet derivative form, together with a sword on the r. of the cross shaft. Thirteenth century? (Size and illustration scale uncertain.)

Prudhoe (St Thomas' Chapel)

The only record so far traced of the monument listed below is a rubbing, tied up with a bundle of drawings of Northumberland cross slabs, made by C. C. Hodges (Hodges n.d.). The rubbing is made with yellow wax on brown paper; on the margin are the appended notes (in pencil): 'Prudhoe Hall Dec 14 1908' — presumably referring to the location of the stone when Hodges made his rubbing — and '10" thick at head' and '2" chamfer', referring to the stone

Prudhoe (St Thomas' Chapel), cont.

itself; within the cross-head panel is the note 'sunk 1/4"'. On the back the rubbing is labelled 'Prudhoe. Found on site of chapel of St Thomas a Becket Nov 1908'. This chapel was probably in South Road, on or near the site of the house whose modern name is 'Prudhoe Grange' (or 'The Grange'); this house preserves medieval features which may have been part of the chapel.

- (1) Slab, in overall dimensions (allowing for the chamfer) 0.75m long and tapering from 0.34m wide at the head to 0.27m at the base. The texture of the rubbing and geology of the locality both point to the stone being a medium-grained sandstone, probably from the local Coal Measures. At the head of the slab is a sunk panel containing a cross made up of four broken circles or 'bracelets', with lozenge-shaped buds between; the place of the cross shaft is taken by a pair of shears (incised except for sunk panels in the loop and between the upper parts of the blades) having a round loop and with blades which have a distinctive square external shoulder. This is a 'half size' slab (Ryder 1985, 6), a form of monument common at some sites in the North East, and probably relating to use as a grave marker rather than a coffin lid. The replacement of the conventional cross shaft and base by an emblem is not uncommon — slabs on which the shears replace or overlie the cross shaft occur at Doddington, Ford and Hexham; the sword is similarly shown at Hexham and North Gosforth. The cross head form is a very common one, in general use in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Ryder 1985, 9–10); the shears are the second-most common emblem on Northern cross slabs. The only unusual features on the Prudhoe slab are the square shoulders to the blades; it is conceivable that they differentiate the emblem from the usual domestic form

with tapering blades, and indicate some specific trade use — like the broad-ended shears at Durham St Oswald and Gainford (Ryder, 1985).

The slab cannot now be traced. At the time Hodges recorded the stone, Prudhoe Hall was a private house, and the stone may have been taken there to add to a collection of antiquarian exhibits. A recent search of the gardens and grounds, and enquiries of the staff, failed to elicit any trace of it.

Ryal (All Saints)

During the restoration of this chapel of ease in 1870 a series of cross slabs were recovered, 18 being re-set across the internal face of the west wall of the nave, with two more re-used as window-heads. This is a fine series of slabs, demonstrating some vernacular variants on 'mainstream' designs, as one might expect at a relatively-remote rural location, some distance from any site (such as a major ecclesiastical centre) which would reflect national rather than local stylistic influences. A similar collection is to be found at Middleton in Teesdale (County Durham).

The slabs in the west wall, all of local sandstones, are here numbered from left to right, across the full width of the wall; (3) and (4), (5), (6) and (7), (10) and (11), (12) and (13), and (14) and (15) are set one above the other.

- (1) Slab, plain except for a chamfered edge, and a pair of shears on the l. side. Date uncertain.
- (2) Damaged slab, slightly tapered, and built into the wall upside down. The design, carved in relief, comprises a cross shaft having a cross bar at its centre and a clustered foliate cross at its lower end; there are traces of what seems to be a cross head, of similar type, at the damaged upper end of the stone. This is a very unusual monument type, at least in this part of the country, although Bolam (2), rather more elongate, is similar both

Ryal (All Saints), cont.

- in having two crosses, and in the form of cross. Fourteenth century?
- (3) Upper part of slab with four-circle cross and sword on r. of shaft. There are sunk panels within the circle, and at the centre of the head, and the circles have concentric lines with beading between (see also slab (9)). Possibly twelfth century.
- (4) Upper part of slab with a roll-moulded edge, and an incised design; four simple bracelets within a circle; on the r. of the cross shaft is part of an emblem, probably a knife. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (5) Upper part of slab with incised design; the head is a derivative of a cross paté, but the four lenticular segments between the arms extend outside the enclosing ring; sword on the l. of the shaft. Twelfth century?
- (6) Upper part of slab, design incised except for sunk panel at head; straight-arm cross with fleur-de-lys terminals, within a ring; setting-out lines still visible. Pair of shears on r. of shaft. Possibly fourteenth or even fifteenth century.
- (7) Head of slab; incised design, simple roughly equal-armed cross with discoidal terminals. Date uncertain.
- (8) Near-complete slab, cracked into two pieces. Incised design. Cross paté in circle, set on shaft that widens towards head, rising from stepped calvary with the line of each step continued across the front of the mount, so that it rises as four tiers. The cross is, unusually, not set centrally, but on the r. side of the tapered slab, and there is a sword (now very faint) with a multi-lobed pommel on the l. side. Both top and bottom of the slab have a border of nail-head ornament, within the edge chamfer. There is a small incised cross at the top l. corner of the slab. The nail-head ornament suggests a thirteenth-century date.
- (9) Near-complete tapered slab; four-circle cross head very like slab (3), with sunk panels within the circles and at the centre, rising from a stepped calvary; sword on r. of shaft. Probably twelfth century.
- (10) Small slab, probably complete; incised design consisting of a simple cross with slightly-expanded terminals, and a crude sword on the r. of the shaft. Twelfth century?
- (11) Complete small slab, with edges of stepped section, but left square at top and bottom. Expanded-arm cross carved within a ring, with sunk panels between the arms. Crude sword on r. of shaft; crude stepped base. Twelfth century?
- (12) Small tapered slab with incised design; slightly l. of centre is a small straight-armed cross, with, to the r., a rather longer sword. Date uncertain.
- (13) Small tapered slab with remains of faintly-incised sword set a little r. of centre. Date uncertain.
- (14) Part of the head of a slab. Incised design; cross with slightly-expanded terminals, with a ring behind the arms. Twelfth century?
- (15) Upper part of slab. Quite refined bracelet cross head, carved in relief within a sunk circle; incised line decoration on bracelets and on the sharply-pointed buds. Broad incised shaft, on the l. the top loop of a probable pair of shears. Probably later twelfth century.
- (16) Upper part of a slab, with incised design. Cross, with lenticular arms, within a ring; pair of shears on l. of shaft. Thirteenth century?
- (17) Slab with incised design. Simple bracelet cross within a ring; broad cross shaft, with sword on l. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (18) Tapered slab with chamfered edges, its only motif a pair of shears, set centrally. Date uncertain.
- (19) Lower part of slab re-used as the external head of the easternmost of the lower series of windows on the south

Ryal (All Saints), cont.

of the nave. Incised design, single-step cross base and broad shaft. Twelfth century?

- (20) Central part of slab re-used as external head of the westernmost of the nave south side windows. Incised design, cross shaft with pair of shears on r. Date uncertain.

St John Lee (St John of Beverley)

There are a number of medieval stones here, including a fourteenth-century slab with a Lombardic inscription and indent for a brass (set against the external face of the east wall of the nave to the south of the chancel) and some minor sculptural fragments beneath the tower, including one cross slab:

- (1) Small slab of orange-brown sandstone, now lacking its head. Incised design. Cross shaft rising from single-step base to end in a fleur-de-lys. This probably formed an opposed pair with the lower terminal of the cross head (broken away) although occasional slabs where a fleur-de-lys is substituted for the cross head do occur, as at Ormside, Cumbria. On the l. is a sword, with a discoidal pommel. Thirteenth century?

Shotley, see Greymare Hill**Simonburn (St Mungo)**

(All the Simonburn illustrations are at a scale of 1:10, except numbers 3, 4, 5 and 6, which are at 1:20.)

The heads of the small cross slabs (1) and (2) now lie on the modern plinth of the 1637 century Ridley monument at the east end of the south aisle, whilst (3) is built into the plinth.

- (1) Slab of fine-grained grey/brown sandstone, with a cross head of eight inter-linked bracelets and dog tooth ornament on the marginal chamfer; pommel of

sword on l. of shaft and part of a second T-shaped emblem (pilgrim's staff?) on the r. Thirteenth century.

- (2) Small, irregular, four-circle cross head of fine-grained grey/brown stone; in 1999 it was obscured by one of the figures from the monument now placed upon it. Difficult to date: twelfth or thirteenth century?
- (3) Worn slab with incised design; cross head of four circles set diagonally, an unusual variant on a common theme. Sword on l. of shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.

Slabs (4) and (5) form part of the chancel floor, (4) adjacent to the north wall and (5) nearby, immediately below the first sanctuary step:

- (4) Slab of fine-grained sandstone, with secondary inscription to An[n] Algood, 1629(?), now set north-south. Of the original design the incised cross shaft, stepped base and faint traces of a cross head with fleur-de-lys terminals are visible. Fourteenth century?
- (5) Slab of fine-grained brown sandstone, with secondary inscription to John Algood, 1681, set east-west. Only faint traces of the original design survive: a cross with head very similar to (4) and sword (?) on r. Fourteenth century?
- (6) Upper part of a slab now set in the floor at the extreme west end of the north aisle. Eight-terminal fleur-de-lys cross head carved in low relief within a circular sunk panel; incised cross shaft with what is probably the top of a pair of shears on the r. Probably later thirteenth century.

Monuments (7)–(12) are now set into the internal face of the east wall of the north porch, along with other sculptural fragments, some of which are of Pre-Conquest date (see Cramp 1984, I, 223–4):

- (7) Small complete slab of fine-grained fawn sandstone. Cross with quatrefoil at

Simonburn (St Mungo), cont.

- centre and fleur-de-lys terminals, carved in relief in sunk circle. Incised shaft, stepped base and shears on l. Fourteenth century.
- (8) Simple bracelet cross head on brown sandstone. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.
- (9) Fragment of coped slab of fawn sandstone with overlapping, rounded, tegulae, and plain-sided ridge with incised shears and two small petalled rosettes on one face. This is an example of a twelfth or thirteenth-century monument type which is quite widely distributed in Northumberland and Durham; stylistically it derives from Pre-Conquest types such as the Anglo-Scandinavian hog-back tombs.
- (10) Small and very worn slab of fine-grained grey sandstone, with a cross head very similar to (1) and, on the r. of the shaft, a (?) hammer. Thirteenth century.
- (11) Headstone of a pinkish fine-grained stone. An octagonal block bears a splay-armed cross, carved in relief, which has a petalled rosette at its centre. This may have been part of a composite monument with a coped slab such as (9). Cramp (1984, I, 246–7) considers it to be of eleventh-century date.
- (12) Fragment of the base of an incised slab of fine-grained fawn sandstone, set in the wall to the left of (7). Part of the stepped base of a cross. Date uncertain.

Stamfordham (St Mary the Virgin)

There are four medieval cross slabs here, nos. (1)–(3) having been re-set, presumably in the nineteenth century, in the internal walls of the south porch:

- (1) Head of a slab of light buff sandstone set on the west side of the porch south-of-centre. The design is carved in relief, except for a raised border. Interlaced-diamond cross head with fleur-de-lys terminals, and a small cross at the centre;

- the shaft appears to have been flanked by pairs of fleur-de-lys. Perhaps c. 1300.
- (2) Upper part of a slab of coarse brown sandstone, carved in high relief, set in the centre of the west wall of the porch, at floor level. Ring cross with eight fleur-de-lys terminals, and a simple four-armed cross within the ring; sword on r. of shaft. Rather crudely laid out; the cross shaft is set a little l. of the axis of the stone. Later thirteenth century.
- (3) Upper part of a slab of yellow/brown sandstone, rather worn, set in the centre of the east wall of the porch, at floor level. The head is carved in relief within a sunk roundel; no other part of the design remains visible. The head has round-leaf bracelets with a small Greek cross at the centre. Thirteenth century.
- (4) Lower half of a slab of greenish sandstone set in the external face of the south wall of the south aisle, around 5m above ground level, above the eastern roof slope of the south porch. Incised design consisting of a cross rising from a three-stepped base with the lines of the steps carried across as 'tiers' (*cf.* Ryal (8)). Sword on l. of shaft. Ryal (8) is a thirteenth-century slab, but the same form of base also occurs on later medieval (fifteenth/sixteenth century) 'floor stones'.

Thockrington (St Aidan)

In addition to the two cross slabs described below, there is also a decayed effigy of a lady (in the nave) and, outside the east end, a broken slab with a Lombardic inscription, formerly inlaid in brass, together with another slab with chamfered edges and possible faint traces of an incised design (a sword?). These monuments are illustrated by Hodgson (1897, 394).

- (1) Complete cross slab of whitish sandstone, placed at the west end of the nave, beside the effigy. A 'three-quarter' size (1.22m long) stone, of good quality, with its design carved in high relief. Bracelet cross with trefoil leaves (but no central

Thockrington (St Aidan), cont.

buds to the terminals) and a quatrefoil in the head centre, with a single fleur-de-llys as the base. On the r. of the shaft a sword and on the l. an open book. Later thirteenth century?

- (2) Rectangular slab, now lying outside the east end, decorated with an incised sword on the r. and a hunting horn (*cf.* Blanchland (3) and (4), Bywell St Andrew (18)), slung on a baldric, on the l. Date uncertain.

Warden (St Michael)

The church has several monuments carved, or re-used, in the pre-Conquest period (Cramp 1984, I, 228–30, 247–9). The medieval cross slabs comprise:

- (1) Slab of coarse brown sandstone, forming part of the paving in the south-east corner of the sanctuary. Bracelet cross, incised except for the head which is carved in relief within a sunk circle. On the l. of the shaft is a pair of shears; the initials 'f' and 'm' in the upper corners of the slab are probably a later addition. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.

Lying loose in the south porch are:

- (2) Small slab of coarse-grained fawn sandstone, virtually complete. Incised design of bracelet cross, with sunk areas within the bracelets and at the head centre. The stepped base is cut in the same distinctive manner as several slabs at Bywell, the steps being simulated by small sunk triangles along a single diagonal line. Faint dagger or small sword on r. of shaft. Late twelfth or thirteenth century.
- (3) Small gritstone slab with a roll moulded edge, its only motif a pair of shears set l. of centre. Date uncertain.
- (4) Base of a fawn sandstone slab; incised stepped base of cross, with a sunk disc in the centre, and the tip of a sword (?) on the r. of the shaft. Date uncertain.

- (5) Small discoidal headstone, its shaft largely broken away, of whitish grit. Relief design, the same on each face, of cross botonée with large trefoil terminals. Late thirteenth or fourteenth century?
- (6) Broken discoidal headstone of coarse-grained fawn sandstone. Relief design, the same on each face, of simple splay-armed cross. Twelfth century?

Lost slabs:

Hodges unpublished notebook (Hodges n.d.) illustrates two fragments of slabs which cannot now be located:

- (7) Upper part of a small slab; cross carved in a circle, with sunk lenticular segments between arms, four-petalled flower at centre and a sunk circular panel in the centre of each arm; pommel of sword to the r. of centre. Twelfth century? (Size and illustration scale uncertain.)
- (8) Upper part of small tapered slab with chamfered edges, the only motif being a sword, set slightly to the r. of centre. Date uncertain. (Size and illustration scale uncertain.)

Whitfield (St John)

Only one medieval monument survives here, but this is a piece of some importance:

- (1) Large section (perhaps missing its upper third) of a coped slab of coarse-grained fawn sandstone. The sloping sides, instead of the usual semicircular or triangular tegulae, each have three overlapping bands of fleshy acanthus leaves, overlain on the l. side by the blade of a sword. The flat-topped ridge bears the remains of an inscription in Lombardic capitals, ending:

...ESTO. PIVS.AMEN.

This is an unusually prestigious monument to find in such a remote spot. Coped slabs with inscriptions, whether

Whitfield (St John), cont.

on the ridge or on the top of one side, are not however uncommon: there are two examples at Hexham (Cambridge and Williams 1995, 120–3, nos. 23 & 29) and others in Durham at Kirk Merrington, Grindon (Ryder 1985, 41) and Durham Cathedral. Both the overall form and the acanthus leaves would indicate a date in the later twelfth-century. (Illustration scale 1:10.)

Whittonstall (St James)

- (1) Slab of coped section, known as the 'Whittonstall Sword Stone', which Hodgson (1902, 200) describes as 'recently unearthed in the churchyard'; it was moved into the church c. 1990. The central section carries a sword carved in relief within a sunk panel, and side-panels enclosed by incised borders; there are possible hints of some additional motif on the l. side. The stone is broken into two pieces, with the lower r. corner missing; an engraving in Hodgson (1902, 200) shows it in similar condition. The slab falls into the class of monuments, fairly common in Northumberland, which show only an emblem, usually a sword or a pair of shears, rather than the usual cross; its form also has affinities with a group of twelfth-/thirteenth-century coped slabs, well seen in the Cathedral yard at Durham. Its closest parallel seems to be the 'Lang Pack' at Bellingham (Bellingham (1)). Date uncertain.

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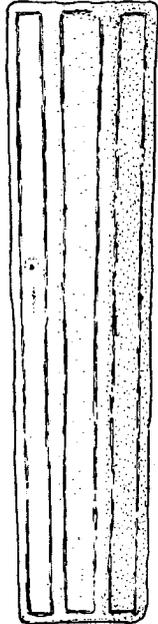
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Asheybank

Bellingham (St. Cuthbert)



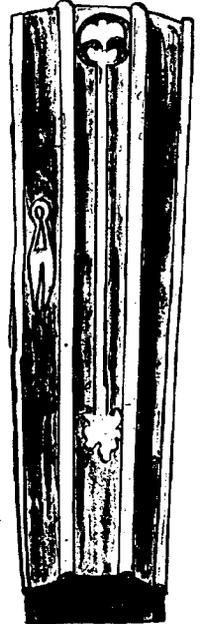
1



1a



1b



1c

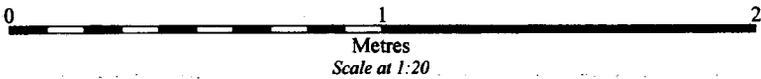


Fig 1. South West Northumberland cross slabs.

Bellingham (St. Cuthbert), cont.

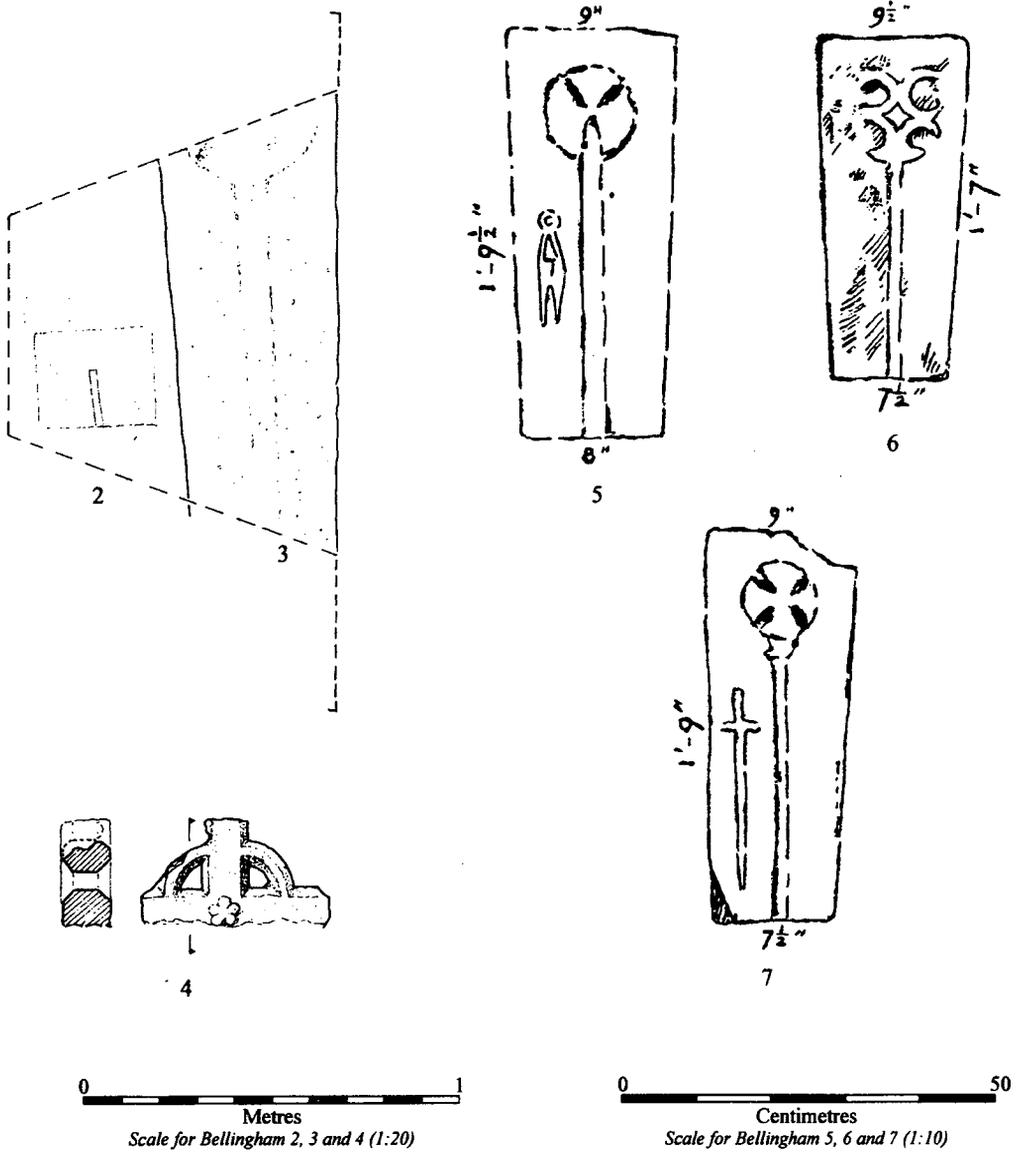


Fig 2. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Beltingham (St. Cuthbert)

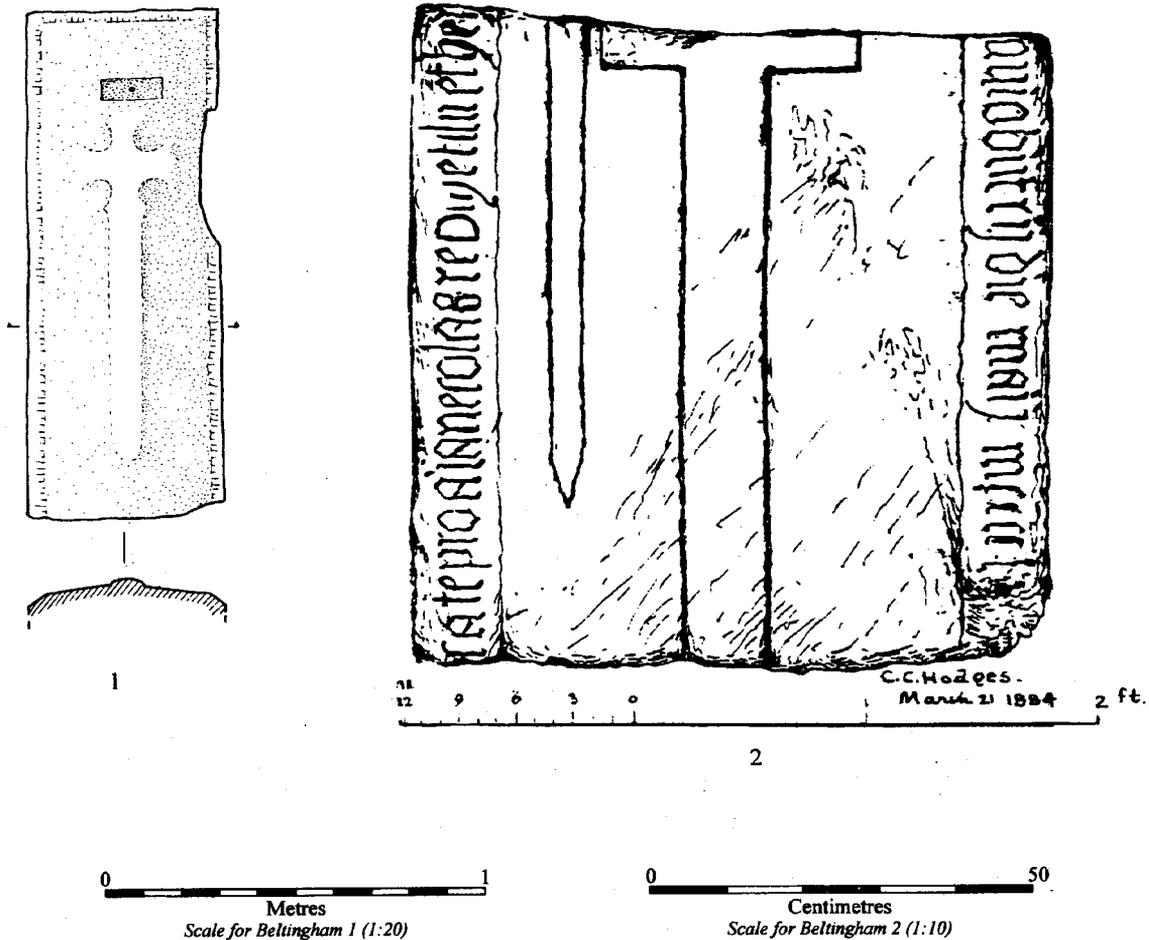


Fig 3. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Birtley (St. Giles)

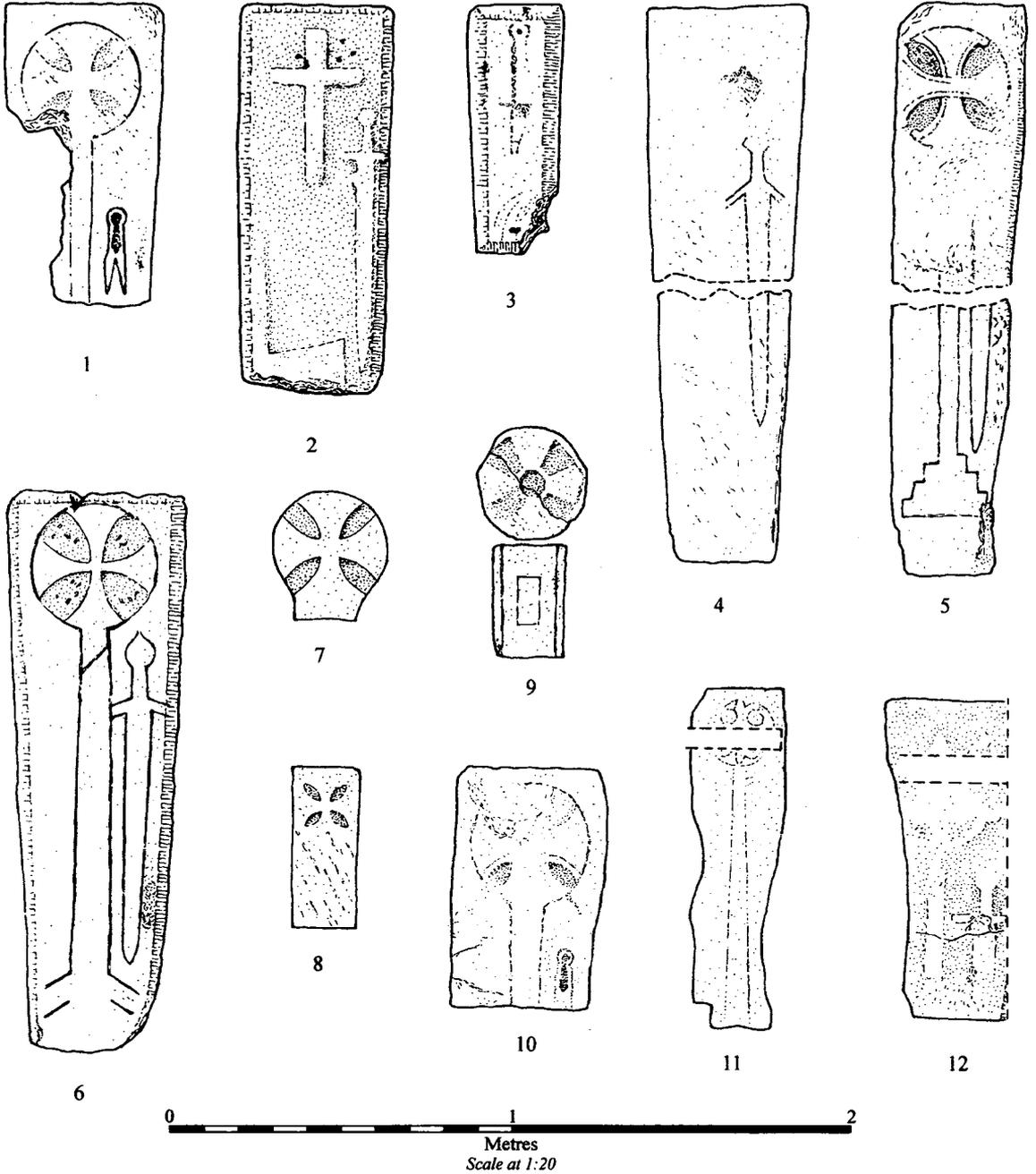
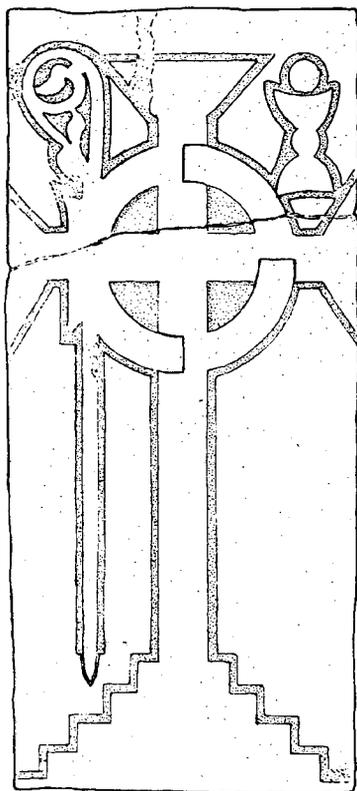
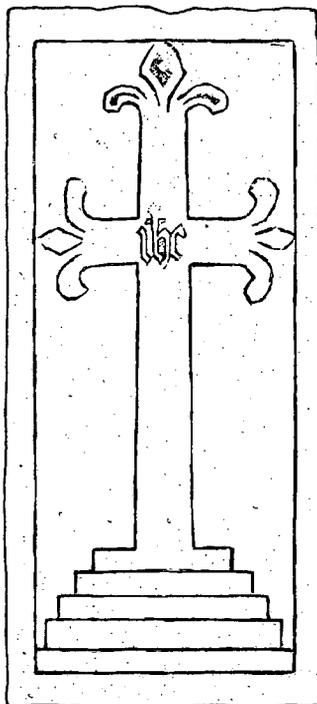


Fig 4. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

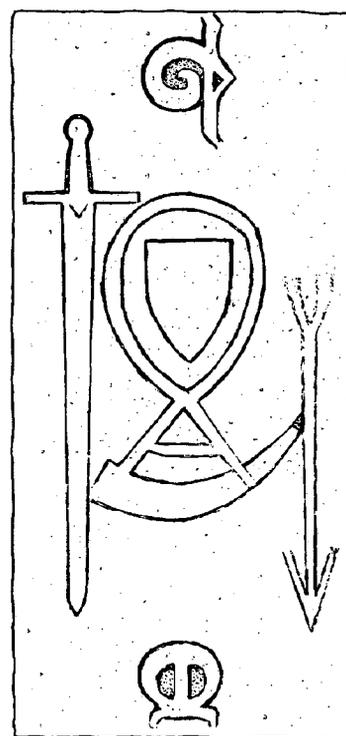
Blanchland (St. Mary the Virgin)



1



2



3

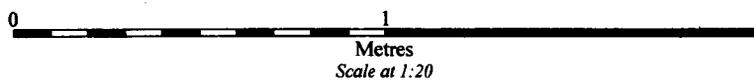
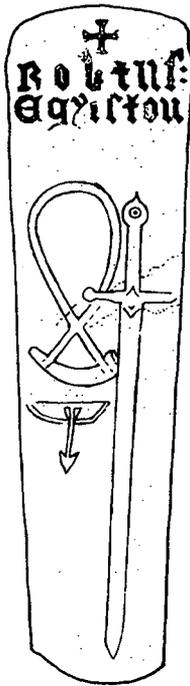
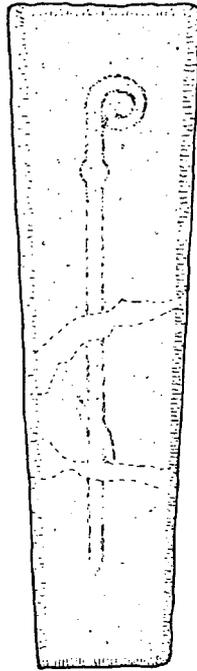


Fig 5. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

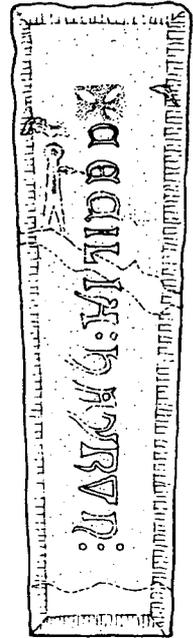
Blanchland (St. Mary the Virgin), cont.



4



5



6

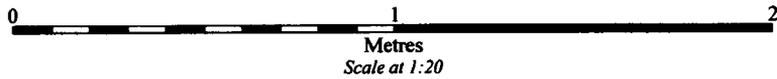


Fig 6. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Bywell (St. Andrew)

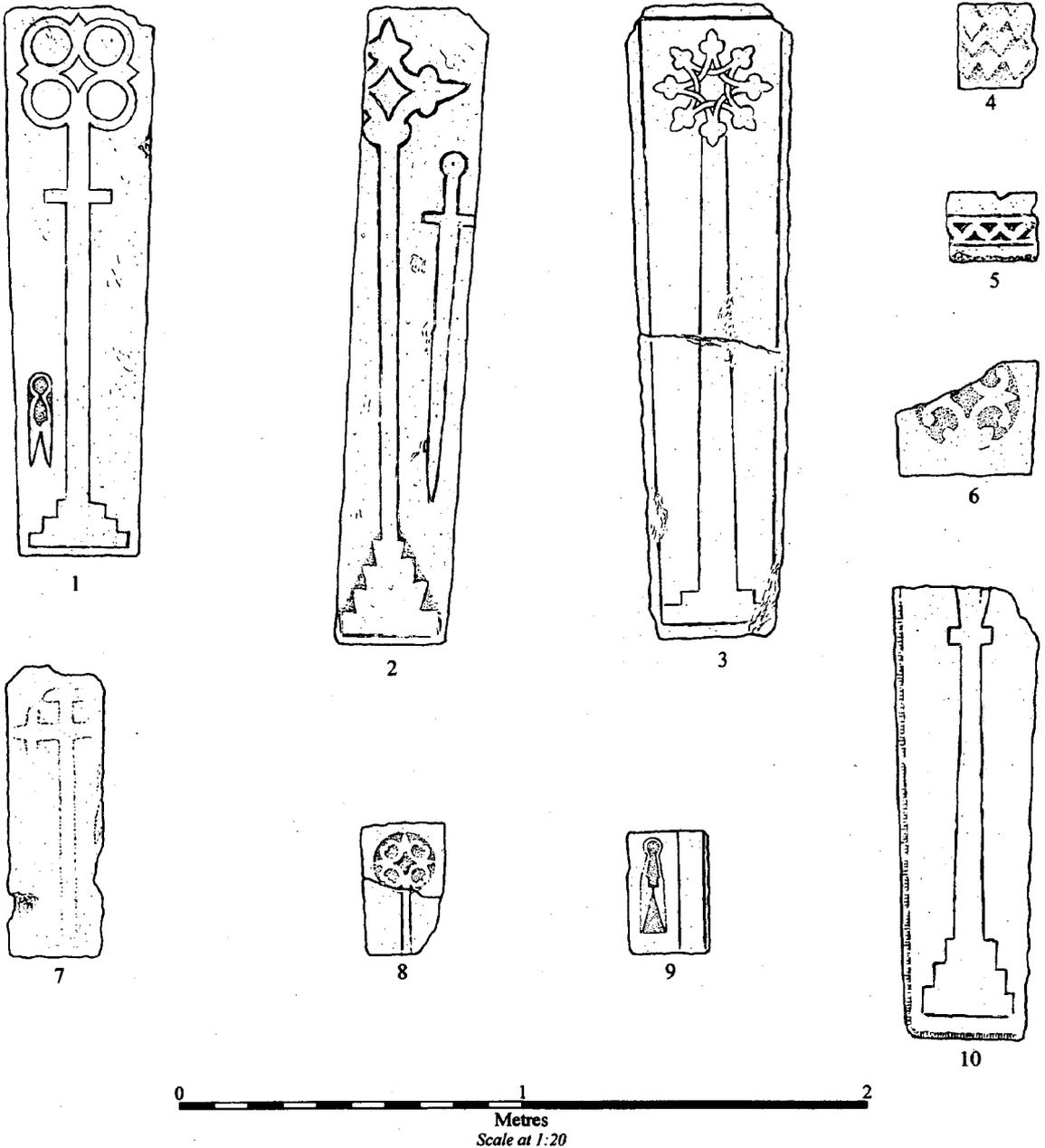
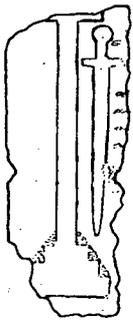
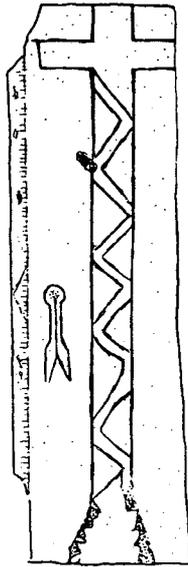


Fig 7. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

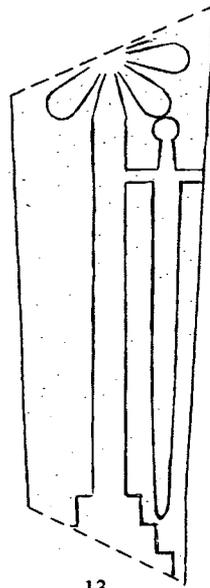
Bywell (St. Andrew), cont.



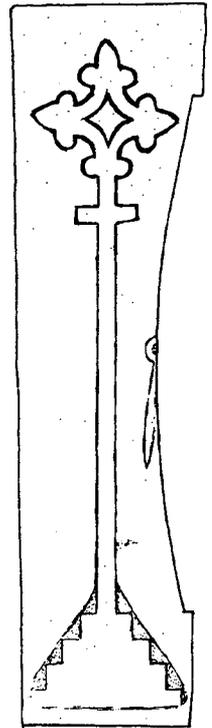
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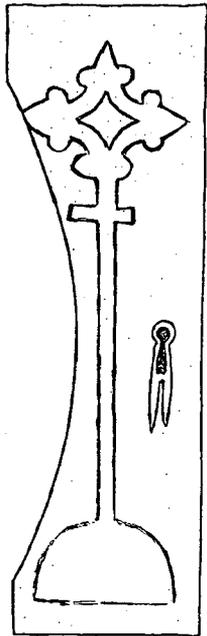
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13



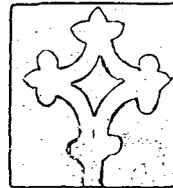
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15



16



17

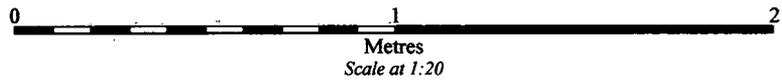


Fig 8. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Bywell (St. Andrew), cont.

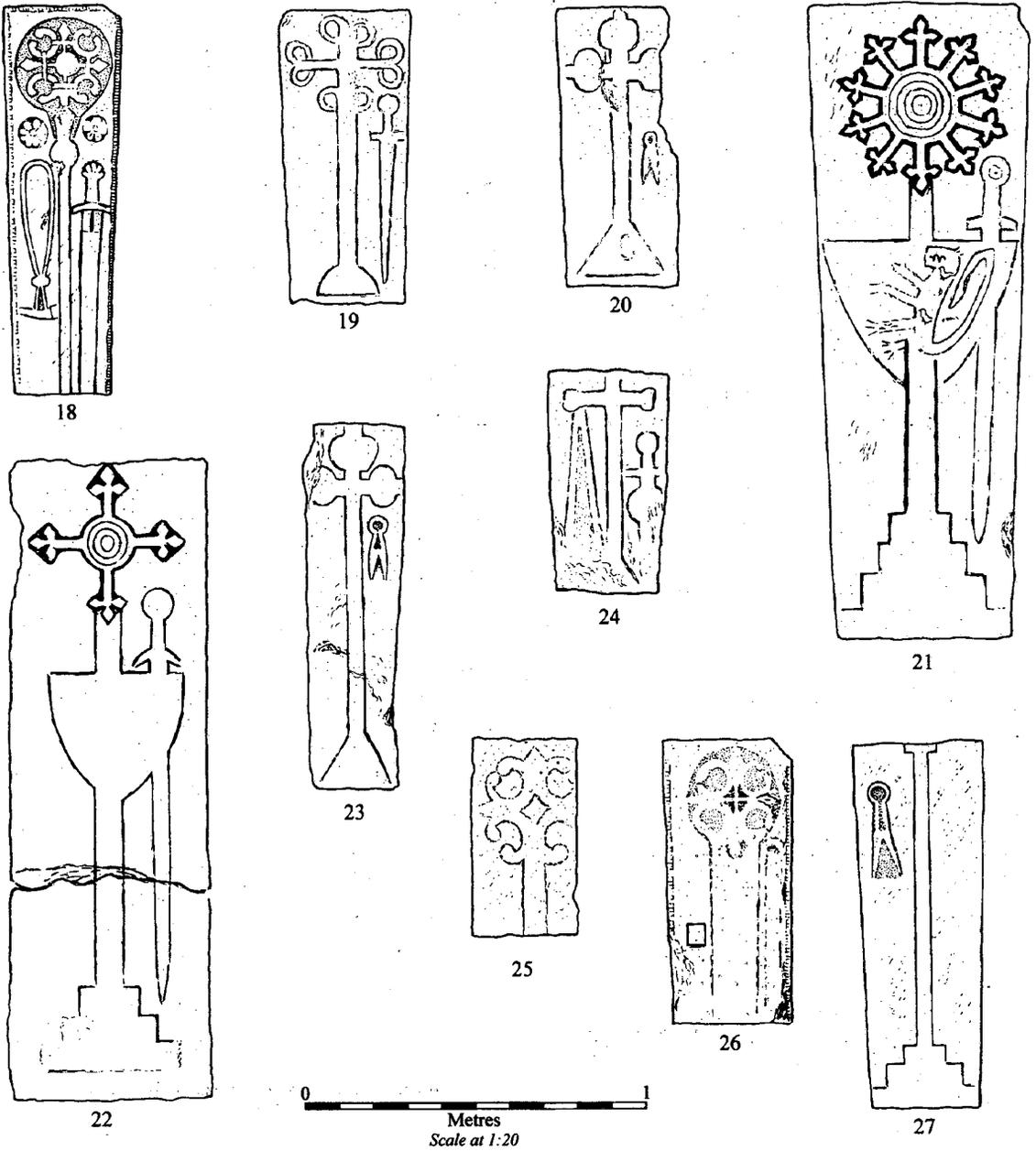


Fig 9. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Bywell (St. Peter)

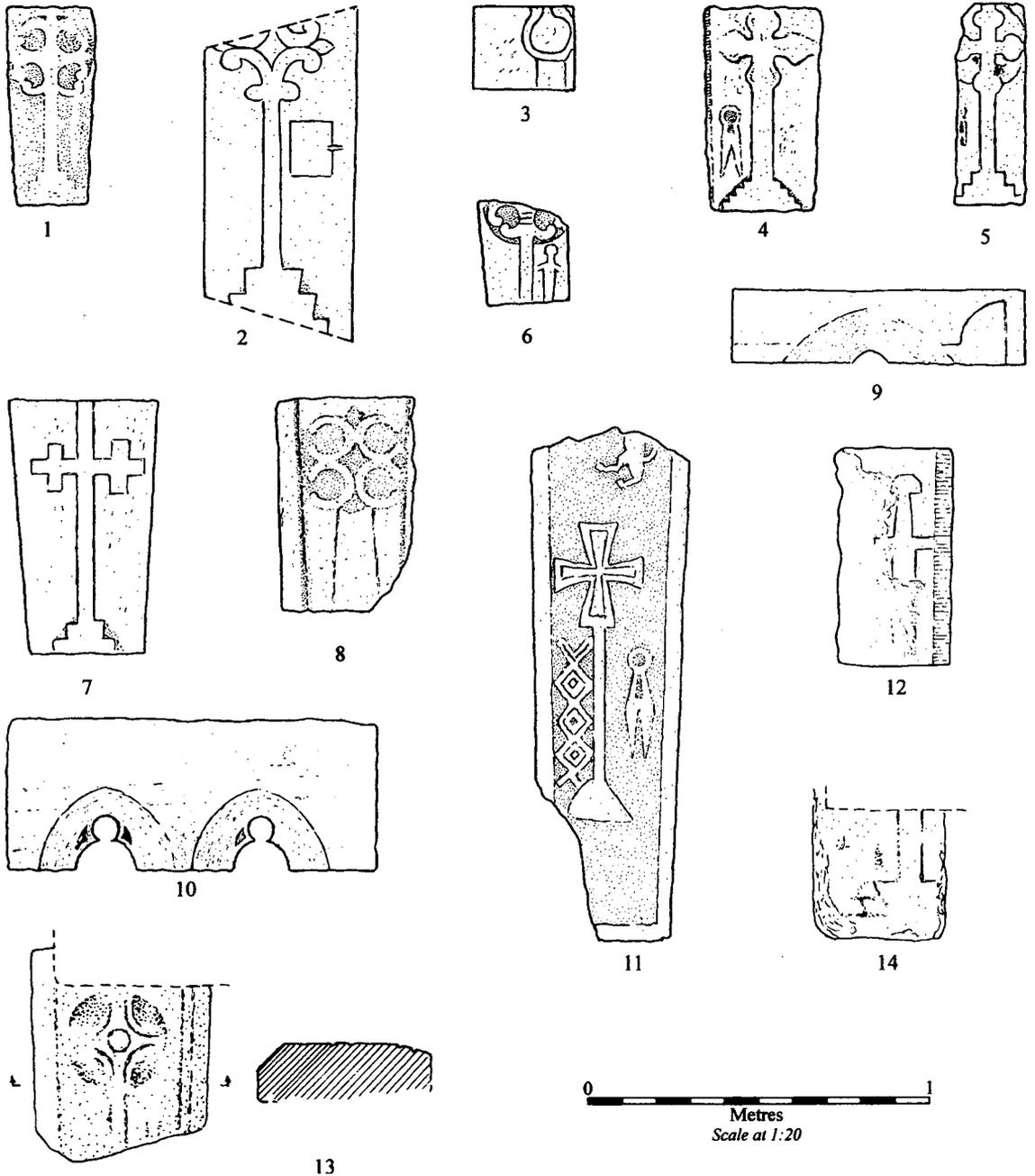


Fig 10. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Chollerton (St. Giles)

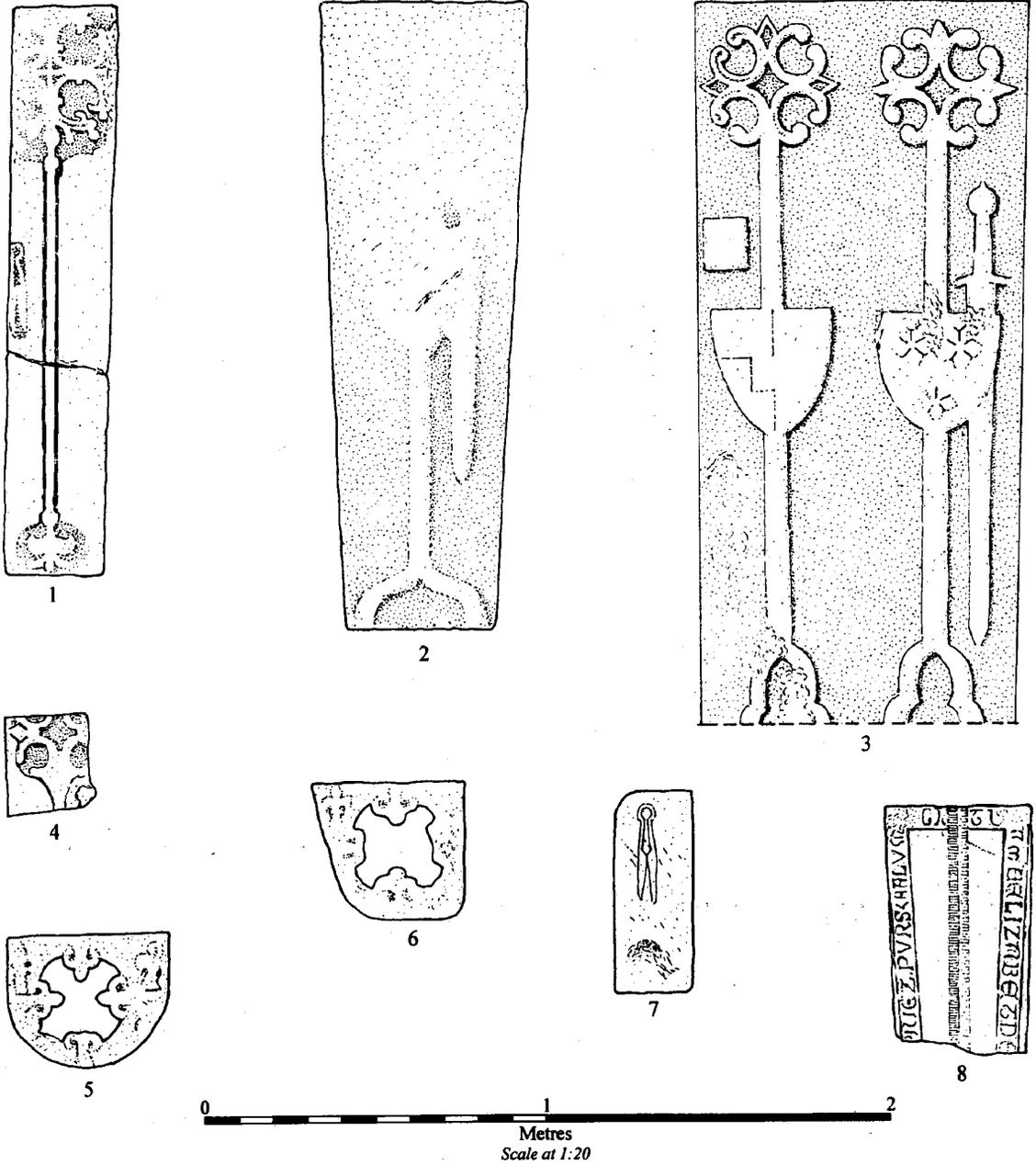
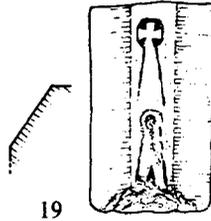
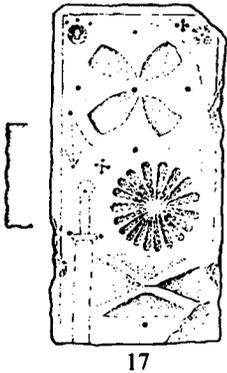
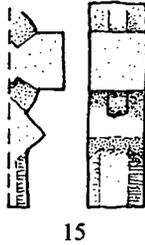
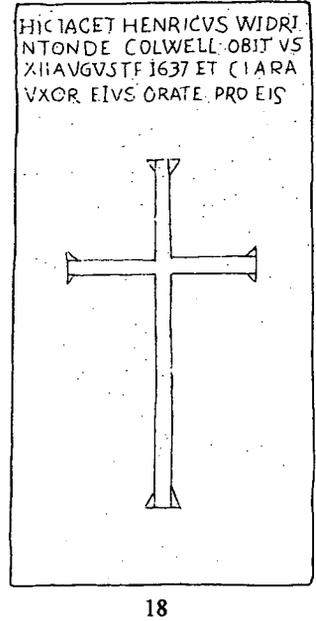
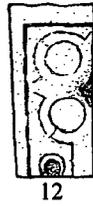
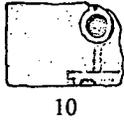
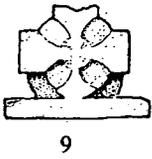


Fig 11. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Chollerton (St. Giles), cont.



Chollerton 20 was not illustrated.

Corbridge (Nos. 18-22 Front Street)



Fig 12. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Corbridge (St. Andrew)

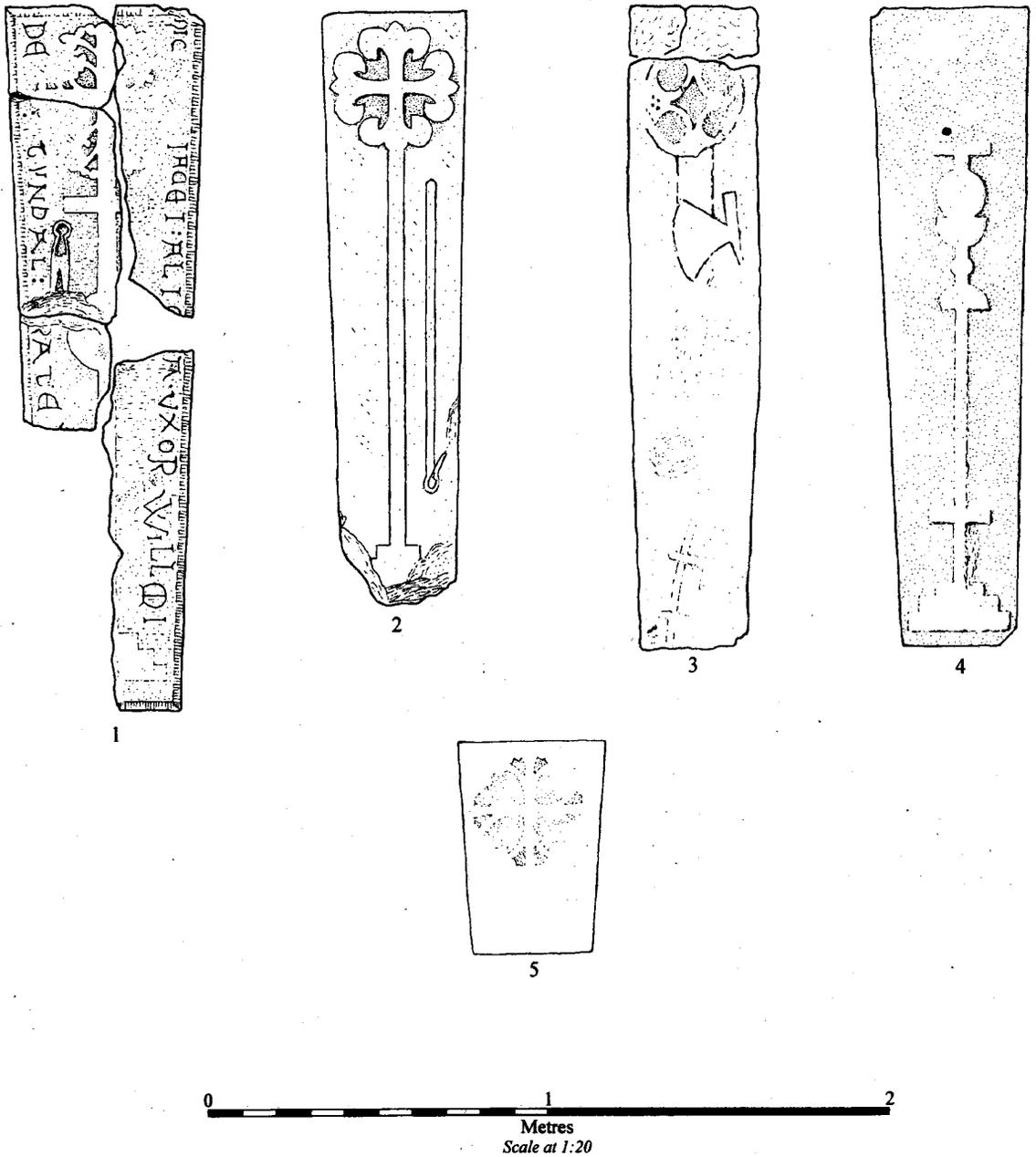


Fig 13. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Corbridge (St. Andrew), cont.

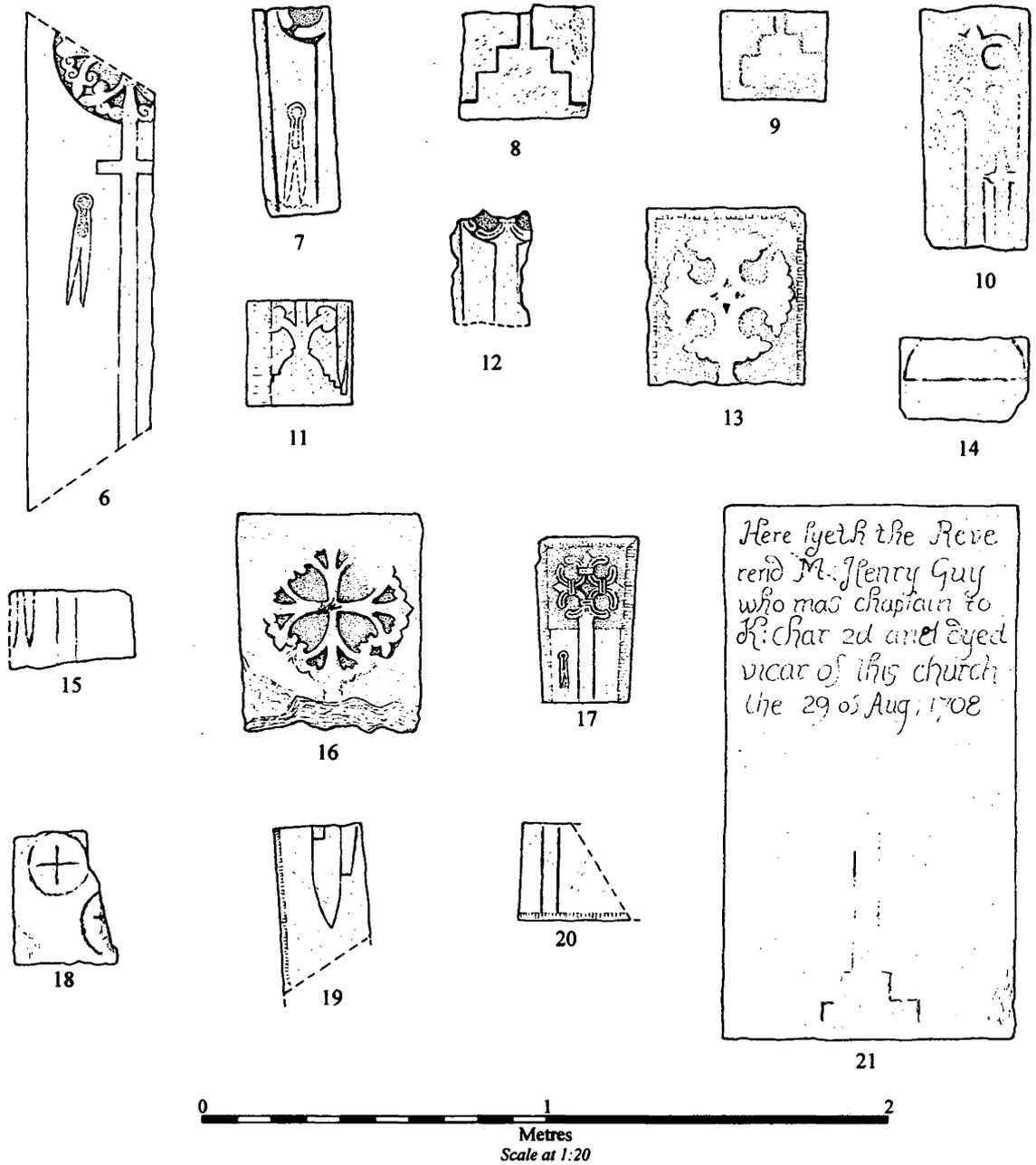


Fig 14. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Corbridge (Vicar's Pele)

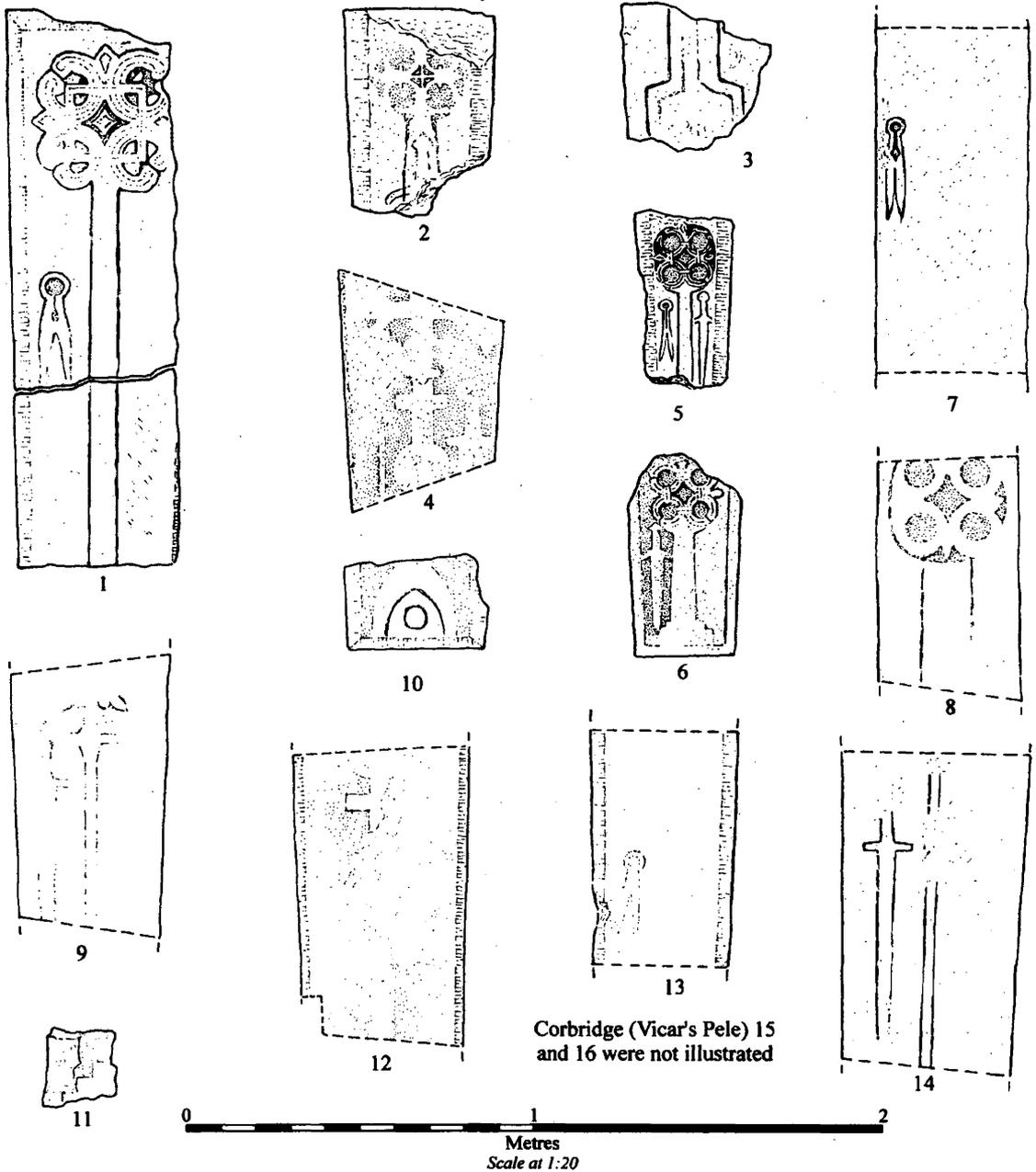


Fig 15. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

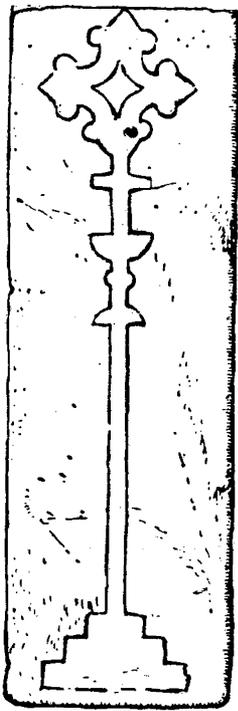
Corbridge (Viney Cottage, Appletree Lane)



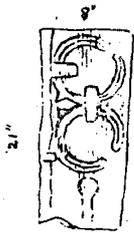
Fig 16. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Corbridge (lost)

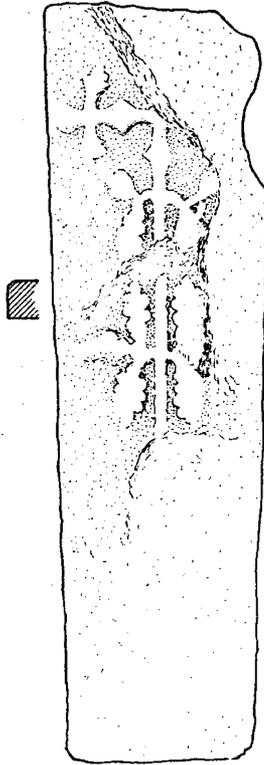
Corsenside (St. Cuthbert)



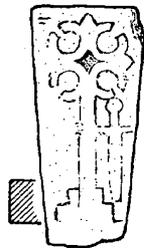
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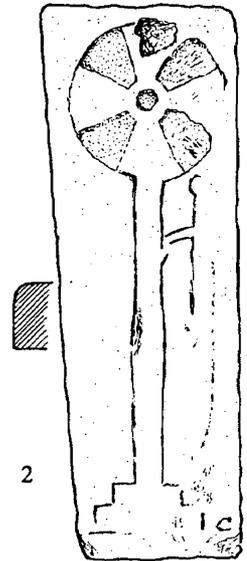
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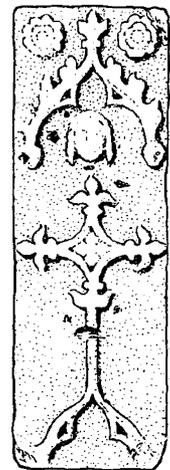
1



3



2



4



Fig 17. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Elsdon (St. Cuthbert)

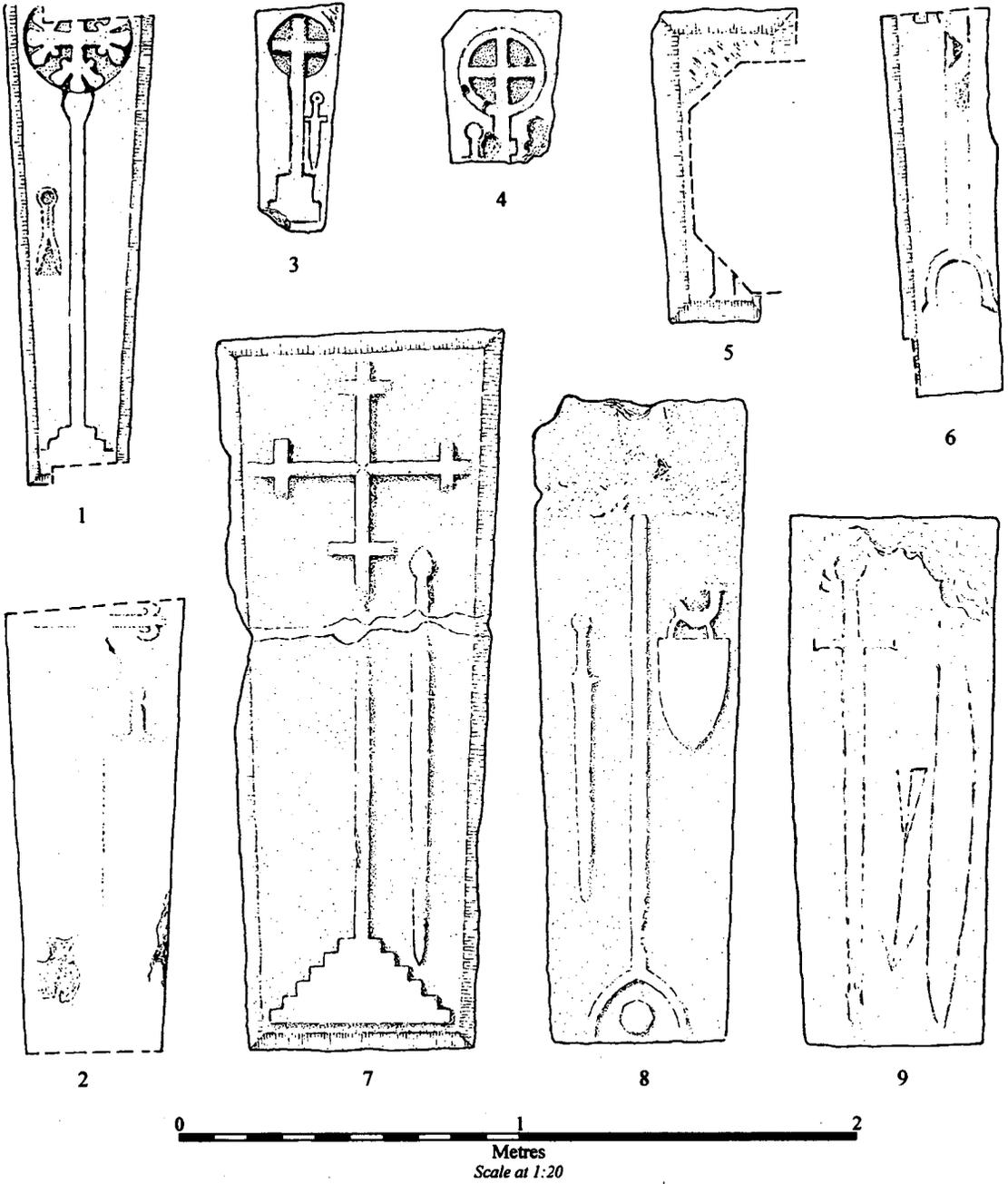
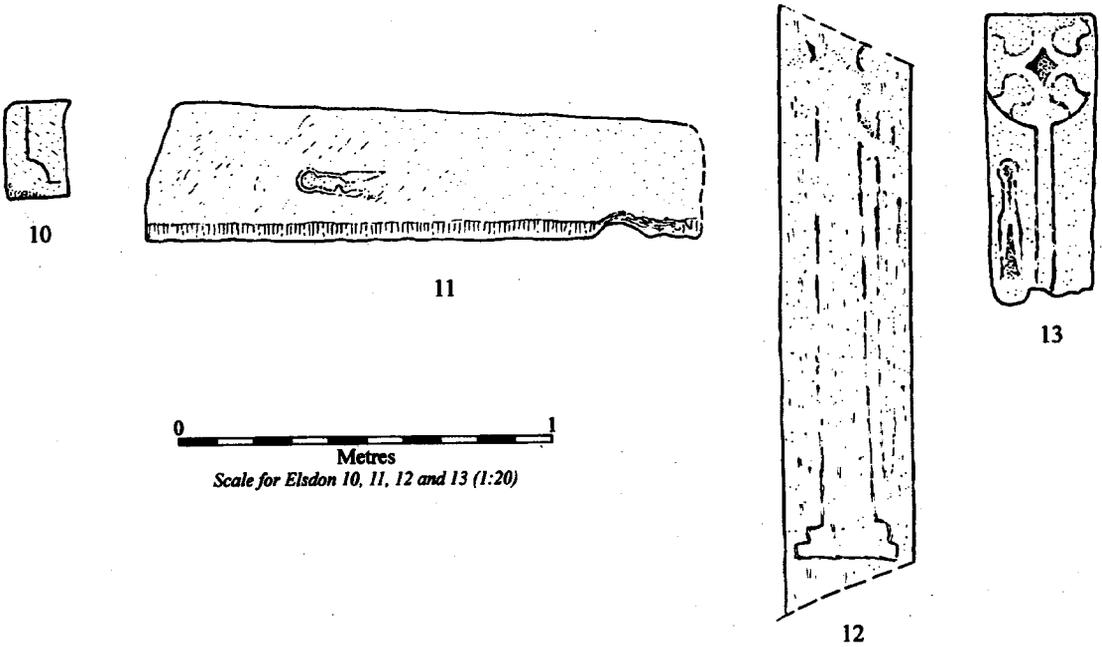


Fig 18. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Elsdon (St. Cuthbert), cont.



Greymare Hill (St. Andrew)

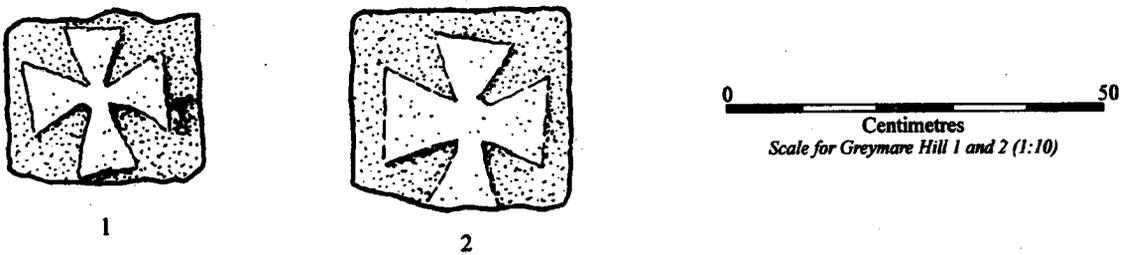
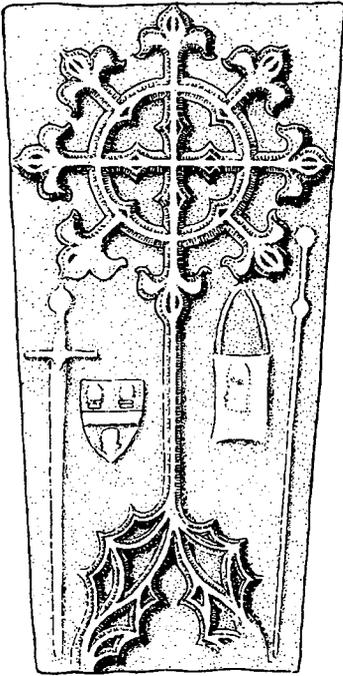
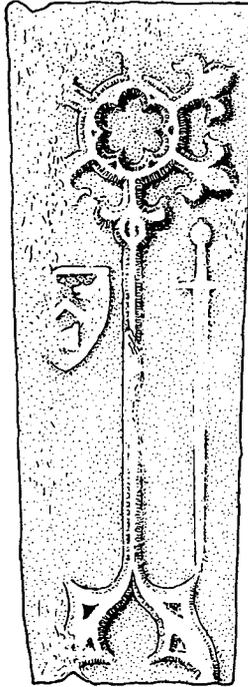


Fig 19. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

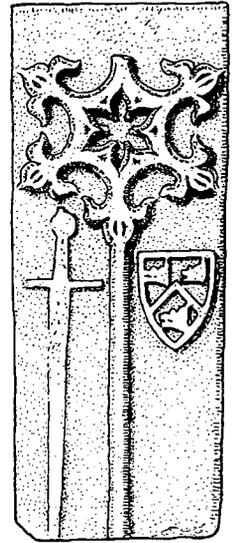
Haltwhistle (Holy Cross)



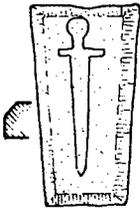
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2



3



4



5

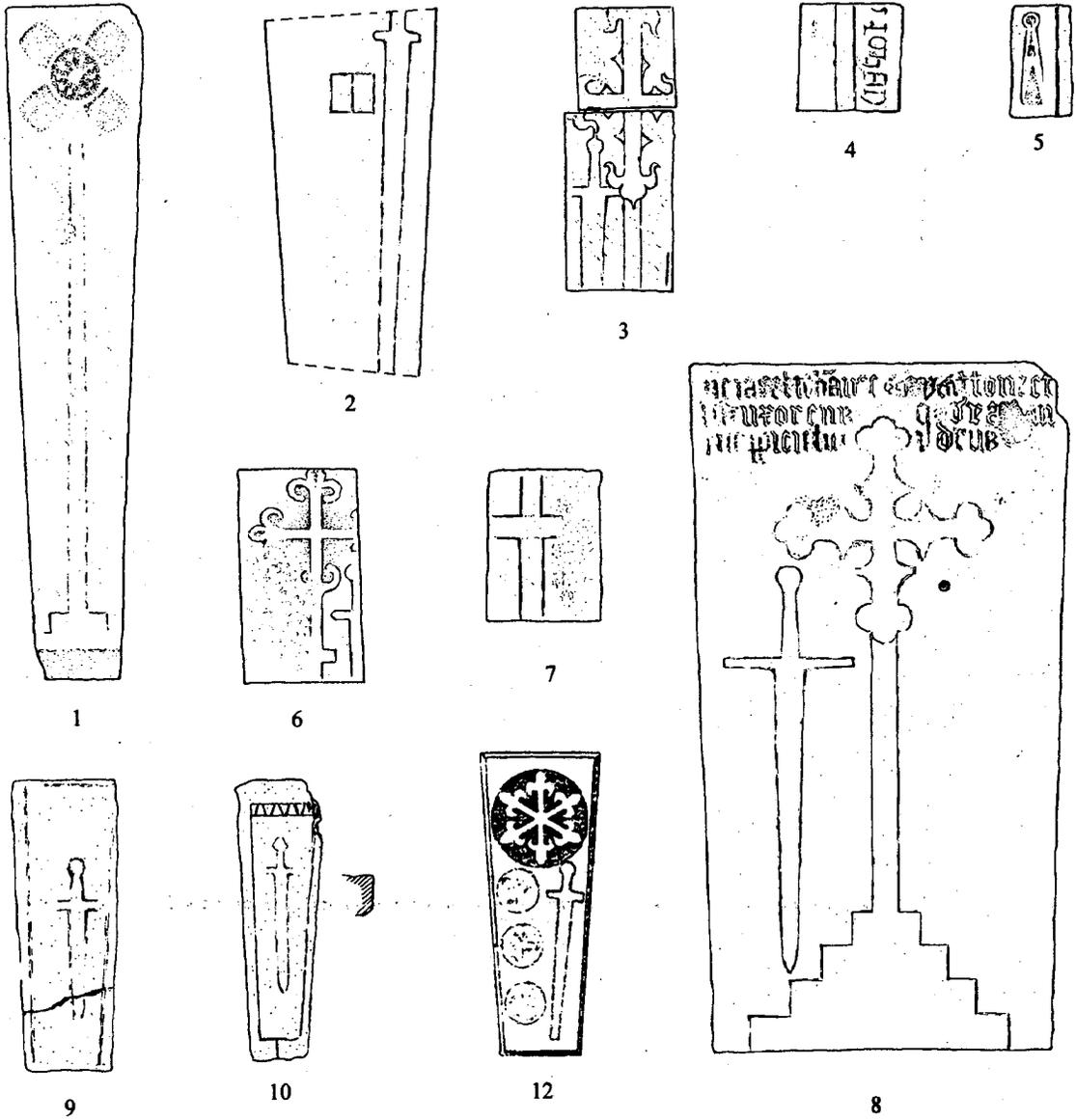
Haltwhistle (Holy Cross) 5 is of unknown size and scale



Metres
Scale at 1:20

Fig 20. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Haydon Bridge (Haydon Old Church)

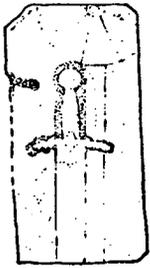


Haydon Bridge 11
was not illustrated

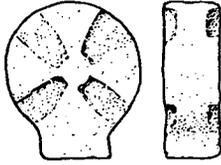
0 1 2
Metres
Scale at 1:20

Fig 21. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

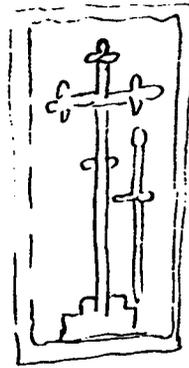
Heddon-on-the-Wall (St. Andrew)



1



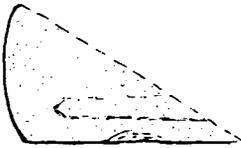
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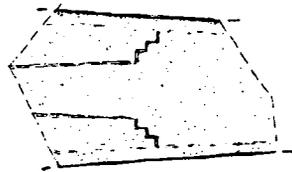
3

Heddon on the Wall 3
is of unknown size and scale

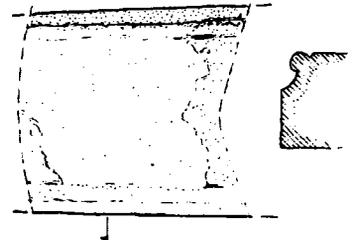
Hexham Abbey



52



53



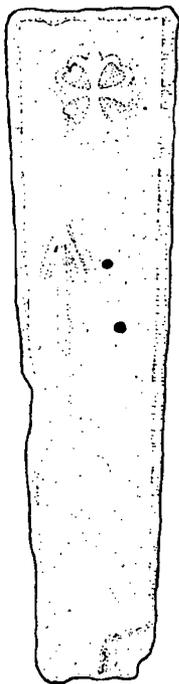
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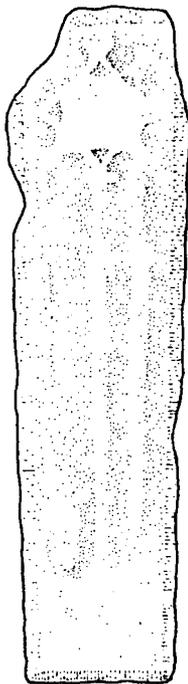
Fig 22. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Knarsdale (St. Jude)

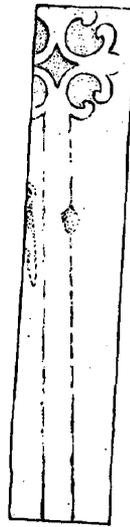
Matfen (Matfen Hall)



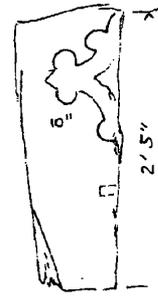
1



2



3



1



2

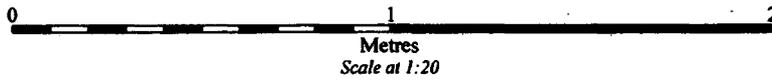
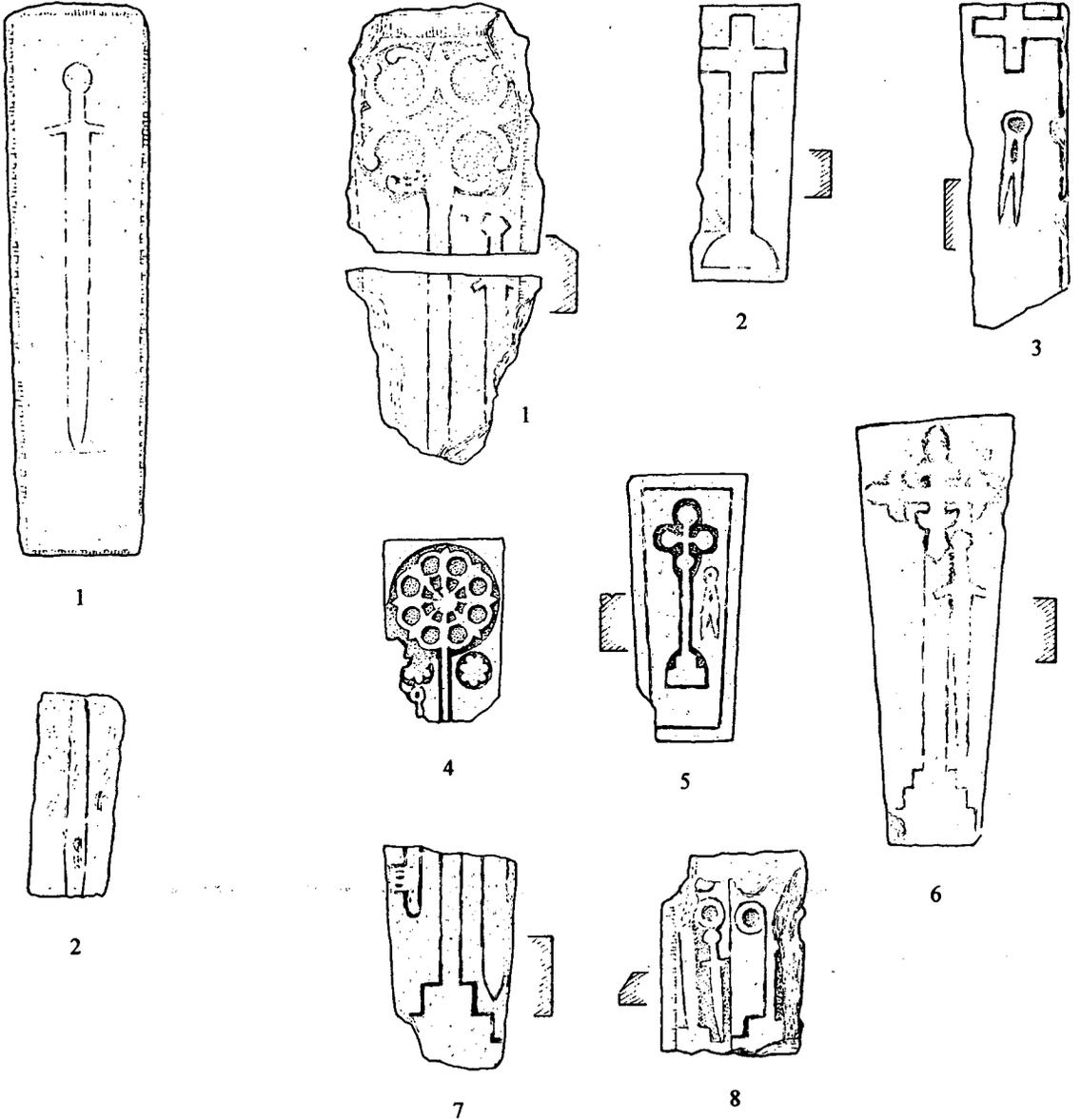


Fig 23. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Newbrough (St. Peter)

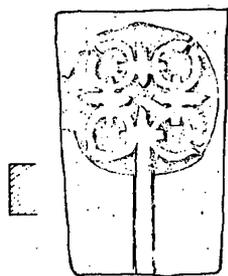
Ovingham (St. Mary the Virgin)



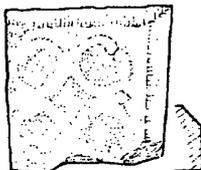
0 1 2
Metres
Scale at 1:20

Fig 24. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Ovingham (St. Mary the Virgin), cont.



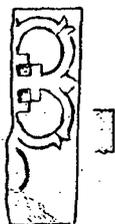
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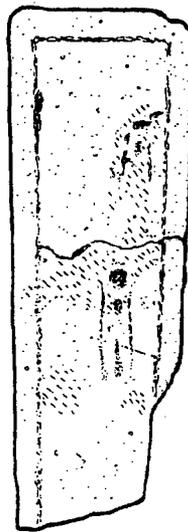
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12



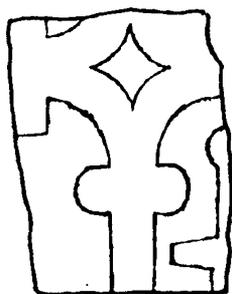
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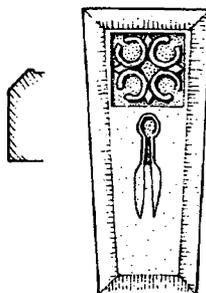
13

Reddened areas

Prudhoe (St. Thomas' Chapel)



14



1

Ovingham (St. Mary the Virgin) 14
is of unknown size and scale



Fig 25. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Ryal (All Saints)

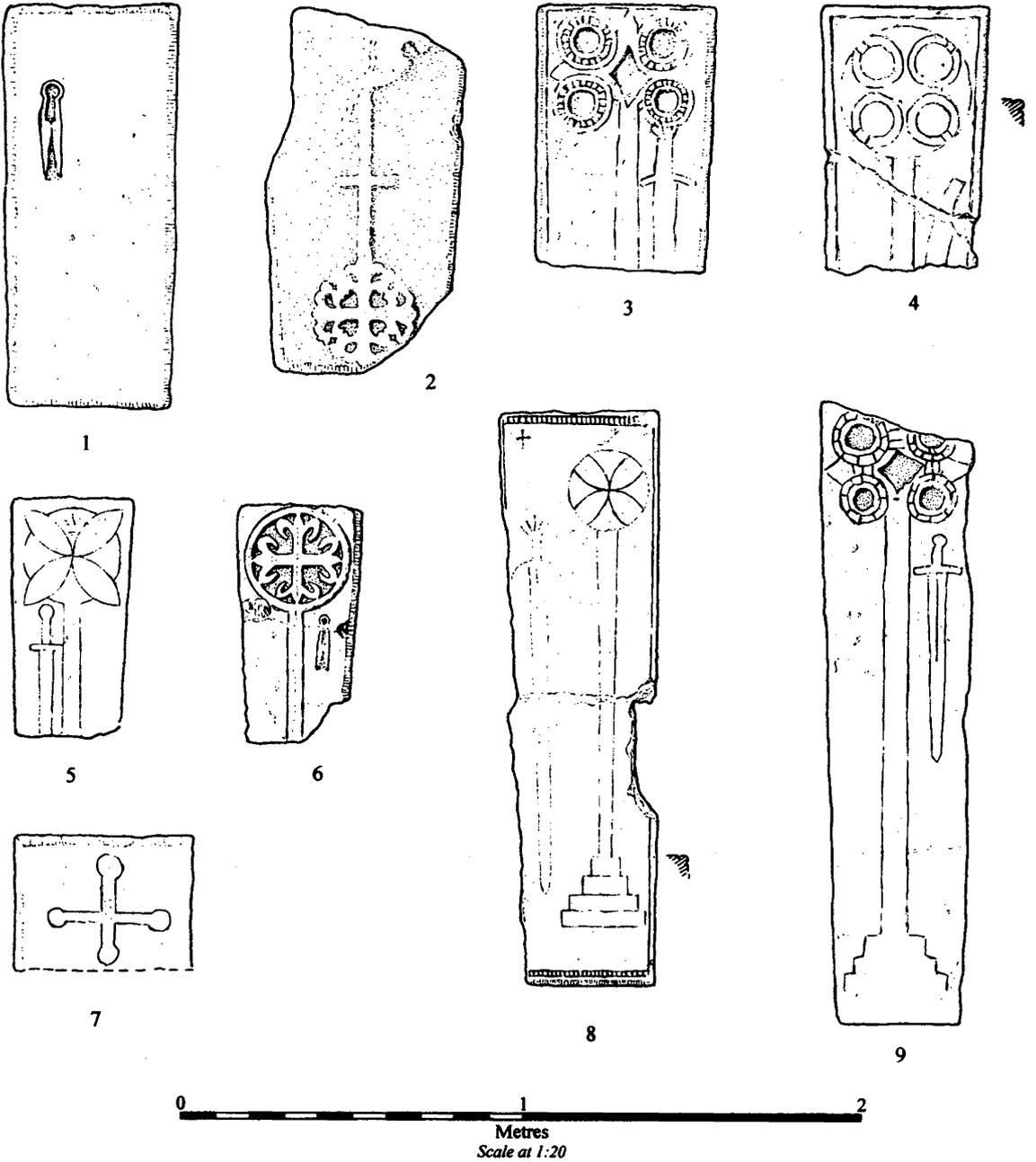
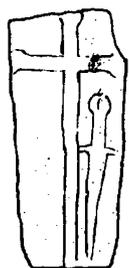
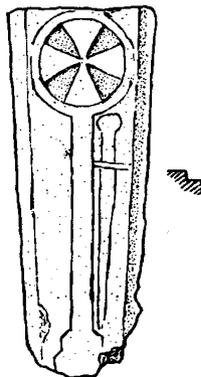


Fig 26. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

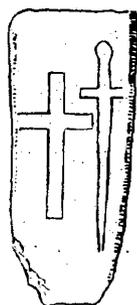
Ryal (All Saints), cont.



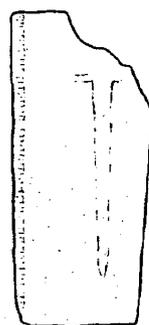
10



11



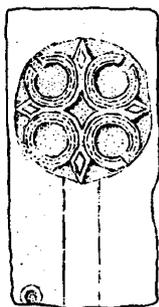
12



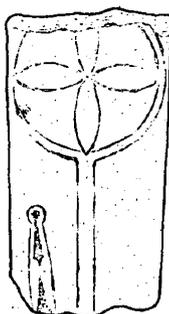
13



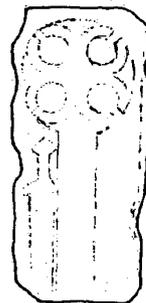
14



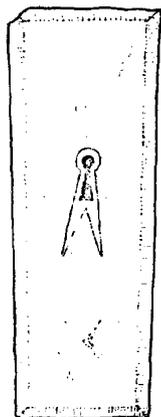
15



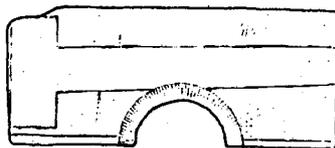
16



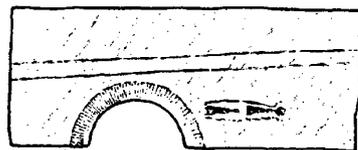
17



18



19



20

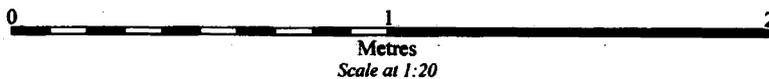
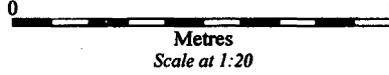


Fig 27. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

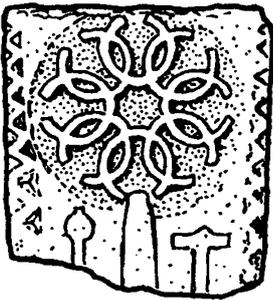
St. John Lee (St. John of Beverley)



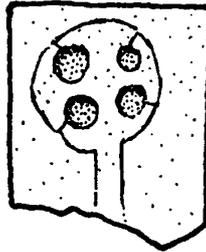
1



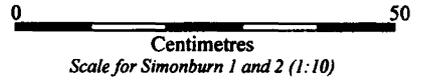
Simonburn (St. Mungo)



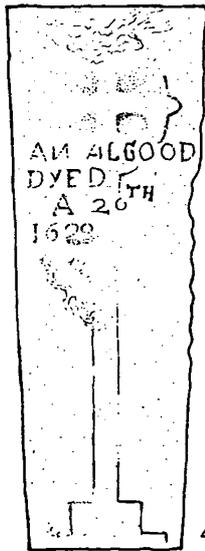
1



2



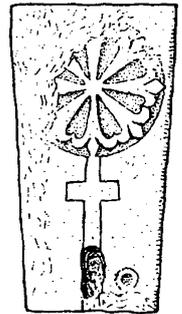
3



4



5



6



Fig 28. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Simonburn (St. Mungo), cont.

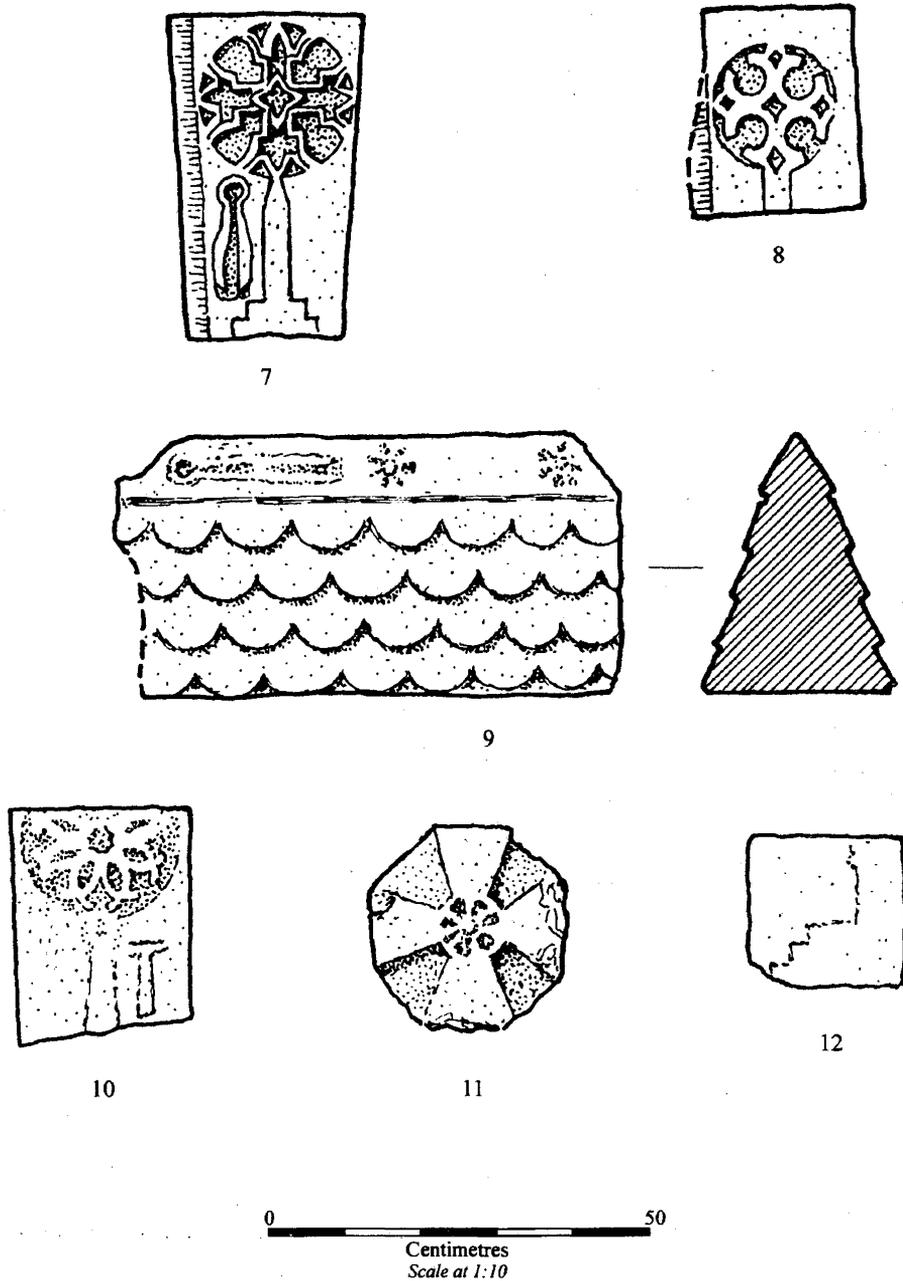
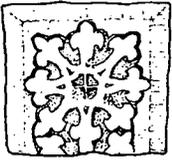
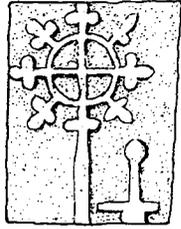


Fig 29. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Stamfordham (St. Mary the Virgin)



1



2

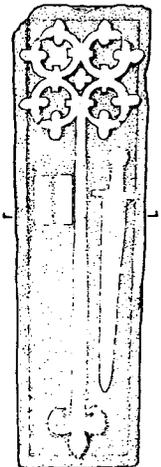


3

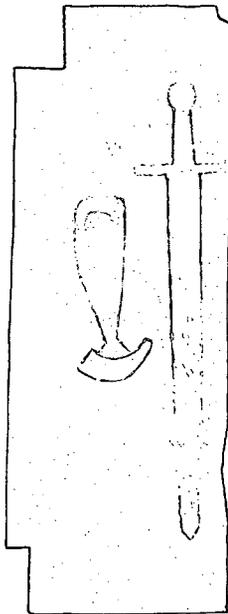


4

Thockrington (St. Aidan)



1



2

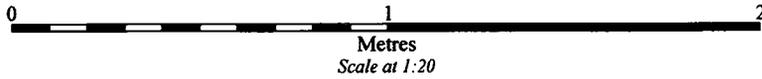


Fig 30. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Warden (St. Michael)

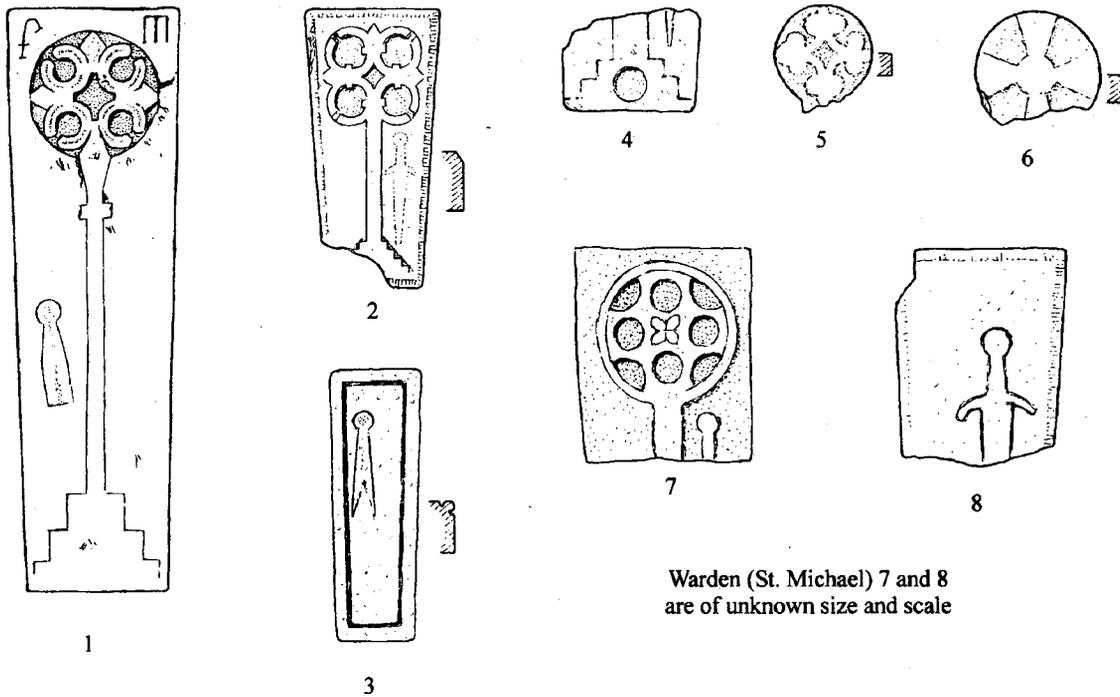
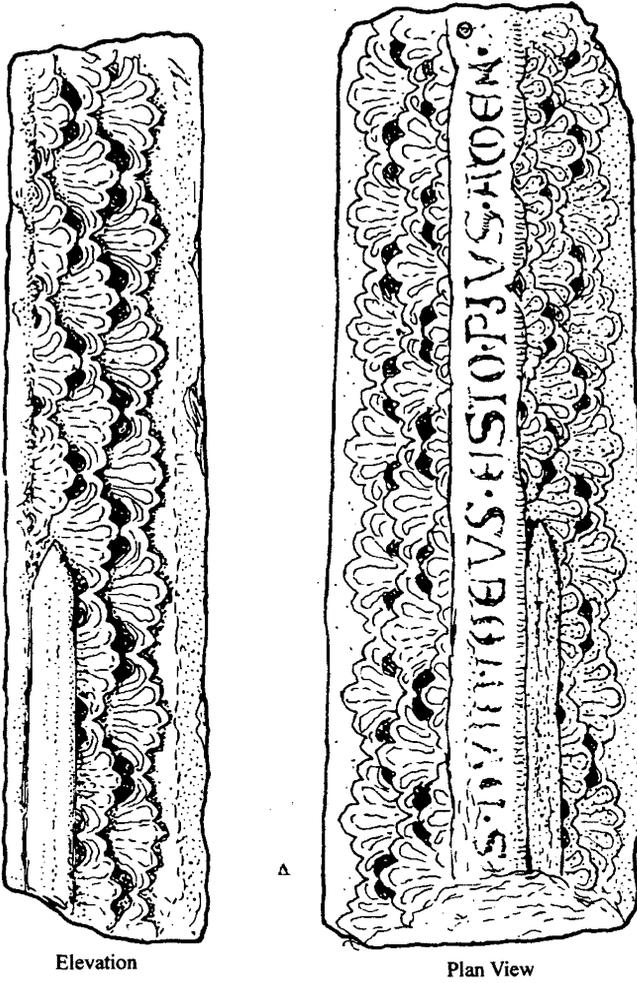


Fig 31. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.

Whitfield (St. John)

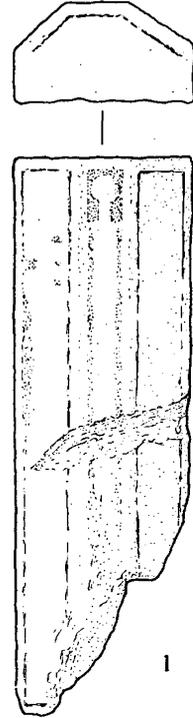
Whittonstall (St. James)



Elevation

Plan View

1

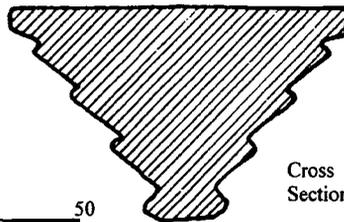


1



Metres

Scale for Whittonstall 1 (1:20)



Cross Section



Centimetres

Scale for Whitfield 1 (1:10)

Fig 32. South West Northumberland cross slabs, cont.