Stone, skin, and silver : a translation of The dream of the rood

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Stone, Skin, and Silver : A Translation of The Dream of the Rood

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STONE, SKIN, AND SILVER

A Translation of *The Dream of the Rood*

Regarded by scholars as –
one of the greatest poems in early English literature.

Richard J. Kelly & Ciarán L. Quinn

STONE, SKIN, AND SILVER

A Translation of the Dream of the Rood

For
Andrew & Joan Kelly
and
Lorcan & Bernadette Quinn
who have shared in all our work

Ic þæs wuldres treowes
oft nales æne hæfde ingemynd
ær ic þæt wundor onwrigen hæfde,
ymb þone beorhtan beam swa ic on bocum fand,
wyrda gangum, on gewritum cyðan
be ðam sigebeacne.

'Full oft I took thought of the Tree of glory
Not once alone, ere I learned the truth
Of the radiant Cross as I read it in books,
In the fullness of time so set forth in writing
The tale of that Standard.'

from *Elene* (ll. 1251-6)

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Richard J. Kelly
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Foreword

The Dream of the Rood, a literary landmark from the earliest history of the English language, forms the focus and inspiration for this book. The Introduction follows the tradition and significance of the Cross from its origins in the pre-Christian era up to the period of the poem (*circa* tenth century). The first reference to this Old English Cross poem is the fourteen-line runic poetic text engraved on the stone-sculptured Ruthwell Cross (*circa* mid-eighth century). The iconographic art of this cross is systematically summarized. A comprehensive analysis of the poem then ensues, discussing manuscript context, stylistic features, and thematic design. The final extant reference to this poetic text is a two-line verse inscription on the early twelfth-century Brussels Cross, the description of which concludes the textual analysis. The Introduction ends with the Translator's Note where editorial policies are outlined.

A succeeding series of plates heralds then the title of the book, *Stone, Skin, and Silver*. The initial plates which are the four sides of the Ruthwell Cross include a fine photographic rendering of the runic writing on the original cross that is now in the parish church at Ruthwell in Dumfries, Scotland. The full manuscript facsimile of *The Dream of the Rood* (fols. 104v – 106r of the Vercelli Book) follows and subsequently a photographic plate of the Brussels Cross which is plated in silver and gilded with gold.

The book's hub is with the texts and translations: the Ruthwell runic poetic text, *The Dream of the Rood*, and the Brussels Cross verse inscription. Careful attention has been given to render these texts with accuracy from their original contexts; each of their Modern English translations aims to be interpretatively accurate.

A brief compilation of contemporary Latin and vernacular Cross hymns and poems goes on to complement the Anglo-Saxon texts. Not only is the broader religious context indicated but their shared tradition. *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* and *Pange Lingua* by Fortunatus and *Victimae Paschali Laudes* by Wipo were sung in the liturgy of Lent and Holy Week in the Medieval Church. The Mugrón and Blathmac extracts from the Irish tradition are meditative pieces on the role of the Cross as protector and in the history of salvation; both themes are emphasized in *The Dream of the Rood*.

The second series of plates invoke the wider scope and range of the Cross tradition throughout Europe in the early Middle Ages. Cross representations in the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Book of Kells, silver- and gold-plated processional and pectoral crosses, and the free-standing crosses of Ireland and Scotland give witness to the universality of Cross art and to a tradition shared with the Ruthwell Cross, *The Dream of the Rood*, and the Brussels Cross.

An outline of the history of the Anglo-Saxon period (*circa* AD 449–1100) and a brief description of the characteristic linguistic features of Old English at this stage of the book support and replenish the reader with chronological contexts and some general linguistic background. Tables and charts are formulated for quick and easy reference. This section concludes with a series of drawings depicting the various historical representations of the Cross tradition and a chart of the contents of the Vercelli Book.

The Select Bibliography and the Glossary (which combines the three poetic texts) draw the book to a close. The bibliographical information provides the opportunity for further reading and research. The Glossary affords the opportunity for a coordinated and more detailed insight into the Anglo-Saxon words in the texts.

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Richard J. Kelly
Kobe, Japan
March 1999

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List of Abbreviations

AB	*Anglia Beiblatt*
Archiv	*Archiv für Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England*
ASPR	Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records
BC	Brussels Cross
BCI	Brussels Cross Inscription
B.L.	British Library
BM	*The Burlington Magazine*
B.M.	British Museum
Catal.	Catalogue
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum*, Series Latina (Turnhout)
Ch/s.	Chapter/s
Col.	Column
Cott. Tiber.	Cotton Tiberius
Cott. Vitell.	Cotton Vitellius
ed/s.	editor/s
EEMF	*Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*
EETS	*Early English Texts Society*
ELN	*English Language Notes*
ES	*Englische Studien*
f/ff.	folio/s
FACS	Facsimile/s
JEGP	*Journal of English and Germanic Philology*
MÆ	*Mediaevalia*
Med. Aev.	*Medium Aevum*
MLN	*Modern Language Notes*
MLR	*Modern Language Review*
MP	*Modern Philology*
MS	*Medieval Studies*
MS/S	Manuscript/s
n/nn.	note/s
no/s	number/s

NM	*Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*
N & Q	*Notes and Queries*
Neophil	*Neophilologus*
os	Ordinary Series
p/pp.	page/s
PG	*Patrologiae Graeca*, Cursus Completus
PL	*Patrologiae Latina*, Cursus Completus
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
pl.	plate
r	recto
RC	Ruthwell Cross
repr.	reprinted
RES	*Review of English Studies*
rev.	revised
SPEC	*Speculum*
ss	Supplementary Series
trans.	translation/translator(s)
v	verso
VB	Vercelli Book
Vol/s.	Volume/s
vv.	verses

Grammatical Terms

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adjvl.	adjectival
adv.	adverb
anom.	anomalous
com. adj.	composite adjective
conj.	conjunction
cons.	consonant
dat.	dative
def. art.	definite article
dem.	demonstrative
dem. adj.	demonstrative adjective
f.	feminine
gen.	genitive
imp.	imperative
ind.	indicative
infl.	inflected
inst.	instrumental
m.	masculine
n.	neuter
neg.	negative
nom.	nominative
pass.	passive
pers.	person
pl.	plural
poss.	possessive
pp.	present participle
prep.	preposition
pres.	present
pret.	preterite
pret. pres.	preterite present
pron.	pronoun
prop.	proper
part.	participle
rel. pron.	relative pronoun
sg.	singular
sv.	strong verb
sup.	superlative
voc.	vocative
w.	word / with
wk.	weak
wv.	weak verb

Introduction

The Cross and Crucifixion in Scripture and Historical Art

Crucifixion, the sentence feared, an excruciating death, to which slaves and non-Romans in the Ancient Roman Empire were subject for grave and heinous crimes, was Persian and Oriental in origin. Both from the Bible and other early accounts of crucifixion it cannot be assumed that Jesus Christ carried the full cross to His place of execution. Historically, the cross-beam was customarily carried to the stance of the upright beam. The bearer, the accused, had his arms bound by nails or ropes to the cross-beam. The wooden upright and cross-beam were joined and secured and their cruciform constituted. Both man and wood were vertically elevated, the feet fastened, and the miscreant held in shame for all below to see. Binding ropes would have supportively maintained the weight and the body in place where the pegging of nails were insufficient to do so.[1]

Scriptural descriptions of these public and punitive measures although differing from the attested accounts of early Roman writers present important historical parallels. From history, the condemned were usually stripped naked; for biblical equivalence, the soldiers had Christ's clothing gratuitously divided among themselves (Mt 27:35). Names and titles were written on placards and hung around the neck. In the Scriptures, Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea who pronounced sentence on Christ, had in cynicism affixed over His head the label of 'King of the Jews'. It was written in three languages: (a) Aramaic, the Judaic vernacular, (b) Greek, the Roman lingua franca, and (c) Latin, the official language of Roman administration (Mt 27:37; Mk 15:26; Lk 23:38; Jn 19:19-22). Raised no more than a metre above the ground those crucified could have received sustenance, as, for example, Christ was proffered sponged vinegar on the end of a reed (Mt 27:48; Mk 15:36). Victims' deaths were more attributable to hunger and thirst as often the crucified survived and endured for several days the pain of the suffering that had been inflicted until their ultimate expiration. Christ, in contrast, is said to have died within hours, namely by the ninth (3pm) (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lk 23:44).

The Crucifixion is referred to only from within the New Testament. It is Jesus, in the synoptic Gospels, who exhorts a 'denial of self' (Mk 8:34) and one's own worldly concerns for those who should take up their own cross and follow Him (Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23; 14:27). Paul preaches that by the sacrifice on the Cross Christ unites both Gentile and Jew (Eph 2:16). The Cross, its scandal to the Jewish world, is redemptive and does not require the Judaic cleansing of initiatory circumcision (Gal 5:11). The Cross solely is His claim to truth (Gal 6:14). Those who are false are the Cross's adversaries (Phil 3:18). Those crimes, the sins of mankind, are absolved by His suffering in volition and becoming Victim on the Cross (Col 2:14). Metaphorically, those in imitation, Christians, must renounce and master the sensuality of the flesh which is crucified (Gal 5:24); Paul, through the Cross of Christ, is crucified to the world and the world to him (Gal 6:14).

Dispersed communities, litanies of persecution, and the Church's emerging theological and liturgical developments mark the earliest history of Christianity. The Cross, the 'accursed tree', as early Christian adherents held, was a symbol of atonement yet designated a moribund signifier of sufferance and disgrace. The early Roman catacombs, souterrains nurturing tacitly a faith which is related to us now through art and artefacts, omit or avoid the expression of the Cross. Other symbols conveyed allegories for and analogies to the importance of Christ: (a) the fish, commonly depicted, signified the widely known Greek anagram ΙΧΘΥΣ (Ichthys), 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour', (b) the Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*) was another early portrayal, and (c) the initial and final letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, signified conjunctively the beginning and end, Creation and the Second Coming, Death and Resurrection.[2]

In AD 312, Emperor Constantine was inspired by a heavenly vision of the sign of the Cross on the eve of battle, his victory over his imperial counterpart, Maxentius, at Milvian Bridge near north of Rome. Constantine was converted to Christianity subsequent to the vision, according to accounts by Lactantius (*circa* AD 317) and also Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (d. AD 339/40) who asserts

[1] For an account of the historical Crucifixion, see McKenzie (1966; repr. 1975), pp. 161-2.

[2] Literature on early Christian and medieval art is vast. See Cabrol & Leclerc (1907-50), Beckwith (1961), Grabar (1968), and Talbot Rice (1963; repr. 1997). On iconography, see Lowden (1997), Schiller (1971), and Weitzmann (1978).

Constantine's personal intimation of the revelation to him on oath. Succeeding from the political imbroglio Constantine had the provinces of Italy and Africa annexed to his own demesne of Britain, Gaul, and Spain; Christians achieved a societal freedom of faith, and Christianity, its first Roman Emperor. Constantine ordered the *chi-rho* monogram, called the *labarum*, which constituted the two initial Greek letters of the name of Christ, X P ('XPIETOE', *Christos*), as an emblem to be applied and adopted by state and military standards and banners, and on the altars of churches.[3]

Through further conquest Constantine went on to merge the then antipodal realms of the Roman Empire, both East and West. On his initiative a basilica was built, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, over the alleged Crucifixional site, Golgotha in Jerusalem. Cyril of Jerusalem who preached to this church's congregation records *circa* AD 350 the discovery of a great Cross *in situ*. Pieces of the Cross were disseminated and a portentuous cruciform apparition of light was seen in the sky overhead. By the end of the fourth century a tradition, the Invention of the True Cross, became more widespread; the discovery of the True Cross was ascribed to Helena, Constantine's mother, and the occasion to her visit to the Holy Land in AD 326.[4] The Cross was soon of itself to become venerated.

According to the legend of Helena, the Gospel triad of crosses, the superscription whose words spurned Christ and the iron nails with which He was crucified were exhumed. A curative miracle established this to be the True Cross. Helena had a pair of its nails dispatched to Constantine, one enshrined in a crown, the other in a bridle; the other pair was said to have been forged to make a sword, or alternatively, a spear for the Emperor. The titled inscription came to be preserved at the Basilica of St. Croce, within Helena's own palace in Rome. A dispersal of fragments, relics of the True Cross, ensued and continued for many centuries afterwards throughout Christendom.

Two feasts of the Cross were commemorated by the Christian Churches within the liturgy, their services of public worship: (a) the ancient and major Eastern festivity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on 14 September, and (b) the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross on 3 May within the liturgical calendar in the Western Church by the seventh century.

Within the Eastern Church theological debates about the nature of the visual image of God were deeply underscored by dissonance and discord.[5] In AD 726 an edict against deistic images, encouraged by Emperor Leo III, led to the destruction of the icon of Christ at the palace gate of Constantinople and the subsequent resignation of the Church Patriarch, Germanus, an advocate of images. Leo's son and heir, Constantine V, sided in solidarity with the Monophysites who believed that Christ embodied a single divine nature (or *physis*) indivisible from the incarnate Logos. The aniconic Cross alone remained apparently unscathed by controversy or censure.

In AD 787 the Second Council of Nicaea under the auspices of the widowed regent, Irene, and the Patriarch, Tarasius, iconoclasm was rescinded. The christological debate intensified when iconoclasm erupted once more in AD 813 under Emperor Leo V, who wished to emulate his earlier predecessors until an orthodoxy, the identity and nature of Christ as both human and divine, was restored in AD 843.

The Western Church did not standardize the visual image of God, provide visual uniformity or clearly defined functions based on theological precepts as which had occurred by the end of the iconoclastic period in Byzantium. The image could be non-mimetic, highly particularized due to either the detail of style or its context. Gregory the Great maintained the picture was informative of the uneducated. Although originally a concerted sixth-century missionary strategy, by the eighth Gregory's statements had come to authorize the instruction of the illiterate or uneducated.[6]

In early Anglo-Saxon England references to religious debate about the nature of the deistic image are few. Theodore of Tarsus, an Eastern theologian, presided over a pan-national assembly at Hatfield

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[3] For an account of this historical period, see Collins (1991), pp. 16-30. On Constantine, see MacMullen (1984); on Eusebius, *PG*: XX. 944-5, 948; and on Lactantius, *PL*: VII. 260-2.

[4] On the construction of the basilica, see Eusebius in *PG*: XX. 1085; on the apparition at Golgotha, see *PG*: XXXIII. 468-9, 776-7, & 1168-9; on the 'Invention' tradition, see Ambrose in *PL*: XVI. 1463, and Rufinus in *PL*: XXI. 475-7.

[5] Literature on the image debate is vast. For a comprehensive historical summary, see Belting (1994), pp. 115-83, Kitzinger (1954), pp. 83-150; (repr. 1976), pp. 90-156.

[6] Gregory the Great, *Epistolae* IX. 209, & XI. 10 in *CCSL:* 140 & 140A. See also Kessler (1985), pp. 75-91.

(AD 679) at which the decrees of the Latern Council (AD 694) were adopted; these maintained that at the essence of His dual natures, human and divine, were two wills within the person of Christ.[7] In Northumbria Bede's Lives of the Abbots records Abbot Benedict Biscop's bringing from Rome (AD 680) images of the Virgin Mary, the twelve apostles, and Gospel and Apocalyptic scenes, for his church of St. Peter's at Monkwearmouth. From a subsequent and similar journey Biscop brought images for the church of St. Mary's at Monkwearmouth; these are believed to have been painted panels. The images at St. Peter's formed narrative cycles for the walls and inert portrayals for the area of sanctuary, most likely the chancel to the east of the nave which was segregated for the officiating clergy. The images could have been icons. An icon is a panelled portable image, its figuration solitary, static, and venerated. Bede, in commentary, assigns a pedagogical and spiritual role to pictures reminiscent of Gregory's assertions, which would have allayed such developments in worship.[8]

As we see them today the sculpted images on crosses are autonomous media of spiritual experience. They may not merely narrate episodes from the Life of Christ and His Passion but can transcend to inform and present spiritual significance or even engage empathy in the believer. In Western religious art of the early Middle Ages this freedom from textual scripture is manifest and manifold. The text of the Scriptures required elucidation within the Church, i.e. an exegesis that guided its interpretation. Two main divergent schools of exegesis existed which may have influenced art through their teachings: (a) the Alexandrine school which emphasized allegorical interpretation, and (b) the Antiochan school which stressed the historical and literal sense of Scripture.

Exegetical commentators maintained the symbolic significance of scriptural text on three to four levels. First was a literal sense that was most often closely aligned to the historical narrative of the Bible. This was conjoined with three further spiritual senses: allegorical, moral, and anagogical.[9] Each level acts as an addition of statement symbolically to the original text's significance. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430) rather than simply discuss or investigate meaning for Scripture also concentrates on the methodology of interpretation. He proposes that every figurative expression in the Bible was to be interpreted; the polyvalence of potential meanings allows for a proliferation of interpreters interpreting but all must affirm truth, the unity of meaning of the Bible. Gregory the Great writing about interpretation draws the analogy between a meandering river on how the commentator should readily digress.[10] Although all Christian interpretation of the Bible was infused with the selfsame message of redemptive salvation it was the modes and methods by which this was to be achieved that enthused both art and literature. Augustine proposed a search and confirmation of biblical truth, i.e. typology, which was Messianic and which stated that the New Testament is hidden in the Old while the Old is made clear by the New. In typology, Jonah and the Whale was symbolic of Christ's Resurrection, the Ark and Deluge symbolized or prefigured the waters of Baptism and Redemption. Although none of these Old Testament prefigurements has been said to occur on the Ruthwell Cross the foreshadowing of events and examplars as in the case of the depictions of the Annunciation or Mary Anoints the Feet of Jesus are evident.

A written text is linear; depiction concludes spatial relationships.[11] For interpretation both maintain latent meaning but both are read differently. Exegesis being in essence a textual analysis of the Scriptures and the sculptured art forms a religious commentary in its own right, a visual exegesis. Cross iconography cannot represent a direct visual exegetical equivalent of biblical text as it is abbreviated to a few panels on a cross; the term visual exegesis does not refer directly to biblical interpretation. It can otherwise portray religious motifs, signs, sequences, and narratives. It can conflate several ideas simultaneously. Detail, selection, arrangement, association, and sequence of the iconography are a central part of our analysis of the depictive commentary on the Cross.

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[7] See Haddan & Stubbs (1871), III, pp. 145-51.

[8] On the history of the abbots, see Plummer (1896). On Bede's commentary on art, see *De Templo*, 2, & Homily, 1. 13 in *CCSL*: 119A & 122.

[9] On medieval exegesis, see de Lubac (1959-64), Simonetti (1994), Kannengiesser & Bright (1996).

[10] Gregory the Great, *Moralia sive Expositio in Job, Epistula Praevia ad Leandrum Hispalensem* in *PL*: LXXV. 513.

[11] A comprehensive account on the relationship between text and image is found in Barasch (1992), pp. 75 & 81. See also Raw (1997), p. 4. On modern trends on the theory of their inter-relation, see Mitchell (1987).

Free-standing crosses implied considerable investment both in skill and finances. What could be the purpose of these silent sentinels? The functions of stone crosses can be categorized into two broad divisions: (a) the Cross is a focus of authority and reverence instituting functions legal, contractual, and commercial, of sanctuary or of patronage; the iconography does not require essential viewing, (b) the interpretation of the art is integral to or the basis for the Cross's functions. The Ruthwell Cross could encompass both precepts. The art on the Ruthwell Cross is sophisticated, arrests visual immediacy, requires further thought. Audiences would, therefore, have been relatively educated, yet an exacting appraisal of their literacy skills would prove difficult; rote memorization, reading and recitation, writing and copying were learned abilities better defined and distinguishable than in the Modern Age.[12]

It is generally acknowledged that Northumbria engendered the seminal reality of the free-standing stone cross, preceded by wooden archetypes. The wooden cross is attested to only historically. Bede describes in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (AD 731) King Oswald's having a wooden cross erected on the eve of battle against the Brittonic King Cædwalla at Heavenfield near Hexham (AD 634) as a standard for victory through faith and a focus for devotion.[13] Bede's account dubiously attributes its edifice as Bernicia's first Christian monument. According to his account, the wooden cruciform was still standing during Bede's lifetime when slivers of wood and the moss that had grown upon it were retained as curative and miraculous relics.

Non-Christian free-standing pillars and monoliths stood within countries, cultures, and communities with which converting Christianity complied, compromised, or defied. Bede makes reference to pagan idols of the seventh century, to Gregory the Great's advice to Augustine of Canterbury for their destruction yet the preservation of the physical sanctity of their erstwhile temples and restoration as churches. Apostasy was abhorred, the constancy of belief was in its fragility a vitreous observance. In AD 664 the Synod of Whitby caused controversy.[14] A new dating and computus for Easter, an ordinance from Rome, was adopted by the Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian Church which directly caused the dissipation of alliances, political, and ecclesiastical, with dissenting Celtic Irish factions. In its wake, the outbreak of an epidemic precipitated a recalcitrant regression for Christians to the worship of pagan idols in nearby Bernicia and in Essex. Yet even Christian symbols could be subject to discrediting disparagement; in AD 744, Boniface castigated how erected crosses were distracting from regular church services.

King Oswald who was converted at Iona in western Scotland may have been influenced by Cross developments at this central Celtic Christian monastic site. Adomnán (d. AD 704), the ninth abbot of Iona, refers in his hagiographical *Life of St. Columba* to the siting of three commemorative crosses.[15] These were presumably wooden and although their chronology is unclear they well antedate the eighth-century establishment of the decorated stone crosses of SS. John, Oran, and Martin on the island of Iona.

Arculf's seventh-century Latin account of the Orient and Holy Land, *De Locis Sanctis* ('Of Holy Places'), describes Cross relics at Byzantium, a commemorative silver cross at Golgotha which replaced a fifth-century jewelled cross plundered by the Persians in AD 614, and one of wood held at stance in the Jordan where Christ was baptized. Adomnán had its translation dedicated to the Northumbrian Aldfrith (AD 685-704) to be copied and distributed.[16] The impact and impetus of such accounts, the role and influence of the imputed tactile witnesses to Christ's Passion, fragments of the True Cross, although intellectually definable their spiritual significance is unquantifiable.

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[12] On Anglo-Saxon pedagogy, refer to Riché (1976), Sims-Williams (1990), pp. 177-210, and Lendinara (1991).

[13] See Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bk. III, Ch. II in Colgrave & Mynors (1969; repr. 1992).

[14] On the Church Synod of Whitby, refer to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bk. III, Ch. XXV-XXVII in Colgrave & Mynors (1969; repr. 1992).

[15] See *The Life of St. Columba*, Bk. I. 45 in Anderson, & Anderson (1961; repr. 1991).

[16] See Adomnán's translation in Meehan (1958).

The Ruthwell Cross

The extant *oeuvre* of little known monastic community in west Northumbria, the Ruthwell Cross, now stands some 5m 28cm in height by the baptistery in a small parish church on the outskirts of the village of Ruthwell, due south of Dumfries in Scotland. The cross, perceived as an irreverent idolatry, was torn down and dismembered in 1642 by order of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In 1802, Henry Duncan, the Ruthwell church minister (1799 – 1843), had its fragments of local red sandstone, which had lain neglected in the churchyard, reassembled and reconstructed in the garden of the churchyard at Ruthwell. The cross was declared a national monument in 1887 under the 'Ancient Monuments Protection Act 1882' and was placed inside the church at Ruthwell that same year and where it still remains. Unfortunately, the transom (or cross-beam) was not recovered and was imaginatively refashioned by Duncan in 1823. The present depictive abstract and animal menagerie is ill-conceived yet consummates the three-dimensional contour of the cross.[17]

The securing of an accurate date for the establishment of the cross has caused considerable debate. Discussions have not reached comprehensive conclusions. The arguments that have been explored are (a) stylistic, (b) epigraphical and philological, and (c) historical.[18]

Stylistic arguments are essentially founded on comparative patterns, tracery, and motifs, and where accompanying epigraphical evidence is applicable. Collingwood determined that adept carving in stone in the north of England could not have been perpetuated until the decoration of churches was established.[19] The double-stranded interlace flanking the sides of the related Bewcastle Shaft he attributed a date and for the Ruthwell Cross to *circa* AD 750. Vine-scroll ornamentation indicates Eucharistic significance but ultimately antecedes from classical and Mediterranean tradition. Baldwin Brown held Anglo-Saxon models as generically Grecian rather than Roman;[20] Kitzinger formulated Eastern models for the late eighth century, but surmises possibilities of unknown occidental modes of transmission from Late Antiquity.[21] R. Cramp has proposed textiles, evidence for whose importation is in abundance, as probable modes of stylistic transmission. She has contended differing dates for both Ruthwell and Bewcastle vine-scroll ornamentation: (a) in 1960-5 she determined their chronology in accordance with two inhabited (i.e. those containing birds and quadrupeds which in depiction partake of the vine) vine-scroll stone fragments at Jarrow *circa* AD 750, whose provenance is not conclusively Jarrow, and (b) more recently, she has forwarded earlier dates *circa* AD 700-50, although conceding inadequacies in the Jarrow parallelism.[22]

For the runic inscriptions R. I. Page originally proposed dates from between AD 750 to AD 850 for both the Ruthwell and the proximate Bewcastle Shaft, subsequently retracting the chronological span from AD 650 to AD 750. For the Bewcastle Shaft he also cautions that corruption caused by nineteenth century runic enthusiasts' carvings complicates a melange amongst its original 'unusual and linguistic forms.'[23] Higgit posits the Latin inscriptions as later than the dedicatory Jarrow inscription (*circa* AD 685) and the Cuthbert's coffin incision (*circa* AD 698) while being in precedence of the early ninth-century flourishment of the manuscript scripts of the Lichfield Gospels and the Book of Kells.[24]

From historical sources, MacLean concludes that such early dates as AD 685 are untenable for the Ruthwell Cross. These sources relied upon are Anglo-Saxon, more specifically Bede, who does not clarify which lands were settled by Northumbrian conquests throughout the region and the seventh century. Baldwin Brown and Schapiro do not acknowledge the significance of the embattled Celtic Briton kingdom of Rheged as being disparate from the Briton kingdom of Strathclyde which was

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[17] Meyvaert (1982), pp. 4-5, and Meyvaert (1992) in Cassidy (1992), pp. 95-104.
[18] On a comprehensive study on the chronological dating of the Ruthwell Cross, see MacLean in Cassidy (1992), pp. 49-70.
[19] Collingwood (1918), pp. 34-83.
[20] Brown (1921), pp. 102-317.
[21] Kitzinger (1936), pp. 61-71.
[22] Cramp (1959-60), pp. 12-3, Cramp (1965), pp. 8-12, Cramp (1984), pp. 27, 114-5, Bailey & Cramp (1988), pp. 20-1, 71.
[23] Page (1959b), pp. 50-3. See also Page (1973), p. 148.
[24] On Higgitt's comment, see MacLean in Cassidy (1992), p. 54, n. 24.

centred at Dumbarton to the north;[25] Rheged was centred at Carlisle and contained the community at Ruthwell some twenty miles due east. It is not clear that Carlisle was territorily Northumbrian until the death of King Ecgfrith, at the hands of the Picts at the Battle of Dunnichen (named Nechtanesmere by Simeon of Durham) in AD 685. These recent Northumbrian acquisitions of Rheged could not have been consolidated nor the erection of free-standing monuments facilitated readily within the Ruthwell region till some years later.

The legacy of Rheged is preserved in the earliest extant Welsh literature. Prince Urien of Rheged, Lord of Catraeth (Catterick in Yorkshire to the east) is celebrated in poems attributed to Taliesin, of the late sixth century. The final demise and dissolution of Rheged, however, remains taciturn, lacking the epic elegy and eulogy of the Gododdin and their annihilation at Catterick (*circa* AD 600) which was immortalized in separate Welsh tradition by the battle's reputed sole survivor, the poet Aneirin.[26]

In summary, MacLean concedes a date from between AD 731 to AD 750 for the cross's erection.[27] Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (AD 731) makes reference to recent increases in the numbers of the faithful more westerly at Whithorn (*Candida Casa*), which necessitated the new establishment of a bishopric at this older Celtic sanctum of St. Ninian; this confirms the securing of vibrant Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical structures beyond Ruthwell. The expansionist conquest by King Eadberht into the littoral Kyle region of Strathclyde in AD 750 belies an assuredness that Rheged to the rear and south was secure.

How and where was the Ruthwell Cross originally situated? Ó Carragáin maintains the cross as an outdoor focus of liturgical and spiritual monastic contemplation. For the opposite faces of the cross he formulates apposite liturgical significances, emblematic of baptism and the Eucharist.[28] Meyvaert proposes the cross's original intended placement within a church although no structure of such capacity has been ascertained. He argues as inverse the expression of the opposing iconographic faces: the East (now South) face stresses the Church (*ecclesia*) and the West (now North) face emphasizes monasticism (*monastica*).[29]

The Ruthwell Cross today should be regarded as isolated but within a continuum; its full Northumbrian contemporary landscape was possibly invested with in excess of four hundred free-standing monuments. Cross-slabs, illuminated manuscripts, the array of metalwork, carvings and paintings in wood now lost, the etching in ivory, bone and stone could all have formed similitudes, prototypes, and models, and even the frozen features of the skeuomorph (i.e. an expression whose generic meaning had become unknown), for the transmission of style and detail.

The free-standing cross is almost invariably insular in tradition and is found widely throughout the British Isles. This tradition amalgamates connections and developments that are generically continental, innovations and considerations domestic. Since the Anglo-Saxon polity for the period is marked by jostling kingdoms and alliances so its expression in art is for analogy in part characterized: 'The insular tradition is not monolithic, there are perceptible regional and cultural differences, particularly between those who did and those who did not accept without adaptation Mediterranean traditions. This is a period of swift assimilation, which produces an art which is pattern-making and motif-making, breaking the flowing repetitive rhythms of classical art into isolated densely packed elements, and this remains an important aspect of Anglo-Saxon art right up to the Conquest.'[30]

Artefacts and authors were portable purveyors, mobile and constantly capable of change; this complicates our analysis and awareness of their provenance. Yet, the mutability of the manuscript and even of metalwork juxtaposes sharply with the inertia of the stone of the cross. The artistry of all artists is, however, contained by that 'in the transmission of pictorial models corruption may occur as the original intent and effect are garbled as a result of deficiency in the copyist's skill, a misunderstanding of the image in the model, the copyist's interpretation of the model according to the

[25] Brown (1921), pp. 291-5, and Schapiro (1944), p. 241.
[26] For a summary, see MacLean in Cassidy (1992), pp. 61-8. On Urien of Rheged, see Dillon & Chadwick (1967), pp. 270-3. On the Gododdin, see Jackson (1969).
[27] See MacLean in Cassidy (1992), pp. 69-70.
[28] Ó Carragáin (1987), pp. 121-2. See also Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), p. 108, n. 40.
[29] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), esp. pp. 102-4.
[30] Cramp in Karkov, Ryan, & Farrell (1997), p. 295.

style in which he has been trained, or the artist's desire to improve upon the image, for instance, to make it more suitable to a new context or to make it more contemporary.'[31] The stone sculpture of the Ruthwell Cross is to be dually appraised: the sculpture reveals the intellect to us that guides the choice and arrangement of religious themes and the skill and learning with which the sculptor has presented his subject.

Physicalities confound perception. The runic inscriptions 'are maddeningly hard to read.'[32] The Latin inscriptions that span the lateral divisions of the iconographic panels are highly condensed and contracted. The sheer towering stature of the monolith would hinder clear decipherment except at very close quarters. Rote memorization, a fundamental monastic instructional process, could have stimulated recall on recognition, even *in situ* recitation. However, mnemonics are not signified, the Latin inscriptions appear as if frozen in mid-sentence and the Ruthwell runic poetic text corresponds with a particular central rather than initiatory section of the later *Dream of the Rood* poem. It has been debated as whether these inscriptions were a later addition to the cross.[33]

A Summary of the Iconographic Programme

The iconographic panels are catalogued in numerical order from the bottom moving vertically upwards. To facilitate visual reference the original and present reconstructed form of the cross as it now stands in the church at Ruthwell has been adopted. The present reconstruction of the original fragments is apparently incorrect. Two readjustments to the upper panels can be proposed: (I) the face order of the top fragment above the transom, the Eagle (West (now North) face, Panel 7) and of John and the Eagle (East (now South) face, Panel 7), are to be reversed; (II) in conjunction with this reversal Meyvaert also proposes the inversion of Martha and Mary (East (now South) face, Panel 5) and the Archer (East (now South) face, Panel 6) with their opposite facing *Agnus Dei* (West (now North) face, Panel 5) and Matthew and the Man (West (now North) face, Panel 6).[34] The modern interpretations given are not definitive; their synopsis intends only an abbreviated commentary of the current focus in argument about the iconographic art.

East (now South) Face

Panel One: The Crucifixion Scene

The cruciate Christ was offered cheap wine on a reed (Mt 27:48; Mk 15:36; Lk 23:36) or 'vinegar about hyssop' (Jn 19:29); on realizing Christ is already dead a soldier pierces His side with a lance (Jn 19:34, 37). In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, the soldiers are singularly named: Stephaton, who offered vinegar to Christ on the Cross, and Longinus who pierced His side with the lance. They are illustrated acting simultaneously in Crucifixion scenes, flanking to the right and left respectively; Christ is both alive and dead, expressing His humanity and divinity in hypostatic union. The Ruthwell Cross portrays, as was common, a concomitant *sol* and *luna*, the sun and crescent moon, on opposite and upper sides of the transom. 25 March represented the liturgical significance for Good Friday that was a moveable feast. They are also significant of the scriptural account of how the earth darkened from the sixth till the ninth hour when Christ's life on earth ended (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lk 23:44).[35]

Panel Two: The Annunciation

The Annunciation (Lk 1:28) depiction panel is notably and directly above the Crucifixion scene. The conception of Christ, celebrated in the liturgy on 25 March, was symbolically synonymous with the date of the Crucifixion, twelve months later. The Annunciation, heralding Christ's conception, was

[31] Netzer (1994), p. 56.
[32] Page (1973), p. 150.
[33] Stanley (1987).
[34] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), p. 104.
[35] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 106-8. On the Crucifixion in Anglo-Saxon Art, see Raw (1990). An edition of the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus is in James (1953).

forwarded by Bede as 'the beginning of our redemption' and 'the restoration of mankind', a clear Crucifixion theme.[36]

Panel Three: The Healing of the Man Born Blind

In patristic commentary the blind man was seen as allegorically symbolic of humanity; enlightenment was to be achieved through his healing. The scene was well represented in early medieval art. This was widely used as a Gospel lection reading (Jn 9:1-38) throughout the Western Church on the Fourth Week in Lent. From the early Christian Church this liturgical week celebrated the third and most important of the seven exorcizing scrutinies of the catechumens in their preparation for baptism at the Easter Vigil. It also celebrated the symbolical handing on (*Traditio Evangeliorum*) of the *Credo* and *Pater Noster* to those to be newly initiated into the faith.[37]

Panel Four: Mary Anoints the Feet of Jesus

The inscription which surrounds this depiction refers directly to Lk 7:37-38; in this scriptural narrative the identity of the penitent woman is unknown. In Mt 26:6-13 and Mk 14:3-9 an unnamed repentant woman anoints the head of Christ. Jerome in his commentary on Matthew distinguishes the woman of the Lucian narrative from the other two synoptic accounts. Bede rejecting this analysis identifies all women as the same and as being Mary Magdalene who is named in the Johnnine account (Jn 12:1-8).[38]

Panel Five: Martha & Mary/Visitation

This depiction reverberates with the relevance of debates concerning the identity of Mary Magdalene on the preceding panel. The epigraphical engraving which environs is in Latin but to exception carved in runic ciphers; the word Martha is from parts legible. Martha and Mary, worthy women, are referred to in Scripture as sisters in contraposition (Lk 10:38-42).[39] In exegesis Gregory the Great (later elaborated upon by Bede) envisages Martha as expressive of an *actualis vita*, an active life given spiritually to the extrinsic expression of administering to our neighbour; Mary voices *contemplativa vita*, an inner yearning for the love of our Lord. Seventh-century Isidore of Seville identifies Martha with the church of the world in the present and Mary, since contemplation is never fully realizable, with the church of the world to come.[40] Most recent scholarship on this panel interprets a Visitation scene indicating by close scrutiny that both figures place a hand on each other's womb.[41] Ó Carragáin (1999) states that only in the Roman liturgy of the late seventh and early eighth centuries was the story of the Visitation read at mass on the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin (September 8). Later in the eighth century this Visitation lection was replaced by the mass lection, the genealogy of Christ (Mt 1:17). The most significant of the new Marian feasts, introduced into the liturgy at this period, was the Assumption of the Virgin on 15 August.[42] The Gospel lection for this feast was the story of Martha and Mary from Luke's Gospel.[43]

Panel Six: The Archer

Readajustment (I) places the eagle directly above the ring centre and archer. On an ivory pectoral cross, and the cross shafts of St. Andrew Auckland and Bradbourne an archer aims directly at the

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[36] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 108-9. Bede's homily for Advent is in *CCSL*: 122, 14, 11, 1, 10.

[37] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), 109-10. On the *Traditio Evangeliorum*, see Ó Carragáin in O'Mahony (1994), pp. 398-436.

[38] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 110-2. The Jerome text is in *PL*: XXVI. 199A, and the relevant Bede commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke is in *CCSL*: 120, pp. 166-7.

[39] Howlett (1974b), p. 334, offers this interpretation of the inscription.

[40] Following Gregory, see Bede's commentary on the Gospel of St. Mark in *CCSL*: 120, p. 225, and on Isidore of Seville, see *PL*: LXXXIII. 124D-125A.

[41] Sincere gratitude to Prof. Éamonn Ó Carragáin for pointing out his recent scholarship on this panel; refer to Ó Carragáin (1999).

[42] Ó Carragáin (1994), pp. 34-6.

[43] See Ó Carragáin (1999), pp. 3-4.

eagle. On the Ruthwell Cross, however, the archer aims at a roughly forty-five degree angle at the right transom arm. On the Scottish Camuston Cross a centaur braces and aims within the same panel position and at the same angle. On the Rothbury Cross shaft an archer is entangled in a vine-scroll at its base.

Scriptural references to archers, arrows, and bows are vast; their interpretations in consequence broader. Both Saxl and Schapiro make allusions to Ps 90(91):5 ('the arrow that flies by day') for the archer; while Farrell thoroughly explores this psalm's implications concluding a malign force as its likely symbolic import.[44]

Alternatively, the arrow could be perceived benign and beneficial, as conducive to the Cross of Victory. Augustine in his commentary on Ps 119:4 ('the sharp arrows of the powerful one') combines the image of hearts healed by the momentary transfixion by arrows, the words of God, and the convalescent living out of them through faith. Adding to Augustine's exposition of the sharp emphatic arrows of Ps 44:6, Cassiodorus maintains the wood of the arrow as the word of God emanating from the wood of the Cross.[45]

Panel Seven: St. John and the Eagle

With readjustment (I) this panel would be placed on the opposite face above (West (now North) face, Panel 6) Matthew and the Man. It may symbolize St. John and the Eagle. Its aquiline significance is evidentially linked to its counterpart, the Eagle, on the opposite side. The revelation of the Second Coming to which both eagle and John pertain may prove pertinent.

West (now North) Face

Panel One: Eroded and Unrecognizable

This panel has been interpreted as originally representing an early Nativity scene. This would be seen as associative and directly paralleling the Crucifixion scene on the opposite side. Interpretations are, however, speculative.

Panel Two: The Flight Into/Out of Egypt

Henderson maintains this panel as the Return from Egypt arguing on the basis that the image, its narrative and action, adheres with conventional Western narrative direction, i.e. from left to right. Representations of the Holy Family and their journeys in and out of the desert are few. Early Irish and Northumbrian martyrologies refer to the importance of a liturgical feast, *Eductio Christi de Egypto*, which celebrates the Return. In the Irish vernacular *Martyrology of Oengus* (*circa* AD 800) a marginal note for this feast equates the word *Egyptus* (Egypt) with the word *tenebrae* ('darkness') and this coming out and return with joy.[46]

Panel Three: Paul and Antony

The representation of Paul and Antony reiterates and emphasizes the theme of the desert, recalling the forty years of Moses and the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness and the forty days of the Lenten fast. Monasticism was diametrically divided between a cenobitic (communal) and eremitic spirituality. Each sought the desert as a metaphorical exemplar for segregation from the contemporary world and secular society. The meeting of Paul the hermit with Antony in the desert based on Jerome's version of *Vita Pauli* epitomizes their monastic concurrence with an implicit symbolic Eucharistic significance. The narrative relates how Paul in the desert while awaiting the raven which for sixty years swooped down to supply him with his daily ration of bread encounters Antony. The raven on this occasion provides a full loaf for the two ascetics who contest their worthiness in humility forwarding each other to break bread; they finally agree to hold each end of the loaf and act jointly.

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[44] See Saxl (1943; repr. 1945), Schapiro (1944), and Farrell (1987), pp. 96-117.

[45] For a comprehensive analysis of this panel, see Raw (1990), and Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 140-5. Refer to Cassiodorus in *CCSL*: 97, pp. 406-7.

[46] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 129-30, and Henderson (1985), p. 7. An edition of *The Martyrology of Oengus* is in Stokes (1905; repr. 1984).

In his *Life of St. Columba* Adomnán describes a unique rite where the saint and a bishop (who had concealed his identity) break the Eucharistic host jointly as celebrants at Iona; its isolated occurrence is a matter for conjecture. The meeting of Paul and Antony, frequent in Irish High Cross iconography, depicts both sitting or standing and with or without the incident of their breaking of the bread. Four Paul and Antony representations have been determined for Pictish cross-slabs. On the upper triangular fragment of the Pictish Nigg slab the raven dives dramatically perpendicular to a small table, its beak pertinently bearing a loaf. Two flanking attendants, possibly deacons who were the bearers of the books of the altar to which they served, bow with books at the table's edges with dogs/lions squatting servile under their heads. The perception that this loaf lacks a segment from its lower left quarter has been deduced significant of the practice of *commixtio* in the canon of the mass, i.e. when a fragment from the host was broken and mingled with the wine which had also been consecrated. In the eighth-century Irish Stowe Missal a vernacular tract on the mass (an eleventh-century addition to the manuscript though linguistically earlier) specifies the celebrant's role in the breaking of this particle as a re-enactment of Longinus's role at Calvary.[47]

Panel Four: Christ upon the Beasts

This panel is a theophany, a revealing of divinity, which also occurs on the Bewcastle Shaft. Christ, on the largest panel on the cross, raises His right hand in benediction and holds a scroll in His left. The disjointed inscription which surrounds the panel on the Ruthwell Cross paraphrases Ps 90(91):13 ('You shall tread upon the asp and the viper; you shall trample down the lion and the dragon'). However, the beasts in the Ruthwell depiction, quadrupeds with their paws crossed, are identical and unidentified.

Meyvaert emphasizes the pacifism of the fawning beasts. He notes Cummian, Irish abbot of Clonfert, in his early seventh-century commentary on the placid compliance of the wild animals. This is likely to have been influenced by the Pseudo-Matthew's Latin commentary on Mk 1:13. The Pseudo-Matthew exposition reflects the general sense of the words of the Ruthwell inscription that surrounds the panel.

Ó Carragáin perceives the scene as polyvalent. He determines a composite conflation between the Canticle of Habakkuk (Hb 3:1-19) and Ps 90(91):13. [48] The Old Latin version of the Canticle of Habakkuk was sung every Friday for the period at lauds (dawn service of prayers) by monastic communities. Responsories based on its opening verses were also sung during the solemn ceremony of the Good Friday services that were performed at the ninth hour (3 pm). St. Jerome (*circa* AD 394) interpreted the scriptural phrase in Old Latin *in medio duorum animalium innotesceris* ('in the midst of two beasts you shall be known') (Hb 3:3) as significant of the crucified Christ being revealed between two thieves. Bede relates this to the Transfiguration (Mt 17:1-8; Mk 2:8; Lk 9:28-36) and associates it with 25 March.

Panel Five: *Agnus Dei*

Ó Carragáin lists four possibilities for the significance of the *Agnus Dei*: (a) symbolic of a prayer for private devotion used *circa* AD 700, (b) symbolic of the baptism of Christ in Scripture where John the Baptist recognizes Christ as the Lamb of God (Jn 1:28), (c) symbolic of the breaking of the bread for distribution and germane to the conclusion of the liturgical communion rite, and (d) symbolic in eschatology of the Book of Revelations, the Apocalypse of St. John which presents the Lamb of God enthroned and revered by elders and beasts. Meyvaert considers possibility (d) as most significant to the art. The nimbed figure holding the Lamb of God and standing on paired globes has been widely

[47] On the meaning and interpretation of the Paul and Antony panel, see Ó Carragáin (1988). For a comprehensive introduction to medieval monasticism, see Lawrence (1984; repr. 1989).

[48] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 125-9. Cummian's commentary on the Gospel of St. Mark is in *PL*: XXX. 594-5; the Pseudo-Augustine commentary is in *PL*: XXXV. 2149-2200. On interpreting the conflation between Ps. 90 (91):13 and the Canticle of Habakkuk, see Ó Carragáin (1986), pp. 376-403.

accepted as John the Baptist. This iconographic panel is also represented midway on the face of the Bewcastle Shaft.[49]

Panel Six: Matthew and the Man

Interpretations for this panel remain speculative. It may represent the first of the Four Evangelists, Matthew facing his pictorial significance, the man. Early exegetical excursus on the Four Evangelists which Irenaeus (*circa* AD 140-200) and Jerome formulated based on the vision of Ezekiel (Ez 1:4-26) readily relayed itself into pictorial portrayal: Matthew the Man, Mark the Lion, Luke the Calf, and John the Eagle. Gregory the Great associates these allegorical anthropomorphisms with the beginnings of the Four Gospels, and each creature with Christ Himself; in birth a man, in death a bull, in resurrection a lion, and in ascension an eagle. In readjustment (I) on the Ruthwell Cross the eagle with St. John would be directly reflected above the transom. In this case, the Four Gospels would then have been symbolically complete if the calf and the lion had been depicted on the now lost right and left arms of the cross-beam.[50]

Panel Seven: The Eagle

The eagle situated above the cross centre holds a sprig in its talons, evidentially of the vine. In readjustment (I) this would appear on the opposite East (now South) face above the archer. The image of the eagle was common in early Christian art as a symbol of victory and resurrection, and its flight reflective of Christ's Ascension. Gregory the Great in his patristic excursus *Moralia* in Job demonstrates how the eagle could imply various significances: (a) the malign spirits that decimate souls (Lam 4:19); (b) earthly kings (Ez 17:3-4) and divinity who on descending to earth incarnate ascends and soars again to the heavens above. Meyvaert stresses Gregory's allusions within this text to a metaphorical focus on monastic contemplation.[51]

A Summary of the Latin Inscriptions

The Ruthwell Cross series of Latin inscriptions are the most extensive in early Anglo-Latin. Yet they are syntactically incomplete, condensed, and contracted. Their lateral encompassment of the iconographic panels greatly substantiates and directs our comprehension of the sculpted depictions but does not secure the arrangement, allegorical or full polyvalent implications. In the transcription of the engraved Latin inscriptions conventional palaeographical rules are adhered to, following Okasha (1971).[52]

East (now South) Face

Panel 2	Annunciation
Top:	*IN*GR*ESS*VS*A*[*NG*]-
Panel 3	The Healing of the Man Born Blind
Top:	+*ETPRA*ET*E*RIENS:VI*D*I[...]*T*[...]*R*[...]
Right:	*A*NATI*BITATE:ETS*[...]
Panel 4	Mary Anoints Christ's Feet
Top:	+A[..*V*.....]*B*[.]
Right:	ST*R*VM:V[*NGVE*]*NTI*:&S[*T*]*A*N[*SR*]*E*[*TR*]*O*SE*C*V*SPED*ES
Left:	*E*IVS*L*ACR*IMI*S:C/O*EPI*TRIG*A*RE:PEDESIVS:&C*APILL*IS:
Bottom:	CAP*ITI*SSVITE*R*GEBAT

[49] On the four possibilities for the interpretation of the panel, see Ó Carragáin (1986), pp. 391-2. On its interpretation as an apocalyptic vision, see Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 112-25.
[50] For Gregory the Great's commentary see *PL*: LXX, esp. *PL*: LXX. 625.
[51] See Meyvaert in Cassidy (1992), pp. 145-7. See Moralia XXXI, Nos. 94-104 in *CCSL*: 143B.1614-1623.
[52] For a discussion of these Latin inscriptions, see Howlett in Cassidy (1992), pp. 72-82.

Panel 5 Martha & Mary/Visitation
damaged runic inscription, but the runic letters for ‘Martha’ and a possible ‘M’ are decipherable.

Panel 6 The Archer
eroded and indecipherable.

Panel 7 The Man and the Eagle
eroded and indecipherable.

West (now North) Face

Panel 2 The Flight Into/Out of Egypt
Top: +M*ARIA*:*E*TIO[.....]
Left: T*V*[*O*...]

Panel 3 Paul and Antony
Top: +SCS:P*AVL*VS:
Right: *ET*:*A*[...]
Left: *F*REG*E*R[..*T*]:PA*NEM*INDESERTO:

Panel 4 Christ upon the Beasts
Top: [.]*IHS*X[.*S*]
Left: I*VD*[.]*X*[..]*E*QV[*IT*]A[*TI*]S:
Right: *BE*STI*AE*:*ET*:DRACO*N*[*ES*]:*C*OGNO*U*ERV*N*T:I*ND*E:

Panel 5 *Agnus Dei*
Top: *-DORAMUS*
Bottom: TNONEVM

Panel 6 Matthew and the Man
eroded and indecipherable.

Panel 7 The Eagle
indecipherable runic inscription.

The Dream of the Rood

The text of *The Dream of the Rood* along with other legendary, homiletic, and poetic material is to be found in Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS CXVII, more generally known as the Vercelli Book.[1] It is now in the care of the Cathedral Library at Vercelli in northern Italy. The town of Vercelli was founded by the Romans *circa* AD 361, and became renowned as a station for pilgrims from northern and central Europe as they made their way towards the centre of Christendom, Rome.[2]

The manuscript itself is well preserved. It comprises of 136 regular-sized parchment folios made from sheepskin. Each folio measures *circa* 31 cm by 20 cm. They are grouped into gatherings that are numbered from I – XIX at the top of every folio and by the letters A – T at the bottom of the final folio in each gathering. It is a plain text manuscript with no decorative artistic pages or space-provision made for illumination; in fact, it contains only a few ornate initial letters. All the folios have been ruled for between 23 and 33 lines of writing with the number of lines to each page similar within each gathering.

The scribal hand throughout the complete codex is regular and legible. The script used is an insular quadratic Anglo-Saxon miniscule, which is indicative of late tenth-century West-Saxon scriptoria. The Vercelli Book is normally dated by scholars to the end of the tenth century or the beginning of the eleventh; M. Förster's proposed dating to the latter part of the tenth century scholars now generally accept to be the most plausible.[3]

The linguistic features of the Vercelli Book provide little specific evidence as to its dating or history. Few special traits are common throughout the manuscript. Anglian and Kentish distinctive forms occur frequently in late West-Saxon texts; yet they appear in too arbitrary a manner for any objective conclusions to be made. Several extant manuscripts copied at scriptoria in Canterbury and Rochester contain versions of Vercelli homilies and sermons.[4] A Kentish influence in the Vercelli Book is the constant use of the abbreviation xb, a contraction most common in late tenth-century manuscripts emanating from Canterbury.[5] Palaeographers have demonstrated that the knot-words on the initials in fols. 49rv, 106v, and 112rv are indicative of types in earlier tenth-century manuscripts from scriptoria at Winchester.[6] Such evidence seems to indicate therefore that the Vercelli Book was a product of one of these scriptoria in the South-east.

There has been much speculation and debate as to why and how this plain Anglo-Saxon codex came to be in Vercelli. Illuminated manuscripts from England were highly prized objects in mainland Europe during the early Middle Ages; this codex is not, however, of such quality. The only documents that contained Anglo-Saxon south of the Italian Alps during the medieval period were fragments that most likely came from individual bindings, which tends to indicate that they were dispatched to the region soon after their completion in England.

Scribal evidence confirms that the manuscript was still in England at the beginning of the eleventh century. K. Sisam suggests that the words 'writ þus' at the bottom of fol. 63v and 'sclean' on fol. 99r signify that the manuscript was not destined to be transported overseas at that time.[7] By the end of the eleventh century, however, the book was at Vercelli. In the blank space at the end of fol. 24v a later hand transcribed a variation in the music of an Italian church service. It is an extract from Psalm 26 written in small Carolingian miniscule with musical notation that is typical of north Italian scribes *circa* AD 1100.[8]

As a result of this scribal evidence, certain theories concerning the history of the Vercelli Book can be disregarded; the arguments are based on dates that are too late in time. As cited, the town of

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[1] A facsimile of the manuscript is in Sisam (1976).
[2] For further details on Vercelli, see Swanton (1987; repr. 1992), pp. 1-4.
[3] Förster (1913), pp. 11-21. See also Hoops (1911-9), p. 102, Keller (1906), p. 106, and Wülcker (1894), p. vii.
[4] See Scragg (1973), p. 207.
[5] Sisam (1953), pp. 109-10.
[6] Decorated initials in English manuscripts are discussed in Wormald (1945), pp. 120, 134.
[7] Sisam (1913), pp. 305-10, and Sisam (1953), p. 113.
[8] See Sisam (1953), pp. 113-15. For further discussion on the Italian connection, refer to Ó Carragáin (1998).

Vercelli functioned as a stop-off point for pilgrims travelling between Anglo-Saxon England and Rome, and the presence of its *Hospitalis Scottum* dates from before the beginning of the twelfth century. It is plausible that the manuscript may have been in the baggage of an important English palmer taking this route to Rome in the twelfth century. Another possibility is that it may have come indirectly to Vercelli via a monastery like Fulda or Fluery, which had close connections with England. Historically, the codex most likely arrived at Vercelli during the latter part of the eleventh century since the monastery diminished in significance after that time.[9]

The Vercelli Book contains twenty-three Old English homilies and sermons.[10] The texts begin with treatises on Christ's Passion and Final Judgement (fols. 1r – 12v), and go on to works dealing with various kinds of immoral behaviour such as the vices of licentiousness and intemperance. The final prose piece is a version of the Life of St. Guthlac (fols. 133v – 135v). The manuscript arrangement conforms loosely around particular themes. This suggests that the compiler and/or scribes were drawing on material from several sources and not assigning any premeditated structure or sequence apart from adhering to their own thematic plan. Interspersed through these prose texts are six verse pieces of differing lengths. The longest of these are *Andreas* and *The Fates of the Apostles* (fols. 29v – 54r), which are poems on Christian evangelization. These are proceeded later in the manuscript at fols. 101v – 106v by two poetic fragments which G. P. Krapp terms as *Body & Soul I* and *Homiletic Fragment I*, and by *The Dream of the Rood*. The final poetic text is *Elene* (fols. 121r – 133v). This is a verse rendering of the legend of St. Helena's finding of the True Cross near the site of Christ's execution in Jerusalem, and is directly connected to the content of *The Dream*.[11]

The Dream of the Rood begins at the sixth line of fol. 104v and concludes at the end of fol. 106r. This places the text at the end of gathering XIV (concluding at fol. 104v) which is ruled for twenty-four lines per page, and at the beginning of gathering XV (commencing at fol. 105r) which is ruled for thirty-two lines per page. The text is the product of one scribal hand, written in regular and uniform insular quadratic Anglo-Saxon miniscule script. The punctuation changes at the beginning of gathering XV reflect the narrower ruling of the pages in this quire. The text of the poem begins with two majuscule letters 'H' and 'Þ', but such lettering is rare throughout. M. Swanton argues that majuscule lettering is used in the poems in the Vercelli Book as a guide to rhythm and emphasis rather than syntax. The most common occurrences are 'Ac' and 'Hwæðe'; these signify the opening of clauses or sentences that present central themes and images. Yet it should be noted that such use is neither consistent nor regular throughout the codex.

This is particularly true of the text of *The Dream*, where punctuation is employed sporadically, and mainly for syntactical reasons. In ll. 22-25 of fol. 105r, however, the scribe has regularly pointed the text after each half-line (except after 'licgende', l. 24).[12] This indicates a possible experiment in metrical punctuation, but for the remainder of the poem this practice is discontinued with punctuation patterns reverting to being syntactical and irregular. The symbol ': ,' after 'gesceaft' (l. 12) and 'treow' (l. 17), and its variant ': ~' which ends the poem, is normally used, as is the case throughout the Vercelli Book, to indicate the end of a particular section. The employment of punctuation in the poem is capricious and variable from which no congruent patterns can be observed.

The Dream of the Rood is written in typical late West Saxon but certain non-West-Saxon forms exist in the poem. Some scholars have argued that these forms may present linguistic evidence indicating the historical transmission of the text.[13] This view is untenable as evidence can only conclusively highlight mixed poetic rather than dialectal word-usage.[14] Furthermore, a reliance mainly

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[9] On the background, providence, and history of the Vercelli Book, see Borgognone (1951), Clayton (1985), Cook (1888), de Grégory (1819-24), Förster (1913), Halsall (1969), Herben (1935), Ó Carragáin (1975), and Scragg (1973).

[10] On the compilation of the Vercelli Book, see Scragg (1973), esp. pp. 206-7; the Vercelli Homilies are edited in Scragg (1992), and the content of the manuscript is outlined in Table 3, pp. 94-5.

[11] The poems of the Vercelli Book are edited in Krapp (1932).

[12] See Krapp (1932), pp. xxviii-xxxi.

[13] See Brunner (1965), esp. §§ 107, 214, & 425, Campbell (1959), §§ 222-3, 446, & 579, and Swanton (1987; repr. 1992), p. 49.

[14] See the discussion in Sisam (1953), pp. 119-39.

on vocabulary to ascertain the dialectical origins of Old English verse would prove inconclusive.[15] Poetic vocabulary in Anglo-Saxon usually contains elements from other dialects such as Anglian, Kentish, and Northumbrian.[16] What then is the significance of this? These dialectic words demonstrate vestiges of scribal tradition (continuity) which is realized in the copying of the material into the Vercelli manuscript, and of scribal changes (discontinuity), which are manifested by errors, dialectic changes, modifications, etc., in the act of copying itself. Instances of Anglian words in the poem are 'sceððan' (l. 47), 'gefringan' (ll. 76, 112), and 'bearn' (l. 83).[17] The second part of the place-name 'feorgbold' (l. 73) is also typically Anglian; 'boðl' is its Northumbrian form, and 'bold' with metathesis is chiefly Mercian.[18] The past participle suffix *-ad* rather than *-od* in the verb 'geniwian' (l. 148) is a typical Kentish form; it is also on occasions used in Anglian.[19] The word 'bestemed' (ll. 22 & 48) is from the Northumbrian rendering on the Ruthwell Cross, and also recurs in the late West Saxon inscription on the Brussels Cross.[20] To conclude, the linguistic character of *The Dream* simply adheres to the standard literary language in use towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, late West Saxon with an Anglian element as well as traces from other dialects. The use of the vernacular, if presented orally, would ultimately encompass all audiences.[21]

The beginning of the poem can be divided into two parts. The first part (ll. 4-12) presents the universal perimeters of the Cross-vision. Here the gold-covered and gem-studded Cross is portrayed and described, culminating in the dreamer's acknowledgement that this is an eschatological Cross, 'Ne wæs ðær huru fracodes gealga' (l. 10b). The second part (ll. 13-23) focuses on presenting the dreamer as a sinful member of humankind, within the context of this all-encompassing Cross.[22] The poet in a subtle use of the word 'fah' (l. 13.) capitulates an ambiguity signifying both stained with sins (the dreamer) and brightly coloured (the Cross). At l. 18 an important shift in tone occurs. Introduced by the conjunction 'hwæðre', the Cross-vision begins to sweat on the right side and the dreamer becomes overcome by sorrow and fear. As he anxiously observes this ever-changing beam and beacon for a prolonged time, it must, among other things, conjure up for him thoughts of Christ's Second Coming (*Parousia*) and the Day of Judgement – the time when his temporal life will be evaluated according to its merits and demerits.[23]

The Cross begins to prepare to speak directly to the dreamer from l. 24, which is once more introduced by the conjunctive adverb 'hwæðe'.[24] The Cross commences speaking at l. 28 by distancing between its participation in the historical act of the Crucifixion and its present state of glory. A certain tension is manifest when it recalls the forceful manner in which it was removed from the edge of the forest and positioned on the hill as an object of execution. This anxiety intensifies as the Cross recalls the sight of Christ as a hero running to mount it. It even expresses doubt that it may be capable of the important task of supporting Christ in His realization of the Paschal event. The impact of this exposé derives from the paradox that the Cross, which was once the embodiment of death, is now a means by which believers, including the dreamer, are challenged to come to seek eternal life.

The scene of Christ resolutely running to the Cross differs from the biblical accounts of the Passion, which depict Christ as a tortured and exhausted figure personally carrying His Cross to the place of execution. This shift in emphasis displays the astuteness of the Anglo-Saxon poet to

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[15] Sisam (1953), pp. 126-31.
[16] On dialectic forms, see Hedberg (1945), Sievers (1885), pp. 464-5, and Sisam (1953), pp. 123-5.
[17] Jordan (1906), pp. 43-4, 94-7, 107.
[18] Ekwall (1917), pp. 82-91, and Smith (1956), I, p. 44, ii, map 8.
[19] Brunner (1965), § 414.
[20] Swanton (1987; repr. 1992), p. 49.
[21] On audience, see the discussion in Fleming (1966), and Ó Carragáin (1987-88) & (1992). While it is generally accepted that the poem engenders monastic spirituality, the fact that it was composed in the vernacular its meaning would have been accessible even to those without a proficiency in Latin. This group would include lay monks.
[22] See the discussion on this section of the poem in Patten (1968), and Raw (1970).
[23] Hieatt (1971) notices verbal and thematic echoes in the opening and closing parts of the poem. See also Kintgen (1974).
[24] On the use of such conjunctive adverbs in *The Dream*, see the discussion in Bolton (1959-60).

culturally tailor his subject-matter for his audience. Anglo-Saxon society valued strong and brave heroes who were assisted by loyal and worthy thanes. The epic poem *Beowulf*, for instance, continually presents this theme, which is especially highlighted in the relationship between the hero, Beowulf, and his thane, Wiglaf, towards the climax of the poem. The relationship between Christ and the Cross is viewed in similar terms in *The Dream*.

The poet establishes a very effective contrast between the intransigence of the human characters and the willingness of the inanimate Cross to accept Christ. The living tree (Rood) now turned gallows emphasizes Christ's desire to mount it and its need to be steadfast in the face of this command.[25] The image of the Cross trembling at l. 42 as Christ mounts highlights the magnanimity of the task it has undertaken, 'Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclyþte'. In unison with Christ it expresses the suffering inflicted by their mutual opponents.

The poet presents the Cross as the most elite inanimate object of all lifeless things, elevates it to the dramatic cynosure, and imbues it with the power of speech through the convention of the dream vision. Consequentially it came to be honoured as the noblest of woods on the hill (ll. 90-1). In the Crucifixion event, emphasis is placed on the nails driven into the wood, the poignant open wounds, the Cross's inability to harm its enemies, and its being drenched with blood from Christ's side. The Cross is not depicted as bleeding or expressing fear or pain. Rather as a witness it subjectively retells the events endured on the hill in terms of violence and derision that were directed against Christ when, as His loyal thane, it endured the death of the Saviour.[26]

Scholars who directly attribute human emotions to the Rood tend to misinterpret the context of the situation where it merely reports what it witnessed on the first Good Friday. Its only autonomously willed action is when it gently presents the body of the dead Christ into the hands of friends. It stands there bloody and scarred during Christ's entombment until its own eventual burial, lamenting with the other two crosses, as all creation did, the death of its king.

The Cross's distress is apparent after the Crucifixion; yet the repetition of the connective 'hwæðre' at l. 57a, l. 70a and l. 75b projects the narrative forward. Christ is at rest in the tomb, the physical body is cooling; further elaboration is neither necessary nor required. Introduced by the adverb 'nu' at l. 78, the contemporary Cross quickly reasserts it role in the redemptive event, and does not at any time throughout the entire poem equate itself with the dreamer or humanity. Its shared experience with Christ symbolically permits it to represent Him as a healing agent and teacher.[27] The vision of the Cross towering high in the heavens is because God's Son penetrated the very centre of darkness and death, hell, and conquered it in triumph, restoring light and life; this is termed as the Harrowing of Hell.[28]

The Rood's deliberation moves quickly to the present tense as it reveals its changed status. An obvious sense of triumph emanates from the vision, which is in sharp contrast to its account of its historical role. The Cross is now emphasizing its glorified, contemporary status as a healing agent and representative symbol of Christ. The poet effectively asserts this paradox of status in a very effective 'then/now' passage at ll. 80b-94, where Christ's humiliating death is dealt with in a single line, 'On me Bearn Godes þrowode hwile'(ll. 83b-84a), as the basis for the Cross's present exalted status.

It is also noteworthy that in the section which focuses on the Crucifixion scene (ll. 28-75a) the person of Christ is referred to in human terms only four or five times, while the words signifying Him as God are present eleven or twelve times. As man Christ endured death on the Cross and sent forth His spirit in the act of dying as revelation had determined. As God He rose from the dead and realized the possibility of eternal life for mankind; in fact, the Crucifixion is perceived as a victory from the very beginning of the poem, especially from l. 13.

In the central part of the poem the dreamer receives instruction from the Cross on the doctrinal message that he is to promulgate to the faithful. The interpretative importance of the Crucifixion is maintained throughout this sermonizing section. Christ is the Son of God (l. 83b), Prince of Glory (l.

[25] For further elaboration on this point, see Gardner (1971; repr. 1983), p. 149.
[26] See Orton (1980), pp. 2-3, for a discussion on the Riddle genre and *The Dream of the Rood*; see also Swanton (1987; repr. 1992), pp. 66-7.
[27] Huppé (1970), p. 101.
[28] Irving (1986), p. 110.

90b), Guardian of Heaven (l. 91b), Lord (l. 105b), and Saviour (l. 111b). He is also the One who freed mankind both from personal wrongdoing and from Original Sin as instigated by Adam (ll. 98-100). These titles referring to the risen Christ are similar to those used in the depiction of the Crucifixion scene itself, except that there His assumed humanity and sufferings had to be acknowledged. The emotional image of the mutilated tree (ll. 39-56), superceded as a symbol of redemption (ll. 84b-85a) functions as an effective doctrinal lesson from l. 95. The dreamer undergoes a *metanoia* ('a change of heart') as a result of being a witness in his dream to this vision. It is highly significant that he has the sole responsibility as the role of 'reordberend' ('voice-bearer') for the Cross, and is urged to convey to the faithful the message and means of redemption that has been revealed to him through the dream-vision. The Cross, therefore, as inanimate object is not depicted as speaking directly to mankind except through the persona of the dreamer.

The device of the Cross speaking, changing from gem-studded object plated with gold through which is seen the vista of the past, to severed forest tree, to gallows, to glorified Rood, and, ultimately, as the means to Christ and the possibility of eternal life. All these phenomena constitute the essence of reverie and of effective teaching.[29] The Crucifixion remains central to the Cross's contemporary status, and almost half of the poem (sixty-five lines) focuses mainly on the tree as object of death. While the Passion is the central part of the Good Friday liturgy, the wider eschatological theme of the poem encourages the repentance (*metanoia*) of the faithful before an impending Day of Judgement. The Rood now acquires the tone of a preacher and represents a notable shift from the proclamation style of the preceding lines, or the emotional impact of the opening section. Repeating the homiletic formula 'hæleð min se leofa' of l. 78, it now instructs the dreamer (ll. 95-109) to reveal to mankind the supernatural symbolic vision that he has just witnessed and to present it in the context of the Creed (*Credo*), the ecclesiastical proclamation of belief.

Throughout the entire poem, the poet does not dwell much on the fear associated with the Day of Judgement, emphasizing instead the inevitable fulfilment of Christ's redemptive sacrifice. The overall treatment of this theme is positive. In answer to the poignant question as to whether one's life has been predominantly good or evil which the Lord will judge, only a few souls, the poet reminds us, will find anything to utter in reply. However, he goes on to inform at ll. 118-19 that no one need be afraid who has before that day the sign of the Rood on his or her chest. The universality of this instruction is emphasized in the proceeding passage (ll. 119-21) where it is explained that by means of the Cross each believer may seek eternal life. In contrast to the dreamer who appeared terrified at the first sight of the Cross-vision but later was reprieved to recount the message of redemption, Christians at Doomsday must have the symbol of the Cross on their breast in order to be accredited with the gift of salvation. Medieval anticipations of the termination of all reverberate here.[30]

The physical existence of Christ is affirmed through the differing perspectives of the person and function of Mary, the Mother of Christ. The similarity is striking between Mary and the Rood in that both are obedient servants and revered agents of Christ as well as being approachable mediums of salvation; the Rood itself makes this parallel at ll. 90-4; their interrelated role has a further significance because it symbolically associates the Annunciation with the Crucifixion. According to tradition Christ is presumed to have died in the same day that He was conceived which is 25 March, the Feast of the Annunciation, the day of the spring equinox when day and night, represented by the sun and moon, are of equal length. Light increases after this date, making it a profound metaphor for Christ's victory over death.

The poet accepts without comment the death on the Cross of the man who was also divine.[31] He conveys the paradox of death and life solely through experiences recounted by the authoritative cult image of the Cross. The appropriate connection between suffering and glory is depicted in the exalted symbolic vision of the Rood, not in the passively enduring gallows. The reference to Adam's ancient deeds at l. 100 recalls a depth of biblical and liturgical tradition since Christ is frequently interpreted

[29] See the discussion in Edwards (1970), esp. pp. 293, 301.

[30] The Blickling text for Easter Day, edited in Morris (1874, 1876, 1880; repr. 1967), pp. 82-96, advises its listeners in a similar way with regard to the Second Coming of Christ.

[31] On moral authority in Old English verse, see Shippey (1972), esp. pp. 70-1.

as the second Adam who undid the negative transgressions of the first Adam. Following the way of the Cross, it is from death comes life and from despair springs hope.

At the poem's climax (ll.126b-44a), the dreamer embarks on a proper devotion to the victory-tree, honouring it, as men do throughout time and creation (l. 12, l. 82), together with a handful of followers (ll. 123b-24a). The emphasis is on prayer, devotion, and focusing the mind (*meditatio*) on the Cross as the means to Christ and to His gift of salvation. This otherworldly longing is replaced at the very end of the poem (ll. 144b-54) by a form of incantation that distinguishes the authoritative perception of Christ's redeeming act from the dreamer's appropriate response to the vision that he has experienced. It becomes a prayer of petition where the dreamer may be made a welcomed guest at heaven's feast (ll.135a-41). He may then be among the multitude that Christ as Saviour has and shall lead to God's kingdom, as a consequence of His sacrifice on the Cross (ll. 142-44a). The two final lines of the poem (ll. 155-6) equate Christ with God. This effectively reminds us of the opening of the poem because the Cross was first introduced as a glorified and eschatological symbol. The audience is finally left with the enduring image of the eschatological Christ residing over heaven and earth – all creation – in a spirit of triumph and fairness.[32]

The purpose of this introduction to the poem is neither to diminish nor ignore the literal structure of the text; nor to apply a too subtle, symbolic, or figurative overview; nor isolate theological abstractions in a few designated passages. Adherence to a sense of thematic and structural balance helps focus on *The Dream of the Rood's* central purpose: objectively and subjectively to inform. The poem imaginatively presents a living belief as practiced; for the most part it avoids elaborating on abstract theological ideologies. Rather it displays a tangible insight into the mystery of the Incarnation-Atonement by presenting it in terms of perceptible acts of mercy in the process of God's revelation to mankind through history. These divine interventions, which the Cross in its admonitory passage (ll. 95-121) instructs the dreamer, are to be acknowledged with gratitude, atonement and praise, and as being ultimately beyond human understanding. Through the Cross-vision, the goal of the dreamer's experience is to guide believers in the ways of salvation before the impending Doomsday.

[32] Garde (1991), pp. 90-112, provides interesting insights into *The Dream of the Rood*, both thematically and textually.

The Processional Cross and Cross Reliquary

Procession, the intended movement of a group of people from place to place for specific religious motives, was practiced widely in pre-Christian times. In the biblical Old Testament procession implies the pilgrimage of a people, the Israelites, in the company of God. In the New Testament the faithful follow Christ to listen to His teachings and later to commemorate His Death and Resurrection.[1]

In the Old Testament the Ark of the Covenant was carried in procession. The ark symbolized the presence of Yahweh and of His covenant with Israel; it contained two tablets of stone thought to originate from the Mosaic period (1K 8:9). It was also believed to contain the rod of Aaron, father of the Judaic priesthood, and a vessel of manna. It was placed to rest finally in the temple of Solomon (1K 8:6). In the New Testament it is described as the heavenly temple (Heb 9:4; Apc 11:19), a typological prefigurement of the Christian Church. [2]

Procession gradually became more extensive through the early Christian liturgical year.[3] The disciples bore palm fronds at Jesus's entry into Jerusalem (Jn 12:13); by the fourth century palms were carried in procession in Jerusalem during Holy Week, in Spain by the sixth, and in France by the ninth. In the late fourth century the Pilgrimage of Egeria account describes at firsthand sacred sites visited in Jerusalem by pilgrims and worshippers during Holy Week. Stational Church feasts were undertaken from the fifth century onwards which entailed processional liturgical celebrations stopping at particular churches dedicated to early martyrs. The *Ordo Romanus Primus* describes the pontifical stational masses in seventh-century Rome. By the end of the seventh century, Marian devotions originating in Byzantium began to flourish in Rome: crosses were carried and held in procession at Christmas, the Annunciation, Purification, and Marian Dormition. By the eighth century the processional ritual of the translation of saints' relics became a well-established practice. Funeral rites too were processional. Crosses were also carried in procession during times of crisis. Pope Gregory the Great (AD 540-604) attests to the early procession with crosses through the streets of Rome to supplicate for protection against plague.

During the liturgy of the mass both gospel and offertory processions were undertaken; in the Medieval Church these proceeded from the chancel which was screened in its sanctity from the congregation. Processions not only included the bearing of the Cross but lights or candles, the colour of vestments and banners, incense and relics. The acolyte, a minor order of the ministry of the Church, was invested with ceremonial functions, which included the bearing of ceremonial lights. The deacon, a minister of the major ecclesiastical orders, was invested with the prominent liturgical role (among others) of the bearing of the Gospel Book and the reading of its lessons (pericopes); he also attended to the altar and its rites during mass.

At Easter and Pentecost processions were undertaken to the font for baptism. From an early period in the Church the consecrated Eucharistic host came to be reserved. In a liturgical service known as the presanctified mass the host was carried in procession by the officiating deacon for its distribution to the assembled faithful at the communion rite.[4] In the Byzantine rite the Eucharist was not celebrated during Lent excepting Saturdays and Sundays which were non-fasting days. In the Western Church the consecrated Eucharist was specially reserved at the evening mass of the Last Supper on Holy (Maundy) Thursday. At the end of this service it was carried behind the processional cross to an altar of repose for distribution the following day during the services of Good Friday.

Rogation Days were days of intercession and prayer and were very popular in the Medieval Church with some occurring annually and others being arranged to suit local needs.[5] Only four such days have been universally observed for many centuries: April 25 and the three days preceding Ascension Day. April 25 was chosen to replace with a Christian procession the pagan *Robigalia*

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[1] See the discussion on procession by Jasper in Davies (1972; repr. 1978), pp. 323-4. See also Andrieu (1931-61), Dunlop (1932), Frere (1906), & Henderson (1882).
[2] On the Ark of Covenant see McKenzie (1966; repr. 1975), pp. 54-55.
[3] On the development of the liturgical year, see Talley (1986).
[4] On the presanctified mass, see Jardine Grisbrooke in Davies (1972; repr. 1978), pp. 322-3.
[5] On the Rogation Days, see Connelly in Davies (1972; repr. 1978), pp. 336-7.

processions of that date. As this always occurred in the Easter season, it was not a fast day and the procession was festal, similar to the processions that took place during Easter week. During *Robigalia* the gods were implored to preserve the crops from mildew and other diseases; the Christian adoption of this festival preserved this meaning. The faithful filed in procession around the fields to invoke God's blessing on the crops.

An important feature of Rogation Days is the singing in procession of the litanies of the saints. April 25 is known as the greater Litanies and the other three as the lesser. The Litanies used are the same on all four days. Such liturgical processions from the fourth century onwards were generally proceeded by a processional cross that was the decorative symbol of triumph. The Anglo-Saxon Brussels Cross (Plate IX, p. 34) and The Rupertus Cross (Plate XXIII, p. 75) are examples of decorative crosses that could have functioned as processional crosses and/or shrines that contained fragments of the True Cross. The Anglo-Saxon Church observed the Rogation days, especially those three preceding Ascension, with particular reverence. The Blickling Homilies, the Vercelli Book, and Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, Series I & II, all provide preaching texts for these days.[6]

Other liturgical celebrations which embodied the procession of the Cross were Ember Days which included the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of three and then later four weeks in the year.[7] Ember weeks, like Lent, were occasions of spiritual renewal, times of prayer and fasting originally coincidental with the Roman seasons of sowing, harvest, and grape-gathering. The Old Roman Missal, *circa* tenth century, assigns six or twelve lection passages at different times for the Ember vigil; this was similar to the Easter vigil.

Anglo-Saxon crosses and crucifixes were engaged in religious processions and/or were enshrined as reliquaries with fragments of the True Cross. They would have held place either within the inner sanctum of the veiled chancel or in ancillary chapels within the church. In later periods they may have been placed above the high altar or on a nearby beam. Some were carved of wood. Others were formed of precious metals, and many were jewelled. The historical references can prove ambiguous: both Latin and Old English use the same word (*crux* and *rod*) for both Cross and Crucifix (i.e. a figural representation) without differentiation. By the seventh century Aldhelm describes a cross that was decorated with gold, gems, and silver. In the eighth Alcuin refers to crosses gilded with gold and silver at York. King Cnut presented a large, sanctified and ornamented cross to New Minster at Winchester. At times our evidence for the Anglo-Saxon jewelled cross and crucifix is contingent on references to the spoils carried off by invaders. After the Norman Conquest of AD 1066, Hereward and his raiders had no fewer than fifteen crosses or crucifixes seized from Peterborough. Other wealthy monasteries were documented to include large numbers of crosses or crucifixes: three gold crosses and six silver at Waltham, twenty-six at Glastonbury (AD 1045), and twenty-seven at Ely by the time of the Conquest. Monastic churches received crucifixes that were donated by secular patrons. King Eadred bequeathed two gold crucifixes to Old Minster at Winchester; Earl Bryhtnoth presented two more (or crosses) to Ely. A lady, Ælfwaru, wishing to be buried at Ely bestowed a further two representations on the establishment.

Crosses or crucifixes could achieve large proportions with more affluent monasteries and churches sponsoring, commissioning, or possessing life-size representations of the figure of Christ. None now exist yet records maintain that a silver-plated crucifix donated by Stigand to Ely was according to human scale as reputedly was one set over the altar at Bury. Often their Crucifixion scene included the Virgin and John at Christ's feet as of a crucifix given by Leofric and Godiva to Evesham before the Conquest.

The Brussels Cross

A lively interest in Cross relics was maintained well into the Anglo-Saxon period. From the early part of the twelfth century comes an important Cross-reliquary now at the Cathedral of SS. Michel-et-

[6] The Blickling Homiles are edited in Morris (1874, 1876, 1880; repr. 1967); the Vercelli texts are in Scragg (1992), and Ælfric's Catholic Homilies are in Godden (1979), Pope (1967-8), & Thorpe (1844-6).

[7] On the Ember Days, see Connelly in Davies (1972; repr. 1978), pp. 168-9.

Gudule in Brussels, Belgium, and popularly known as the Brussels Cross. This cross, bearing a two-line inscription in Anglo-Saxon verse, was first brought to the attention of scholars by Zupitza (after Logeman in 1891).[8] Traditionally reputed to have contained fragments of the True Cross, it has been at the Brussels Cathedral since the middle of the seventeenth century.

The cross is 46.5cm high by 28cm wide (18.3 inches by 11 inches) in size. The front and principal face was once covered by a jewelled gold plate which is now lost. This face would probably have originally depicted a Crucifixion scene. An inscription on a gilded silver plate that was attached to the foot of the cross reads: *Direpta 7Ma/Martii, Publicae/Venerationi/ Restituta/ 29Na 7Bris/1793* ('Looted 7 March, restored for public veneration 29 September 1793'). This refers to the plundering of the cross by French soldiers in 1793. The rear face is still covered by a silver plate bearing medallions depicting the four evangelist symbols, one of each on the four arms, and an *Agnus Dei* figure (Lamb with transfixing Cross) in a roundel at its centre. Across the silver plating of the transom the artist has inscribed his name: '+Drahmal me worhte'. The Anglo-Saxon inscription is incised on a silver strip that runs around the edges of the cross. It is written not in runes but in Roman letters in a curious mixture of capitals and miniscules. The letters NE of 'ricne', NG of 'cyning', and ME of 'bestemed' are written in ligatures.

It is generally accepted that the Brussels Cross is English in origin. The three brothers, Ælfric, Æthlmær, and Athelwold, referred to in the prose section of the inscription, have never been positively identified. The name of the craftsman, Drahmal, is Norse and may perhaps indicate that he originated from the northern part of Britain; nothing more is known about him.

Determining from the language of its epigraph and ornamentation the cross dates from the early twelfth century. The language is generally regular late West Saxon with one Anglian form 'bestemed', and a few irregular spellings such as 'byfigynede' (with 'y' for 'e' in the ending) in the verse, and 'wyrican' and 'beropor' (both with an intrusive vowel) in the prose. The Anglian form 'bestemed' (for West Saxon 'bestiemed', 'bestymed') does not necessarily indicate a northern origin for the inscription; it can more plausibly be explained as a traditional spelling adopted from an older poetic vocabulary.

Cook has suggested that the three names, Ælfric, Æthlmær, and Athelwold might be synonymous with Alfricus, Agelmarus, and Agelwardus, three of the six brothers of Eadric of Streona mentioned by Florence of Worcester under the year AD 1007.[9] Dickens and Ross argue that the Æthelmær of the inscription is the well-known patron of Ælfric, who founded the Abbey of Eynsham in AD 1005; they offer no identification for the two other names.[10] It is possible that this holy relic that forms part of the present cross is the same as the *lignum Domini* sent by Pope Martius to King Ælfred in AD 883 or 885. None of these possibilities can be conclusively proved. D'Ardenne, however, who favours the identification of the relic with Ælfred's *lignum Domini* has made a study of all the available evidence, presenting a plausible and accurate account of its later history. According to d'Ardenne, the relic remained in the hands of the West-Saxon royal family until near the end of the tenth century, when it left the possession of the family's direct line. The cross's new owners had it enclosed in a reliquary (the present cross) and presented to Westminister Abbey.[11] It later found its way to the Netherlands, probably during the reign of King Stephen, when Flemish soldiers were stationed in England.

In January 1999, A. van Vpersele de Strihou, Curator at the Cathedral of SS. Michel-et-Gudule in Brussels, discovered a rare document relating to the Brussels Cross within the archives of the chapter-church (now cathedral). This contains (i) a diagram of the cross, comprising of the cross inscription and a Latin translation from *circa* 1650, with an additional translation in Dutch by Prof. H. Logeman dated 1894 (Fig. 4, p. 76); and (ii) notes on the cross diagram from *circa* 1650 (Fig. 5, p. 77). She has graciously given permission to produce this document in this edition, which highlights scholarly interest in the Brussels Cross as early as *circa* 1650 and its continuance to the present time.

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[8] Zupitza (1891), Logeman (1891). See also the discussion in Dobbie (1942), pp. cxviii, clxxiv, 115, & 204.
[9] Cook (1905), pp. ix - xvii, 3 - 5.
[10] Dickens & Ross (1934), pp. 1-13, 25-29.
[11] d'Ardenne (1939), pp. 145-64, 271-2.

Translator's Note

The Dream of the Rood is a literary poem of witness, voiced by both the dreamer and the Rood. Muffled by a millennium, the translation should strive to empathize with what has been heard and like a 'bearer of voices' (spoke of in the poem) to once more convey. Ezra Pound distinguishes between two modes of conveyance: 'interpretative translation', a rendering with which most translators comply, as of here, and the more liberal and original paraphrase. To interpret is to engage a fidelity to the text with new expression in sense and sensibility that will vary vastly in manner and degree from translator to translator. In recommendation, however, a faithfulness directing within the translation should be flexible and non-inhibitive.

King Ælfred the Great in his Preface to *St. Gregory's Pastoral Care* (AD 871-99), a translation into Anglo-Saxon of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*, which was a standard directive model for clerical orders, explains the accommodative implications of an interpretative gap. While deploring the loss and lack of Latin and its learning among the clergy of his day Ælfred recommends its translation sometimes word for word, sometimes by sense. Interlinear and marginal glosses in medieval manuscripts had for centuries throughout Europe earlier conveyed both these cognitive conditions of the sense and accuracy of words or phrases but left the case unstated. At times the act of translation was disdained and disapproved of. A ninth-century Anglo-Saxon interlinear translation of the text of the elaborate and illuminated Lindisfarne Gospels is denigrated by a gloss as an act of educated vandalism defacing the veritable Word of God.

Medieval translation does embody further processes of conveyance. The edition of the poem (taken accurately from the original manuscript) observes standard palaeographical procedures. A glossary of dictionary definitions in modern English in its right-hand margin preserves the gap by a bridge between the 'interpretative translation' rendered in parallel on each facing-page; the bridge waxes and wanes within the modulation of the translation's recognition of the gorge in time, language, and culture between the medieval and the modern. The dictionary definitions of words are indicated by the abbreviation 'w' (word) and numerated according to their linear word order in the Anglo-Saxon text. This marginal glossing concentrates on the explanation of nouns and verbs. Definite/indefinite articles, pronouns and adverbs are in general more consonant and regular in Anglo-Saxon and can be referred to within the general glossary.

The runic ciphers of the Ruthwell Cross, which are ideographic, also require conveyance to the modern Roman alphabet; palaeographic procedures are relevant. Eroded/damaged runes are projected interpretations: (i) the partial reconstruction of runes are indicated by italicized Roman letters, and (ii) the total reconstruction of runes, where conservatively possible, are indicated by italicized Roman letters within square brackets. In panorama, the complete runic inscription has been presented in the visual order and sequence with which it borders the North (now East) and South (now West) sides of the Ruthwell Cross; these are read beginning from the top border on the left-hand corner (arrow 1), continuing to the right and vertically down the border (arrow 2). The inscription reading follows then from the top left-hand corner and vertically down the left-hand border (arrow 3).

The Dream of the Rood is a spiritual poem imbued with *godspel*, the words of the Gospel, the good news. Christianity is centrally concerned with the doctrine of salvation and how this is to be achieved; these redemptive sentiments are with which both art and literature will emanate and resonate. The drama of a moment, Christ *in extremis*, 'Christ was on Rood', appears stark and disparate in the translation due to the heightened significance of the event in Christian spirituality. Anglo-Saxon generic terms and details in the poem, however, portray a vernacular particularism in relation to religious terms. A central Christian term for 'Cross' is unmentioned in the *Dream of the Rood* but must be implicitly understood from the varied vocabulary of 'tree', 'beam/beacon', 'gallows', 'the best of woods', and 'rood' which represent it.

English words in general are commonly longer than their direct and recognized Anglo-Saxon antecedents. The original verbal inflection of this the earliest recorded period of the English language has been largely loosened and distended. The sphere of subject and predicate are now more extended and explored by modern pronouns and prepositions. In addition, the intensity, the intention, its subtlety and suppositions of any word such as 'wood' in Anglo-Saxon may now be largely lost with

the prodigious linguistic shifts within the language. Yet a fidelity to reproduce this word simply even as it in orthography is, remarkably unchanged and intact, will with the translation refract at the very least where we cannot possibly reflect the sentiments of a society divided so by the ages.

The standard double-stressed syllabic half-lines of Anglo-Saxon in English poetry have long been ci-devant. The appliance of regular or modern metrical metre to the translation of medieval text rather than enhance may impede emphasis and effect within the original; the verse given here is free in form. Rhythm and line-length are determined by course and effluence within the medium of Modern English thought, form, and expression. The random and intermittent alliteration deliberated throughout the translation inculcates its pervasive order and presence in the original Anglo-Saxon text.

Debate about the non-use, use, and abuse of archaisms is itself old in argument. At times words such as 'thither' have been chosen to sound its hastily gathered assembly; 'thanes' and 'slayers' maintain an aura of Anglo-Saxon heroicism for Christ and the Cross of Victory. The word 'direly' has been adopted based on its Modern English definitions of the ominous and of dread that are synonymous with both scriptural and the poem's dark portentuous environ of the Crucifixional event; the Latinic derivatives of *dirus* also remain cogent. The synchronism of two or more meanings within one word was common to Anglo-Saxon and early Germanic languages (Old Icelandic, in particular); this is evident in *The Dream of the Rood*. In Anglo-Saxon this beam (of the Cross) is also a beacon. In the translation, as it is governed by fluvial rhythms and contexts contemporary and medieval, the expression 'beam and beacon' is represented in text as: (a) by both words conjoined by the conjunctive 'and', (b) by implied parallelism as 'the brightest of beams/All that beacon . . . ', (c) or by either word singularly stated to express a perceived emphasis. Another exemplar that occurs repeatedly in the text is 'sweat and blood'.

Translation is the art of exposition. Conceding that such should shy from and is ever inept in its accuracy, the interpretative translation can readily seek further afield in its relative understanding. By providing supplementary Cross-related texts, undirected by commentary, it is hoped that the reader may by their experience of *The Dream of the Rood* enhance appreciation and understanding. The Latin Cross texts have been chosen for their continued popularity, then and now, within the liturgy of Holy Week. The two Irish vernacular Cross poems have been added to indicate medieval distinctions between the significance of the sign of the Cross (Mugrón's Hymn) and the physical Cross (Blathmac Poem).

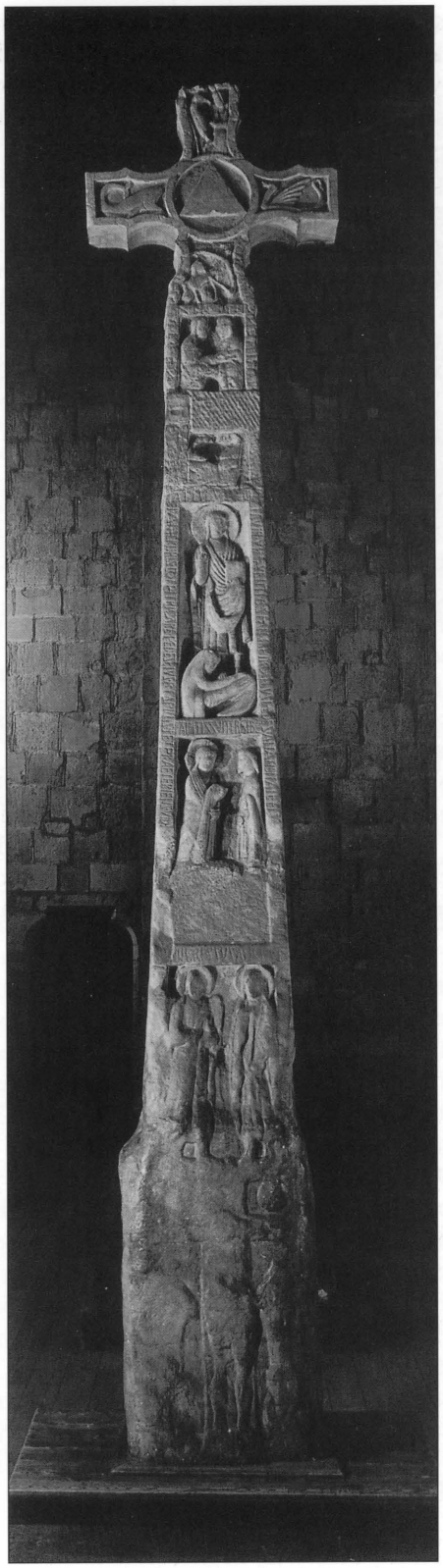

Plate I: East (now South) face of the cast of the Ruthwell Cross in Durham Cathedral, Iconography & Inscriptions.

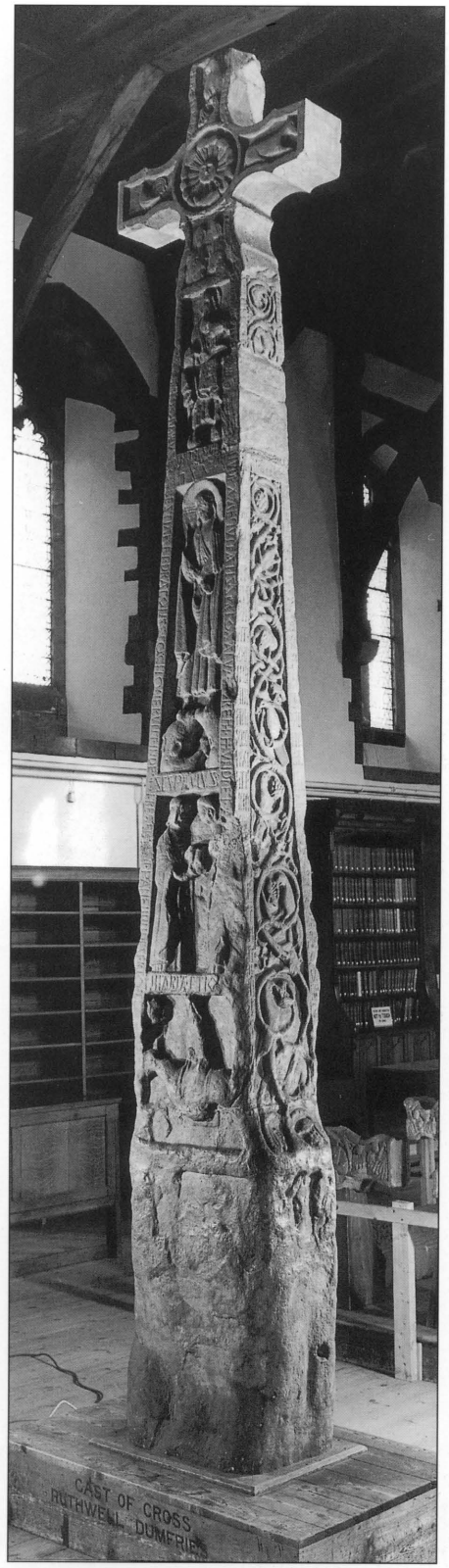

Plate II: West (now North) face of the cast of the Ruthwell Cross in Durham Cathedral, Iconography & Inscriptions.

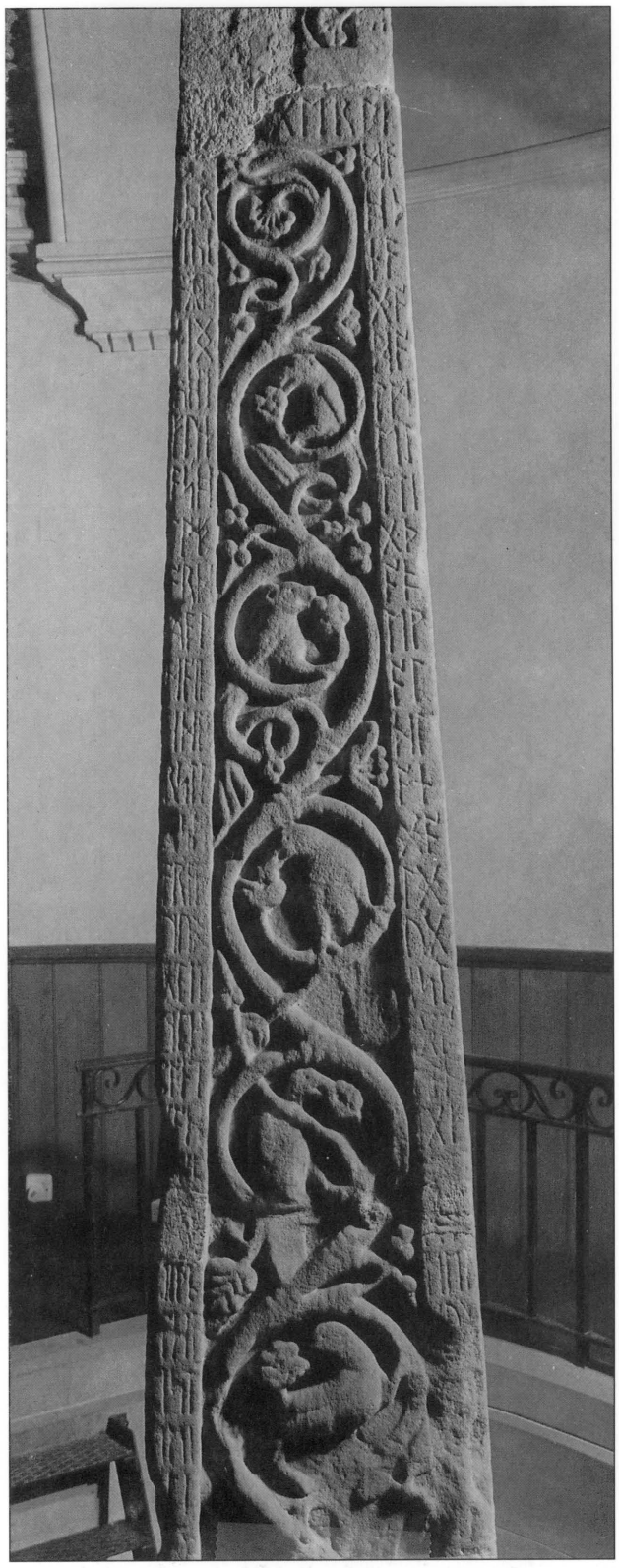

Plate III: North (now East) side of the Ruthwell Cross in Dumfries, Scotland, Runic Phrasal Units I & II.

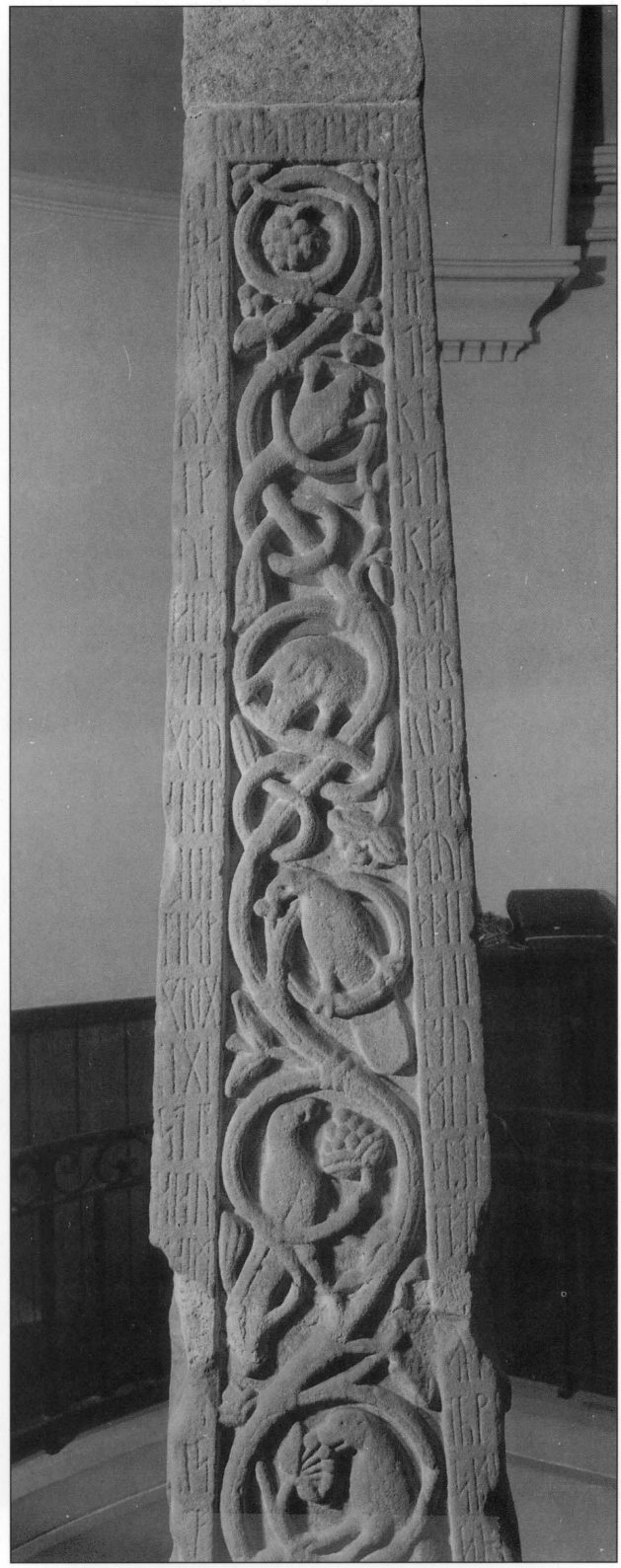

Plate IV: South (now West) side of the Ruthwell Cross in Dumfries, Scotland, Runic Phrasal Units III & IV.

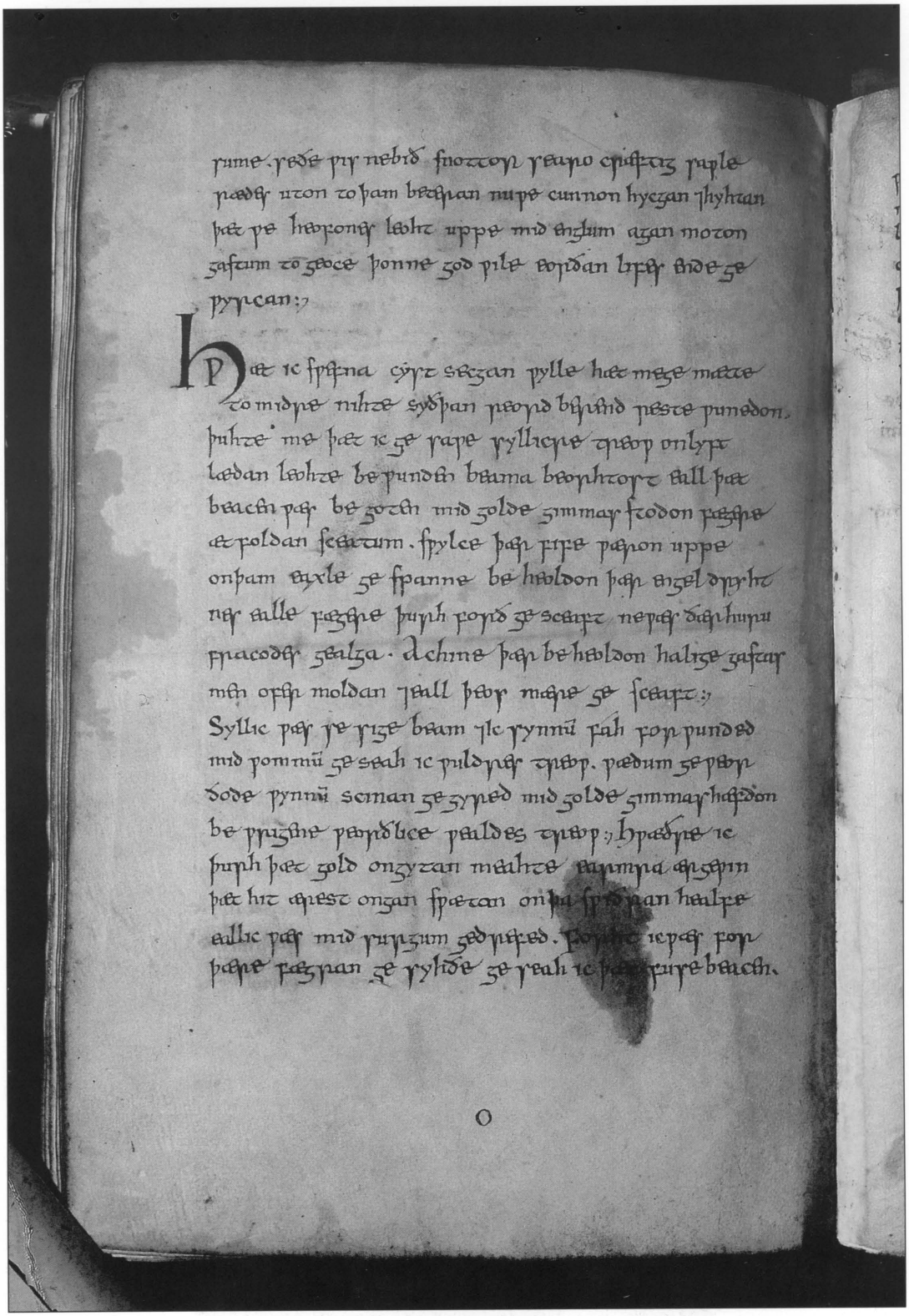

Plate V: The Vercelli Book, fol. 104v.

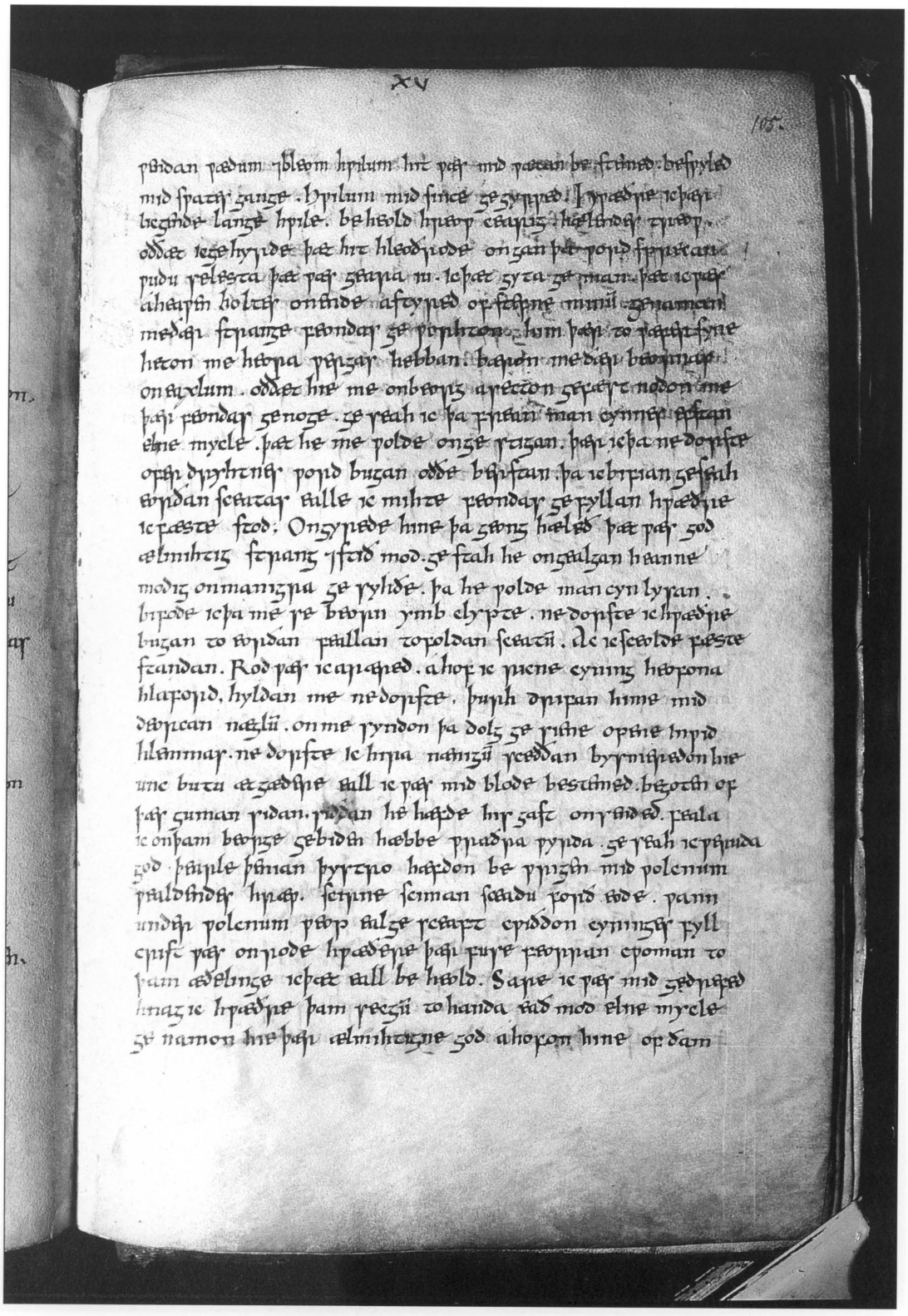

Plate VI: The Vercelli Book, fol. 105r.

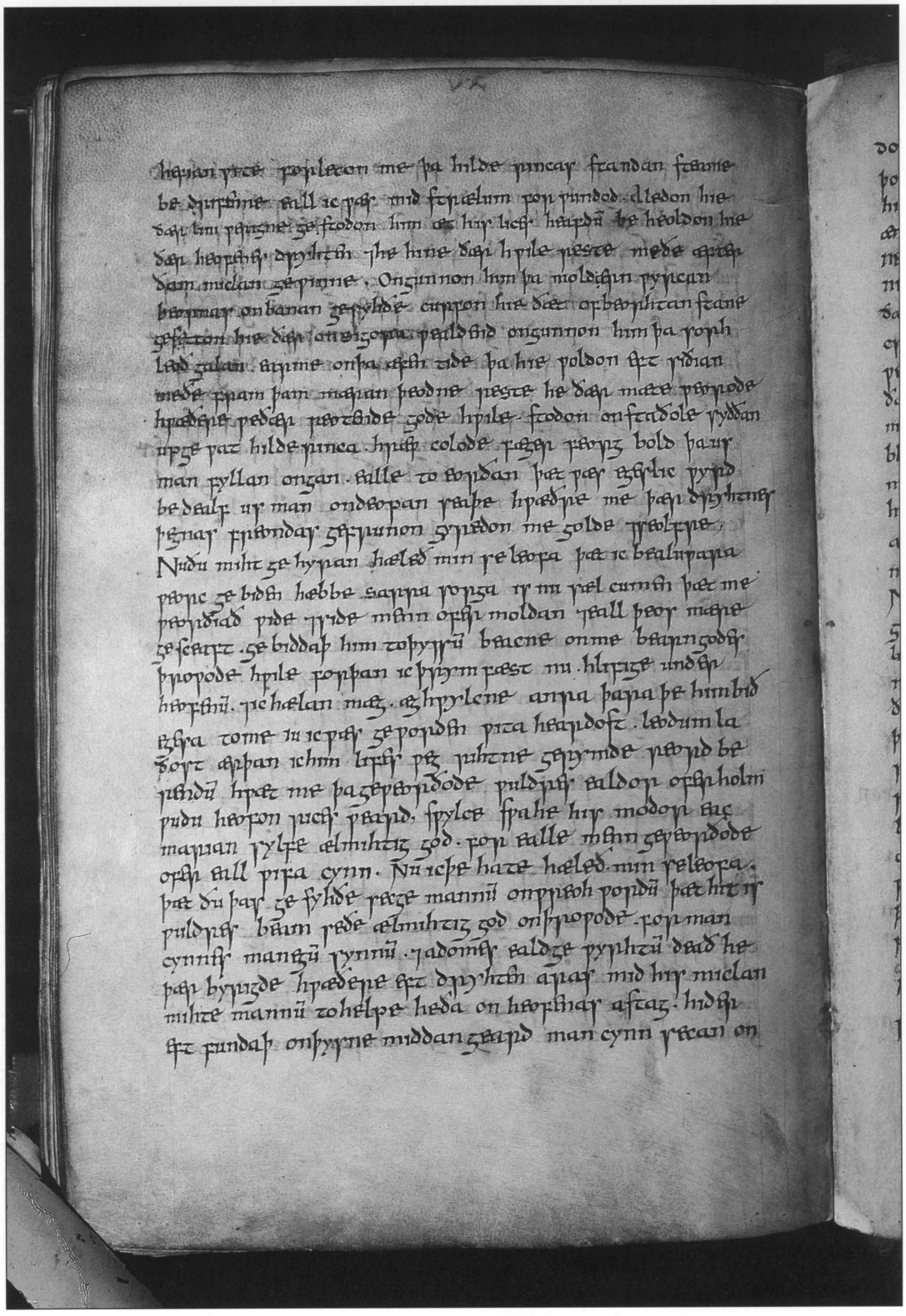

Plate VII: The Vercelli Book, fol. 105v.

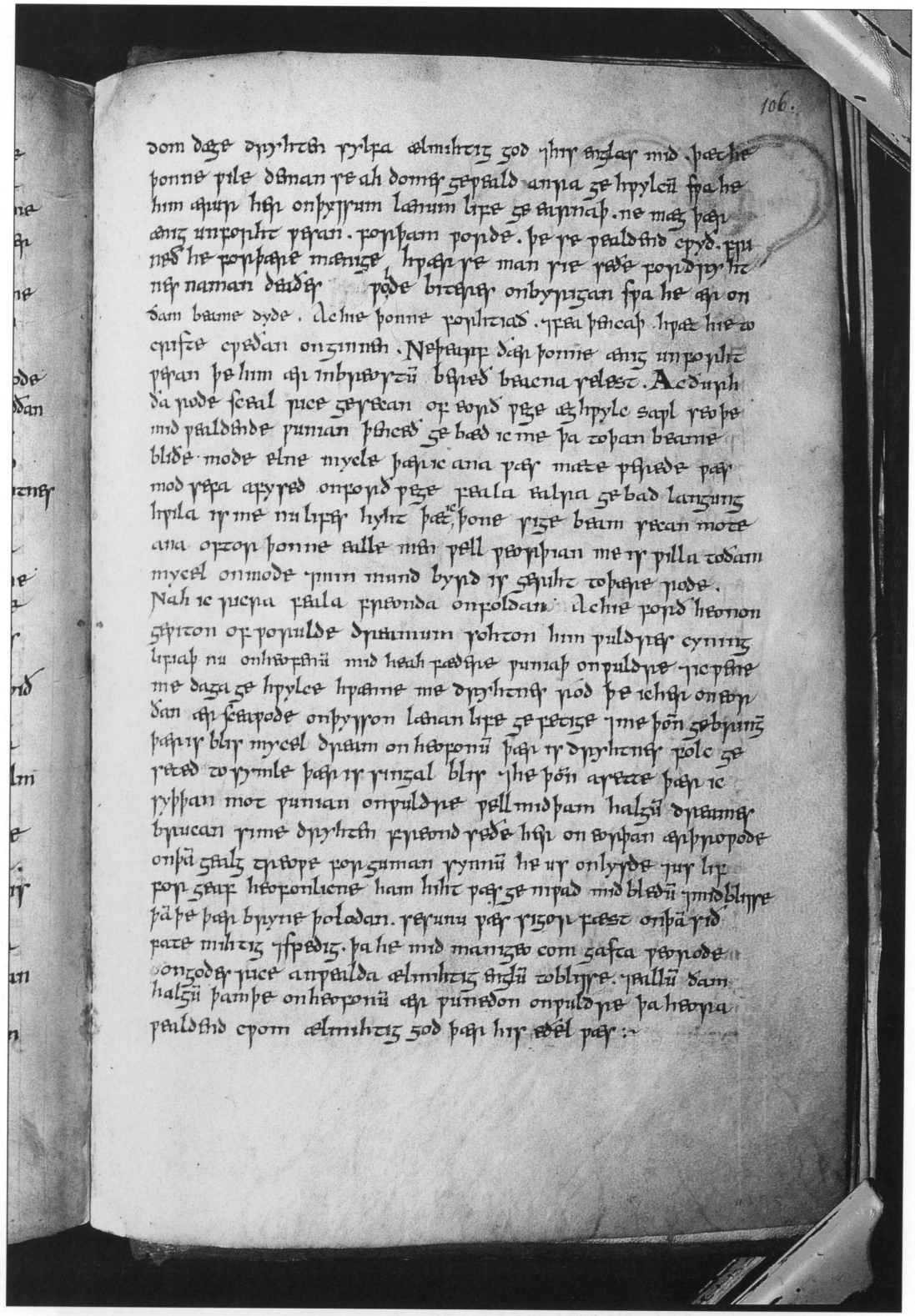

Plate VIII: The Vercelli Book, fol. 106r.

Plate IX: The Brussels Cross.

Ruthwell Runic Poetic Text

READING AND EDITORIAL PROCEDURES OF THE RUNES

The terms left and right are designated as the relative position as seen by the observer of the cross. Both runic phrasal units I & III begin on the left-hand corner of the narrow sides of the Ruthwell Cross and follow arrow 2. Both units II & IV begin at the top of the left side-border and continue vertically downwards and follow arrow 3. Runic letters, recognized/complete, are represented by Roman letters. Eroded/damaged runes are projected interpretations: (i) the partial reconstruction of runes are indicated by italicized Roman letters, and (ii) the total reconstruction of runes, where conservatively possible, are indicated by italicized Roman letters within square brackets. Certain archaic spellings have been modernized in the editing of the four runic phrasal units (p. 38). The text, with minor modifications, is after R.I. Page in Okasha (1971), pp.11-12, corrected from Howlett (1974a), and supplemented from Howlett (1976a); some modifications have been made, however, based on editorial procedures and an interpretation of the runes. A Modern English translation follows on the facing-page (p. 39).

Fig. 1: Ruthwell Runic Text

On the top border of the panel

ᛏ ᛘ ᚱ ᛁ ᛋ ᛏ ᚦ ᚠ ᛋ ᚠ ᛊ 1 →

[+] KRIST WÆS ON

On right vertical border of panel		On left vertical border of panel	
ᚱ ᚠ 2	RO	ᛗ ᛁ 3	*M*I
ᛗ ᛁ ↓	DI	ᚦ ᛋ ↓	ÞS
ᚻ ᚹ	HW	ᛏ ᚱ ᛖ	TRE
ᛖ ᚦ	EÞ	ᛚ ᚢ	*L*U
ᚱ ᚫ	RÆ	ᛗ ᚷ	MG
ᚦ ᛖ	ÞE	ᛁ ᚹ	IW
ᚱ ᚠ	RF	ᚢ ᚾ	UN
ᚢ ᛋ ᚫ	USÆ	ᛞ ᚫ ᛞ	DÆD
ᚠ ᛉ ᚱ	FEaR	ᚠ ᛚ ᛖ	ALE
ᚱ ᚫ ᚾ	RAN	ᚷ ᛞ ᚢ	GDU
ᛏ ᚹ ᚠ	KWO	ᚾ ᚻ ᛁ ᚠ	NHIÆ
ᛗ ᚢ ᚫ	MUÆ	ᚻ ᛁ ᚾ ᚫ	*H*INÆ
ᚦ ᚦ ᛁ ᛚ	ÞÞIL	ᛚ ᛁ ᛗ ᚹ	LIMW
ᚫ ᛏ ᛁ ᛚ	ÆTIL	ᛟ ᚱ ᛁ ᛝ	ŒRIG
ᚫ ᚾ ᚢ	ANU	ᚾ ᚫ ᛝ ᛁ	NÆGI
ᛗ ᛁ ᛕ	MIK	ᛋ ᛏ ᚠ	STO
ᚦ ᚫ ᛏ ᚫ	ÞÆTA	ᛞ ᛞ ᚢ	DDU
ᛚ ᛒ ᛁ ᚻ	LBI*H*	ᚾ ᚻ ᛁ ᛗ	*N*HIM
ᛉ ᛚ ᛞ	[*Ea L D*]	ᚫ ᛏ ᚻ	[*Æ T H*
ᛋ ᚠ ᚱ ᛖ	SA*R*[*E*]	ᛁ ᛋ ᛚ ᛁ	*I S*] *L* I
ᛁ ᛕ ᚹ ᚫ	IKWÆ	ᛕ ᚫ ᛋ	*K*ÆS
ᛋ ᛗ ᛁ ᚦ	SMI[*Þ*]	ᚻ ᛉ ᚾ	[*H Ea*] F
ᛋ ᚠ ᚱ	SO*R*	ᛞ ᚢ ᛞ	[*D U*] M
ᛝ ᚢ ᛞ	GUM	ᛒ ᛁ ᚻ ᛉ	[*B I*] *H* Ea
ᛝ ᛁ ᛞ	GI*D*	ᛚ ᛞ ᚢ	[*L*] *D* U
ᚱ ᛟ ᚾ ᛁ	RŒ[*F I*]	ᚾ ᚻ ᛁ	[*N*] *H* I
ᛞ ᚻ ᚾ	DH[*N*]	ᚠ ᚦ ᛖ	[*Æ*] ÞE
ᚠ ᛝ ᛁ ᚾ	AG[*I K*]	ᚱ ᚻ ᛉ	[*R H Ea*
	[. . . .]	ᚾ ᚢ ᚾ	*F U N*]
			[. . . .]

Runic Phrasal Unit I (North (now East) Side, Top & Right Border)

[+ *Ond*]geredæ Hinæ God Almeȝttig
þa He walde on galgu gistiga,
[*m*]o*d*ig f[*ore allæ*] men.
[*B*]u*g*[*a ic ni dorstæ ac scealde fæstæ standa.*]

Runic Phrasal Unit II (North (now East) Side, Left Border)

[*Ahof*] ic riicnæ Kyningc,
Heafunæs H*l*afard, *h*ælda ic ni dorstæ.
*B*ismærædu ungket men ba ætgad[re]; ic [*wæs*] *m*iþ blodæ [*b*]iste*m*i[*d*],
bi[*goten of þæs Guman sida siþþan He His gastæ sendæ.*]

Runic Phrasal Unit III (South (now West) Side, Top & Right Border)

[+] Krist wæs on rodi.
Hweþræ þer fusæ fearran kwomu
æþþilæ til anum: ic þæt al bi*h*[*eald*].
Sa*r*[*æ*] ic wæs mi[*þ*] so*r*gum gi*d*rœ[*fi*]d h[*n*]a*g* [*ic þam secgum til handa.*]

Runic Phrasal Unit IV (South (now West) Side, Left Border)

*M*iþ stre*l*um giwundad
Alegdun hiæ *H*inæ limwœrignæ;
Gistoddu*n* him [*æt His*] *l*icæs [*hea*]f[*du*]m;
[*bi*]*h*ea[*l*]*d*u[*n*] *h*i[*æ*] þe[*r Heafunæs Dryctin; ond He Hinæ þer hwilæ restæ.*]

God Almighty stripped Himself
when He wished to mount the gallows,
brave in the sight of all men;
I dared not bow down, but had to stand fast.

I raised up a powerful King,
the Lord of Heaven; I dared not bow.
They reviled us both together.
I was drenched with blood shed from the man's side
after He had send forth His spirit.

Christ was on Rood.
Yet worthy ones gathered there eagerly from afar.
I beheld all that. Sorely was I with arrows afflicted.
I yielded unto the men, their hands.

Badly wounded by arrows, with His languid limbs
they laid Him down.
They stood by His body at the head.
They beheld there the Lord of the Heavens
and He rested Himself there for a while.

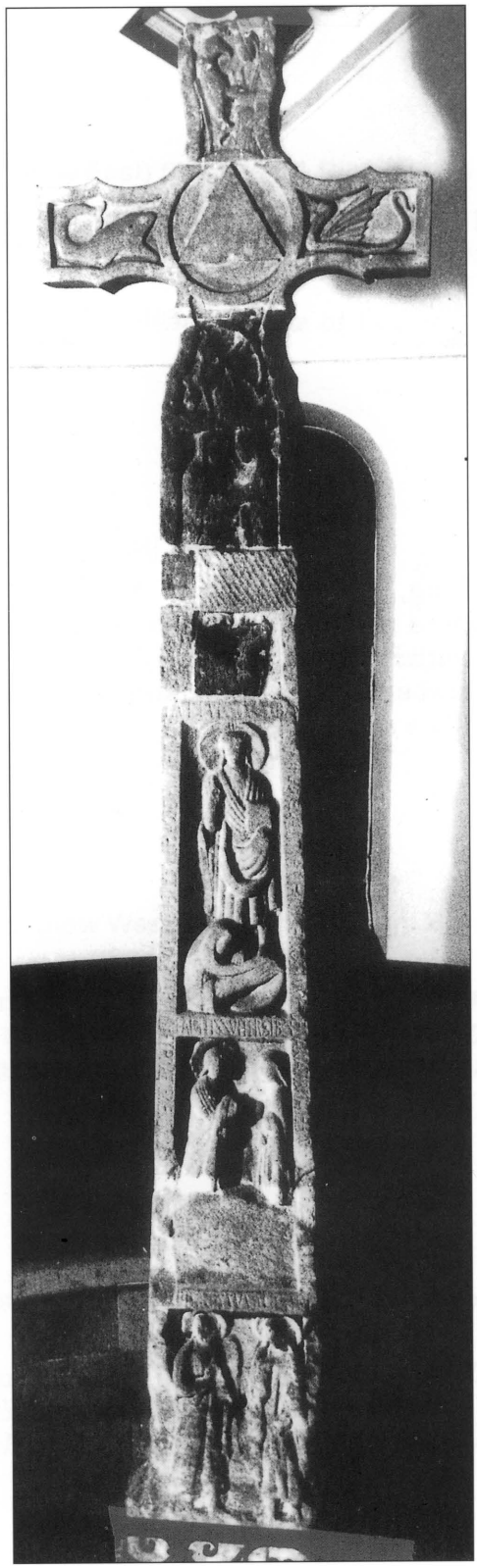

Plate X: East (now South) face of the Ruthwell Cross in Dumfries Scotland, Iconography & Inscription.

The Dream of the Rood

Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan wylle	[f. 104v]	(w. 5 to tell; w. 6 wish or will)
h[*w*]æt mé gemǽtte tó midre nihte,		(w. 3 dreamed)
syðþan reordberend reste wunedon.		(w. 2 speech-bearer; w. 4 were)
Þúhte mé þæt ic gesáwe syllicre tréow		(w. 6 wonderful)
on lyft lǽdan, léohte bewunden,	5	(w. 3 to be lifted up; w. 5 wrapped)
béama beorhtost. Eall þæt béacen wæs		(w. 1 beam of wood or ray of light)
begoten mid golde; gimmas stódon		(w. 1 sprinkled; w. 4 gems)
fægere æt foldan scéatum; swylce þǽr fífe wǽron		(w. 3 earth, ground; w. 4 corners)
uppe on þám eaxlegespanne. Behéoldon þǽr		(w. 4 cross-beam, junction of the cross)
engel Dryhtnes ealle,		(w. 1 angel)
fægere þurh forðgesceaft. Ne wæs ðǽr húru	10	(w. 3 creation)
fracodes gealga.		(w. 1 of the wicked one; w. 2 gallows)
Ac hine þǽr behéoldon hálige gástas,		(w. 6 spirits)
men ofer moldan, ond eall þéos mǽre gesceaft.		(w. 3 earth; w. 7 great, glorious)
Syllic wæs se sigebéam ond ic synnum fáh,		(w. 4 victory-beam; w. 8 stained)
forwunded mid wommum. Geseah ic wuldres tréow,		(w. 3 sins; w. 4 saw)
wǽdum geweorðode wynnum scínan,	15	(w. 1 clothing; w. 4 to shine)
gegyred mid golde; gimmas hæfdon		(w. 1 adorned)
bewrigene weorðlíce weald[*end*]es tréow.		(w. 1 clothed; w. 2 worthily)
Hwæðre ic þurh þæt gold ongytan meahte		(w. 1 however; w. 6 to perceive)
earmra ǽrgewin, þæt hit ǽrest ongan		(w. 1 of wretched; w. 2 former strife)
swǽtan on þá swiðran healfe. Eall ic wæs mid	20	(w. 1 to sweat; w. 4 on the right)
*so*rgum gedréfed.		(w. 2 troubled)
Forht ic wæs for þære fægran gesyhðe. Geseah		(w. 1 afraid; w. 7 vision, sight)
ic þæt fúse béacen		(w. 3 eager)
wendan wǽdum ond bléom; hwílum hit wæs	[f. 105r]	(w. 1 to change; w. 2 clothing)
mid wǽtan bestémed,		(w. 3 made wet)
beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since		(w. 3 of blood; w. 4 flow; w. 7 treasure)
gegyrwed.		(w. 1 adorned)
Hwæðre ic þær licgende lange hwile		(w. 4 lying)
beheold hreowcearig Hælendes treow,	25	(w. 2 sorrowful; w. 3 Saviour's)
oððæt ic gehyrde þæt hit hleoðrode.		(w. 6 spoke)
Ongan þa word sprecan wudu selesta:		(w. 5 piece of wood; w. 6 good, great)
'þæt wæs geara iu, ic þæt gyta geman,		(w. 4 long ago; w. 8 may remember)
þæt ic wæs aheawen holtes on ende,		(w. 4 cut down; w. 5 of the forest)
astyred of stefne minum. Genaman me ðær	30	(w. 1 removed; w. 3 trunk, root)
strange feondas,		(w. 2 enemies)
geworhton him þær to wæfersyne, heton me		(w. 5 show, spectacle)
heora wergas hebban.		(w. 2 outlaw, criminal)
Bæron me ðær beornas on eaxlum, oððæt hie		(w. 4 men, warriors; w. 6 shoulders)
me on beorg asetton,		(w. 3 mound, hill)
gefæstnodon me þær feondas genoge. Geseah ic		(w. 1 fastened; w. 5 enough, many)
þa Frean mancynnes		(w. 2 Lord; w. 3 of mankind)
efstan elne mycle þæt he me wolde on gestigan.		(w. 1 to make haste)
Þær ic þa ne dorste ofer Dryhtnes word		(w. 5 dared)
bugan oððe berstan, þa ic bifian geseah	35	(w. 3 to burst, break; w. 6 to tremble)
eorðan sceatas. Ealle ic mihte		(w. 2 corners)
feondas gefyllan, hwæðre ic fæste stod.		(w. 2 to fell, strike down)
Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, þæt wæs God		(w. 1 stripped)

Listen! Let me tell you about the best of dreams,
what I dreamed about at around midnight,
after the bearers of voices took their rest.
It seemed to me that I saw a most wondrous tree raised aloft,
enveloped in light, the brightest of beams. *5*
All that beacon was encrusted with gold.
Gems stood out, beautiful at the earth's corners;
likewise there were five upon the shoulder-span.
All fair things throughout time and creation
beheld there the messenger of the Lord. *10*
Indeed, that was not a criminal's gallows,
but holy spirits and men throughout the earth
and all this glorious creation beheld it there.
Splendid was that victory-tree,
and I was stained with sins, terribly wounded by evildoing. *15*
I saw the tree of glory, honoured by its garments,
shining beautifully, clothed in gold;
gems had covered the Ruler's tree in splendour.
Yet through that gold I could perceive the ancient struggle of a wretched people,
in that it first began to sweat on the right side. *20*
I was completely overcome by sorrows;
frightened I was by that fair sight.
I saw that restless beam and beacon ever-changing its garments and colours;
at times it was made wet with moisture, drenched with the flow of blood and sweat,
at times adorned with treasure. *25*
Moreover, lying there for a long while,
I watched, troubled with sorrows, the Saviour's tree
until I heard its voice.
Then the best of woods began to speak in words:

'That was long ago. *30*
I still remember that I was hewn down at the edge of a forest,
cut off from my roots.
Strong enemies seized me there,
made a show and mockery of me for themselves,
ordered me to raise their condemned men aloft. *35*
Then men bore me on their shoulders
until they finally set me up on a hill.
Enemies enough fastened me there.
Then I saw the Lord of mankind hastening with great courage
in His urgent need to mount upon me. *40*
Then I dared not there against the Lord's word bend or break
when I saw that the corners of the earth did shake.
I could have felled all enemies but I stood fast.
Then the young warrior stripped Himself,

ælmihtig,		
strang ond stiðmod; gestah he on gealgan	40	(w. 3 courageous; w. 7 gallows)
heanne,		(w. 1 high, lofty)
modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn		(w. 4 sight, vision; w. 8 mankind)
lysan.		(w. 1 to redeem)
Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclyþte; ne dorste		(w. 1 trembled; w. 7 to embrace)
ic hwæðre bugan to eorðan,		(w. 3 to bow down)
feallan to foldan sceatum. Ac ic sceolde fæste		(w. 1 to fall)
standan.		
Rod wæs ic arared. Ahof ic ricne Cyning,		(w. 1 rood; w. 4 raised up)
heofona Hlaford; hyldan me ne dorste.	45	(w. 1 of heaven)
Þurhdrifan hi me mid deorcan næglum; on me		(w. 1 to pierce; w. 5 dark; w. 6 nails)
syndon þa dolg gesiene,		(w. 3 wounds)
opene inwidhlemmas. Ne dorste ic hira		(w. 2 malicious wounds)
nænigum sceððan.		(w. 2 to harm, injure)
Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere. Eall ic		(w. 1 mocked, insulted; w. 4 both)
wæs mid blode bestemed,		(w. 4 made wet)
begoten of þæs guman sidan, siððan he hæfde		(w. 1 poured out; w. 4 man's)
his gast onsended.		(w. 2 spirit; w. 3 sent forth)
Feala ic on þam beorge gebiden hæbbe	50	(w. 5 hill, mound)
wraðra wryda. Geseah ic weruda God		(w. 1 of cruel; w. 2 fates; w. 5 of hosts)
þearle þenian. Þystro hæfdon		(w. 1 severely; w. 2 to stretched out)
bewrigen mid wolcnum Wealdendes hræw,		(w. 1 covered; w. 3 clouds; w. 5 corpse)
scirne sciman; sceadu forð eode,		(w. 1 bright; w. 2 light; w. 3 shadow)
wann under wolcnum. Weop eal gesceaft,	55	(w. 1 dark, black; w. 4 wept)
cwiðdon Cyninges fyll. Crist wæs on rode.		(w. 1 lamented, mourned; w. 3 fall)
Hwæðere þær fuse feorran cwoman		(w. 3 hastening; w. 4 from afar)
to þam æðelinge. Ic þæt eall beheold.		(w. 3 Lord, Prince; w. 7 witnessed)
Sare ic wæs mid [*sorgum*] gedrefed, hnag ic		(w. 1 deeply; w. 6 overcome; w. 7 bent)
hwæðre þam secgum to handa,		(w. 3 men)
eaðmod elne mycle. Genamon hie þær ælmihtigne	60	(w. 1 humble; w. 2 zeal; w. 4 seized)
God,		
ahofon hine of ðam hefian wite. Forleton me [f. 105v]		(w. 1 raised up; w. 5 grim; w. 6 torture)
þa hilderincas		(w. 2 warrior)
standan steame bedrifenne; eall ic wæs mid		(w. 3 covered, drenched)
strælum forwundod.		(w. 1 arrows, darts)
Aledon hie ðær limwerigne, gestodon him æt		(w. 1 laid down; w. 4 weary in limb)
his lices heafdum;		(w. 3 head)
beheoldon hie ðær heofenes Dryhten, ond he		(w. 4 heaven, sky)
hine ðær hwile reste,		(w. 4 rested)
meðe æfter ðam miclan gewinne. Ongunnon him	65	(w. 1 exhausted; w. 5 battle)
þa molder wyrcan		(w. 2 grave, tomb; w. 3 to make)
beornas on banan gesyhðe; curfon hie ðæt of		(w. 1 men; w. 5 to cut out, carve)
beorhtan stane,		(w. 1 bright, shining)
gesetton hie ðæron sigora Wealdend. Ongunnon		(w. 4 of victories)
him þa sorhleoð galan		(w. 3 lament, dirge; w. 4 to sing)
earme on þa æfentide; þa hie woldon eft siðian		(w. 4 evening-time; w. 9 to depart)
meðe fram þam mæran þeodne; reste he þær		(w. 4 great, glorious; w. 5 prince)
mæte weorode.		(w. 1 small; w. 2 host, multitude)
Hwæðere we ðær [*g*]reotende gode hwile	70	(w. 4 wept)
stodon on staðole, syððan [*stefn*] up gewat		(w. 3 position, foundation; w. 5 voice)

who was God Almighty, strong and resolute. *45*
He mounted the high gallows,
brave in the sight of many,
since He wished to set mankind free.
I trembled when the man embraced me,
yet I dared not bow to earth, fall to the land's spread, *50*
but had to stand fast.
A rood, I was lifted up.
I raised aloft a powerful king, Lord of the Heavens;
I dared not bow down.
They pierced me through with dark nails; *55*
on me the cleaving wounds can be seen, these open wounds of malice.
I dared not injure any of them;
they reviled the two of us together.
I was all drenched with the blood shed from the man's side
after He had sent forth His Spirit. *60*
On that hill I had to endure many dreadful things;
I saw the God of hosts direly stretched out.
The darkness had covered with clouds the Body of the Ruler,
the Illuminating Light.
His shadow went forth, dark under clouds. *65*
All creation wept, lamented the King's death.

Christ was on Rood.

Yet eager ones thither came from afar to the Prince.
I beheld all that.
I was completely overcome by grief, but humbly, *70*
yet with great bravery, I submitted myself to the hands of these men.
They seized Almighty God there;
they raised Him up with such sore torment.
The warriors forsook me, standing drenched in sweltering sweat.
I was all wounded with arrows. *75*
Then with His languid limbs they laid Him down;
they stood by His body at the head.
They beheld there the Lord of the Heavens
and He rested Himself for a while, worn after the great battle.
These men began making a cave in the earth for Him, *80*
in the sight of His slayers.
They carved it of bright stone and set within it the Ruler's treasures.
Then they began at evening to sing a lament for Him who was forlorn.
Later, when spent, they motioned to take leave from the Glorious Prince;
He rested there with a bare gathering. *85*
But we, weeping there for a long while, stood our ground
after the cry of the warriors went aloft.

hilderinca; hræw colode,		(w. 1 of warriors; w. 2 corpse)
fæger feorgbold. Þa us man fyllan ongan		(w. 1 fair, beautiful; w. 2 body)
ealle to eorðan; þæt wæs egeslic wyrd!		(w. 6 fearful; w. 7 fate, event)
Bedealf us man on deopan seaþe. Hwæðre me	75	(w. 1 buried; w. 6 pit)
þær Dryhtnes þegnas,		(w. 3 thanes)
freondas gefrunon, ...		(w. 2 heard of)
gyredon me golde ond seolfre.		(w. 1 adorned, dressed)
Nu ðu miht gehyran, hæleð min se leofa,		(w. 5 hero)
þæt ic bealuwara weorc gebiden hæbbe,		(w 3 dwellers in evil, evil men)
sarra sorga. Is nu sæl cumen	80	(w.1 of painful; w. 2 sorrows)
þæt me weorðiað wide ond side		(w. 3 adore, honour)
menn ofer moldan ond eall þeos mære gesceaft,		(w. 3 earth; w. 8 creation)
gebiddaþ him to þyssum beacne. On me Bearn		(w. 5 symbol, sign, standard)
Godes		
þrowode hwile. Forþan ic þrymfæst nu		(w. 1 suffered; w. 5 glorious)
hlifige under heofenum, ond ic hælan mæg	85	(w. 1 rise, tower; w. 6 to heal, save)
æghwylcne anra þara þe him bið egesa to me.		(w. 1 every; w. 2 of them; w. 7 awe)
Iu ic wæs geworden wita heardost,		(w. 1 long ago; w. 4 become)
leodum laðost, ærþan ic him lifes weg		(w. 2 hostile; w. 3 before)
rihtne gerymde, reordberendum.		(w. 1 proper; w. 3 speech-bearer, man)
Hwæt, me þa geweorðode wuldres Ealdor	90	(w. 4 honoured; w. 6 Prince, Lord)
ofer holmwudu, heofonrices Weard,		(w. 2 wood on the hill; w. 3 heaven)
swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,		(w. 1 just as; w. 8 herself)
ælmihtig God, for ealle menn		
geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn.		(w. 4 & w. 5 womankind)
Nu ic þe hate, hæleð min se leofa,	95	(w. 4 command)
þæt ðu þas gesyhðe secge mannum,		(w. 4 sight, vision)
onwreoh wordum þæt hit is wuldres beam,		(w. 1 reveal; w. 7 beam of wood /light)
se ðe ælmihtig God on þrowode		(w. 6 suffered)
for mancynnes manegum synnum		(w. 2 mankind's)
ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.	100	(w. 3 ancient or former deeds)
Deað he þær byrigde; hwæðere eft Dryhten		(w. 4 tasted; w. 5 however)
aras		(w. 1 arose)
mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe.		(w. 3 great; w. 4 power)
He ða on heofenas astag. Hider eft fundaþ		(w. 5 ascended; w. 8 come)
on þysne middangeard mancynn secan		(w. 3 middle earth; w. 5 may tell)
on domdæge Dryhten sylfa, [f.106r]	105	(w. 2 Doomsday, Judgement Day)
ælmihtig God, ond His englas mid,		(w. 5 angels)
þæt he þonne wile deman, se ah domes geweald,		(w. 5 to judge; w. 7 may have)
anra gehwylcum swa he him ærur her		(w. 2 everyone; w. 6 earlier)
on þyssum lænum life geearnaþ.		(w. 3 fleeting, transitory)
Ne mæg þær ænig unforht wesan	110	(w. 5 unafraid; w. 6 to be)
for þam worde þe se Wealdend cwyð.		(w. 6 Saviour)
Frineð he for þære mænige hwær se man sie,		(w. 1 will ask; w. 9 may be)
se ðe for Dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde[1]		(w. 7 may intend)
biteres onbyrigan, swa he ær on ðam beame		(w. 2 to taste)
dyde.		(w. 1 did)
Ac hie þonne forhtiað, ond fea þencaþ	115	(w. 4 will be afraid; w. 6 little)
hwæt hie to Criste cweðan onginnen.		(w. 5 to say; w. 6 to begin)
Ne þearf ðær þonne ænig *a*nforht wesan		(w. 6 very frightened, terrified)
þe him ær in breostum bereð beacna selest.		(w. 5 breast; w. 7 of signs; w. 8 best)

The body cooled, fair seat of the spirit.
Then we were all felled to the earth.
That was a terrifying event! *90*
We were buried in a deep pit.
The Lord's thanes, His friends, heard;
they adorned me with gold and silver.
Now you can hear, my beloved warrior, how I,
the work of evil men, have endured painful sorrows. *95*
Now the time has come for mankind to honour me far and wide;
men throughout the earth and all this glorious creation
pray for themselves to this beacon.
On me God's Son suffered for a while.
I, powerful now, because of that *100*
tower aloft under the heavens,
and I can heal all who are in awe of me.
For many years I was seen as the cruellest of tortures,
most hateful to the people, before I prepared
the true way of life for them, the bearers of voices. *105*
Behold, the Prince of Glory, the Guardian of the Heavenly Kingdom,
honoured me then above all the trees of the hill,
just as Almighty God highly honoured His mother, Mary herself,
above all the race of women for the sake of mankind.
Now I command that you, my beloved warrior, *110*
announce this vision to men,
reveal in words that this is the beam of glory
which Almighty God suffered upon
for mankind's many sins and Adam's ancient deeds.
He tasted death there, *115*
but the Lord rose again in His great power to help mankind.
He then ascended into the heavens.
He will come again onto this middle-earth
to seek out mankind on Doomsday.
The Lord Himself, Almighty God, together with His angels, *120*
He who has power to give eternal glory,
according to the way each person has behaved
during his transient life on earth,
will come in order to give judgement.
Then no one can be without fear *125*
because of the speech which the Ruler will make.
He will ask before the multitude of the dead
where the man is who for the Lord's name
was willing to taste bitter death,
as He once did on the beam. *130*
But they will be full of fear,
and few will then know what they may begin to say to Christ.
But no one who has borne on his breast the best of beacons
need be too much afraid.

Ac ðurh ða rode sceal rice gesecan		(w. 2 through; w. 4 cross)
of eorðwege æghwylc sawl,	120	(w. 2 earth; w. 4 soul)
seo þe mid Wealdende wunian þenceð.'		(w. 5 to dwell; w. 6 intends)
Gebæd ic me þa to þan beame bliðe mode,		(w. 1 prayed; w. 8 happy; w. 9 heart)
elne mycle, þær ic ana wæs		(w. 5 alone)
mæte werede. Wæs modsefa		(w. 1 small; w. 2 group; w. 4 mind)
afysed on forðwege; feala ealra gebad	125	(w. 1 urged forth; w. 3 the departure)
langunghwila. Is me nu lifes hyht		(w. 1 time of longing)
þæt ic[2] þone sigebeam secan mote		(w. 4 wood of victory)
ana oftor þonne ealle men,		(w. 2 often)
well weorþian. Me is willa to ðam		(w. 2 to honour, adore)
mycel on mode, ond min mundbyrd is	130	(w. 6 allegiance, protection)
geriht to þære rode. Nah ic ricra feala		(w. 1 directed; w. 5 do not have)
freonda on foldan[3]. Ac hie forð heonon		(w. 1 friends; w. 3 earth; w. 7 hence)
gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him		(w. 1 departed; w. 4 joys; w. 5 said)
wuldres Cyning;		(w. 1 of glory; w. 2 King)
lifiaþ nu on heofenum mid Heahfædere,		(w. 6 God the Father)
wuniaþ on wuldre. Ond ic wene me	135	(w. 6 may hope, look for)
daga gehwylce hwænne me Dryhtnes rod,		(w. 1 of days; w. 3 when)
þe ic her on eorðan ær sceawode,		(w. 7 beheld)
on þysson lænan life gefetige		(w. 3 transitory; w. 5 may fetch)
ond me þonne gebringe þær is blis mycel,		(w. 4 may bring)
dream on heofonum, þær is Dryhtnes folc	140	(w. 6 Lord's; w. 7 people)
geseted to symle, þær is singal blis;		(w. 1 placed; w. 6 everlasting; w.7 joy)
ond *me* þonne asette þær ic syþþan mot		(w. 4 may be positioned; w. 8 may be)
wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum		(w. 4 fully)
dreames brucan. Si me Dryhten freond,		(w. 1 joys; w. 2 to enjoy, partake of)
se ðe her on eorþan ær þrowode	145	(w. 6 previously; w. 7 suffered)
on þam gealgtreowe for guman synnum.		(w. 3 gallows-tree; w. 5 mankind)
He us onlysde ond us lif forgeaf,		(w. 3 redeemed; w. 7 gave, granted)
heofonlicne ham. Hiht wæs geniwad		(w. 1 heavenly; w. 3 hope)
mid bledum ond mid blisse þam þe þær bryne		(w. 2 glories; w. 9 burning hell-fire)
þolodan.		(w. 1 suffered)
Se Sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate,	150	(w. 4 victorious; w. 7 expedition)
mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,		(w. 7 multitude)
gasta weorode, on[4] Godes rice,		(w. 1 souls)
Anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse		(w. 1 Sovereign Lord)
ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum		(w. 4 holy ones)
ær		
wunedon on wuldre, þa heora Wealdend cwom,	155	(w. 1 dwelt; w. 3 glory)
ælmihtig God, þær his eðel wæs.		(w. 5 homeland)

Through the Rood every soul who with the Ruler wishes to dwell *135*
must seek out the Kingdom, away from the way of the world.'

I prayed then to that beam content of spirit,
with great valour, there where I was alone with a handful of followers.
My heart was made restless for the way forth;
I underwent many hours of longing. *140*
It is now the joy of my life that I,
being more frequently alone than other men,
may seek out that victory-tree and honour it fully.
Determination for this is great in my mind,
and my hope for protection is completely in the Rood. *145*
I do not have many powerful friends on earth;
they passed forth earlier from the joys of the world,
found their way to the King of Glory.
They live now in heaven with the Father on high
and dwell in glory; *150*
I hope too every day for the time when the Lord's Rood,
which I here on earth have already looked upon,
will from this fleeting life fetch me,
and bring me to where there is great happiness in heaven,
where the people of the Lord are seated at the feast, *155*
where joy is never-ending.
I trust that He will sit me down
where I may from then on dwell in glory,
and enjoy eternal bliss consummate with the saints.
May the Lord be a friend to me, *160*
Who here on earth once suffered on the gallows-tree for the sins of men.
He set us free and gave us everlasting life, a heavenly home.
For those who endured the burning of hell
hope was renewed with rejoicing and exultation.
The Son was victorious on that journey, *165*
mighty and successful when He came with a multitude,
a company of souls, into God's Kingdom.
The Sovereign Lord Almighty,
to the delight of the angels and all those sanctified
who had in heaven till this dwelt in glory, *170*
then He their Ruler came; Almighty God,
there His homeland was.

Textual Notes:

The Anglo-Saxon text is accompanied by a select glossary in the right-hand column, which provides a rendering into Modern English of words that may be unfamiliar, primarily verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Each corresponds with the letter 'w' and by number to the word order within the line. Both line numberings of the poem in the original text and in the translation are collated independently, being indicated respectively by normal and italic script. The folio number, abbreviated as [f.], is also cited to indicate the location of the poem within the Vercelli Codex.

L.2, w.1	h[*w*]æt] *MS.* hæt.
L.17, w.3	weald[*end*]es] *MS.* wealdes.
L.20, w.1	s*o*rgum] *MS.* surgum.
L.59, w.5	[*sorgum*] supplied from the Ruthwell text.
L.65, w.2	mold*e*rn] *MS.* moldærn: the MS reading has dots over and under the *a* of *æ*, which usually indicates the omission of such a letter.
L.70, w.4	[*g*]reotende] *MS.* reotende.
L.71, w.5	[*stefn*] supplied by Kluge.
L.113, w.7	[1]wolde]: emmended by Swanton from 'þrowolde'; 'pro' erased and 'l' interlined.
L.117, w.6	*a*nforth] *MS.* unforth.
L.127, w.2	[2]ic]: interlined.
L.132, w.3	[3]on]: erased after foldan.
L.142, w.2	*m*e] *MS.* he.
L.152, w.3	[4]o]: erased before on.

The Dream of the Rood has attracted and given cause to a century of linguistic debate and interpretation; for its scholarship see Swanton (1987; repr. 1992), pp. 103-39.

Brussels Cross Inscription & Dedication

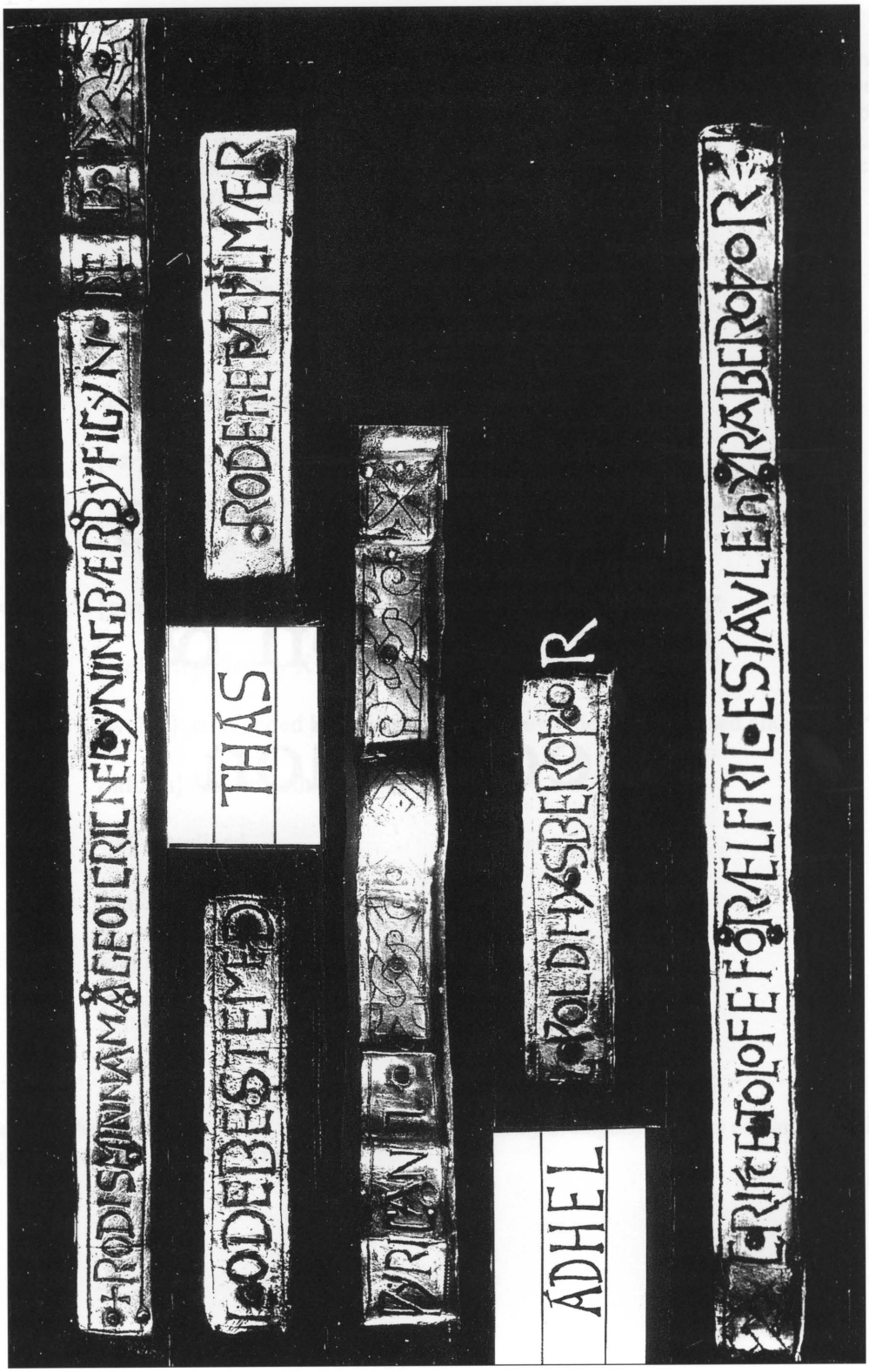

Plate XI: The Brussels Cross Inscription.

Poetic Inscription

Rod is min nama. Geo ic ricne cyning
bær byfigynde, blode bestemed.

Prose Dedication

Þas rode het Æþlmær wyrican ond Aðelwold hys beroþo[*r*]
Criste to lofe for Ælfrices saule hyra beroþor.

Rood is my name. Trembling once, I bore
a powerful king, made wet with blood.

Æthlmær and Athelwold, his brother, ordered this rood to be made so as to praise Christ for the soul of Ælfric, their brother.

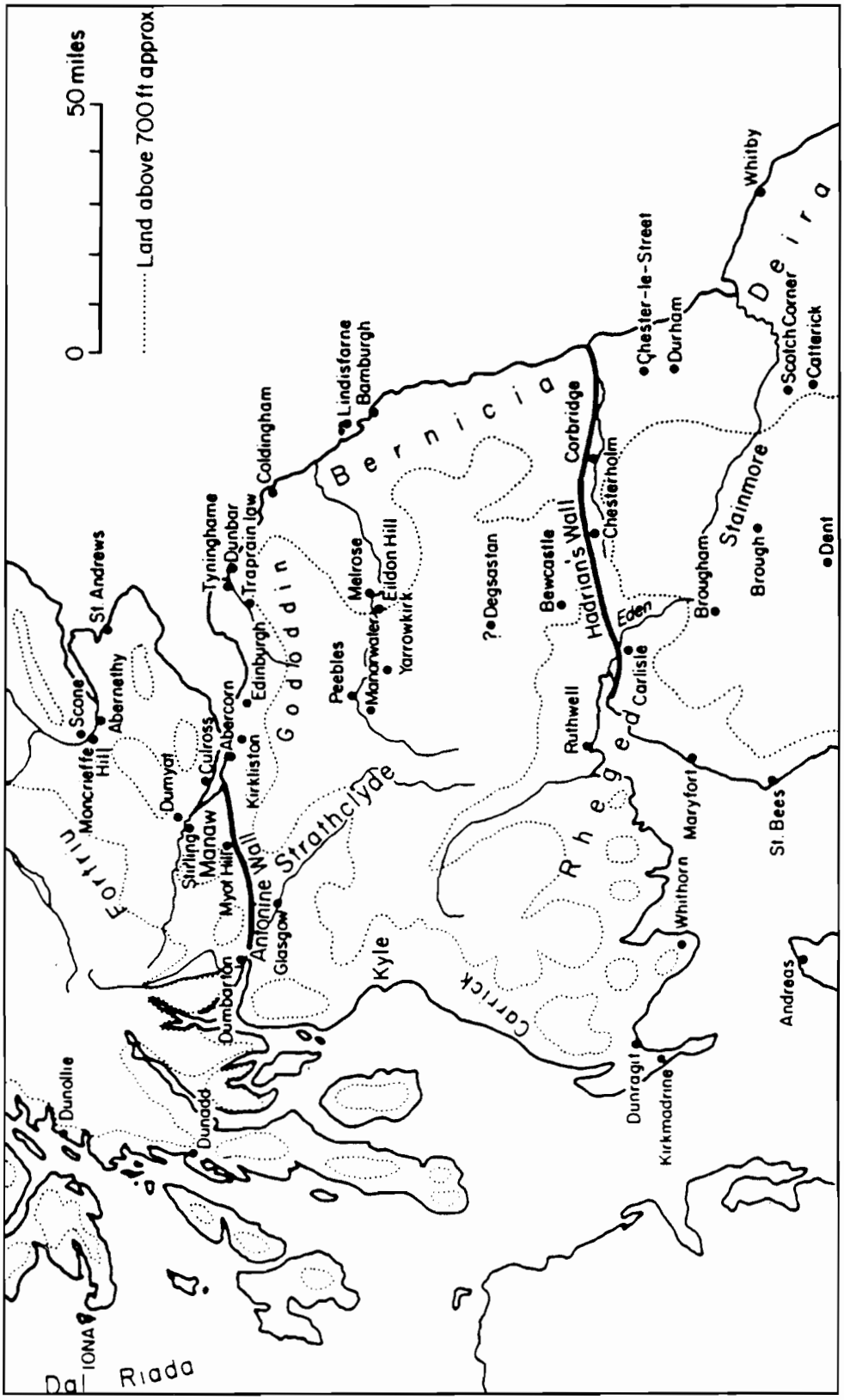

Fig 2: Map of southern Scotland and northern England.