CHAPTER VIII

THE INSCRIPTIONS
by John Higgitt

The early medieval inscriptions on stone from the area covered by this volume belong to two quite distinct broad epigraphic traditions. Some eighteen inscriptions in the south-western British or Dumnonian tradition are to be found, or have been recorded, in Devon and north-western Somerset (one example). Related to these is a geographically detached group of five inscriptions at Wareham in eastern Dorset. (Most of the inscribed stones (some sixty) in this south-western British tradition lie further to the west in Cornwall, beyond the area surveyed here.) In the area covered by this volume the roughly twenty-three British inscriptions outnumber the nine or so inscriptions on stone for which an 'Anglo-Saxon' origin can be shown. As will be seen, most of the 'British' inscriptions are early, that is probably dating from no later than the ninth century. The 'Anglo-Saxon' inscriptions on the other hand seem to have belonged in the main to the tenth and eleventh centuries. The traditions were separate but there are one or two indications of contact.

This volume is concerned with Anglo-Saxon sculpture and therefore the inscriptions which are demonstrably or arguably Anglo-Saxon in character or which are associated with Anglo-Saxon sculpture are described and discussed in the catalogue. For the same reason the British inscriptions are summarily listed in Appendix H (p. 245). Discussions, illustrations and full bibliographies for these stones can be found in the recently published *Corpus of Early Christian Inscribed Stones of South-west Britain* and its supplement (Okasha 1993; id. 1998–9).[1] An exception has, however, been made in the case of the Wareham inscriptions, both because they are likely to date from after the Anglo-Saxon conquest of that area of Dorset and because they were excluded from Okasha's Corpus.

THE BRITISH INSCRIBED STONES OF DEVON AND SOMERSET (Fig. 24)

Nearly all of the British inscribed stones in Devon and Somerset belong to Okasha's Category 1a, that is plain, uncarved pillar-stones with simple memorial texts (Okasha 1993, 11–13; Yorke 1995, 16–18).[2] In most cases the text is in one or two vertical lines, which run down the stone with the feet of the letters facing to the viewer's left. The two exceptions (Lundy III and IV) have texts set out horizontally. Most are in what Okasha calls 'predominantly capital script' and only two (Lustleigh and Stowford) are in 'predominantly insular script' (Okasha 1993, 19–28, 53–4). Three or four of these pillar-stones from south-western Devon show contacts with Ireland. Stones from Fardel and Buckland Monachorum (now Tavistock III) have texts in ogham in addition to their Latin-letter inscriptions. The Latin-letter texts of both of these and of another stone from Buckland Monachorum (now Tavistock II) contain Irish names or, in the case of Fardel, the Primitive Irish MAQVI ('of the son'). One of the names on Tavistock I is also probably Irish (Sims-Williams 2003, 62–3, 176, 306). In nearly all cases the texts consist of personal names, often in the form of '[The stone?] of X son of Y'. This simple Latin formula, which is analogous to the common ogham formula X MAQQI Y, is characteristic of the west of Britain, being found also in Wales and on two stones in Brittany (McManus 1991, 51–2, 119; Okasha 1993, 14–15; Nash-Williams 1950, 7–8; Davies *et al.* 2000, 80, 90–1, 131–6, 137–44). The names, where interpretable, are Celtic or Latin in form. The ostensible purpose of these stones was to serve as memorials to individuals, presumably in most cases as grave-markers. The four

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1. On these inscriptions see also the website of the Celtic Inscribed Stones Project <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/cisp>.

2. Okasha's one example in this area of a Category 1b inscription (a text with a longer formula), Tavistock III, only differs from the other Category 1 stones in identifying the commemoratee as a *faber* ('smith' or 'wright').

examples on Lundy were found in association with a cemetery (Thomas 1994, 163-6; Yorke 1995, 154). Only one of the inscriptions from this area in Okasha's *Corpus* (1993, 12), Plymstock in south-west Devon, belongs to her Category 2a, that is an inscription on the shaft of a free-standing stone cross (Ills. 34, 38). In this case the text has plausibly been interpreted as an Old English personal name (see p. 87). There are in addition two further inscriptions in Okasha's *Corpus* which should be excluded from the present discussion on the grounds that they probably date from a later phase, perhaps as late as the eleventh or twelfth century. These are her Tavistock IV and V and are only known through illustrations published in the 1830s (Okasha 1993, 282-7).

The inscribed stones of Okasha's Category 1, in Cornwall as well as Devon and Somerset, belong to a broader western British epigraphic tradition. They are the equivalent of Nash-Williams' Group I of Welsh monuments, which he called 'simple inscribed stones' and defined as 'rude pillar-stones and slabs, of natural shape or roughly hewn, bearing inscriptions in Latin or Ogams or, commonly, both' (Nash-Williams 1950, 3). South-west British and Welsh inscriptions share both an informal approach to the laying out of lettering and several more specific palaeographical features. Nash-Williams dated his Group I to a period between the fifth and seventh centuries.

Okasha is more cautious and dates her Category 1 inscriptions to between the fifth or sixth centuries and the eleventh century (Okasha 1993, 50-7). She extends the period of Category 1 inscriptions into the eleventh century in order to accommodate the apparently early Middle English features of the inscription on the stone at Lanteglos in Cornwall (Okasha 1993, 56, 141-4). This stone is exceptional in language, length of text and the neat shaping of the stone. It should in fact be classed as an inscribed cross-shaft (Okasha's Category 2a) rather than a Category 1 pillar-stone. If the vertically set lines of its text are regarded as an imitation of older monuments, the Category 1 period can be shortened by two or three centuries. In fact Okasha (1993, 51-2, 52-3, 54) does allow that certain features found in several of the Category 1 inscriptions are evidence for a narrower date range. In the case of the stones in Devon and Somerset these are: the use of ogham and the appearance of Primitive Irish names ('the fifth or sixth century to the eighth century'); the appearance of Latin names ('sixth to eighth century'); and the use of horizontal I ('a sixth- to eighth-century date').

In recent years the arguments on which Nash-Williams' system of dating rested have been challenged. The principal points at issue are the absolute dates which he

thought could be assigned to a few early inscriptions and the typological arguments based principally on letter forms (summary and references in Sims-Williams 2003, 5–20). Tedeschi (1995; 2001) has re-examined the 'Early Christian' inscriptions in Wales, south-west Britain, southern Scotland, Northumberland, the Isle of Man and Brittany from a palaeographical point of view and he defends the argument that 'the palaeographical aspects of the inscriptions can provide a logical evolutionary sequence of letter-forms' (2001, 23). In his *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: phonology and chronology, c. 400–1200*, Sims-Williams (2003) has taken a new approach to the dating problem by using the relative chronology of British and Irish sound-changes to date the inscriptions. His exhaustive phonological analysis leads him to the conclusion that 'the phonology of the Brittonic inscriptions broadly vindicates the relative chronologies that have been suggested for them on epigraphic and typological grounds' (Sims-Williams 2003, 351). Not all of the texts contain useful phonological evidence but the following examples illustrate his results. He assigns Winsford Hill to his Brittonic Period 1–3, that is to probably before *c.* 600, which accords well with Tedeschi's palaeographical dating to the first half of the sixth century (Sims-Williams 2003, 281–2, 290, 292–3, 363 (499/ Ok77); Tedeschi 1995, 120). There is a broad agreement in the case of Lundy I, dated by Tedeschi (1995, 120) to the second half of the sixth century and by Sims-Williams (2003, 290, 293, 366) to Brittonic Period 1–7, which might take the date into the seventh century. In other cases Sims-Williams' relative chronology of sound changes prompts him to argue for somewhat later dates than those that have been advanced on palaeographical grounds. The Stowford inscription falls into his Brittonic Period 22– 28, which he would see as no earlier than the ninth century, whereas its lettering has been dated to the seventh century (Sims-Williams 2003, 274, 291–2, 294–5, 366; Tedeschi 1995, 120). There is a similar tension between phonological and palaeographical datings of Lundy III, that is Brittonic Period 27–28 versus fifth century, but in this case Sims-Williams regards the linguistic interpretation as possible rather than certain (Sims-Williams 2003, 235, 275, 291–2, 294-5, 366; Tedeschi 1995, 119). What is striking here, however, is the broad compatibility between the results of Sims-Williams' phonological examination of Brittonic inscriptions and those based on typologies of letter forms and similar epigraphic arguments. It must, however, be remembered that Sims-Williams is revising and elaborating a *relative* chronology of sound-changes and that these can only be dated to within very wide margins.

WAREHAM

The five inscribed stones in Lady St Mary church in Wareham, Dorset (pp. 118–24, Ills. 129–41) are related to inscriptions in south-west Britain and Wales in their lettering and are British in the sense that most of the names on them are linguistically Brittonic. They are, however, physically separated from the other British inscriptions of the south-west and do not straightforwardly fit into that context. They are like Okasha's Category 1a, to which nearly all of the Devon and Somerset British inscribed stones belong, in being uncarved stones and in carrying simple memorial texts. Four of the five stones probably, or possibly, used the '[The stone?] of X son of Y' formula with forms of the Latin *filius* for 'son'. They differed from Category 1 stones, however, as far as can be judged in their fragmentary state, in having been pieces of re-used, probably Roman architectural masonry rather than the usual 'pillar-stone'. The variety of lettering and techniques of letter-cutting to be seen in the five Wareham inscriptions make it likely that these monuments were inscribed over many years. The approximate datings that are argued in the catalogue on palaeographical and phonological grounds range between the seventh and ninth centuries (pp. 118–24). These monuments must have been older than the construction of the Anglo-Saxon church in which they were re-used as building stones. Gem (1993, 39–45) has argued, principally on typological grounds, that this church may been built around 800. It may indeed have been the church at Wareham in which Beorhtric, king of Wessex, was buried in 802 (Whitelock 1979, 180, *s.a.* 786). The evidence suggests that the Wareham inscriptions commemorated important members of a British Christian community at various times in the seventh and eighth centuries and perhaps in the early ninth century, implying that this community retained its identity and a certain status for a considerable time after the establishment of Anglo-Saxon rule in this region. But these monuments seem no longer to have had powerful protectors at the time when the Anglo-Saxon church was built. The apparently deliberate display of at least one of the inscriptions (Wareham 7, pp. 120–1) in the Anglo-Saxon fabric could be read either as a triumphalist gesture or as a tribute to a British past.

An alternative explanation for this cluster of Brittonic inscriptions is that some or all of them were monuments to members of an exiled Breton community in the later ninth or tenth century (McClure 1907; Dumville 1992, 157; Hinton 1992; Sims-Williams 2003, 87–8). This would, however, entail an uncomfortably late date for the lettering of all except perhaps Wareham 9 (Ill. 141)

and is a less convincing hypothesis than that of British survival (cf. Yorke 1995, 69–72). It would also be very late for the '[The stone?] of X son of Y' formula. The two Breton examples of the formula have recently been dated to the sixth or seventh century (Davies *et al.* 2000, 131–6, 137–44). British inscriptions provide a much more satisfactory background for the lettering and formulae of the Wareham inscriptions than does the modest corpus of early medieval inscriptions in Brittany. It is true that there were continuing parallelisms between the scripts and other aspects of Breton inscriptions and those of Insular inscriptions (ibid., 52, 53–4, 62–3, 68–9), but there seem to be no features of the Wareham inscriptions that can only be paralleled in Breton inscriptions and nowhere else.

ANGLO-SAXON INSCRIPTIONS IN THE SOUTH-WEST (Fig. 24)

The inscriptions on stone cut in the south-west of England during the Anglo-Saxon period are both fewer and more miscellaneous than the British inscriptions. Too little now remains for it to be possible to see whether there were at any stage distinctive epigraphic styles or practices in this region. In marked contrast to Northumbria, no inscriptions are known to survive from the early Anglo-Saxon centuries in the south-western counties. There is, however, one piece of evidence that ambitious inscriptions may have been known and appreciated at an early date. According to William of Malmesbury's *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae*, King Ine (688–726) had 26 lines of Latin verse ('Siderei montes, speciosa cacumina Syon ...') inscribed somewhere at the top ('in ... supremo ordine') of the church of Saints Peter and Paul which he built at Glastonbury, Somerset (Scott 1981, 94–7). Scott (ibid., 199 n. 89) regards this passage as an interpolation into William's text and takes the verses as, by implication, a later pastiche. If, however, the verses are genuine, as argued by Lapidge (1996, 402–3), the Glastonbury verses illustrate the adoption from the Continent of the practice of displaying verse *tituli* on church buildings. They could then be compared to those composed by Bede for display in the apse of a church in Lindsey in the time of Bishop Cyneberht (716 × 731–731) and to others transcribed in Milred of Worcester's collection of Latin epigrams and verse inscriptions (Sims-Williams 1990, 328–59; id. 1991; Lapidge 1996, 357–79, 510–12; Everson and Stocker 1999, 306–7). The Glastonbury *titulus* was simply cobbled together by taking sections from two dedicatory *tituli* by Venantius Fortunatus in order to honour the patrons of the church at Glastonbury, Saints Peter and Paul, and,

with slight emendation, the royal founder, Ine (Lapidge 1996, 402–3; Venantius Fortunatus 1881, 56–7, 40 (III.7, lines 1–12, 17–20; II.10, lines 17–26)). The *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae* does not make clear how the verses were inscribed, whether painted on plaster or incised into stone. If they really were still legible in the twelfth century, stone is the more likely. Even if William did not transcribe the verses from the original, they may still have been a genuine record of an inscribed text. He could perhaps have found them in a manuscript source, perhaps even in an unrecorded section of the lost Malmesbury manuscript of Milred of Worcester's collection of metrical *tituli*. This manuscript, of which a single bifolium remains (Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois, MS 128), was very probably known to William and was at Malmesbury in the sixteenth century when John Leland made a partial transcription (Sims-Williams 1990, 339; Lapidge 1996, 357–79, 510–12; Thomson 2003, 78, 109–10, 126–7, 128).

The *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae* also preserves a two-line Latin verse epitaph of Tica, probably a mid-eighth-century abbot, whose finely carved tomb lay in the great church at Glastonbury. The epitaph referred to the carving of the monument: 'Tumba hec mirifico fulget fabricata decore. / Desuper exsculptum (*sic*) condit sub culmine Tican' (and in Sims-Williams' translation: 'This tomb, made with marvellous elegance, shines; beneath its carved roof above, it hides Tica.') (Scott 1981, 68–9, 106–7; Sims-Williams 1990, 343; Foot 1991, 175).

William of Malmesbury transcribed a four-line Latin epitaph from the tomb at Meare of a certain Beonna, whom Glastonbury legend came to identify with St Benignus and to regard as successor at Glastonbury to St Patrick. This inscription presumably dated from before 1091, the probable date of translation of the remains of 'Benignus' to Glastonbury, but it need not have been very much older (Finberg 1969, 82–3; Scott 1981, 62–3, 86–7, 192 n.40, 197 n.76; William of Malmesbury 1998, 808–11).

It was also at Glastonbury that William of Malmesbury noted the sets of inscriptions on two free-standing monuments, the two 'pyramids' which he described as standing near the old church. His description appears, with some differences of detail, in both his *Gesta regum Anglorum* and his *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae* (William of Malmesbury 1998, 806–7; id. 1999, 401–3, 405; Scott 1981, 82–3, 84–5, 196–7 n. 75). According to William, both of these tall stone monuments, most probably cross-shafts or columns, were inscribed with a series of personal names. In the case of the taller 'pyramid', there was also figure sculpture on the top, second and lowest of the five tiers, whereas the names appeared on

all tiers except the top one. William does not say how the names related to the figure sculpture. He is silent too about the presence or absence of figure sculpture on the four tiers of the other 'pyramid', but mentions further names without indicating where they appeared on the monument. William implies that the names appeared unaccompanied by any other text, except in the case of 'Hedde episcopus'. He tentatively took the names to refer individuals whose bones were contained within these monuments, which he refers to as hollow stones, a suggestion which is hard to reconcile with the normal dimensions of a cross-shaft (see above, pp. 32–4, and Fig. 17). The names as recorded in the *Gesta regum* (with variants in the *De antiquitate* in square brackets) were as follows. On the taller 'pyramid':

Tier 2. Her; Sexi; Bliswerh [*De ant*. Blisyer]

Tier 3. Wencrest [*De ant*. Wemcrest]; Bantomp; Winethegn

Tier 4. Bate [*De ant*. Hate]; Wulfred [variant reading Wulfled]; Eanfled

Tier 5. Logwor [variant reading Logor; *De ant*. Logwor]; Weaslieas [*De ant*. Weslicas]; Bregden; Swelwes; Hiwingendes [*De ant*. Hwingendes]; Bearn [*De ant*. Bern]

On the other 'pyramid':

Centwine [*De ant*. absent]; Hedde episcopus; Bregored; Beorward [*De ant*. Beoruuard]

The names on the other, smaller 'pyramid' are probably identifiable as those of Centwine, king of Wessex (676–685), Hædde, bishop of Winchester (676–705) and two early abbots of Glastonbury, Bregored and perhaps Beorwald. There is evidence for an Abbot Beorwald at Glastonbury in the early eighth century and he may have been either the successor or the immediate predecessor of an Abbot Bregored (Foot 1991, 171–3; Cramp 2001, 160, n. 9). Some of the names recorded by William on the taller pyramid are clearly corrupt but the majority can be explained as Old English personal names (William of Malmesbury 1999, 401–2). The first 'name', Her, may of course have been the Old English adverb *her* ('here'). The identities of these names are discussed by Watkin (1945) but are much less certain than those on the smaller 'pyramid'. As Cramp (2001, 155) has suggested, the inscriptions could have commemorated prominent patrons of the monastery and could have formed something akin to a *Liber Vitae*. It is possible that the names were intended to identify figures on the 'pyramids'. That could explain why William recorded them as unaccompanied names without further explanatory text. The names on the smaller 'pyramid' can probably be taken as dating it to no earlier than the early eighth century.

The faint traces of lettering reported on one of the two cross-shaft fragments built into the porch at Littleton

Drew, Wiltshire, are no longer visible (Browne 1903, 174–5, fig. 12; see p. 222, Ill. 460). If the report can be relied upon, the Littleton Drew cross could be compared to the twenty or so Anglo-Saxon crosses in the north of England which carried inscriptions on the shaft (Higgitt 1986b, 129–30).

The recently discovered inscription on the grave-cover at Braunton, Devon (p. 79, Ill. 2) is presumably contemporary with the tenth-century plant-scroll decoration. Only a few letters can be made out but the setting of the inscription along an edge-band on the upper surface provides a precedent for the eleventh-century inscribed grave-cover at Stratfield Mortimer, Berkshire (Okasha 1971, 114–15; Tweddle et al. 1995, 335–7), which, however, has no sculptural decoration.

The well-preserved inscription on the font at Potterne, Wiltshire (Ills. 472–84) is an important piece of evidence in the long-running debate on whether any stone fonts can be shown to pre-date the Norman Conquest (Allen 1888; Bailey 2005, 14–23; see pp. 38–40). It is argued in the catalogue that the plain and mostly 'Roman' capitals at Potterne fit convincingly into the context of southern English lettering of the ninth and tenth century but that an eleventh-century dating cannot be excluded (pp. 224–7). The symbolism of the Latin text, which consists of a psalm verse (41.2) quoted from the baptismal liturgy, is appropriate to the function of a font with its imagery of the hart panting after the fountains of water. The setting of the inscription on a vertical band around the top of the bowl may possibly have had a pre-Conquest analogue in this region on the dressed-back font now in Wells Cathedral, Somerset (Rodwell 1990, 162–3, pls. 2 and 4; see Wells 4, p. 177, Ills. 328–45).

The short inscription above the tenth- to eleventh-century carving of the Virgin and Child at Inglesham, Wiltshire (p.217, Ills. 453–4) is now incomplete but seems to have functioned as a simple identification of the figure, figures or scene below. Such identificatory texts were by no means universal but they can also be found in manuscripts and on ivories in the later Anglo-Saxon period (Okasha 1971, nos. 17, 97; Gameson 1995, 90–1), as well as, for example, on stone crosses of around the eighth and ninth centuries (Higgitt 1986b, 136–7).

The fragmentary inscription found in excavations at Shaftesbury Abbey, Dorset, in 1904 can probably be identified with an inscription recorded at Shaftesbury by William of Malmesbury (1870, 186; 2002a, 124). This commemorated the making of an *urbs* by King Alfred. The lettering, now only known through a rubbing (Ill. 99), very probably dated from before the Conquest but more probably from the later tenth or early eleventh century than from the time of Alfred (p. 111). If the inscription was originally set up in relation to the *burh* defences at Shaftesbury, it would be unique among known Anglo-Saxon inscriptions on stone in recording the foundation of a secular structure. There would, however, have been precedents in Italy, for example, in the building inscriptions on the walls raised against the Saracens by Pope Leo IV (847–55) for the Civitas Leoniana around the Vatican and at Leopolis near Civitavecchia (Higgitt 2004, 9).

The recently recognized inscribed fragment re-used in the fabric of the church at Winterbourne Steepleton, Dorset (p. 126, Ill. 148) is too damaged for more than a few letters to be made out. The forms of the capitals and the orderly layout, however, suggest that the inscription was approximately contemporary with the later Anglo-Saxon figure of an angel (Ills. 149–52) which was similarly re-used in later masonry in the same church.

The pocket-sized inscribed and decorated stone found at Barton St David, Somerset (p. 135, Ills. 164–9) is an oddity in the company of the other pre-Conquest inscriptions, which were all, as far as can be seen, displayed on stone monuments or buildings. Although there is a possibility that the object is a clever pastiche, the lettering and decoration look genuine. Its three, or perhaps four, texts, which were probably carved by different hands and perhaps at different times, consist of the first five letters of the alphabet and, in less formal hands, two incomplete formulae, at least one of which was in Old English, and some graffito-like lettering. It may have remained in use for some time, although whether as amulet or trial-piece or for some other purpose is uncertain.

INSCRIPTIONS OF UNCERTAIN CLASSIFICATION

There remain four inscriptions which, for various reasons, cannot be classified unambiguously as either British or Anglo-Saxon.

The head of the plain granite cross at Plymstock, Devon, with its expanding arms and ring has affinities with crosses in Cornwall, but the short text, which need not be primary, may consist of an Old English personal name (p. 87, Ills. 34, 38). This monument can perhaps be seen as an illustration of cultural interaction. If so, it can be compared with the later case of the inscribed cross-shaft at Lanteglos in Cornwall, the perhaps early Middle English text of which is inscribed vertically in the manner of many of the much earlier Category 1 British inscribed pillar-stones (Okasha 1971, no. 69; id. 1993, 140–5).

The fragmentary inscription at Holcombe, Somerset (p. 160, Ill. 267) must pre-date its re-use in the twelfth-

century church but the date and meaning of its probably Latin text are uncertain, although it may have referred to some form of consecration or to a tombstone. Surviving sequences of letters have been interpreted as parts of both Old English and Brittonic personal names but too little remains for any certainty. The informal layout of the lettering is reminiscent of many south-west British and Welsh inscriptions. One possibility is that the inscription reflects the sort of positive contact or continuity between British and Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical traditions for which there is some evidence in the western Wessex (Yorke 1995, 177–81). It might in that case date from around the eighth or ninth century.

The two fragmentary inscribed stones found at Tavistock, Devon, in the nineteenth century and subsequently lost are hard to interpret from the drawings (Okasha 1993, 282–7, nos. IV and V, figs. II.61, II.62; see Appendix H, p. 245). Both had Latin inscriptions and both may have been grave-markers or grave-covers. To judge from the drawing, the lettering of Tavistock IV probably dated from after the Norman Conquest. Tavistock V seems to have included a personal name ending in an Old English name element with a Latin termination: *-fridus*. The lettering, as represented in the drawing, consisted of 'Roman' capitals, perhaps with the addition of an uncial or half-uncial H. It probably dated from some time in the later Anglo-Saxon or early post-Conquest periods.

CONCLUSIONS

This survey has shown that nearly all of the early medieval inscriptions of this region can be classed as belonging clearly either to British or Anglo-Saxon traditions of epigraphy. It is possible too to draw some tentative conclusions about the relationship between these traditions. With the exception of the five Wareham inscriptions, the clearly British inscriptions are all in the west, in Devon and the west of Somerset. The distribution of the clearly Anglo-Saxon inscriptions is more eastern, with only one example (Braunton) in Devon. The clearly British inscriptions (with the exception of those at Wareham) are Category 1 inscribed pillar-stones, are early and perhaps all date from before the Anglo-Saxon conquest of the areas in which they are found. None of the clearly Anglo-Saxon inscriptions that are still extant can be dated to earlier than the ninth century, although William of Malmesbury records Anglo-Saxon inscriptions at Glastonbury dating apparently from the time of Ine (688–726) and from the middle of the eighth century. The five inscriptions at Wareham in east Dorset are British in formulae, in the majority of the personal names and in their lettering but are geographically separated from the other British inscriptions in this region. They appear to represent the survival of a British Christian community for many decades after the Anglo-Saxon conquest. Like Wareham, Tavistock was a British Christian centre which had as its successor an Anglo-Saxon church. At Tavistock, the British phase is illustrated by one Category 1a inscription (Tavistock I) and the Anglo-Saxon phase perhaps by the lost inscribed stone commemorating a man with an Old English personal name (Tavistock V). The British inscriptions in this area form a relatively homogenous class in terms of their simple memorial formulae and their lettering. The smaller number of Anglo-Saxon inscriptions are much more miscellaneous in character, function and text.