

## CHAPTER V

### THE VIKING PERIOD

#### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The huge increase in the quantity of sculpture, and in the number of sites involved in its production, during this period has already been emphasised. Large parts of central and southern Lancashire and areas of Cheshire now figure on the distribution map, notably in the upper reaches of the Ribble and Mersey, and their tributary streams; Chester also belatedly begins to produce stone carving. Gaps, however, remain in the mosslands and marshlands of western Lancashire and the ill-drained Weaver valley to the east of the Central Cheshire Ridge. Here both relative poverty and lack of available stone must be controlling factors.

The distribution map draws attention to marked concentrations of production (Fig. 11). Along the river Lune most of the sites which had produced Anglian sculpture have work of the later period; at the eastern end of the valley Hornby and Gressingham may disappear from the map but they are replaced by Melling. Further south there is a noticeable cluster in the Ribble valley, certainly from Ribchester eastwards, but also possibly including Preston itself (see Anderton 1). These sites are around the route across to Yorkshire whose significance in the tenth century was early indicated by the deposition of the Cuerdale hoard (Graham-Campbell 1987; id. 1992). On the southern side of the Forest of Rossendale another cluster, reaching from Eccles north-eastwards, is on the line of a second route from Chester to York whose importance has not always been fully acknowledged (Bailey and Whalley 2006, 353). A further group, discussed below, clusters along the foothills of the Pennines in the enormous Prestbury parish of the *Hamestan* hundred of eastern Cheshire.

The final concentration is on the Wirral peninsula. Apart from the carvings at Neston and Bromborough, these sculptures are all focused in an arc across the northern end of the peninsula within a mile of the coast; Bidston indeed, which has yielded a very Yorkshire-looking hogback, overlooks the whole of the area — hence the choice of Bidston Hill as the site of the

1771 lighthouse to control traffic up both the Dee and Mersey (Brownbill 1935, 143–4). It is surely significant that, just below Bidston and at the centre of this arc, is the long-established beach market of Meols which, despite the growth of Chester, remained active — was indeed re-vitalised — in the Viking period (Griffiths 1992, 66–9; id. 1996, 56; id. 2001b; Griffiths *et al.* 2007, 399–406, 433).

Chester itself may have had two sculptural workshops during this period, when it was rapidly growing in political and commercial significance (Thacker 1987, 251, 257–8, 260–2; id. 2003; Griffiths 1994; Carrington, P. 1996; Ward, S. 2001). The first is associated with St John's church, which produced a series of stereotyped circle-headed carvings (p. 000). We have seen that the recorded history of the site goes back into the Anglian period and, although it was eclipsed by the rise of St Werburgh in the tenth century, it was still sufficiently important to be enriched by royal gifts in the late Saxon period (Thacker 1982; id. 1987, 268; Blair 2005, 357). The second site, which may have been at St Werburgh, produced the Chester Unknown Provenance carvings whose ornament more explicitly draws on styles popular in central and southern England (p. 000). It is noticeable that Chester's emergence as a centre of sculptural production has much in common with Lincoln in that neither of them have yielded evidence of interest in stone carving before the Viking period. There is a marked contrast here with both Lancaster and Carlisle which have work of eighth-, ninth- and tenth-century date.

The status of the other church sites producing sculpture at the period is clearer in Cheshire than it is in the less-well documented northern part of the region. Higham's study of the territorial organisation of early medieval Cheshire made a strong case for a 'mother church' status for the following sites: Astbury, Bowdon, Bromborough, Frodsham, Neston, Sandbach and West Kirby (Higham, N. 1993b, 108, 132, 152, 164, 168–9, 172–4; for discussions of the mother church or *mynster* concept, see Cambridge and Rollason 1995; Blair 2005; Foot 2006, esp. 285–91). Across the Mersey, Walton on

FIGURE 12  
Sites with sculpture later than c. 920

the Hill appears to have had an extensive *parochia* which included Winwick; a tenth-century reorganisation seems to have split this between what then emerged as two mother churches (Freke and Thacker 1987–8, 34–6). Another late Saxon split seems to have divided Thornton le Moors from Frodsham (Higham, N. 1993b, 152–3). Of the rest, Hilbre Island clearly had early developed as a pilgrimage centre, whilst Macclesfield may have been the centre of a substantial royal estate in the early tenth century (Higham, N. 1993b, 117). Prestbury's medieval parish was one of the largest in England (Thacker 1987, fig. 36), though it was nearly matched in extent by Whalley (Farrer and Brownbill 1911c, fig. on 348); both clearly acted as mother churches to extensive areas whose relative poverty had militated against the kind of parish divisions which occurred in other parts of the country. In summary, it is clear that sculptural production in this region, though more widespread than it had been in the Anglian period, was still largely limited to high-status sites.

To a certain extent the north/south division noted in the earlier Anglian period continues. Thus the motifs and shaft-shape of Lancaster St Mary 4 and Melling 1 link with groups in Cumbria (pp. 000, 000), the hammerhead cross on Heysham 8 echoes a Solway-basin preference (p. 000), and the tall narrow proportions of the Heysham 5 and Bolton le Sands 2 hogbacks find their best parallels in Cumbria (pp. 000, 000). By contrast, the ornament of Chester Unknown Provenance 1 and 2, now in the British Museum, reflects Mercian and southern English ornament (p. 000). The acanthus-derived decoration of Astbury 2 and 3 point in the same southerly direction (p. 000), as do the circular ornaments of Bowdon 1 and the head shape of Tarvin 1 (p. 000, 000). In addition, two distinctive forms of carving were developed in the Cheshire area which were not employed in that particular form further north: (a) the circle-heads of Chester and the Wirral, and (b) the round-shafts of eastern Cheshire. Not only do these latter two groups emphasise the continuity of a north/south divide within the region but they also hint at an east/west cultural division within Cheshire itself: the circle-heads are effectively limited to the Wirral, whilst the Cheshire round-shafts are part of a group, sharing both shapes and ornamental motifs, which reaches east and south into Derbyshire and Staffordshire (see below).

Though the monuments erected in the tenth and eleventh centuries in this region were produced during the Viking period, there is little evidence of sculptors' use of motifs which derive from the art of Scandinavia, despite the fact that metalwork objects decorated in Scandinavian-based styles were clearly circulating in

the area (Graham-Campbell 1983; Ward, S. 1994, 66–7; Edwards, B. 1998, figs. 4, 13; Griffiths *et al.* 2007, 62, 71; Portable Antiquities database). The Sigurd iconography of Halton St Wilfrid 1 is the only clear exception to this assertion (p. 000), though it should be noted that a case can be made for Sigurd iconography on the Heysham 5 hogback (p. 000) and for Ringerike inspiration behind the tendrils of Disley Lyme Hall 1 (p. 000). In this avoidance of Scandinavia-derived ornament the sculptors in Viking-age Cheshire and Lancashire were merely following a general pattern observed elsewhere in northern England (Bailey 1978, 175–6). In general, the motifs and forms they employed derive from an Anglian tradition, a derivation most clearly seen in the dominance of free-armed forms of head and in the ubiquity of panels of scrollwork.

A surprisingly wide Christian iconography and symbolism can be identified on these Viking-age carvings. At Lancaster and Halton there are both figural and zoomorphic forms which carry a Christian meaning and it is even arguable that the teeming ornament of the Heysham hogback echoes Christian themes (p. 000). Further south there are *orans* figures on Whalley 1 alongside a (seeming) representation of Habakkuk III, 2: *In medio duorum animalium innotesceris* (p. 000). At Anderton a large figure holds a small cross in the manner of a Byzantine saint (p. 000), whilst the large cross-head at Winwick depicts a priest alongside a tortured soul in hell (p. 000). Thornton le Moors 1 shows Christ displaying his wounds (p. 000), and Neston has a series of figural carvings including an angel and scenes which may have been inspired by the psalms (p. 000). Motifs like the linked triquetra at Bidston (p. 000) or the foliate cruciform mouldings of Whalley 3 (p. 000), moreover, are a useful reminder that there is potential Christian content in even the most simple of ornamental forms.

## MONUMENT FORMS IN THE VIKING PERIOD

Crosses and slabs continue as the dominant forms in this period, though new shapes of both shaft and head become popular. The four hogbacks (perhaps five — see p. 000) in the region represent a Viking-period innovation.

### RING- AND CIRCLE-HEADS

Collingwood long ago demonstrated that a ring or circle connecting the arms of a cross-head was a Viking-period introduction to England (Collingwood 1926a). The distribution of the form, and its earliest dating elsewhere, suggests that it developed in the Celtic west and was first

FIGURE 13  
Ring- and circle-heads in Cheshire and Lancashire

brought to England by Hiberno-Norse settlers in the early years of the tenth century. It remains arguable as to which of the various Celtic lands was the ultimate source of the English versions, though the western isles of Scotland have as much claim to have pioneered ring-headed forms as the Irish and Manx sources commonly espoused (Bailey 1980, 70–1). This Corpus region has both ring- and circle-headed shapes — the ‘ring’ type consisting of four arcs connecting the arms, whilst the ‘circle’ form is characterised by a continuous circle, seemingly overlying the arms whose ends project as ‘ears’ beyond the circle (see General Introduction: Cramp 1991, xiv, fig. 3).

#### *Ring-heads*

Ring-headed forms are not, in fact, very common in the area. In the north, the vestigial head of Lancaster St Mary 4 might have been ring-headed but, since the rest of its ornament so closely resembles that of the circle-head at Aspatria on the Cumbrian coastal plain, it probably carried the same form as the Cumbrian cross (Ills. 581–3; Collingwood 1927a, fig. 171; Bailey and Cramp 1988, 51, ill. 31, 33). Further south, there is only a scatter of occurrences — several of dubious status — on the Wirral, along the Mersey and in the area around Disley. Of these Bromborough 4 is the most certain whilst Chester St John 7 survives only as fragments whose ornament reflects that of the dominant circle-headed types at the site (Ills. 46, 104–7). Greasby’s nineteenth-century iron cross may preserve the form of its Irish-influenced early medieval predecessor (Ill. 738), but a less contentious example lies near one of the lowest crossing points of the Mersey at Winwick, where the great cross-head carries only the stubs of a ring which had been cut away to form a later memorial (Ills. 710–13); its iconographical schemes look to the Celtic west. To these can be added the fragmentary survivals, using a markedly fan-shaped form of head, on round-shaft monuments at Disley Lyme Hall 1 and 2, and Alderley Edge 1 (Ills. 9–12, 128–32, 137–54); Bolton le Moors 3 provides a more northerly outlier on the distribution map (Ills. 413–14, 417–18).

#### *The Cheshire circle-head group*

This group is geographically limited to the Wirral and Chester, with an outlier across the Mersey estuary at Walton on the Hill 2 (Ills. 651–2). Crosses in north Wales at Penmon in Anglesey, and at Diserth, Whitford and Meliden on the south side of the Dee are also clearly related (Nash-Williams 1950, pls. XXI–XXIV; Edwards, N. 1999). The three latter sites all lie within modern Flintshire in an area which, between 921 and 1066, was

at least nominally within the Anglo-Saxon kingdom; the Cheshire Domesday Book shows common ownership of estates on both sides of the Dee estuary (Sawyer and Thacker 1987, 304; Griffiths 1996, 56, fig. 5).

The Cheshire members of the group are: Bromborough 3 (Ills. 35–8); Chester St John 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Ills. 75–99); Chester City Walls 1 (Ills. 112–14); Hilbre Island 1 (Ills. 172–5); West Kirby 2 and 3 (and probably the associated 1) (Ills. 345–54). Bromborough 1 is probably also to be classed with the same set (Ills. 39–42), whilst Chester St John 6 and 7 draw on elements of their ornamental repertoire (Ills. 100–7). Neston 2 provides another certain example; this probably carries with it Neston 3, which shares similar motifs on the narrow faces (Ills. 200–5, 207–10), whilst the proportions of the shafts Neston 1 and 4 suggest they also belong to the same group (Ills. 195–9, 211–13). These form part of a wider distribution of the type on the eastern seaboard of the Irish Sea between Cumbria and north Wales, with further but later outliers in Cornwall (Langdon 1896, 171–4; Collingwood 1915, 174; id. 1928; Nash-Williams 1950, 65, 67, 126, 129; Bu’lock 1959; Bailey 1980, 177–82; Bailey and Cramp 1988, 31–2; Coatsworth 2008, 157–8). To the west, the Isle of Man has two slabs using circle-head forms, together with a cross from Maughold whose accompanying ornament suggests that it is a reflex of the Cumbrian circle-head school (Kermode 1907, nos. 33, 56 and 97). If we leave aside, for the moment, the Cornish examples and the sole Yorkshire representative from Gargrave, then it is possible immediately to distinguish between the Cumbrian and Cheshire treatments of the head by their very different forms of ornament (Fig. 13; Ills. 94

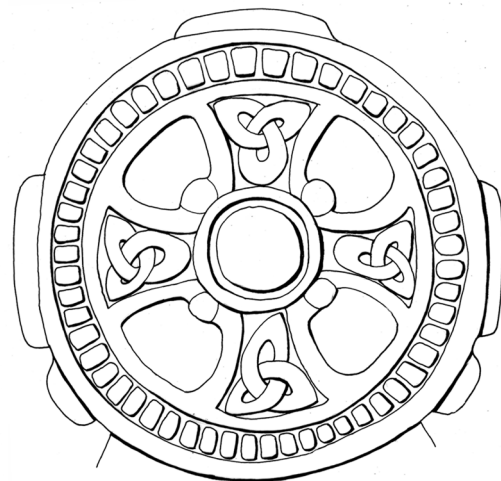


FIGURE 14  
The Cheshire circle-head type



that the outliers at Gargrave and in north Wales seem to draw upon both Cumbrian and Cheshire characteristics, Gargrave 5 using the Cheshire boss-decorated circle (Coatsworth 2008, *ills.* 289–91) and Penmon the Cumbrian ring-chain (Nash-Williams 1950, *pl.* XXXII). And it is supported by the observation that, within each group, there is an occasional use of an ornamental device which is prominent in the other set: witness the possible plait decoration of the circle on Chester St John 2 (*Ills.* 81, 83). It is certainly not possible to establish a chronological primacy between the two groups.

The shape is a north-west England invention. It may well, however, owe some of its details to Irish inspiration. The so-called ‘Cross of the Scriptures’ at Clonmacnoise shows a closely comparable form in existence in Ireland in the ninth or early tenth century (Harbison 1992, *i*, 367–8, *ii*, *fig.* 134; for dating see summary in Stalley 2007, 155–6), and others can be quoted on less ambitious pieces at Ardane, Finglas and Kilquiggin (Harbison 1992, *ii*, *figs.* 43–4, 285–6, 443). Earlier the type is found on the Moylough belt reliquary (Henry 1965, *pl.* 35). At least six of the Irish crosses, moreover, carry cylinders or bosses in the armpits of the spandrels in the manner of the Wirral group: Castlekeeran, Drumcliff, Dysert O’Dea, Kells, Monasterboice (Harbison 1992, *ii*, *figs.* 112, 113, 221, 263, 337, 346, 481, 496). Finally, the discussion in the catalogue of Walton on the Hill 2 (*p.* 000), with its cylinder or boss set on the inside of the circle, shows that its closest parallels also lie in Ireland. Wherever placed, these bosses or cylinders may well have originated as skeuomorphs of externally-placed metallic rivets of the kind seen on the Cuthbert pectoral cross (Webster and Backhouse 1991, *no.* 98).

The presence of a quarry immediately to the south of St John’s church in Chester, and the existence of the seemingly unfinished carving, *no.* 6, among the numerous circle-heads from the site (*Ills.* 100–3), have suggested that many of the stones were carved at St John’s. This seems not unreasonable. But clearly, across the whole group, there was more than one workshop involved, as can be seen by the discussion of the Neston carvings which form a linked, but quite distinctive, sub-group within the set.

#### VIKING-AGE FREE-ARMED HEADS

The dominant form among surviving free-armed heads is that labelled ‘penannular’ or ‘fan-shaped’ by Collingwood (1915, 279; 1927a, 88–90). This type, whose arm terminals — including the lower arm — are exaggeratedly expanded, was being used by the ninth century in southern England for stone sculpture

at sites like Bath and Deerhurst (Rahtz 1976, *pl.* XI; Bailey 2005, 25; Cramp 2006, *ills.* 175–6). Further north, however, the associated ornament suggests that its main exploitation was in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Though there are examples at Kirkby Stephen in Westmorland and at York (Bailey and Cramp 1988, *ills.* 410–12; Lang 1991, *ills.* 394–5), there is a marked concentration of this shape in western Yorkshire and in eastern Cheshire and Lancashire. In Yorkshire it is found in the Nidd and Wharfe valleys at Burnsall, Kirkby Wharfe and Staveley (Coatsworth 2008, *ills.* 105–8, 112–15, 432–5, 440–3, 713–16), whilst the examples to the west of the Pennines include Cheadle 1, Bolton le Moors 1, Colne 1, Rochdale 1 and Whalley 2 (*Ills.* 70–4, 409–12, 445–6, 645–8, 671–4). Prestbury 2 may belong to the same set, and the head at Aughton show similar tendencies (*Ills.* 231–2, 234–5, 405–8). Tarvin 1, with its bossed terminals, represents a particular variant on the type which has close parallels at Rowsley in Derbyshire and Rolleston in Staffordshire (*Ills.* 333–4; Auden 1908; Routh 1937, *pl.* XVIII). The regional importance of the penannular form can be judged by the fact that it also appears in a ringed version at Alderley Edge, Disley Lyme Hall 1 and 2, Bolton le Moors 3 — and at Monyash in Derbyshire (*Ills.* 9–10, 131, 137, 139–47, 413–14, 417–18; Myers and Barnatt 1984).

#### ROUND-SHAFTS

This form of cross is distinguished by having a shaft whose lower parts are cylindrical in section whilst the upper area is squared. The junction between cylindrical and squared sections is marked or masked by two features which can occur individually or in combination: a curved ‘swag’ to the lower panel on the squared section; and one or more horizontal mouldings or fillets encircling the upper part of the cylinder (General Introduction: Cramp 1991, *xiv*, *fig.* 1, shaft types ‘g’ and ‘h’). As a variation on the latter form the encircling fillet can be very broad and carry decoration. This set of carvings was first isolated by Allen (1895, 144–6) and have been the subject of numerous later studies (Cox, J. 1904; Andrew 1905; Kendrick 1941b, 10–16; *id.* 1949, 68–75; Pape 1945–6; Bu’lock 1960b; Radford 1961, 210; Bailey and Cramp 1988, 30–1; Sidebottom 1994; *id.* 1999, 212). Within Cheshire the following sculptures form part of the group: Adlington 1 and 2 (*Ills.* 1–8); Astbury 1 (*Ills.* 19–22); Cheadle 1 and 2 (*Ills.* 70–4); Disley Lyme Hall 1 and 2 (*Ills.* 131–2, 137–8, 139–41, 156–9); Disley Lyme Handley 1 and 2 (*Ills.* 162–70); Macclesfield St Michael 3 and 4 (*Ills.* 185–8, 189–94); Rainow 1 (*Ills.* 239–43); Sutton Ridge Hall 1, 2 and 3 (*Ills.* 313–32); Upton 1 (*Ills.* 343–4); Wincle

Cleulow 1 and Wincle Grange 1 (Ills. 362–5, 366–71). The double socket-stones of Disley Church Field 1 and Disley Lyme Handley 3 belong with these carvings (Ills. 160–1, 162), and so also might the cross-head, Alderley Edge 1 (Ills. 9–12). Heaton is another member of the set (Ills. 739–40), though the catalogue entry shows that there are problems about its exact provenance. Almost all of these Cheshire carvings came from the extensive medieval parish of Prestbury, and even the exceptions — from Cheadle, Heaton and Disley — are not far from its boundaries (see Higham, N. 1993b, 171–6). In adjacent areas of Derbyshire there are similar sculptures at Bakewell, Brailsford and Fernilee Hall (Routh 1937, 12–13, 20–1), whilst in north Staffordshire they can be found at Alstonefield, Chebsey, Checkley, Ilam and Leek (Pape 1945–6). Bolton le Moors 2 may furnish an isolated example from Lancashire (Ills. 415–16, 419–20).

Though the group considered here form a set of Viking-age carvings limited in distribution to the Peak District of eastern Cheshire, west Derbyshire and adjacent north Staffordshire, related material occurs elsewhere at a variety of dates. It is therefore helpful first to identify these other carvings, not only to establish the distinctive features of this Peak set, but because several have been unnecessarily invoked in arguments about the chronology and meaning of the Cheshire sculptures.

Amongst these related carvings are the cylindrical columns, decorated with horizontal bands of ornament, which undoubtedly existed in the pre-Viking period. Such sculptures survive from Masham and Reculver and are probably also represented at Wantage, Winchester and Deerhurst (Lang 2001, 168–71; Tweddle *et al.* 1995, 151–61 (esp. 156), 268, 331, 333–4; Bailey 2005, 16–17; Hawkes 2006). Wolverhampton's columnar monument may also be of this early date, though it is probably more likely to belong to the tenth century (Rix 1960; Cramp 1975, 187–9). It has often been assumed that these cylinders had rectangular upper works (Collingwood 1927a, fig. 13(5); Rix 1960, fig. 1), but there is no need to assume such an addition: early Christian columns — like the two westernmost shafts of the ciborium over the shrine of St Mark in Venice — or the earlier Jupiter columns of the Roman period would have provided potential models which lack any change in their sections (Demus and Forlati 1960; Mitchell 2001, 91; Hawkes 2006).

Alongside these columns, within Northumbria, we also have evidence for pre-Viking period shafts which combine cylindrical and rectangular (usually square) sections. The evidence comes from Collingham and

Dewsbury in Yorkshire, Beckermest St Bridget and (more doubtfully) Dacre in Cumbria (Collingwood 1927a, fig. 13; *id.* 1929, 28; Coatsworth 2008, 117–19, 129–38; Bailey and Cramp 1988, 54–6, 90–1). Of these, the examples from Beckermest and Dewsbury are the most convincing; both carry swags whilst Beckermest also has encircling fillets. Importantly the Dewsbury shaft was almost certainly topped by a cross-head. We can thus be certain of the existence of this type of elaborate cross-shaft at a date before the Viking period, without having recourse to the example of Eliseg's Pillar whose conventional assignment to the second quarter of the ninth century poses certain problems (Nash-Williams 1950, 123–5; Bu'lock 1960b).<sup>1</sup>

In the ensuing Viking period, outside the Peak District and its periphery, there are several cross-shafts combining round and square sections which continue this Anglian tradition. Cumbria provides examples from Beckermest St Bridget, Penrith, Gosforth and possibly Workington (Bailey and Cramp 1988, 56–7, 100–6, 136–8, 155), whilst Yorkshire has similar carvings from Ellerburn, Gilling West and possibly Kirklevington — as well as a columnar shaft from Bedale (Lang 1991, 127–8; *id.* 2001, 25, 59, 60, 113–14, 147).

The Peak District group, which can all be assigned to the tenth or eleventh centuries, thus grows out of a widespread, if non-prolific, pre-Viking tradition in which both swags and fillets were essential decorative elements; within the Viking period, moreover, the area was not alone in producing crosses of this type. What is novel about the Peak District group is the geographical concentration of the form, the presence of non-ornamented varieties and, for many of the Cheshire and Derbyshire sculptures, an implied function which was not associated with the church building or its immediate cemetery surroundings.

Kendrick (1941b, 10–16; 1949, 68–75) proposed a three-fold classification of these carvings: 'Peak decorated (Leek type)'; 'Peak decorated (Ilam type)'; 'Peak plain'. As a short-hand descriptive system this is acceptable, though his reasons for allocation of individual sculptures to particular classes is not always clear, and close examination of some of the 'plain' series, long thought to be unornamented, shows that they also carried low-relief carving (see Wincle Grange 1 and Heaton, pp. 000, 000). For our immediate purposes, however, what is important to stress is that both of his 'decorated' types draw on the same limited repertoire of motifs, and that the 'plain' series echo the swag and fillet combinations — or absences — of the two 'decorated'

1. A new paper on Eliseg's Pillar by Nancy Edwards (2009), including a discussion of the round-shafts, appeared too late to be considered here.



FIGURE 15  
Round-shafts in Cheshire and Lancashire

groups. In addition, all are found in the same geographical areas, and members of all three groups occur in non-ecclesiastical settings in Cheshire and Derbyshire. It is therefore difficult to avoid the conclusion that all three types were contemporary with each other.

The date of these carvings is clearly of the Viking period, though none of the forms and decoration (apart from the peripheral Brailsford with its Viking warrior, and the possible Ringerike-inspired extended trails of Disley Lyme Hall 1, p. 000) betray any impact from Scandinavian art. Where decoration does survive, then it is either in an Anglian tradition or employs motifs which were popular in the Viking period but did not necessarily have a clear source in the art of pre-Viking Scandinavia. Scroll-work falls into the first category; in variant forms it can be found on Astbury 1, Disley Lyme Handley 1 and 2, Sutton Ridge Hall 1, and Wincle Grange 1 (Ills. 20–2, 162–70, 313, 325, 366–70), as well as Heaton, Chebsey, Ilam and Leek. In the second category (see Bailey 1980, 71–2) are the encircled crossings of Disley Lyme Hall 1, Rainow 1 and possibly Sutton Ridge Hall 1 — and the interlinked circles or ovals of Disley Lyme Hall 2 (Ills. 131, 139, 156, 240, 315, 329), alongside Alstonefield 2, 3, 4, Chebsey and Ilam (Pape 1945–6, 30, 31, 32, 34). To the same group belongs the meander pattern of Sutton Ridge Hall 1, Rainow 1, Disley Lyme Hall 1 and 2 (Ills. 138, 139, 159, 241, 314, 326), alongside Alstonefield 1, 2, 3, 4, Ilam and Leek: its popularity within the Viking period has often been remarked (Bailey 1980, 72). Plain plait is also a relatively late feature; it occurs on Disley Lyme Hall 1 (Ill. 132), as well as Bakewell 1, Alstonefield 1, 2, 4 and Leek. The Viking-period ring-head forms of Disley Lyme Hall 1 and 2 offer further support for this dating.

Up to this point, the carvings from Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire have all been treated as a single contemporaneous set, sharing identical forms and motifs. But there is a functional division to be made between this type of monument in Staffordshire and its Peak District equivalents. The statistics are inevitably somewhat imprecise because of problems in deciding whether certain sculptures, such as those from Disley, are all parts of the same composite monument. But, even granted this reservation, the totals are startling. At most, there are only four such carvings from the Peak District which appear to have a church or churchyard provenance: Astbury 1, Macclesfield St Michael 3 and 4, together with Brailsford. Against this can be set at least 20 from the same Peak District area, including both ‘plain’ and ‘decorated’ forms, which do not seem to have originated from an ecclesiastical site. This is not a provenance pattern found in Staffordshire and, indeed, is in marked

contrast to the rest of English sculpture (though see Neuman de Vegvar 2007). It cannot, I would argue, be the chance results of later medieval or post-medieval movements; given the popular function of a church as a *depository* (not source) of local material, any transfers would be expected to operate in the other direction. We cannot, admittedly, be certain of the precise original setting of all of these stones: both Adlington carvings, for example, were first recorded as enhancements to the garden and surrounding landscape of the Hall; Wincle Grange 1 is known to have been transported from somewhere near the Grange to the park in Swythamley in Staffordshire; whilst Upton 1 was apparently moved on several occasions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But for none of the *c.* 20 examples which are now in a non-churchyard setting is there documented — or inferred — evidence of their movement *from* a churchyard.

Where they still seemingly stand in their original position (or can be deduced once to have stood), then these non-churchyard crosses occupy positions on high points in the landscape, on tracks and/or on what were later to be recognised as parish boundaries. Wincle Cleulow 1, the so-called ‘Cl[e]ulow cross’, provides the classic example: ‘... on a mound and ... a notable landmark at the head of the valley. It is also at the crossing of the Congleton–Buxton and Macclesfield–Wincle roads and near the boundary of the townships of Wincle and Sutton Downes’ (Thacker 1987, 281). It might seem reasonable therefore to conclude that, in the Peak District, many such crosses functioned as way- or boundary-markers, and this argument has frequently been advanced in a series of detailed local topographical studies (Cox, J. 1904; Andrew 1905; (—) 1914, 266–7; Sharpe 2002, 20–38, 94–107).

Evidence that crosses marked boundaries in other parts of the country is admittedly thin, but it does exist. The Lypiatt cross in Gloucestershire, and perhaps the Moulton cross in Lincolnshire, provide clear pre-Viking period examples (Bryant 1990, 44–6; Everson and Stocker 1999, 70, 162–4), whilst, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, there is charter evidence for some forms of cross being used as in this way (Blair 2005, 479). The Rey Cross on Stainmoor could be one actual survival from the north, and others could be added from the south-west of England as well as Ireland (Bailey 2001, 121; Lang 2001, 283; Cramp 2006, 69, 73, 82, 86–7; Hamlin 1987, 138–9). Use of crosses as way-markers is equally attested outside this immediate Peak District area. Thus both Blair and Cramp have drawn attention to William of Malmesbury’s record of crosses being erected along the route of Aldhelm’s funeral procession, whilst



studies in Cornwall suggest a local, late, pre-Norman function as way-markers over high ground or at crucial crossings (Blair 2005, 480; Cramp 2006, 32; Preston-Jones and Langdon 1997, 113, 121). In summary, this set of non-churchyard crosses in the Peak District seem to represent a particular geographical concentration of a function which is only weakly evidenced elsewhere.

Recently, however, Sidebottom (1994, 31) has taken a very different view of this evidence, arguing that ‘in all but one case these Cheshire round-shafts are to be found in the grounds of large stately residencies (e.g. Lyme Hall) and the suspicion is that they are the result of past collection of “curios”’. Expanding on this analysis, he notes that the two Adlington shafts came from the grounds of the Hall itself, that the Upton stone is on the boundary of Upton Hall, that the three Sutton stones came from Ridge Hall Farm, and that the Lyme Hall and Lyme Handley stones are from the Lyme Hall estate (Sidebottom 1994, 152–3). Similarly Winkle Grange 1 is associated with the Grange there. He concludes that their present non-churchyard distribution is a result of acquisitions and subsequent recycling of shafts by local landowners in the seventeenth or eighteenth century from church sites in Macclesfield and Prestbury. This relatively recent change in function, he asserts, is betrayed by the fact that many of the Cheshire round-shafts, along with those in Derbyshire, have initials on them in early modern script (Marshall 1975; Sharpe 2002, 121) whilst Fernilee is inscribed with the date of 1721. Sidebottom’s analysis is robustly argued — and may be right — but it fails to explain why it was predominantly *round-shafts* which were so treated. It also fails to recognise that the bounds of seventeenth-century estates often represent earlier land-divisions — the presence of crosses in a non-churchyard setting may thus go back a long way. Nor, to take a well-documented example, does it take into account the fact that ‘Clulow cross’ is recorded in a will of 1538 as a habitation name ([—] 1934, 97–8; Dodgson 1970a, 165–6). On balance therefore, particularly given the evidence from other parts of the country reviewed above, I accept the traditional view that round-shafts had been given a particular topographical role within Prestbury parish and adjacent areas. The examples at Upton and, probably, Adlington show that this function was not restricted to the very high lands in the eastern part of the parish.

THE ANDERTON/BOLTON/WHALLEY GROUP

Alongside the more distinctive groups of circle-heads and round-shafts, there is one further and more amorphous

TABLE 4  
The Anderton/Bolton/Whalley group

MOTIF	SITE NAME	ANDERTON 1	BOLTON LE MOORS 1	BOLTON LE MOORS 7	WHALLEY 2	WHALLEY 3	WHALLEY 13
Shouldered profile to shaft		●	●			●	
Square block base		●	●				
Bold mouldings		●				●	
Dogtooth/chevron mouldings		●				●	●
Large bosses on shaft		●	●			●	
Curving arches to cruciform shapes		●				●	
Triangular fret motif 		●			●	●	
Variant on meander pattern		●	●		●		
Fleur-de-lys terminals		●					
Vertical moulding on narrow edge				●	●	●	
Key-pattern motif or variant 		●	●				
Linked diamond motif			●			●	
Hollow square decoration on narrow face			●				

set of Viking-age carvings in eastern Lancashire which are closely linked together in both ornament and monument form. The sculptures come from three sites: Anderton 1 (possibly originally from Preston: Ills. 396–404); Bolton le Moors (nos. 1 and 7: Ills. 409–12); Whalley (nos. 2, 3, and 13: Ills. 671–4, 675–8, 702–5). Some of the decoration of another cross, Accrington 1, seems to reflect this group, though its handling of scroll sets it apart from the core members (Ills. 391–5). There is too much variety within the group to envisage that they are all the work of the same sculptor but they do all share a selection of distinctive shapes and motifs, summarised in the chart below (Table 4), which at very least signals certain sub-regional preferences. As the individual catalogue discussions make clear, many of these features were inspired by metalwork forms.

DOUBLE SOCKETS

At six sites in the western Pennine foothills of the region there are double socket-stones, a form of base which seems to be limited to this area and adjacent parts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire. They can be divided

into two types, according to whether they are cut to accommodate squared- or round-sectioned shafts. Sockets with cylindrical holes survive at Disley Church Field 1 and Disley Lyme Handley 3 (Ills. 160–1, 162); another can also be found in Derbyshire at Ludworth (Sharpe 2002, fig. on 13). The rectangular form of socket is represented in the Corpus region by Haslingden 1, Stretford 1 and Whalley 14 (Ills. 506–7, 649–50, 706–7), to which possibly can be added the now-lost examples at Cheetham Hill and Rochdale; in Yorkshire and Derbyshire this type has still to be fully recorded but certainly occurs at Bolsterstone, Ecclesfield and Whaley Moor (Ryder 1982, 110; Sharpe 2002, pls. on 62, 68, 107; Coatsworth 2008, ill. 249–50, 803–6). Pre-Conquest shafts still survive set in these sockets at Whalley, Lyme Handley and Ecclesfield and it is on that basis that these double forms are included in this Corpus. Unfortunately, we cannot be absolutely certain that those three sets of associations are primary.

Within the present Corpus region only Haslingden 1 and Whalley 14 seem to have a clear churchyard provenance. With varying degrees of conviction, it is possible to argue that at least three of the others (both Disley stones and Stretford) did not originally stand in churchyards. Of the Peak District and Derbyshire examples, only Ecclesfield was discovered within the church precincts; Ludworth, Whaley Moor and Bolsterstone came from other sites. Like the round-shafts which several of them supported therefore, the function of some of these stones was clearly not to mark graves. They may indeed have had several purposes, some to signal routes (Cox, J. 1904), others to mark special sites like the spring in Disley Church Field; yet others may have denoted territorial boundaries — a function perhaps recalled in the nineteenth-century tradition that any movement of the Stretford stone would result in the Traffords losing their estates (Crofton 1903, 45).

#### HOGBACKS

The hogback monument is building-shaped with, characteristically, a curved roof ridge and bombé ground plan. The date and origin of this form of carving have been much discussed but there is now general agreement that it represents a Viking-period adaptation of the building-shaped shrines of Anglo-Saxon England, of which Hedda's Tomb at Peterborough represents a well-documented example; influences from related metalwork shrines can also be traced in their form and decoration (Schmidt 1973, 52–77; Bailey 1980, 85–100; Lang 1984, 90–7). Lang has argued that this type of sculpture was short-lived, with most carvings dating to the first half of

the tenth century (Lang 2001, 23). His discussions and maps show that the main areas of production were in northern Yorkshire, along the Eden valley and down the Cumbrian coastal plain as far as Gosforth (Lang 1974a; id. 1984). Outside of these areas use of this type of monument is both scattered and markedly coastal. Thus the Scottish examples are either close to the sea or up navigable rivers, with a noticeable concentration around the Clyde and Forth estuaries, whilst the sole Welsh hogback is on a prominent ridge overlooking Cardigan Bay (Lang 1974a, 209, fig. 2; Crawford, B. 1987, 172–4; id. 1994, 104–5; Edwards, N. 2007a, 61).

Hogbacks in Lancashire and Cheshire follow this Scottish and Welsh pattern. There are only four sites, all significantly close to accessible harbours or beaches: West Kirby 4 and Bidston 1 on the Wirral coast (Ills. 27–33, 355–8); Heysham 5 and Bolton le Sands 2 on Morecambe Bay (Ills. 425–8, 521–3). The implication must be that these are monuments raised by traders and/or settlers whose sculptural tastes mirror those of the main concentrations of Hiberno-Norse groups in Yorkshire or Cumbria. More than aesthetic taste may, however, have been involved. For the choice of this particular form of monument in the coastal settlements of Cheshire and Lancashire, where it was (in local terms) an alien and unusual kind of sculpture, must have constituted a symbolic assertion of identity with the secular trading elite of Yorkshire and Cumbria (see, for comparison, the arguments of Everson and Stocker 1999, 80–4; Stocker 2000, esp. 191, 194–8; Stocker and Everson 2001, 230–2). What is more, in their regional rarity, they were also monumental expressions of status. That prestige was inherent in the fact that the form was derived from a rare kind of stone shrine but, in the case of West Kirby 4, it was underlined by the fact that it is carved from a stone which was not native to the area.

The northern pair of hogbacks, at Heysham and Bolton le Sands, are strongly linked in form and decoration to equivalent monuments in Cumbria. They have the tall thin section of the Cumbrian, and associated Clyde, hogbacks (Bailey and Cramp 1988, 29). Heysham also shares a taste for figural decoration on both faces of the hogback which is a favoured ornamental scheme in the peninsula to the north; apart from examples at Sockburn in Co. Durham (Cramp 1984, pls. 138.741, 139.745, 146.767–8), this type is restricted to Cumbria, found on monuments from Gosforth, Lowther, Penrith and Cross Canonby (Bailey and Cramp 1988, ill. 233, 234, 315, 323, 444, 447, 450, 510). In addition, if the suggestion in the catalogue below, that the scheme on face C of Heysham shows ornament surrounded by a serpent form, is accepted, then it can be compared with

the snake-encircled hogbacks at Lowther and Cross Canonby.

Whilst the two hogbacks from Morecambe Bay show decorative allegiances to Cumbria, the two certain examples from the Wirral exhibit diverging loyalties. West Kirby 4 looks to Cumbria both in its slim proportions and in its use of stopped plait. The diminutive carving from Bidston reveals, as the detailed analysis in the catalogue below makes clear (p. 000), more direct links to Yorkshire, and particularly to forms known from Brompton, near Northallerton. West Kirby 5 (Ills. 359–61), if it is part of a hogback, also seems to have its best analogues in Yorkshire.

### THE IRISH SEA DIMENSION

Viking-age sculpture in the region remains highly traditional in its continued use of free-armed crosses and scroll forms. New motifs whose origins lie in the Celtic west, such as the ‘hart and hound’ motif of Lancaster St Mary 4 (p. 000, Ill. 581), can undoubtedly be traced and there are innovative treatments of traditional themes like the interweaving scroll complexities of Accrington 1 (p. 000, Ill. 391). Equally in Cheshire, at sites like Astbury and Chester, the sculptors were open to the art of southern England (pp. 000, 000, 000, Ills. 13–18, 120, 126). But essentially this is a conservative art, almost parochial in its range of distinctive sub-regional forms like the circle-heads and round-shafts. Nowhere is that parochial traditionalism more marked than at Halton St Wilfrid where the tenth-century cross (no. 1), though importing novel Sigurd iconography, directly copies the earlier Anglian monuments at the site in a whole range of details: cable mouldings; pelleted slab arches; winged and scroll forms; interlace types and layout (p. 000, Ills. 465–70).

The lands around and within the northern Irish Sea all supported Viking colonies in the tenth century. But the relationship between the settling and host communities, their linguistic mix and the extent of acculturation varied a great deal from area to area; so also did the extent of trading and other relationships between them (Bailey 1984; Wilson, D. M. 1995; Griffiths 2004). Some years ago I attempted to chart the sculptural evidence for these fluctuating patterns (Bailey 1984; id. 1994); this complete Corpus listing of the carvings from Lancashire and Cheshire offers the opportunity to review those earlier conclusions.

In Cumbria links to Man were strong. Characteristic Manx ornamental forms such as the ring chain, ‘link-lock’ split-band, and knotwork tendrils are found

on carvings at sites like Aspatria and Lowther; the characteristic Manx head pattern recurs at Walton whilst Braddan has several sculptures which reflect forms of monument and knotwork developed in Cumbria (Bailey and Cramp 1988). By contrast, the carvings catalogued in this volume show little trace of Manx contacts. The only exception to this is Lancaster St Mary 4 whose spiral hips and lobate turns do seem to reflect the art of the island (p. 000, Ill. 581). Elsewhere the case is much more difficult to sustain. There are, for example, Manx parallels for the free-style animals of Prestbury 1 (p. 000, Ills. 230–7) but their treatment is common to much of tenth-century art across the north of England. Even the Sigurd iconography of Halton St Wilfrid 1 (p. 000, Ill. 470) betrays little direct influence from Manx formulations of the theme. More significantly, given the place-name evidence for a Manx involvement in Wirral (Fellows-Jensen 1983; id. 1985, 48–50; id. 1997), there is no trace of any Manx sculptural impact on that part of the region.

What *is* well evidenced, by contrast, in the Wirral and adjacent areas are a series of forms and ornaments which are best paralleled in Cumbria and adjacent parts of the Lune valley. Since they are not exploited by sculptors along the Pennines in eastern Lancashire, these parallels must reflect contact by sea, skirting the marshlands of Lancashire south of the Lune. They include the use of circle-headed carvings, double rows of ornament, runs of Stafford knots, forms of irregular spiral-scroll, stopped-plait and the tall narrow form of hogback.

A final element can now be added: that of Ireland. Here there is a contrast with Cumbria where no such influence could be detected. The analysis of Walton on the Hill 2 and Winwick 1, however, clearly show that Irish shapes, ornamental organisation, motif choices and iconography lie behind those carvings (pp. 000, 000, Ills. 651–1, 708–15). The ringed crosses on slabs from Hilbre and the amphitheatre in Chester point in the same direction (pp. 000, 000, Ills. 115, 176), and Ireland is the most likely source of the iconography of at least one of the figural panels at Thornton le Moors and of the ‘face on cross’ symbolism of Bromborough 5 (pp. 000, 000, Ills. 47–9, 335). The vertical arrangement of the text on the Thornton le Moors stone can also be attributed to an Irish ogam tradition (p. 000, Ill. 336). If the Greasby iron cross reproduces the form of an earlier carving then this too provides supporting evidence (p. 000, Ill. 738).

Significantly, most of these Irish symptoms are concentrated on the Mersey and Dee rivers and the Wirral peninsula. This conclusion is perhaps not unexpected given the onomastic, archaeological and numismatic evidence for links between the Wirral, Chester and Dublin (Wallace 1986, 207–14; id. 1987,

213; Griffiths 1992, 68–9; id. 1994; Thacker 1987, 258, pl. 24; id. 2003, 16, 21; Coates 1998). From the Chester area, routes led south-eastwards into the Midlands plain. But they also led north-eastwards to York. When combined with the visual statements of Yorkshire loyalty embedded in the Bidston hogback, the identification of a York-manufactured brooch at

Meols and a Chester customs tag of Eadwig's reign found at York, these carvings along the Mersey provide a useful corrective to a current emphasis on more northerly routes to York (Thomas, G. 2000, fig. 20; Vince 1991, 335, 340): the roads binding the vital political and commercial Dublin–York axis did not all run through the Ribble valley.

