



## CHAPTER X CONTINUING TRADITION

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### INTRODUCTION

Approximately 660 extant crosses, cross-bases and fragments survive in the county (see Appendix G, p. 259), showing that Cornwall's cross carving continued with vigour after the Norman Conquest, throughout the late medieval period and right up until the Reformation. There is also documentary evidence to suggest that many more crosses once existed which have not survived (Henderson, C. 1930). New examples turn up almost every year, with two new discoveries during 2011, and we can estimate that by the Reformation there may have been at least a thousand standing crosses in Cornwall.

By far the majority of stone crosses in Cornwall do not have an entry in this volume as they are not considered to be from the early medieval period. Nonetheless, very early dates have often been assigned to them. Often carved from coarse-grained moorland granite, their very rustic weathered appearance and simplicity of style are taken by many as a sign of their antiquity, while the popular term 'Celtic cross' leads to the assumption of a pre-Saxon date, when the vague use of the term may only be intended to describe their wheel-headed shape, rather than their age.<sup>1</sup>

Church guide books and popular books about Cornwall often provide unsubstantiated dates. For example, a Stithians church guide book suggests that the Tretheague Cross in Stithians parish is fifteen hundred years old, while guide books at Altarnun state that a wayside cross preserved in the churchyard was set up by St Nonna in c. 527 (Cumber 1950, 23).

1. 'Wheel' cross is the general term used in Arthur G. Langdon's *Old Cornish Crosses* (1896) for these monuments '... which have approximately circular heads of a greater diameter than the width of the shaft', and is used here rather than the usual Corpus term 'disc-head', since as he states, '... the heads in many instances are not actually round, being in some cases elliptical, and in others having straight sides ...' (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 40). But it does not imply that the arms are joined by a ring.

At St Agnes, a guide book to the village states that the wayside cross set up in the churchyard is probably eighth-century in date (Bizley and Bizley 1951, 15), while at Gerrans the date suggested for their wheel-headed cross is between the sixth and tenth centuries ((—) 1952, 9). At many Cornish churches, crosses have been appointed very early dates, perhaps to try and reinforce the presumed early foundation of their sites. Despite these unsubstantiated claims, evidence to be examined below indicates that most actually date from the Norman period and later.

### THE RESOURCE

There is a small number of substantial decorated monuments, but the majority consist of over 290 free-standing, simple wheel-headed crosses and a further 100 latin-style crosses, preserved in the countryside, in churchyards and in private gardens. Another 10 upright cross-slabs survive in country locations and in addition it is estimated that there are over 185 cross-bases and assorted cross fragments surviving. Finally, the remains of 17 sculptured late medieval lantern crosses with canopied heads and biblical images may be added to this collection. The small number of decorated crosses which have diagnostic evidence have been given catalogue entries in Appendix D (p. 231 and Ills. 285–337), while the remainder are listed in Appendix G (p. 259). Localised groupings, for example of latin crosses in the parish of Paul or of crosses with projections at the neck in the parishes of Davidstow, Laneast and St Clether (Fig. 22b) on the north-east side of Bodmin Moor, suggest that these simple crosses are, for the most part, the work of local stone masons and not products of major schools of craftsmen.

Many of these crosses are no longer in their original locations, having been rescued by well-meaning





antiquarians in the course of the nineteenth century, to be placed in churchyards or the gardens of manor houses. Appendix G lists the crosses as far as possible in their original locations. This shows that the crosses are mainly wayside crosses, set up to mark the route to the parish church, where they presumably acted as points of devotion as well as way markers. They are a reflection of the geography of Cornwall: a landscape of small hamlets and complex topography with a network of tracks linking the individual settlements (Preston-Jones and Rose 1986, 135). The crosses can be seen to mark fords and bridges, cross-roads or the meeting of tracks, the transition from enclosed to rough ground, and tracks over open rough ground (Preston-Jones and Langdon, Andrew 1997, 111–15). A number also mark boundaries of the glebe and of the parish, for example the cross at Treslea, Cardinham (Fig. 22f) (Langdon, Andrew 2005, 32).

Apart from the small group of lantern crosses, the majority are very plain monuments with little or no sculpture. The wheel-headed crosses may have an unsophisticated carved cross on the head, and a significant number bear simple images of the Crucifixion. A small number have incised decoration. For the most part, the latin crosses are even simpler, with no carving other than the rough shaping of the stone or a simple incised cross. It is the absolute plainness of the majority of these crosses which makes dating difficult: few have decorative elements that enable confident dates to be assigned. Nonetheless, a number do contain pointers towards dating and it is with the help of these that broad dates can be suggested for the plainer majority.

#### DATING

The evidence for dating most if not all of these crosses to after the Norman Conquest, rather than to a mythical Celtic Christian past, has never before been fully considered. Therefore, although they are strictly outside the remit of this volume, their role as successors to the sculptured crosses of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries requires careful consideration. It was a development which was without break, leading to an astonishing proliferation of stone monuments in Norman times. This remarkable collection indicates that the stone sculpture initiated in pre-Norman times was powerfully influential in shaping the character of Cornish sculpture. Both early and later medieval crosses remain an important feature of Cornish landscape and culture: even today the rise in their popularity within

the county can be seen by the number of books that feature them and the demand for modern copies and replicas as garden furniture.

The evidence to be considered includes the overall form of the monuments, the types of crosses carved on them, the style of the Crucifixion, and small decorative details and motifs. In examining these, much comparison is made with the later medieval grave-slabs. These are minor monumental carvings common in some parts of the country but represented by a relatively small collection in Cornwall.

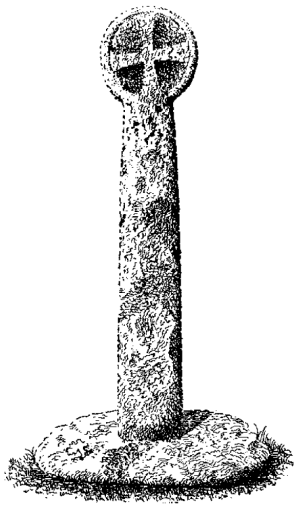
The term 'medieval grave-slab' in this instance can be considered to cover a range of different names which in the past have been given to stone slabs that cover a stone sarcophagus, coffin or grave, including cross-slab, grave-covers, priest tombs, sepulchral cross-slabs, coffin slabs and coffin lids.

As has been shown in Chapter IX (Transitional Monuments with Incised Decoration, p. 95), as we move into the Norman period, churchyard crosses become less well executed. The relief-carved decoration is replaced by shallow incised decoration and simpler styles, perhaps indicating a loss of skills, less competent craftsmen and/or a lack of understanding of previous forms of decoration. With the Continuing Tradition monuments there is a further simplification with most decoration other than the cross symbol being lost. Moreover, while the pre-Conquest crosses may have been carved by either an itinerant sculptor or perhaps by a school of sculptors linked to a religious house, and so show regional groupings, the later wayside and boundary crosses become more parochial in style. This may be because they were carved by local stonemasons without specialist sculptural skills. Exceptions to these generalisations are the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century lantern crosses, ornately carved with sculptured figures.

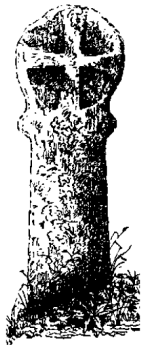
#### CROSS-FORM AND CRUCIFIXION

Simpler, geometric cross forms on solid wheel or disc heads become predominant in the Norman period. For example, the shape of the transitional cross on the north side of Lanivet churchyard (Lanivet 2, p. 161, Ills. 120–3) is similar to the cross-heads on many wayside and boundary crosses throughout Cornwall. It can be compared in style to the heads of crosses at Gwithian churchyard and at Druid's Hill, Boconnoc, originally from Lanlivery (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 168–9, 167–8), and also to Belfry Cross, Wendron (Langdon, Andrew 1999, 59), and to a fragment





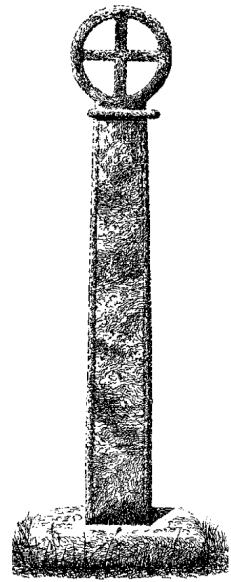
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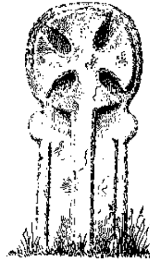
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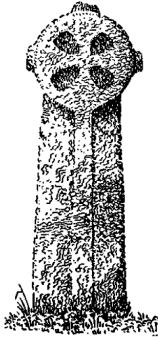
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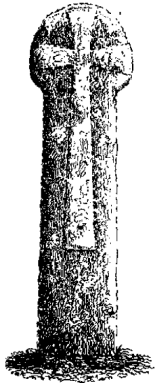
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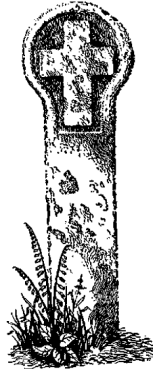
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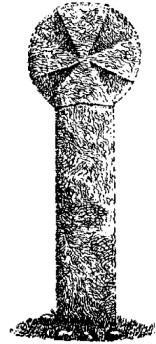
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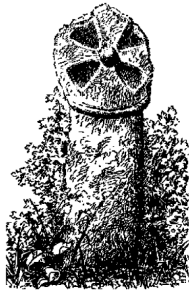
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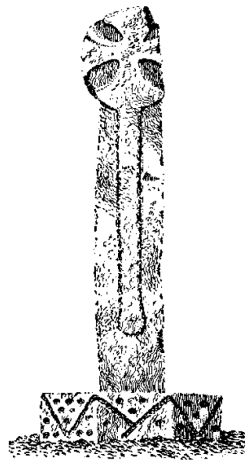
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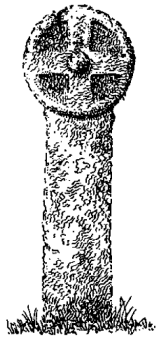
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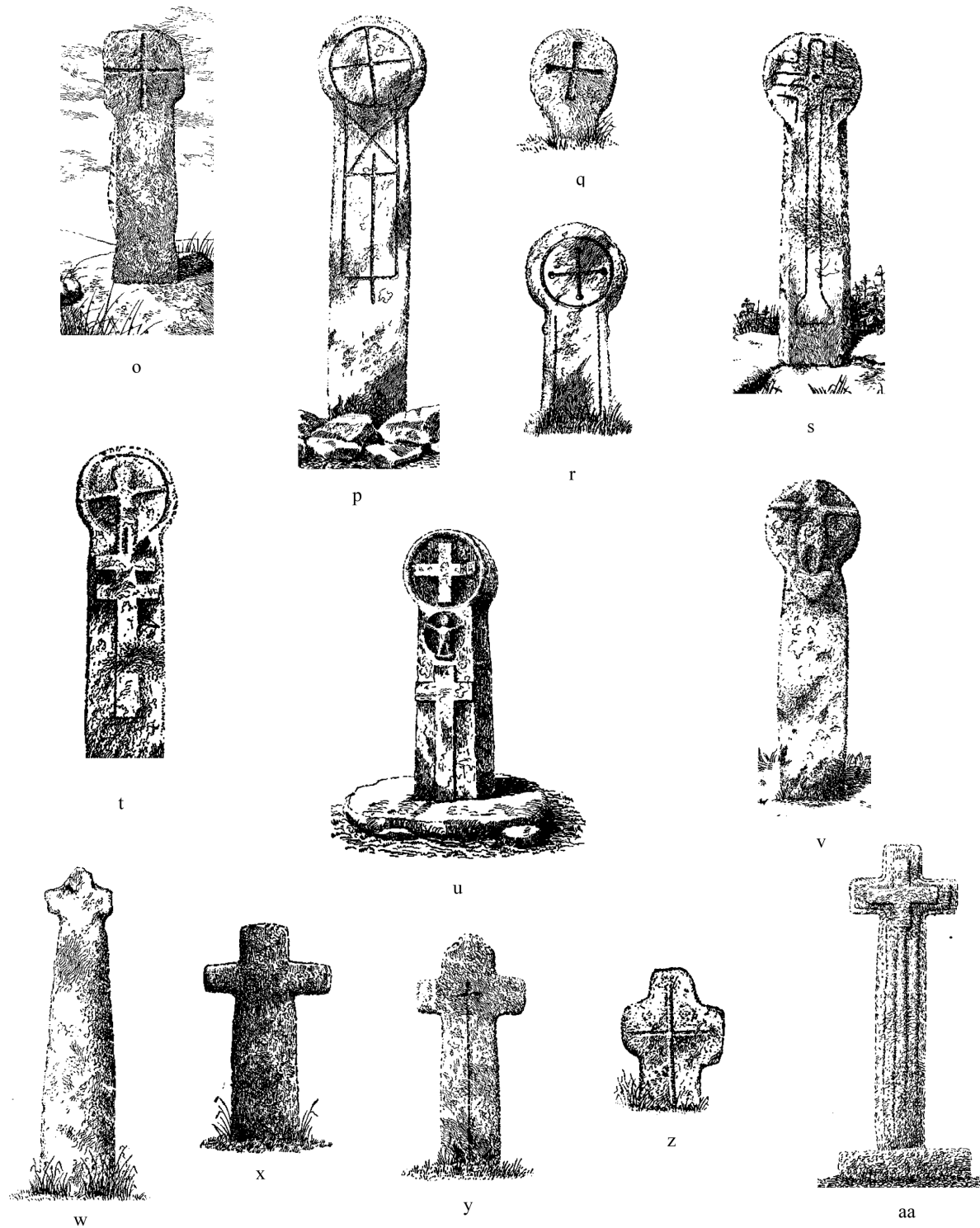


FIGURE 22

Some Continuing Tradition crosses in Cornwall (after Arthur G. Langdon, 1896)

- a – Tresinney, Advent; b – Basil, St Clether; c – Treniffle, Lawhitton; d – Michaelstow; e – Holyway, South Petherwin;  
 f – Treslea, Cardinham; g – Trevear, Sennen; h – Washaway, Egloshayle; i – Reppers Mill, Gwennap; j – St Ingunger,  
 Lanivet; k – Trevenning, Michaelstow; l – Bossiney, Tintagel; m – Tregaminion, Tywardreath; n – Gwithian;  
 o – Middle Moor, St Breward; p – Trewardreva, Constantine; q – Trevennen, Michaelstow; r – Helland, Mabe;  
 s – Meruny, Wendron; t – Trevease, Constantine; u – St Michael's Mount, St Hilary; v – Trevales, Stithians;  
 w – Lambrenny, Davidstow; x – Carracawn, St Germans; y – St Neot; z – St Neot; aa – Holy Well, St Cleer

from Trequite in St Kew (Langdon, Andrew 1996b, 39). Each has a cross formed by triangular segments recessed on the head to give the impression that the cross is in relief, and each has a small central boss.

Similar features can be seen on the Rectory cross-head at Lanteglos by Camelford (Lanteglos 2, p. 161, Ill. 136) where additional small bosses have been carved within the triangular segments. If this cross-head was originally part of the same monument as the inscribed shaft Lanteglos 1 (p. 159), then it is to be dated to the late eleventh or twelfth century. This cross-head can also be compared with a wayside cross at Bossiney in Tintagel parish (Fig. 22L), which has no sculpture on it other than the carved cross on the head (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 98–9).

A further development of the solid wheel-headed cross can be seen at Trelaske, Lewannick, where the triangular segments or recesses have been pierced to form a four-holed cross (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 185–6), or at Michaelstow (Fig. 22d), Lawhitton (Fig. 22c) and Laneast where the triangular area has been cut away completely to create a fine four-holed cross with narrow cross-arms and slender ring (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 186–7; Langdon, Andrew 1996b, 40).

These ‘Early Geometric’ cross forms can be paralleled on cross-slabs in other parts of the country; these cross forms are considered by both Butler and Ryder to represent very early Romanesque (Butler 1964, 115, fig. 1; Ryder 1991, 50–1). An example at Bradford, Bradford 4 (Ryder 1991, 15–16), contains small bosses between the cross-arms, like Lanteglos 2, and others at Calverley and at Kirkstall Abbey (Ryder 1991, 17–18, 35–6) can be compared with the Trevillet cross (Tintagel 1, Ills. 224–6). The range of Early Geometric cross designs seen on grave-slabs and illustrated by both Butler and Ryder includes others with more splayed arms, and crosses constructed from a series of arcs (cross pattée), all of which can be paralleled on the Cornish wayside and boundary crosses. These parallels again indicate their likely Norman date.

A stylistic link between wayside/boundary crosses and grave-slabs, which suggests that they may all be broadly contemporary, can be found in the Wendron area. In Appendix D (Continuing Tradition) Wendron 2, a grave-slab or cross-slab, is catalogued because it was considered by Langdon to be ‘probably the earliest example in Cornwall of a monument of this type’ (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 250–1). This rectangular granite slab depicts an incised latin cross with its upper arms enclosed in an incised compass-drawn circle (p. 247, Ills. 327). Although the style is primitive, this does not necessarily imply an early medieval date, since

the simple incised decoration can be closely compared with similar decoration on at least five wheel-headed wayside crosses in the area, three in the same parish. The crosses are at: Predannack, Mullion; Trewardreva, Constantine (Fig. 22p); Carnmenellis; Manhay-vean, Wendron; and Trenethick, Wendron (respectively Langdon, Arthur 1896, 283–4; 281–2; 280–1; 250–1; 285–6). In other words, these monuments represent a locally popular way of depicting a cross and are likely to date from the same period. Similar stones are often given very early dates elsewhere in Britain, but the context in which the symbol appears in Cornwall appears to suggest a later medieval date. There therefore seems little reason to assume an earlier date for the cross-slab Wendron 2.

Although most of the parallels quoted above are with grave-slabs, there are elsewhere a few instances of small round-headed monuments of the Norman period. Generally few in number, these are found in churchyards where they are considered to be headstones; they can nonetheless be compared with the Cornish wheel-headed wayside crosses. A group of such stones at Adel in west Yorkshire serve to illustrate the point. Coatsworth considers them all to be examples of transitional monuments, probably of the late eleventh century; they also illustrate preferential use of incised work to form the designs (Coatsworth 2008, 271–3, ill. 784–99; Ryder 1991, 8–9). Other more sophisticated instances, as for example from Whitby in north Yorkshire, may have a late eleventh- to twelfth-century date as suggested by Lang (2001, 288–9, ill. 1168–79). The same types of monuments can be seen in southern France and northern Spain (‘discoïdal stèles’: Thomas, A. C. 1994, 18) and in Germany (Azzola and Azzola 1972, pls. 11, 12, 13, 29 and 30): these suggest that, although used in a different context, Cornwall’s wheel-headed crosses conform to a European type of monument. In Germany, these regional groups of stones continue into the seventeenth century demonstrating that, in remote rural areas, monument types once adopted can persist for a long time. The same may be true in Cornwall although this cannot be demonstrated with any certainty.

Nevertheless, although these crosses are considered to have been carved after the Norman Conquest, Thomas has argued that three of the surviving crosses in St Buryan parish, at Trevorgans, Boskenna and the Churchtown cross (St Buryan 3–5, Ills. 285–6, 287–8, 289–90), could in fact pre-date the elaborate and highly decorated churchyard crosses like St Buryan 1, Paul 1 and Sancreed 1 (Ills. 29–32, 178–80, 214–17),

and that the churchyard crosses evolved from the smaller wayside examples (Thomas, A. C. 1978, 78–9). In this corpus, it is argued that the opposite is true, that the churchyard crosses such as St Buryan 1 in the churchyard are early medieval (p. 126) while crosses such as Trevorgans, Boskenna and the Churchtown cross were cruder, locally produced, later copies, created without the carving skill, knowledge and understanding of the earlier examples (pp. 231–4). These three crosses all feature simple representations of the Crucifixion.

There are 44 surviving wayside crosses, all in west Cornwall which depict a crucifix figure, and the three referred to by Thomas may provide a link between the pre-Conquest crosses such as St Buryan 1 and the remainder of the wayside group with crucifix figures. Like the crosses described above, the Trevorgans, Boskenna and Churchtown crosses all have a solid disc- or wheel-head with simple geometric crosses, rather than four-holed heads with an outer ring linking the cross-arms. Each features a simple crucifix figure on one face of the head and, although they have the same out-turned feet and short tunic as St Buryan 1's figure (Ill. 29), they are not as well proportioned, they lack details like the halo, and they are without a supporting cross (Preston-Jones and Langdon, Andrew 1997, 115–21). In other words, each appears to be copying and simplifying the well-proportioned figure of Christ on St Buryan 1, but to lack the flair and craftsmanship of the earliest sculptors. Copying the head of the impressive churchyard cross of St Buryan, they may be amongst the earliest examples of wayside crosses in west Cornwall to use the Crucifixion in this way. Similarly, the Boskenna cross (Ill. 288) shows raised areas between the four cross-arms which appear to mimic the bosses which feature on face C of the churchyard cross-head (Ill. 31), while the reverse face of the Churchtown cross, although extremely eroded (Ill. 286), appears to be similar to the Boskenna cross.

The Penwith group of early medieval crosses with depictions of the Crucifixion all show a triumphant Christ alive on the cross, with head upright, arms stretched out straight, and feet turned outwards (Chapter IX, p. 89). Christ is depicted wearing a tunic, with long sleeves, rather than a loin cloth. However, this is in contrast with later depictions of the Crucifixion, introduced in southern England from the tenth century, for example Romsey 1 and 2, London Stepney 1, and Langford 1 (Tweddle *et al.* 1995, 261–3, ills. 451–6; 229–30, ill. 354; 213, ills. 292–3). During the later medieval period the image of the dying or dead Christ is more strongly emphasized (Coatsworth

2000, 175). Christ is depicted with head slumped to his right side, his contorted body often hanging by his arms, his rib cage showing, his knees bent and his feet nailed one on top of the other. However, presumably because they are copying earlier models, many Cornish later medieval wayside crosses, like those described above, show a triumphant Christ, even if the figure is sometimes reduced to doll-like simplicity, as on the monuments in Pendarves churchyard and outside the Institute at Camborne (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 136–8 and 310–11). However some do show an awareness of the later forms and so betray their later date. For example, on the Battery Mill cross, St Erth (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 133), Christ's head is inclined to the right, while a cross recorded by Langdon at Phillack (now missing: Langdon, Arthur 1896, 135) and one at Zennor (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 146–7) show Christ's arms raised, while Scorrier No. 1, St Day, appears to show Christ's feet crossed, rather than sticking out (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 141–2). The evolution of these representations in Cornwall is especially difficult to assess because the shape and style of the figures may be dependent not only on the skill of the stone carver but also on the quality of the stone it was being carved on: erosion, coupled with large crystals in coarse-grained granite, may have necessitated modifications to the way the Crucifixion figure was represented.

The only wheel-headed cross with a crucifix which may be more closely dateable is a cross in Feock churchyard which also features a foliated bracelet cross on its reverse face. Here Christ is depicted crowned and this is the only piece of Cornish sculpture to show a crown (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 153–4). According to Ó Floinn, crowned figures of Christ are rarely seen before 1100 and are not common after 1200 as they then usually have the crown replaced by a crown of thorns (Ó Floinn 1987, 181). Here is strong evidence of a twelfth-century date, a date supported by its foliated cross which is discussed further below.

#### DATEABLE MOTIFS

Although the majority of the Cornish 'continuing tradition' crosses have no sculpture or decoration upon them, there are some which do have evidence to suggest a later medieval date and these indicators of date are discussed below.

Several of these indicators can again be related to medieval grave-slabs. These include the use of emblems or motifs such as the bracelet cross, the *fleur-de-lys*, and calvary-type terminations on the lower



cross-arm. Further individual elements that feature on both wayside/boundary crosses and also on grave-slabs include hour-glasses, chalices and wafers, horseshoes, shields, swords, human faces, and chevrons, although it must be noted that not all these elements necessarily have the same meaning or interpretation as those which have been suggested for the grave-slabs. Further indicators of date include the use of chamfered shafts, and parochial styles.

#### BRACELET CROSSES

As noted above, a wheel-headed cross in the churchyard at Feock has a late crowned image of Christ displayed on its principal face and a bracelet cross on the reverse. The bracelet motif is so-called as the cross-symbol is made up of four broken or open circles similar to bracelets which are butted up together, their open ends being diagonally placed. The terminations of the bracelets are round-leafed, often shown with buds between the circles. The same motif can be seen on the remains of three medieval grave-slabs in Cornwall, two in the churchyard at St Petroc, Bodmin and another in the parish church at Gerrans (Allan, J. and Langdon, Andrew 2008, 132).

The use of this motif to decorate medieval grave-slabs was very popular in northern England, with many in Yorkshire, Durham and Cumbria, for example at St Oswald, Ravenstonedale, Cumbria (Ryder 2005, 43). Ryder (1985, 9) suggested that such round-leaf bracelet crosses on grave-slabs in Co. Durham date from between *c.* 1175 and *c.* 1250; however he later revised his date for this style of decoration in his corpus of grave-slabs in Cumbria to *c.* 1150 to *c.* 1250 (Ryder 2005, 13). The Ravenstonedale example, which Ryder suggests is probably thirteenth century (Ryder 2005, 43), is a grave-slab with a similar open bracelet cross to the one shown on the back of the Feock cross. At St John the Baptist church at Croglin in Cumbria, he records another similar bracelet cross, this time with a Latin inscription which can be dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century (Ryder 2005, 57). With dates for the bracelet cross falling between the late twelfth and the thirteenth century, and the crowned Crucifixion being of probable twelfth-century date, the combined evidence suggests a probable late twelfth-century date for the Feock cross.

#### THE FLEUR-DE-LYS

The *fleur-de-lys* is an emblem which features on the cross-heads of three wayside crosses in north Cornwall,

on another small wheel-headed cross recently discovered at St Michael Lesnewth, and also on the shaft of Sancreed 2 (see Appendix D, p. 243, Ill. 316). In fact, the Prior's Cross at Washaway in Egloshayle parish (Fig. 22h) cannot strictly be called a cross as it has no cross-symbol on its wheel-head, but a *fleur-de-lys* in relief on either face (Langdon, Andrew 1996b, 30). A more stylised *fleur-de-lys* can be seen on a small wayside cross preserved on the south side of Egloshayle churchyard. In the neighbouring parish of St Mabyn is the Penwine Cross, which displays a simple geometric cross in relief on its front face and also has a *fleur-de-lys* on the reverse. Maclean (1873, 407) conjectured that the *fleur-de-lys* on the Egloshayle cross may have marked land of the Priory at Bodmin, as the priory was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose symbol it was, and St Petroc.

The origin of the symbol has been interpreted by some as a spear, lance or sceptre; however it is most popularly seen as a representation of a stylised flower, the lily or iris. Both the *fleur-de-lys* and the lily are taken as metaphors for whiteness, purity and hence for the Virgin Mary. The lily is the central figure in late medieval images of the Annunciation and was a popular image in both monastic houses and parish churches throughout the late medieval period.

Although its design can be traced to many parts of the world, the initial appearance of the *fleur-de-lys* in the western world was during the late twelfth century. The emblem was first used by Louis VII of France (1137–80) (Friar 1988, 199–200) and was later incorporated into the arms of Edward III (1327–77), quartered with the lions of England. The *fleur-de-lys* remained on the arms of every English sovereign until 1801. It also became a popular decorative motif or symbol on medieval grave-slabs. Ryder (1985, 12) suggests that straight-arm crosses with *fleur-de-lys* terminals date from between 1250 and 1350, although he later states that the *fleur-de-lys* was very typical of the terminals of cross-slabs after 1300, supplanting the earlier bracelet cross-forms (Ryder 2005, 208).

There are several medieval grave- or coffin-slabs in Cornwall with foliated crosses carved in relief which incorporate the *fleur-de-lys*: good examples are at Tintagel, St Buryan, St Allen and St Ewe, while the St Buryan grave-slab also includes an inscription in Norman-French, considered by Pevsner to be thirteenth century (Pevsner 1970, 162). The St Buryan grave-slab is one of only five in the county with Norman-French inscriptions. The weight of the evidence is therefore that crosses with *fleur-de-lys* are probably of thirteenth-century or later date. In the





case of Sancreed 2, the *fleur-de-lys* was presumably added to an existing monument at that date, at the same time as was added the incised zig-zag down the side (see p. 244).

#### EXTENDED CROSS-ARMS TERMINATING IN A CALVARY

By far the majority of medieval grave-slabs in Cornwall and throughout England have some form of cross or *fleur-de-lys*, floriated or foliated, with a centrally placed lower cross-arm extending down the grave-slab as a stem and terminating on a Calvary stepped base or 'mount'. These Calvaries are two dimensional in profile and can be seen on both grave-slabs and standing crosses; they do not have actual physical stepped bases. According to Ryder (1985, 14) the Calvary stepped base was in common use from the twelfth century onwards; and this feature can also be seen, in a simplified form, on a small number of the wheel-headed crosses in Cornwall. Although no cross displays a stepped base, several crosses have a triangular mount, including the crosses at Cury, St Levan, Sennen and Warleggan churchyards and also the Merther Uny Cross at Wendron (Fig. 22s) (respectively Langdon, Arthur 1896, 267–8, 298–9, 107–8, 108–9, 264–5). Further primitive-looking terminations such as a bulge at Tregaminion, Tywardreath (Fig. 22m) and at Tregullow, St Day, now in Devon (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 273–5, 272–3) as well as at Crewel, Lanlivery (Langdon, Andrew 2002, 52) could also be seen as an attempt by the stonemason to replicate a Calvary or mount.

#### CHEVRONS

In the parishes of Wendron and Stithians are a small group of wheel-headed crosses decorated with a mixture of chevrons, double chevrons, diamonds, zigzags and triangles. Crosses in this compact group, centred on the Carnmenellis granite area, are so similar that they may all have been carved by one sculptor or group of sculptors. They include: Stithians 1 (Tretheague); Wendron 4 (Trelill); Wendron 5 (Nine Maidens' Down); and Wendron 6 (Rame). Because of their decoration and the fact that early medieval dates have been proposed in the past for them, all these monuments are given a catalogue entry in Appendix D (Continuing Tradition, p. 231).

Architecturally, the chevron is more widely known as an element of Romanesque or Norman work and can often be found on Norman doorways. Sedding states that the 'ornament most frequently

used by the Norman craftsmen is the "chevron" or "zigzag" (Sedding, E. 1909, 459–60). In Cornwall, St Germans, Kilkhampton and Morwenstow churches have examples, but they also feature on Norman fonts, for example at Carnmenellis, St Cuby, St Conan's Egloshayle and St Stephen in Brannel (Sedding, E. 1909, respectively pls. XX, XXXII, XXXVI and CXLII).

Although chevron work is less common on medieval grave-slabs, instances do exist, for example at Pittington no. 1 in Co. Durham (Ryder 1985, 109, pl. 47), and at St Edmund, Newbiggin, Cumbria (Ryder 2005, 40). An example at Forcett in north Yorkshire has been wrongly considered to date to the early medieval period in the past but is in fact dated by Lang to the twelfth century (Lang 2001, 292, ill. 1140); the way the chevrons are depicted on this is very similar to their rendering on the Camborne 4 (Troon, Fenton-Ia) cross (Ill. 291; Thomas, A. C. 1967a, 88–9). Hence this characteristically Norman motif can be seen to transfer between different monument types and its appearance on the crosses helps to confirm their post-Conquest dates. Incised zig-zags, seen on St Levan 1, Sancreed 2 and Wendron 6 face B (Ills. 307–9, 317, 347), are presumably a simplified version of the chevron.

#### OTHER DECORATIVE MOTIFS

A small number of other motifs appear in only one or two instances on the wayside crosses and are discussed below.

An hour-glass or chalice-shaped device is represented on two wheel-headed crosses. At St Dennis the device can be seen three times on the front of the shaft, below each other, while on the reverse face is another one and a further three are placed down one side (Ills. 294–6). On the chevron-decorated Nine Maidens' Down cross (Wendron 5) an hour-glass or chalice can be found low down on face A of the shaft (Ill. 334). Above it is a small circle, the proximity of the two motifs suggesting that together they represent a chalice and wafer. A second hour-glass or chalice device can be seen on face C of the cross at the neck of the monument (Ill. 336).

The chalice and the wafer (host) are symbols of the blood and body of Christ. The chalice is a popular symbol on medieval grave-slabs, where it is normally considered to represent a priest (Cutts 1849, 34–5). The majority of chalice symbols carved on medieval grave-slabs in the north of England are more ornate than the Cornish examples, with a knop in the middle.





Those on the crosses at St Dennis and Nine Maidens' Down do not have a knop in the middle and therefore cannot be said with complete certainty to represent a chalice. An alternative idea put forward by Langdon, that they resemble an hour-glass symbol (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 330), is difficult to sustain since hour-glasses were not in use until in the late medieval and Tudor periods; the earliest example may be an image in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's 1338 painting the *Allegory of Good Government* <[http://www.casasantapia.com/art/ambrogio\\_lorenzetti/goodandbadgovernment.htm](http://www.casasantapia.com/art/ambrogio_lorenzetti/goodandbadgovernment.htm)>. The symbols on these crosses are therefore more likely to be the stonemason's attempt to represent a simple chalice. The use of coarse-grained granite may have restricted the amount of detail which could be achieved, with straight incised lines being easier to carve than curves.

A shield-shaped motif is cut on two crosses: on face *C* of Sancreed 2 (see Appendix D, p. 243, Ill. 318) and at Trevia in Lanteglos by Camelford (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 297–8) where it is the only decoration on the shaft. Like the *fleur-de-lys*, the shield became popular in heraldry and is often shown on grave-slabs, sometimes plain and sometimes with bearings, though none appears on Cornish grave-slabs.

The cross in Roche churchyard (see Appendix D, p. 241) has a sword depicted on face *D* (Ill. 315): it is the only example on a Cornish cross (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 344–5). The pommel, hilt and guard are carved in relief, with three incised lines representing the blade; the tip of the sword is now below ground level. The central line represents the fuller, a narrow groove which often runs down the centre of actual blades to make them lighter. The sword is a popular symbol on grave-slabs. In Ryder's catalogue of Co. Durham slabs he stated that the sword was the most common secondary emblem to occur and can be seen on 167 examples (Ryder, 1985, 18). Although it was depicted on pre-Conquest sculpture, it became much more popular after the Conquest with the introduction of heraldry. The majority of swords depicted on grave-slabs do not have the fuller or central line down the blade of the sword, although an example does exist on a grave-slab at Kirkheaton, Kirkheaton no. 1, in west Yorkshire, which Ryder suggests may date from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries (Ryder, 1991, 33).

An incised horseshoe-like motif appears on three crosses, each of which also displays chevron work. They include the Camborne 4 (Troon, Fenton-Ia, Ill. 291), Wendron 4 (Trelill, Ill. 332), and Wendron 6 (Rame, Ill. 348) crosses, all from the same area and all similar in style. The Wendron 4 (Trelill) cross shows

a horseshoe randomly placed across the chevron decoration, and another two horseshoes, with their open ends pointing upwards and downwards on the reverse side of the shaft. The horseshoe is commonly depicted on grave-slabs in the north of England, usually in conjunction with the symbol of a hammer or tongs where together they are thought to represent the grave of a blacksmith or farrier. On Wendon 4 (Trelill) there is also a symbol which may represent a pair of tongs. The meaning of the symbol on these crosses is uncertain: since the majority of this group of crosses stood on boundaries they presumably did not represent blacksmiths' burials. Langdon suggested that the horseshoes may represent the Ferrers family of Trelowarren whose coat of arms depicts horseshoes, even though this family's appearance in the area is later than the assumed date of the crosses (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 332).

Finally, the Trevean Cross from St Erth, which is now on St Michael's Mount, features relief-carved human faces on each shoulder just beneath the round head (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 335–7). The mutilated remains of a second cross with a human face in a similar position can be seen at St Anthony in Meneage (Langdon, Andrew 1999, 66). Such disembodied heads are not seen in the early medieval sculpture of Cornwall but are more reminiscent of the heads seen on Norman fonts and corbels. Two important groups of Norman fonts in Cornwall feature human faces at their corners: the Altarnun group and the impressive late Norman Bodmin Series (Sedding, E. 1909, 454–6).

#### ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

All the crosses discussed above are wheel-headed monuments which, as a group, constitute by far the majority of wayside and boundary crosses in Cornwall. There are also nearly one hundred latin-style crosses, although most of these lack any decorative features that allow them to be dated. Such indications as there are suggest that they may be slightly later in date than the wheel-headed crosses.

The Trevean Cross, discussed above, features broad chamfering down its sides giving it an almost octagonal section which is more comparable with later medieval crosses of perhaps the thirteenth century onwards. The wheel-headed cross at Trelanvean, St Keverne, displays chamfers which terminate in chamfered stops of a type usually associated with the shafts of late medieval monuments (Langdon, Arthur 1896, 112–13). But other than this, very few wheel-headed crosses (less

than 5%) feature chamfered shafts. In contrast, 60% of the latin crosses have chamfered or octagonal-sectioned shafts, suggesting that on the whole these may represent a later development, although with such simple monuments there will always be some uncertainty.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the legacy of the early medieval sculpture in Cornwall was to inspire a remarkable continuing tradition of cross-carving in Cornwall, with local parishes creating their own parochial styles. Why cross-carving has proved so popular in Cornwall is uncertain, or why these monuments proliferated in the countryside, unlike in other counties where more investment seems to have been put into the use of grave-slabs in churchyards. In addition to the ornate

group of chevron-decorated crosses in the Wendron area, crosses in the parish of Lanivet all look similar, with crosses of the same style carved on their heads, while at St Clether all the crosses are tall and have large wheel-heads with projections at the neck. Some parishes apparently chose to have carved latin rather than wheel-headed crosses, notably at Paul in west Cornwall and St Cleer and St Neot on Bodmin Moor. Geology has had an influence on the surviving crosses and their location. The majority of crosses were carved from surface moorland granite and survive in large numbers in moorland parishes such as St Buryan, St Breward, St Just, Altarnun and St Neot. Those in west Cornwall are normally smaller when compared to those on Bodmin Moor, probably due to the nature of the coarse-grained granite. With new examples being discovered almost annually, further material may well be found in the future, hopefully with further evidence to substantiate the dates suggested above.