

THE TESTAMENT OF STONE: UNDERSTANDING THE PAST,
PRESENT, AND FUTURE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LONG
LIVES OF THE IRISH HIGH CROSSES

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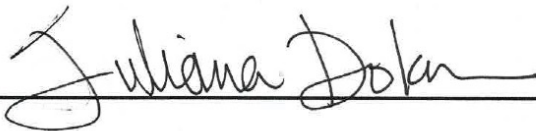
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The Testament of Stone: understanding the past, present, and future cultural significance of the long lives of the Irish high crosses.

Ana Dolan

Abstract.

The Irish High Crosses are a unique group of monuments that, relative to their size, convey an exceptional amount of information about the early Christian period in which they were made. Over the past one hundred and fifty years, they have been the subject of a large body of scholarship, focused primarily on their insular art, iconography, evolution and design. However, very little attention has been paid to their post 1200 survival and the untold stories of their long lives. The physical fabric of the crosses is an unrecognised and undervalued source of evidence about their changing cultural significance during that time. In addition, the crosses that remain outdoors are vulnerable to climate change impacts but there is an absence of any public debate about their future. At present, there is no government policy for the protection of carved stone sculpture nor is there an inventory or condition audit for the crosses. This research attempts to address the gaps in our understanding of the crosses post 1200 by examining historical texts and images to advance knowledge of the changing cultural, political, and religious values that affected the survival of the crosses. It reveals their post-Reformation role in the creation of Catholic and Protestant Irish identity which contributed to their survival and the retention of their cultural significance. In addition, ten case studies of high crosses are examined to determine what additional understanding can be achieved through combining a forensic analysis of their physical condition with their known biographies. The findings of the ten case studies together with the historical evidence are brought together to create a 'lexicon of losses' which not only identifies shared patterns of loss in the past but also highlights their vulnerability to future climate change impacts. This thesis demonstrates that the histories of the crosses are far from static and that they will continue to change into the future. An acceptance of the crosses as a high-value/high-risk category of monument will provide clarity around the difficult question of maintaining their cultural significance in the face of climate change impacts and assist in addressing the role of policy in managing their future.

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The images and illustrations for this thesis can be found online at the link
<http://hdl.handle.net/2262/108444>

Preface.

My initial training as an architect led to a career in the Office of Public Works (OPW) where I worked on a number of National Building Programmes. I retrained as a landscape architect in the early nineties and had the good fortune to design the *Dubh Linn Garden* in Dublin Castle and the National Memorial for the members of the Garda Síochána who had been killed in the line of duty. In 1993 I transferred to Aighleann O'Shaughnessy's National Monuments conservation team for the districts of Kilkenny and Mallow and subsequently undertook a Masters in Urban and Building Conservation (MUBC) in University College Dublin. For my thesis, I examined the post-Reformation survival and adaptation of twelve large twelfth century medieval churches in the context of a minority Protestant community.¹ During that time, I had my first close encounter with high crosses as we were taking the Moone cross apart to remove iron dowels that had been used in its 1893 reconstruction which were now rusting and cracking the stone. The most alarming part of the project was when the tenon on the underside of the shaft broke while separating the shaft from the base. The parts were tightly wedged together by the rusting iron dowels but was soon repaired with stainless steel pins by the expert OPW stone masons. A better memory was when Richard Stapleton and I were up on the scaffolding surveying the gable of the ruined medieval church at Moone when he spotted a carved stone built into the wall which turned out to be a missing part of the famous 'holed' cross² (Fig. P.1). The experience at Moone shaped my view of the crosses: they could be assembled and disassembled, lost and found, broken and repaired, lifted and relocated.

In 2002, I moved to the Trim National Monuments Depot and led the team that moved the Durrow cross into the interior of an adjacent ruined church that was then restored around it. This was a less complex operation as the cross was lifted as a single object and placed on a new foundation within the church. During the following years, my team and I relocated the late medieval cross at Bealin, Co. Meath in 2008 when the road junction was altered. We lifted, repaired and relocated several large nineteenth century ringed crosses at Slane Abbey, Co. Meath and at Monasterboice, Co. Louth. In 2019 we straightened up the cross at Drumiskin, Co. Louth which was in danger of collapse due to subsidence.

1. Ana Dolan, "The large medieval churches of the dioceses of Leighlin, Ferns and Ossory: a study of adaptation and change," Part I & Part II, *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies*, Vol II & III, (Kinsale: Irish Georgian Society, 1999) 26-65, (Kinsale: Irish Georgian Society, 2000) 102-155; Ana Dolan and Loughlin Kealy, "Sacred Places: Contested Relics. Reflections on the survival of medieval parish churches." *Tracings*, vol. 1 (Dublin: The School Of Architecture, University College Dublin, 2000) 74-94.

2. Walter Fitz Gerald, 'On a Holed Cross at Moone.' *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 9, no. 4 (1899): 385-89.

In 2009, I attended the final *ICOMOS* stone course in Venice, an intense multi-disciplinary training focused on understanding the mechanisms of stone decay and appropriate conservation options.³ On my return, I carried out detail condition reports on the Monasterboice and Kells crosses and began to identify patterns of damage that could not be explained by the impact of weathering (Fig. P.2). The published literature concentrated on the art historical value of the crosses and there were scant references to their current physical condition or any explanation for the visible damage. Despite their obvious cultural importance, there was little understanding of the long lives of the crosses or any official acknowledgement of them as a high-risk group of monuments. At local level, there was considerable concern about individual crosses but at a national level there was an absence of a discussion about their future as a group.

During my thirty years with the National Monuments Service, I was privileged to study and engage with a wide range of monuments from the Brú na Boinne World Heritage site in Co. Meath to Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin. In terms of their future conservation, the high crosses were, without doubt, some of the most challenging monuments in the National Monuments portfolio. My experience and training over the years had given me unparalleled access to the crosses and an understanding of their unique vulnerabilities. This concern was coupled with an awareness of the gaps in knowledge regarding their post 1200 history and the lack of official policies regarding their future protection. The traditional approach of moving crosses indoors no longer seemed a viable option as issues of cultural value, sustainability and technological advances began to change conservation approaches.

When I started this research in 2016, I was still working full time and the threat of climate change to the crosses was considered to be ‘in the future’. Seven years later, climate change impacts are everywhere and the threat to the crosses is real and present. This thesis is a synthesis of my knowledge and experience of the crosses since the early nineties with additional new research carried out since 2016. It is an attempt to raise awareness of the impact that climate change will have on the crosses and to make a contribution to the discussion about how we deal with future losses.

September 2023.

3. <https://www.iccom.org/courses/20th-international-course-stone-conservation---sc17>

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The restrictions of the past few years have added an additional challenge to the PhD process, and I am thankful for the support and kindness of Mark Leslie, my daughter Julie and her husband Paul Quincey. Finally, as this thesis is principally concerned with dealing with loss, I would like to acknowledge the kindness and support of my beloved brother Aidan Power who died recently. *Ní beigh a lithéid arís ann.*

The Testament of Stone: understanding the past, present and future cultural significance of the long lives of the Irish high crosses.

Chapter 1. The long lives of the Irish high crosses.

1.1 Introduction and research questions.

The Irish high crosses are a group of free standing stone sculptures, which were carved and erected between the eighth and twelfth centuries.¹ The high crosses, hereafter ‘the crosses’, are recognised as an internationally significant group of stone monuments created by sculptors of remarkable artistic and technical skill.² Peter Harbison described them as ‘one of the most distinctive and individual creations the country has ever produced’.³ His photographic and iconographical survey of 1992 is the *corpus* for the group, which includes crosses with carvings, decorated cross bases, undecorated crosses over 1.5 meters in height, some smaller crosses on sites with larger crosses, decorated pillars and the cross decorated slab at Fahan Mura, Co. Donegal.⁴ They were first created c. 800 and part of their art historical significance is that they had no obvious sculptural prototypes on the European mainland. In terms of their international importance, they are a unique example of monumental stone carving, which fill in gaps in knowledge around the development of European art between the decline of the Roman Empire and the eleventh century revival of stone sculpture at the beginning of the Romanesque period. In artistic terms, they combined a unique sculptural form with complex scriptural iconography that was influenced by carvings from the Classical world and Christian art from the fifth century onwards.⁵ These sources had not previously reached Ireland, which had remained outside the sphere of Roman influence. |One of the unique features of the crosses is the way that Christian

1. Peter Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland: An Iconographical and Photographic Survey*, 3 vols. (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt GMBH, 1992), 1:1–2.

2. For an overview of the group see; Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland*, vol.1; Françoise Henry, *Irish High Crosses*. (Dublin: Three Candles Ltd for The Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland, 1964); Roger Stalley, *Irish High Crosses*, (Dublin: Town House, 1996); Roger Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture and the Art of the High Crosses*. (London: Yale University Press, 2020); Hilary Richardson, and John Scarry. *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1990); Rachel Moss, ed. *Art and Architecture of Ireland: Medieval c. 400–1600* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 143–157; Malcolm Seaborne, *Celtic Crosses of Britain and Ireland* (Aylesbury: Shire Publications, 1989).

3. Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:1.

4. Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:1–3.

5. Moss, *Art and Architecture of Ireland, Medieval*, 41–43.

influences were combined with lively Insular detail that was a product of an elite and cultured society in early medieval Gaelic Ireland and areas under its influence.⁶

In terms of the level of information that they contain about early Christianity in Ireland, the only comparable group of artefacts are early manuscripts that are all safely conserved in museums and libraries across Europe. The ability to understand the crosses depends on the legibility of the carvings, which can be appreciated at different levels. The iconography can be read as simple biblical scenes but, as many art historians have demonstrated, deeper levels of symbolism and meaning can be found in ever increasing levels of complexity. This has resulted in a body of literature dedicated to reviewing existing theories and creating new ones. Their importance goes beyond their inimitable insular contribution to European art, as they were both nodal points and integrated elements of a symbolic and sacred landscape.⁷ Some of the crosses, unusually, still occupy their primary position, thus providing insights into the layout and ritual practices that symbolically recreated the Temple of Jerusalem complex in Ireland.⁸ The majority of the crosses will continue to remain outdoors, resulting in the gradual disappearance of their carvings and the information they contain. The crosses that survived in urban settings provide tangible links to the early medieval origins of the towns and were substantial landmarks.⁹

A programme of making and dispersing plaster casts of the crosses for museums and exhibitions in the nineteenth century has ensured that the ringed cross was fused with Irish identity.¹⁰ The crosses remain cultural icons today that interweave national, religious, and artistic values as well as contributing to the identity of local places. They are often the oldest object in a locality that can be touched, providing a tangible link with an earlier period, and are no longer associated with any negative aspects of the past. The religious value of the crosses is affirmed through the rituals of pattern day festivals at sites associated with founding saints. The role of the crosses as important national emblems was confirmed

6. See Chapter 4, “Abstract and Animal Art,” in Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 67–83.

7. Tomás Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland: Architecture, Ritual and Memory* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010), 120–22.

8. Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 57–60; David H. Jenkins, ‘Holy, Holier, Holiest’: *The Sacred Topography of the Early Medieval Irish Church*. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).

9. Anngret Simms, “The Monastic Town,” <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/annngret-simms-monastic-town>. Accessed January 20, 2021.

10. Ragnall Ó Floinn, “Reproducing the Past: Making Replicas of Irish Antiquities,” in *A Carnival of Learning, Essays to honour George Cunningham and his 50 Conferences on Medieval Ireland in the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St Joseph’s, Roscrea, 1987–2012*. eds. Peter Harbison and Valerie Hall (Roscrea: Cistercian Press, 2012.), 146–57.

by the use of six plaster casts of high crosses as the centrepiece of an exhibition themed around Celtic art in the Irish pavilion at the 2005 Expo in Nagoya, Japan.¹¹ When visiting the exhibition, President Mary McAleese commented ‘what better way for Ireland to present itself to Japan and the World.’¹² They can be significant tourist attractions either as part of the wider ecclesiastical landscape or the focus of exhibitions in heritage centres. The shape of the ringed cross is the inspiration for the GAA medals, tattoos related to ‘Celtic ancestry’, decorative interlace art, and particularly in memorials of all kinds. Equivalent symbols of Ireland such as the harp, the shamrock, and the wolfhound are not related to a similar group of original artefacts or monuments.

The key gap that this thesis seeks to address is what new understanding can be gained of the cultural significance of the long lives of the crosses after 1200 and how this should influence heritage policies for their future protection. The crosses’ unquestionable art-historical value has overshadowed the significance of other values associated with their often battered and fragmented survival. The untold stories of their long lives, that can be read in their physical fabric, is an unrecognised and undervalued source of evidence of their changing cultural significance. The first gap in knowledge that this thesis seeks to address is the minimal consideration given to the long lives of the crosses from the period after 1200, despite major changes in their cultural significance during that time. A dedicated study of the crosses since c.1200, aims to answer the question of what new knowledge can be gained by examining the largely ignored, 800-year history of the crosses’ existence. This survival has been shaped by their interaction with people and places as their meaning and value was transformed by individuals, groups and nations.¹³ These changes were culturally created and constantly evolving as the crosses were contested, modified and replaced.¹⁴ This is a critical issue, as relevant and effective future conservation planning intended to maintain their cultural significance should be based on understanding of their past and present significance. This process is based on the *Burra Charter*’s definition of cultural significance as the sum of the aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, or spiritual values embodied in a place

11. <http://www.expo2005.or.jp/en/nations/4d.html> Accessed May 13, 2023.

12. *The Irish Times*, March 19, 2005.

13. Stuart Hall, “Whose Heritage? Un-settling ‘The Heritage’, Re-imagining the Post-nation,” In *The Heritage Reader*, eds., G. Fairclough *et. al.* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008) 219–28.

14. Erica Avrami, Randall Mason and Marta de la Torre, *Values and Heritage Conservation*, (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2000).

https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/valuesrpt.pdf. Accessed May 3, 2023.

by past, present, and future generations.¹⁵ These ideas were clarified by English Heritage and Sally Foster in the ‘heritage cycle’ which demonstrates how the creation of new knowledge and understanding can modify the values that contribute to its cultural significance which in turn influence future management and engagement (Fig.1.1).¹⁶

The second way that new knowledge and understanding is created is by making a detailed forensic examination of the physical fabric of the crosses with an emphasis on the evidence of later additions, the nature of wear and other forms of damage, relocations, and adaptations. Many of the surviving monuments are incomplete, composite and/or no longer in their original locations, and although this is crucial to understanding their future management, their piecemeal condition has not been acknowledged due to the dominance of other values. The new historical and evidential research is overlaid to find shared patterns of cultural appropriation, identity creation, adaptation, and changes in meaning. The analysis of shared patterns is based on ten case studies. This selective approach is necessary in the absence of an accessible current inventory of the group or a systematic audit of their physical condition. Finally, the future retention of the cultural significance of the crosses is discussed in the context of this new knowledge and understanding. The overall objective is to prompt new thinking about how their cultural significance is assessed and, consequently, to influence policy and planning for their future.

1.2. The future of the crosses.

At present, there is little or no discussion or debate regarding the future of the Irish crosses amongst official heritage or academic circles. This lack of discussion is due to a number of issues that are summarised below and described in some detail in the following sections. The strength and dominance of the art-historical values associated with the crosses has overshadowed other values associated with the crosses. This lack of balance has led to conservation solutions that traditionally prioritised the protection of the art-historical values over others, such as spiritual or social values. Departmental changes since 1994 have led to a lack of coordination in the Irish Government’s delivery of their conservation function. This lack extends to the coordination of the protection of monuments and relationships

15. *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (1979–2013), 2. <http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>. Accessed May 3, 2023; Avrami *et al*, *Values and Heritage Conservation*. 155–166; Marta de la Torre, “Values and Heritage Conservation,” *Heritage & Society*, 6: 2 (2013):7–10.

16. For details of ‘the heritage cycle’ see Sally Foster, *My Life as a Replica; St. John’s Cross, Iona* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2020), 170–84.

between the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive, which has been non-functioning since 2022. The *National Monuments Act* provides legal protection to over 140,000 monuments resulting in a lack of visibility and identification of the crosses as a relatively small and vulnerable group of monuments. There is no current dedicated inventory or data base exclusively dedicated to the crosses, so it is difficult to get an overview of the conservation issues that specifically relate to them. The Irish Government have no policy in place to guide the protection of early medieval carved stone sculpture or any co-ordinated research frameworks to address how the crosses are valued and what they mean to the current and next generations.

1.2.1. The dominance of expert-led, art-historical values.

The crosses are a unique group of stone sculptures but are also part of a wider group of contemporary artefacts and monuments created during a period known as the ‘Golden Age of Irish Art’.¹⁷ This period has proved to be a rich resource for academic research and interest in the crosses has never waned since their ‘rediscovery’ during the nineteenth century. Books and papers continue to be published that explore their unique setting, development, and art.¹⁸ To date, research has primarily focused on their chronology, art-historical and aesthetic values, aspects that are traditionally considered to be intrinsic to heritage objects.¹⁹ The majority of research concentrates on the early medieval period and ends at the twelfth century. This is due in part to a nationalistic bias that developed during the nineteenth century, which has endured due to scholarly focus on the pre-Anglo-Norman culture in which the crosses were made. As a result, our knowledge of the crosses is largely based on archaeological, and art historical research focused on understanding and interpreting their early history. Remarkably little study has been undertaken in Ireland on the significance of their long lives and the multiple meanings they have had over time. When the entire known past of a monument is examined, the significance of its survival can be appreciated and this, in turn, increases understanding of future vulnerability and risk.

17. Peter Harbison, *The Golden Age of Irish Art: The Medieval Achievement, 600–1200* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999); <https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2020/05/remembering-anglo-saxon-kingdoms-art-word-war.html>. Accessed August 18, 2022.

18. The most recent publication is Roger Stalley’s 2020 *Early Irish Sculpture*.

19. Randall Mason, “Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices” in *Heritage Reader*, 99–124; Marta de la Torre, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage: Research Report*. (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2002), 13.

The dominance of art-historical values can be seen in three recent conservation plans, which were completed over the past eighteen years for sites with crosses in the care of the state.²⁰ The conservation plan process, derived from the *Burra Charter*, places the assessment and retention of cultural significance at the centre of heritage planning and management.²¹ Multi-disciplinary teams provide their expert contributions that are then collated in the conservation plan so that the cultural significance of a site and its vulnerabilities are identified. The plan for Durrow Abbey in Co. Offaly was completed in 2005,²² Monasterboice in Co. Louth in 2009,²³ and the plan for the group known as the Western Ossory High Crosses in 2011.²⁴ Each plan, quite correctly, employed interdisciplinary teams with different skill sets but there was a bias towards traditional heritage ‘experts’ and their methodologies for assessing natural and historic values.

A full fabric analysis and building history was included in the conservation plans for the sites that had buildings and/or ruins. A condition report on each cross was also included but there was little acknowledgement of the significance of their post-1200 history. An assessment of the social and spiritual values of the crosses is largely absent from all three plans. The condition report on the crosses in the Ossory plan is descriptive and makes no attempt to analyse the nature or cause of the damage to the stone: the missing corners of the Ahenny crosses are described as ‘mechanical damage’, while the missing quadrant of the ring of the north cross is ‘old damage’.²⁵ At Monasterboice, the missing section of the lower part of the shaft of the Tall Cross is described as ‘likely to represent historic physical

20. The conservation plan process is based on the principles in the *Burra Charter*. See James Semple Kerr, ‘The Conservation Plan’ in *The Heritage Reader*, 322–330; de la Torre, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*; Harald Fredheim and Manal Khalaf, “The Significance of Values: Heritage Value Typologies Re-examined,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 22:6 (2016): 466–481.

21. *Burra Charter* (1979), 2. The categories of the *Burra Charter* values are not static as different sets of categories have emerged over time but the concept of a values-based framework to guide heritage management remains intact.

22. <https://www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Heritage/Archaeology/Durrow-Conservation-Plan-2005-pdf-.pdf> Accessed April 25, 2022.

23. Margaret Gowan, *Monasterboice, Co. Louth, Conservation Study*. (Drogheda: Louth County Council, 2009). <https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/services/heritage/publications/monasterboiceconservationstudyfull.pdf> Accessed August 10, 2022; Ned Mc. Hugh, “Monasterboice Conservation Study: Selected Excerpts,” *JCLAHS* 27, no. 2 (2010): 177–215. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41433021>.

24. Margaret Quinlan Architects, *Conservation Plan Western Ossory High Crosses prepared for the Office of Public Works*, (Dublin: OPW, 2011). The Western Ossory crosses include four separate locations, seven free-standing outdoor crosses and several other fragments. This team was led by a conservation architect with contributions from an historian, a geologist/ecologist/landscape consultant, a stone conservator, an art and architectural historian and an archaeologist.

25. Quinlan, *Conservation Plan Western Ossory High Crosses*, 116.

damage’ and there is no mention of the meaning behind this loss or the significance of its survival despite this structural impairment.²⁶ The social and spiritual values associated with the pattern day and the cross are included in the Durrow plan although the impact of moving the cross indoors was not discussed.²⁷ In the Ossory and Monasterboice plans, the interaction of people with the sites is discussed in the vulnerabilities section, as high visitor numbers and traffic congestion were considered to be potential threats that require management.²⁸

In all three plans, the historic and artistic values of the crosses were primarily derived from their date of origin, function, workmanship, artistic merit and setting. The historic values that have been largely overlooked are those that relate to their long lives, such as the significance of alterations, relocations, changes in meaning, neglect, repurposing, decay and destruction.²⁹ Traditional heritage management structures lack the skill set to assess the spiritual and social values associated with the crosses, hence their absence in the conservation plans.³⁰ Recent research by Elizabeth Robson developed a ‘tool kit’ for assessing social value which she defined as ‘the significance of the historic environment to contemporary communities, including people’s sense of identity, belonging, attachment and place’. Her work highlights how ethnographic research tools are needed to assess people’s memories, and their associations with particular places.³¹ The lack of balance in the assessment of values can be seen in these three conservation plans, which were written to guide the future management of sites with crosses. This thesis will address how a broader analysis of the values associated with the long lives of the crosses will bring a more balanced view to their cultural significance, but it must be acknowledged that the

26. Gowen, *Monasterboice Conservation Study*, 161.

27. <https://www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Heritage/Archaeology/Durrow-Conservation-Plan-2005-pdf.pdf> Accessed April 25, 2022.

28. Quinlan, *Conservation Plan Western Ossory High Crosses*, 56–57; Gowen, *Monasterboice Conservation Study*, 62.

29. Foster, *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland*, 52–53.

30. Siân Jones, “Monuments, Memory and Identity: Exploring the Social Value of Place,” *Conservation Bulletin* 63(2010):22–24; Siân Jones and Steven Leech, *Valuing the Historic Environment: A Critical Review of Existing Approaches to Social Value* (Manchester: AHRC Cultural Value Report, 2015) <https://core.ac.uk/reader/42546350> Accessed April 15, 2023.

31. Elizabeth Robson, “Wrestling with Social Value: An Examination of Methods and Approaches for Assessing Social Value in Heritage Management and Conservation” (PhD diss., University of Stirling, 2021). Her ‘tool kit’ provides heritage practitioners with a detailed guidance on how contemporary social values can be assessed and brought into decision making as part of heritage management and conservation projects.

<http://hdl.handle.net/1893/33355>; <https://wrestlingsocialvalue.org/2021/06/07/new-toolkit/>
<https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/handle/1893/33355#.ZEf9BS8w2J8> Accessed 20 April 2023.

assessment of their contemporary social and spiritual values lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

1.2.2. Conservation strategies.

The crosses are large objects made from a single robust material and many of them stand outdoors, exposed to all manner of threats. Their survival is remarkable, as free-standing sculptures, made from a minimum of two separate pieces of stone, are a particularly vulnerable category of monument. They are at risk from rain, frost, wind, extreme weather events, and accidental and deliberate damage caused by man and animals. The best examples of the group are in the ownership or guardianship of the Irish state and their conservation and management is guided by international conservation charters and heritage policy documents.³² In the past, decisions about their protection gave priority to securing the artistic and historic values of the crosses from these impacts. Thus, state-led conservation efforts were concentrated on moving crosses of high historic and artistic value indoors for their protection. Alternatively, open sided covers were placed over crosses in either their primary or secondary locations.³³ At Clonmacnoise, all the crosses were replaced by replicas when they were moved indoors in an acknowledgment of the importance of recording their location and its relationship with other crosses and buildings.³⁴ This action failed to recognise that two of the crosses had been relocated in the past and did not occupy their primary locations.³⁵ The most recent crosses that were moved indoors in Ireland were at Durrow and Roscrea, in 2003 and 2004 respectively, and in Northern Ireland, the Downpatrick cross was moved indoors in 2013.³⁶ At Durrow, the cross was moved into the adjacent church and the outdoor location was not marked with a replica due to doubts about the primacy of the position (Fig. 1.2). At Roscrea, the cross was moved to the Black Mill exhibition centre adjacent to the cross's original site, which opened in 2006 (Fig. 1.3). A stone replica carved by an Office of Public Works (OPW) craftsman marks the location in

32. Avrami et al, *Values and Heritage Conservation*.

33. The Scottish practice of enclosing early medieval stone monuments in protective glass structures has not been applied in Ireland. <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland-case-studies/case-study-glazed-monument-shelters/> Accessed May 12, 2022.

34. *The Monastic City of Clonmacnoise and its Cultural Landscape Candidate World Heritage Status, Draft Management Plan* (Dublin: Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009) 22–23. The Cross of the Scriptures, The South Cross and the North Cross.

35. <https://excavations.ie/report/1993/Offaly/0001564/>; <https://excavations.ie/report/1994/Offaly/0001805/>. Accessed May 12, 2022.

36. For details see case study 8, the Downpatrick cross, Chapter 4.

the graveyard across the road where it previously stood. These conservation responses by the National Monuments Service of the OPW were based on individual sites and adapted for each project without any overarching policy guidance. Appendix 1 contains a list of the Irish crosses that have been moved indoors or covered with roofs. These projects were managed at local level by OPW without an overview of the needs of the group as a whole or any resultant build-up of corporate knowledge.³⁷ The Downpatrick cross will be discussed later in Chapter 4.

The Ossory and Monasterboice conservation plans of 2009 and 2011 respectively have policies directing that the crosses are kept close to or on their ‘original’ site and *de facto*, this has been the accepted policy regarding their protection.³⁸ The National Museum of Ireland (NMI), the statutory repository for *ex situ* archaeological artefacts, has only six recorded loose cross fragments of high crosses in its collection but there may be more fragments that are not included in the listing.³⁹ The current lack of focus and momentum regarding the future of the crosses can be seen in the absence of implementation committees to bring the recommendations of the relevant conservation plans forward. At Monasterboice, there have been no further developments since the conservation plan was published, other than a condition inspection of the crosses in 2010 and in 2019.⁴⁰ The discussion around the future of the Ossory crosses has been equally silent, although some of the recommendations in the conservation plan regarding the removal of the surrounding hard surface pavements are due to be implemented in the near future.⁴¹ Part of the problem is that when there is a lack of suitable adjacent buildings to protect crosses, there are no

37. There are six regionally-based National Monuments depots managed as individual units; Mallow, Athenry, Dromahaire, Trim, Killarney and Kilkenny. To date, the records of cross relocation and protection have not been co-ordinated, and each depot holds its own local records.

38. The most recent relocation of a cross fragment was in 2016 when a cross head from Drumcullen, Co. Offaly was moved to the nearby RC church at Rath. In the past, this was a common practice for fragments, as the Drumcliff fragment is now in the National Museum of Ireland, the capstone of the Kinitty cross is now in the Department of Archaeology, University College Dublin, the fragments of the Kilkieran cross are now in the Jerpoint Abbey visitor centre in Co. Kilkenny and the Tau Cross from Killnaboy is now in the visitor centre in the Clare Heritage Museum in Corofin, Co. Clare.

39. The six fragments are; DU018-181, fragment of a cross base from Drumcliff, Co. Sligo, DU018-190, fragment of possible high cross from Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly, DU018-191, fragment of a high cross from Durrow, Co. Offaly, DU018-201, Head of a high cross from Ogilla, Co. Roscommon, DU018-205, shaft of a cross from Banagher, Co. Offaly, DU018-415, damaged head of a cross from Donaghmore, Co. Meath, dug up when making a grave.

40. The condition surveys were conducted by the author and David Odgers. Unpublished Internal OPW Reports.

41. Pers. Comm. Flora O’Mahony, Senior Conservation Architect, OPW, Kilkenny District. January 12, 2022.

obvious solutions to the protection of the crosses that stand outdoors. In the absence of a guidance policy or framework and the intense local interest in crosses, there is an understandable reluctance on the part of heritage professionals to engage with the crosses. The relevant district senior architects in the OPW and archaeologists of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH),⁴² who are responsible for the implementation of the conservation plans, direct their limited professional and other resources towards the monuments that are considered to be a priority, usually if there is a risk of collapse or loss of fabric, or a tourism related access issue. This reluctance to engage may also be due to the *Burra Charter*'s emphasis on concepts of authenticity, sustainability, intangible culture, and contemporary social value, which continue to evolve and increase the complexity of the relationship between cultural significance and conservation solutions.⁴³

In 2006, *UNESCO* informed conservation professionals and heritage organisations that monuments are likely to experience increased deterioration due to the impact of climate change.⁴⁴ There have been many warnings since then, most recently ICOMOS' *The Future of our Pasts* in 2019, which contains unequivocal warnings about climate change and monument loss.⁴⁵ The key Irish policy document that will guide the heritage sector's response to climate change and resources allocation over the next seven years is the 2019 *Built & Archaeological Heritage Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan*.⁴⁶ In the plan, the decisive factor for resource allocation is the identification of 'monuments as high-value and

42. The roles of the OPW and the DHLGH are explained in the next section.

43. de la Torre, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*; Harald Fredheim and Manal Khalaf, "The Significance of Values: Heritage Value Typologies Re-examined" *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 22, no. 6 (April 2016): 466-481; Foster, *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland*, 70-79; Siân Jones, *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place: The Case of the Hilton of Cadboll* (Edinburgh: Historic Scotland, 2004), 5-6; "Wrestling with the Social Value of Heritage: Dilemmas and Opportunities," *JCAH* 4, no. 1 (February 2017): 22-26; Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 170-84.

44. UNESCO, "Predicting and Managing the impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage"(2006); "Strategy to Assist States Parties to Implement Management Responses", (2006), . <https://whc.unesco.org/en/CC-policy-document/> Accessed May 12, 2023.

45. ICOMOS Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group, 2019. *The Future of Our Pasts: Engaging Cultural Heritage in Climate Action, July 1, 2019*. (Paris: ICOMOS, 2019).

46. *Heritage Ireland 2030, a framework for Heritage*, (Dublin: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2022) <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/216633/d5e7370d-ee0e-41a8-81b5-9bc46bc75e17.pdf#page=null>; *Built and Archaeological Heritage Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan* (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2019). <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/246863/2660361a-6b77-4b58-b040-aea8fd960606.pdf#page=null>

high-risk over and above other monuments'.⁴⁷ However, there is no reference in the report to the high crosses or indeed to carved stone as a vulnerable group, despite their obvious exposure to risk.

1.2.3. Departmental and legislative issues.

The fragmentation of the government's heritage function from 1994 onwards has resulted in the dismantling of the OPW's sole responsibility for the protection, conservation and presentation of national monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the state.⁴⁸ In a similar move, English Heritage was split into two organisations in 2015, the statutory role is fulfilled by the Quasi Non-governmental Organisation (Quango) Historic England, while English Heritage, now a charity, manages and presents the property portfolio. The OPW portfolio of monuments included some of the finest examples of high crosses in Ireland and, before 1994, it was a relatively straightforward matter to make decisions about their conservation, as the process did not require planning permission or any other consent process.⁴⁹ If the relocation of a cross indoors or the provision of an open-sided roof was considered desirable for its protection, the project went ahead if adequate resources were available.⁵⁰ The multidisciplinary teams of National Monuments Service of the OPW, that included architects and archaeologists, oversaw these projects. Under the current arrangements, the National Monuments Service and the archaeological staff are in the DHLGH, who have ownership of the crosses and responsibility for heritage policy and the granting of consents for works to all monuments.⁵¹ The architectural teams and the depot staff, who have responsibility for the maintenance and presentation of monuments, have returned to the OPW along with the budget for works.⁵² Under these arrangements, the OPW

47. *Climate Change Sectoral Plan*, 54.

48. Grellan D. Rourke, "Preserving the Past," *Irish Arts Review* 23 (2006) 22–25; Anne Carey, "Harold G. Leask: Aspects of His Work as Inspector of National Monuments," *JRSAI* 133 (2003): 24–35; Christiaan Corlett, "The Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and the Protection of Monuments (Part 1)," *JRSAI* 139 (2009): 80–100.

49. For a list of the National Monuments in State care listed on a county basis see;

<https://www.archaeology.ie/national-monuments/search-by-county> . Accessed January 20, 2022.

50. The crosses were not covered *in situ* with glass enclosure. This approach was pioneered in Scotland but, to date, it has not been applied in Ireland.

51. <https://www.archaeology.ie/publications-forms-legislation> Accessed February 10, 2022.

52. The OPW originally assumed a role in heritage management following the Irish Church Act of 1869, which placed a number of architecturally important ruined churches and crosses in their care. This role came to an end in 1994 when, following the controversy over the proposed visitor centres at Brú na Boinne, Mullaghmore and Luggalá, responsibility for heritage management was transferred to the Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht. Duchás, the Heritage Service with responsibility for built and natural heritage was created in 1996 but it was broken up in 2002. Following a

is treated in the same way as any other monument owner and must apply to the DHLGH for consent to carry out conservation works at National Monuments in the ownership of the DHLGH. The consent process involves a high degree of documentation and preparation so that the OPW is expert consultant, contractor and budget holder, while the DHLGH is the monument owner and consent giver. Different agendas can be at play as the care of national monuments is a minor part of the OPW's extensive property portfolio, which also includes the management of all state-owned property and responsibility for flood relief throughout the country. This arrangement can be compared to a situation where the owner of a building (DHLGH) has a veto on the type of work that is carried out at their property but has little influence over what the tenant (OPW) decides to prioritise and if, and when they carry it out works. The tenant is responsible for the maintenance of the building and holds the budget but cannot be compelled by the owner to undertake essential or any repairs. This is not an ideal arrangement, as there is a degree of uncertainty around who is responsible for the care of monuments. There is no doubt that there are major benefits to the consent process as conservation planning is now formal, transparent, and accountable. However, there has been little acknowledgement by either Department of the additional bureaucracy or a corresponding increase in professional resources required to support the process. Other administrative issues relate to the records and drawings of earlier works carried out at National Monuments, which are divided between the two departments.⁵³ Before the final split of responsibilities, the *Duchás Inventory of Carved Stone in State Care* was compiled and functioned for around six years, generating thousands of records including many on the crosses. Due to a lack of funding, much of the data was never uploaded and the split of organisations and changes of personnel has led to a situation where few of the staff in OPW/DHLGH even know of its existence.

The lack of recognition of the crosses as a vulnerable group of monuments in the *Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan* prepared in 2019 has been discussed above.⁵⁴

transfer of functions to the Department of the Environment, the operational function of heritage management was returned to the OPW in 2004. The remaining functions of protection and policy were eventually transferred to the Department of Arts, Culture and the Islands, which later became the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. In July 2020, the service was transferred to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The operational function remains with the OPW.

53. There is a current project to scan all this data and create a database accessible to both Departments. Pers. Comm. Flora O'Mahony, Senior Conservation Architect, OPW, Kilkenny District. January 12, 2022.

54. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 14–16. The specific monuments that are singled out as vulnerable in the are the artefacts in the bogs and peat lands, the urban archaeology in deep sequential layers and the wrecks around the coast.

Their lack of visibility may lie in their designation as recorded monuments, which places them under the protection of the *National Monuments Act 2004* and the jurisdiction of the National Monuments Service of the DHLGH.⁵⁵ The statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), established under the Act, provides protection to ‘recorded monuments’ when they are listed in the relevant county manual and marked on the accompanying county map.⁵⁶ The on-line data base for the RMP known as the Historic Environment Viewer has more than 140,000 recorded monuments.⁵⁷ The original surveys were conducted on an individual county basis and the search criteria remains by county with eighteen different drop down options for a cross.⁵⁸ As a result, the data relating to the crosses is complicated to access on the viewer and despite their relatively low numbers within the overall number, it is difficult to get an overview of the crosses. The data is largely based on the 234 crosses and cross fragments recorded in Harbison’s *High Crosses of Ireland*. His three-volume inventory provided an overview of the crosses but had a limited print run, was expensive and is now out of print. Issues with the nomenclature and definition of the high crosses, together with their numerically small typology within the RMP and their lack of visibility as a group is exacerbated by the absence of an up-to-date *corpus* like those in other parts of the British Isles.

1.2.4. Policy and research issues.

The National Monuments web page has a number of policy documents but there is no policy dedicated to carved stone.⁵⁹ In contrast, the Scottish Ministers’ policy and guidance for the care and protection of carved stone, published in 2005, covers a wide range of monuments

55. <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2004/act/22/enacted/en/html?q=National+Monuments+Act> When an archaeological object is moved away from its found location, it is still under the protection of the *National Monuments Act* but comes under the jurisdiction of the NMI in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. For the Scottish context see Sally Foster, “The Curatorial Consequences of being Moved, Moveable or Portable: The Case of Carved Stones,” *Scottish Archaeological Journal* 32 (2010): 15–28.

56. For details see; <https://www.archaeology.ie/publications-forms-legislation/record-of-monuments-and-places> Accessed January 20, 2022.

57. <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/> Accessed, May 13, 2023.

58. The drop down menu in the viewer is limited to an individual county and has the following selection: churchyard cross, churchyard cross, (present location), High cross, High cross (present location), Market cross, Market cross (present location), Tau cross, Tau cross (present location), Termon cross, Termon cross (present location), Wayside cross, Wayside cross (present location), cross-inscribed pillar, cross-inscribed pillar (present location), cross-inscribed stone, cross-inscribed stone (present location), cross-slab, cross-slab (present location).

59. <https://www.archaeology.ie/publications-forms-legislation> Accessed May 12, 2023.

from prehistoric rock art to gravestones.⁶⁰ The categories of medieval carved stone include ‘symbol-incised stones, symbol-bearing cross-slabs, cross-slabs, cross incised stones, free-standing crosses, shrines, hogbacks, architectural sculpture, etc’.⁶¹ In Ireland, operational and policy roles regarding heritage are currently split between two government departments but in Scotland they are combined in a single non-government body. Historic Environment Scotland is a dedicated heritage conservation body, which places a noteworthy emphasis on research in its role ‘to investigate, care for and promote Scotland’s historic environment’.⁶² The National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland (NCCSS), an independent body established in 1993 to provide a framework for research and exchange of information on stone monuments, provides an additional focus on the protection of carved stone.⁶³ The Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF) presents an overview of archaeological research and is managed by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and funded by Historic Environment Scotland.⁶⁴ In terms of carved stone, ScARF’s most influential and thought provoking document is *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland: A Research Framework* published on-line in 2016.⁶⁵ At the core of *Future Thinking* is a concern with the way Scotland’s carved stone is valued and what this understanding means for the next and future generations. It describes the current state of knowledge, how it was created and the different ways that carved stones are valued. The at-risk categories are clearly identified; loose stone particularly in graveyards, fixed stone in graveyards, *in situ* rock art and architectural carved stone.⁶⁶ The combined output of these organisations fosters the creation of research frameworks for carved stone and discussions around the protection of carved stone are central to heritage planning, climate change actions and future resource allocation. This focus can be seen in Historic Environment Scotland’s guide to climate change impacts on the historic environment which lists seven

60. <http://www.carvedstones.scot/uploads/4/4/0/3/44032535/carved-stones-scottish-executive-policy.pdf>,

61. <http://www.carvedstones.scot/uploads/4/4/0/3/44032535/carved-stones-scottish-executive-policy.pdf>, 6.

62. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/who-we-are/about-historic-environment-scotland/>

63. The NCCSS is an independent body mainly composed of representatives from Scottish national bodies. They meet three times a year to provide a forum for the exchange of information among members and their organizations. They aim to enable a better understanding of the issues affecting carved stone and to facilitate collective efforts to address them. They draw on a wide range of interests and expertise and seek to identify and spread good practice, and to inform and hence influence institutional policy and strategy. <http://www.carvedstones.scot/about-us.html> Accessed 23 July, 2022.

64. <https://scarf.scot> Accessed March 18, 2023.

65. <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland-2/>, Accessed July 23, 2022

66. <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland-2/>, 89-91. Accessed July 23, 2022

different components of heritage that are considered vulnerable.⁶⁷ Much of the carved stone belongs to the vulnerable category of ‘surface remains,’ described as ‘man-made, located above ground, uncovered, potentially unroofed and exposed to the elements’.⁶⁸

The exceptional engagement with carved stone in Scotland is not matched in Ireland or elsewhere in the EU. A 2022 report *Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate Change* prepared by an EU expert group found that the response to the threat to cultural heritage from the unprecedented speed and scale of climate change is hampered by ‘fragmentation in the sector which lacks an effective structure, cooperation and coordination with regard to climate change issues.’⁶⁹ These weaknesses were ‘exacerbated by insufficient research programmes at national level.’⁷⁰ In Ireland, funding for research in the humanities disciplines is provided by the Irish Research Council (IRC) and the Royal Irish Academy (RIA), but both organisations only fund short-term projects. There is no equivalent organisation or pressure group in Ireland to the NCCSS to advocate for the collation and publication of data relating to past cataloguing projects and conservation works or for research frameworks. The threat from climate change to the crosses’ survival is serious and, if their cultural significance is to be maintained in the future, new thinking about them is long overdue.

1.3. The literature review.

This literature review will examine the current state of knowledge of the issues identified above in order to contextualize the research questions and identify the gaps in understanding. There is no attempt at a complete review of scholarly publications on the subject, but the development of scholarship is traced from the establishment of creation dates for the monuments to the overriding focus on art historical issues. This is followed by the literature of assemblages, which summarises how groups of stone monuments have been surveyed and collated by reviewing the *corpora* of medieval carved stone produced in other parts of the British Isles and comparing them with the Irish *corpus*. The next section

67. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=843d0c97-d3f4-4510-acd3-aadf0118bf82>, Accessed July, 23, 2022

68. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=843d0c97-d3f4-4510-acd3-aadf0118bf82>, 29 Accessed July 25, 2022

69 Expert Group of Member States, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate Change: Executive Summary of the Report of the EU*. Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Brussels: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022), 5. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/030764>, 5. Accessed May 12, 2023.

70. European Commission, *Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate Change*, 5.

explores the very limited scholarship on the long lives of crosses in Ireland and contrasts this with the recent flourishing of writing on cultural biographies of carved stone found elsewhere. The final section traces the development of a values-based approach to heritage and in particular the relationship between values and conservation. The role of research frameworks in monument protection and conservation is also discussed, together with the many ways that value can be categorised and some of the difficulties associated with carved stone assessment. This review will contextualise the methodology which follows by identifying gaps in our knowledge regarding the high crosses.

1.3.1. The academic high cross.

The initial academic study of the high crosses was positioned within the overall development of the field of archaeology in the nineteenth century but by the end of the century it had emerged as an independent area of study with its own distinct literature. Prior to this, antiquarian texts had typically treated the crosses in passing, briefly noting that they were sculpted and with widely speculative suggestions as to dating and origins. Some crosses were deemed to be of ‘Danish’ origin, the result of the Norse settlement of Ireland, while others interpreted them as Roman, brought to Ireland by founding saints in the sixth or seventh centuries.⁷¹ The literature of the nineteenth century initially concerned itself with establishing the creation date of the crosses and their credentials as Irish works of art. The idea of the crosses as uniquely Irish monuments was later challenged by the recognition of them as a rich oeuvre within the wider traditions of European and Byzantine Christian art. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the artistic and historic credentials of the crosses were well-established and later studies tended to focus on three broad areas; the chronology of the development of the form of the crosses, their relationships with the art of manuscripts and metalwork and the interpretation of the figurative carvings. Later research explored the setting of crosses, their original function, their iconographical meaning, the benefit of a phenomenological approach and the craft skills used in their making. A number of scholars have included reviews of the literature and summarise developments relating to the study of the crosses in their publications.⁷²

71. Francis Grose, *Antiquities of Ireland*, ed. Edward Ledwich (2 vols: London: S. Hoper, 1794–6.) I, 15–16; Thomas Wright, *Louthiana: Or, an Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*. (3 vols: London: W. Faden, 1748), 17.

72. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 4–7; Kelly, “The High Crosses of Ireland” 67–78; Richardson, *An Introduction to the Irish High Crosses*, 27–28; Éamonn Ó’Carragáin “Visual Theology within Liturgical Context: The Visual

George Petrie (1790–1866) was the first person to investigate the crosses (together with other ecclesiastical monuments) in a scholarly, historical fashion.⁷³ In his 1845 publication *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Norman invasion*, he used the names in the inscriptions on four crosses to identify the dates when they were erected by referencing them with the manuscript sources.⁷⁴ Petrie was determined to confirm the existence in Ireland of an artistic elite with their own language that predated the Anglo-Norman invasion. He also interpreted objects with similar art styles as contemporaneous, such as the carvings on the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise and those of the Cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice.⁷⁵ His terminology for the crosses was still fluid as references throughout the text vary from ‘stone crosses’, ‘sepulchral crosses’, ‘sculptured crosses’, ‘great crosses’, ‘richly sculptured stone crosses’ or ‘a pierced cross within a circle’.⁷⁶ Although the craftsmanship of a ‘rude but gorgeously sculptured cross’ at Clonmacnoise was admirable, he considered the iconographical panels to be a version of Greek and Roman sculpture, which had been debased in its transition to Ireland.⁷⁷ Petrie used the information in the annals to correctly identify the purpose of the crosses describing the crosses at Kilfenora as ‘erected as termini or boundary stones, to define the limits of the sanctuary of the church.’⁷⁸ He introduced the twelfth-century cut-off to the study of the

Programmes of the Irish High Crosses,” in *L'Irlanda e gli Irlandesi nell'alto Medioevo* (Spoleto: Presso la sede della Fondazione, 2010), 707–13; Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 2–4,

73 George Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, Anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion; Comprising an Essay on the Origin and uses of the Round Towers of Ireland* (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1845); Peter Murray, *George Petrie, the Rediscovery of Ireland's Past* (Cork: Crawford Municipal Art Gallery and Gandon Editions, 2004); John Waddell, *Foundation Myths* (Bray: Wordwell Ltd, 2005) 97–116; Paul Walsh, “George Petrie: His Life and Work.” in *Pathfinders to the Past: The Antiquarian Road to Irish Historical Writing, 1640–1960*, eds. Próinséas Ní Chatháin, Siobhán Fitzpatrick and Howard Clarke (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), 44–72; William Stokes, *The Life and Labours in Art and Architecture of George Petrie, LL.D., M.R.I.A.* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co, 1868). Petrie’s legacy was secured by the publication, within two years of his death, of a detailed and flattering biography written by his friend William Stokes (1804-1878) and the publication of his two volumes of *Inscriptions* edited by William’s daughter Margaret Stokes. George Petrie, *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language Chiefly Collected and Drawn by George Petrie, LL.D.*, ed. Margaret Stokes (2 vols. Dublin: University Press, 1872-1878).

74. Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 311, 404. The inscriptions are on the base of the Cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice, the base of the market cross at Tuam, the ‘inscribed pillar’ at Tuam and the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise.

75. Petrie, *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 404 .

76. Petrie, *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 260, 301, 402–3, 432, 498.

77. Stokes, *Life and Labours*, Extract from Petrie’s journal 1820 in which he described his first visit to Clonmacnoise, 31, 362.

78. Petrie, *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 42.

crosses as the arrival of the Anglo-Normans signalled the end of this purely ‘native’ art form as the creation of high crosses ceased at that time.⁷⁹ His 1851 design for the Daniel O’Connell memorial included a round tower, a high gabled church and an extremely large undecorated ringed stone cross (Fig.1.4). This use of the ringed cross as a fitting expression of national commemoration helped to establish its wider adoption as a fitting memorial for those of ‘Celtic’ ancestry.⁸⁰

The importance of the high crosses as a distinctively Irish art form was perpetuated by Henry O’Neill in his *Illustrations of the most interesting of the Sculptured Crosses of Ancient Ireland* (1857).⁸¹ O’Neill’s passionate nationalistic fervour contrasted with Petrie’s academic, measured approach. He declared that ‘these ornaments display wonderful powers of invention and execution and entitle the ancient Irish to rank as the greatest masters of ornamental art that ever existed.’⁸² While Petrie’s interest lay principally in the inscriptions on the crosses, O’Neill was interested in their interlace patterns and sculptural decoration. He made some rudimentary attempts at interpreting the figurative scenes, as well as producing accurate, and in some cases coloured, representations of the more abstract ornament that he so admired (Fig.1.5). By restricting himself to the ‘most interesting’ crosses, O’Neill distilled their artistic and sculptural qualities, presenting them as a collection of unique objects to an increasingly nationalistic public.

Margaret Stokes (1832–1900), a talented artist and antiquary had edited George Petrie and the Earl of Dunraven’s unfinished works following their deaths.⁸³ In her own 1878 work, *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, Stokes coined the term ‘high cross’ by using it in reference to a cross at Glendalough unearthed by Deane, for the ‘high cross of Muiredach’ and the ‘high cross’ at Tuam.⁸⁴ In her next work, the two volume *Early Christian Art in Ireland*, published in 1887, she confirmed that there were forty-five ‘high crosses’ in

79. Petrie, *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 299.

80. Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland’s Past: The Celtic Revival, 1830–1930* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980) 73–77.

81 Henry O’Neill. *Illustrations of the Most Interesting of the Sculptured Crosses of Ancient Ireland, Drawn to Scale and Lithographed by Henry O’Neill*. (London: H. O’Neill, 1857), hereafter *Crosses of Ancient Ireland*.

82. O’Neill, *Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, i.

83. Petrie, *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language*; Edwin, Third Earl of Dunraven, *Notes on Irish Architecture by Edwin, third Earl of Dunraven*, ed. Margaret Stokes (2 vols, London: George Bell, 1875–1877).

84. Stokes, *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, 2 vols. (London: George Bell, 1878–1887)1:143–45.

Ireland of which thirty-two were richly ornamented and eight had inscriptions.⁸⁵ She later reduced this list to thirty-seven ‘still preserved’.⁸⁶ She only counted complete crosses, as this figure falls short of the over 200 monuments referred to as high crosses today. From 1890 until her death in 1900, she devoted herself exclusively to studying the iconography of the Irish high crosses.⁸⁷ In 1891 she published the first instalment of an intended larger work on the crosses at Castledermot and Durrow.⁸⁸ Stokes’ unique contribution to the study of the crosses lay in her ability to present a wide range of academic data in a coherent and succinct manner combined with her skill as an artist. Her research was based on the work of the French writer Adolphe Napoléon Didron (1806–1867) who had progressed the understanding of Christian iconography in *Iconographie Chrétienne* published in 1843.⁸⁹ She synthesised what was known of the crosses using her expertise as an editor and writer, her artistic and photographic skills, her encyclopaedic knowledge of Irish art and architecture, her understanding of the historic annals and illustrated manuscripts and her knowledge of early medieval European religious symbolism (Fig. 1.6 & 1.7). In her interpretation of each panel on the Moone cross, she pointed out where the Irish treatment of a subject was unique and the links to the iconography of Early Christian Art.⁹⁰ Following her death in 1900, T. W. Westropp (1860–1922) took on the task of completing her work on the crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery but the larger work was never completed.⁹¹

85. Stokes, *Early Christian Art in Ireland*, 2: 8.

86. Margaret Stokes, *The High Crosses of Castledermot and Durrow*, (Dublin: Academy House, 1898) i. She described thirty-seven high crosses ‘still preserved’, nine shafts, four crosses without circles, and five others ‘not described’ and twenty-three monuments ‘said to be high crosses’.

87 For a discussion on the posthumous publication of Petrie’s work see; Jenifer Ní Ghrádaigh, “Authorship Denied: Margaret Stokes, Rev. James Graves and the Publication of Petrie’s ‘Christian Inscriptions.’” *JRSAI* 138 (2008): 136–146; Philip McEvansoneya, “More Light on Margaret Stokes and the Publication of George Petrie’s ‘Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language’.” *JRSAI* 141 (2011): 149–66. Margaret Stokes, *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, 1:143, 145.

88. Stokes, *High Crosses of Castledermot and Durrow*, ii.

89. Adolphe Napoléon Didron, *Christian Iconography: The History of Christian Art in the Middle Ages by the late Adolphe Napoléon Didron, translated from the French by E. J. Millington, and completed with additions and appendices by Margaret Stokes* (2 vols, London: 1892–1896). Didron realised that the repetition of the same images over and over in ecclesiastical art was the result of a written guide which set out ‘how all the subjects are to be treated, and what inscriptions are to be added ... the appropriate arrangement of the pictures as regards their position on the walls of the church’. Didron had published the Guide to Painting, which is the source material from Byzantine painting programmes in 1845 and it was brought to the attention of the English speaking world by a review in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* in the same year. *JBAA* Vol 1. (1845) 262–67.

90. Margaret Stokes and W. J. Westropp, “Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery” in *Trans. RIA* 31 (1896–1901) 546–58;

91. Stokes, “Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery”, 546–48. 541–78.

Stokes' contemporary, J. Romilly Allen (1847–1907) published *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland before the thirteenth century* in 1887 which included two chapters on the Irish high crosses.⁹² Didron had developed a simple line drawing technique, which allowed the iconography of different types of artwork to be clearly read without the distraction of context, texture or colour. Allen used this technique, which is still used by art historians today, to separate the content of the panels from the reality of the three-dimensional cross (Fig.1.8).⁹³ He connected the iconographic content of the panels in the Irish crosses with parallels in the Irish manuscripts, Irish metalwork, Roman sarcophagi, Italian wall paintings and French ivories.⁹⁴ Allen provided new insights into the iconography of the crosses by studying individual panels across a range of topics; occurrence, location on crosses, carved detail, clothing, symbolic meaning and parallels in other art forms. The interpretation of the iconography on the crosses required an academic knowledge of the symbolism of early medieval Christian art as well as a familiarity with theology, liturgy and exegesis.⁹⁵ Allen confirmed the art historical value of the Irish crosses as a unique manifestation in stone sculpture of a much broader, Europe-wide, system of religious symbols.⁹⁶

Henry Saxton Crawford's, (1868–1927) publication *Irish Carved Ornament* (1926), analysed the spirals, interlace, fret and zoomorphic patterns on the crosses, sepulchral slabs and pillar stones (Fig. 1.9). Otherwise, high cross scholarship in the first three quarters of the twentieth century continued to be dominated by iconographic studies.⁹⁷ Arthur Kingsley Porter (1883–1933), a Harvard Professor of Art History became interested in the Irish crosses while researching his 1928 book on Spanish Romanesque architecture.⁹⁸ His 1931 publication *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland*, was exclusively devoted to the iconography

92. J. Romilly Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland before the Thirteenth Century*. (London: Whiting & Co. 1887). 129–235. The two chapters are titled; 'Lecture 3, The High Crosses of Ireland (10th cent.) - Subjects on the Heads' and 'Lecture 4 'The High Crosses of Ireland – subjects on the shafts and bases.'

93. Megan Henvey used this method to illustrate the iconography in her recent PhD thesis. "The High Crosses of 'Northern Ireland': An Iconographical Review of a Modern Geo-political Grouping of Early Medieval Monuments," 2 vols. PhD. Thesis. University of York. 2020.

94. Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, 130.

95. Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, 182–4.

96. Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, 131.

97. Henry Crawford, *Handbook Carved Ornament of Irish Monuments of the Christian Period*, (Dublin: Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1926), 1.

98. Arthur Kingsley Porter, *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture*, (New York: Pantheon, 1928).

on the crosses and made no mention of their abstract art, chronology, form, or context.⁹⁹ He used photographs to illustrate the relationship between the Irish crosses and a wide range of early Eastern material, which emphasised the influence of early Coptic art. Contrary to the views of Allen and Stokes, He devised heroic saga/pagan and non-biblical explanations for the ‘illusive iconography’ of the more obscure panels that were difficult to interpret.¹⁰⁰

Françoise Henry (1902–1982) brought clarity and synthesis to previously separate areas of early medieval scholarship through her trained analysis and original thinking. A French trained archaeologist, she published *Les origines de l'iconographie irlandaise* in 1930, a year before Porter's publication (Fig. 1.10).¹⁰¹ The 1933 publication *La Sculpture Irlandaise* set out her chronology of the crosses and she continued to refine and publish her pioneering work in English language publications.¹⁰² In 1964, she published the modest booklet *Irish High Crosses* in French and English (Fig.1.11), which provided ‘a broad, informed survey’ to the non-academic reader in an accessible and reasonably priced format.¹⁰³ Her chronology of the crosses, and dating was somewhat controversial, and some reviewers disagreed with her processional methodology, thus highlighting the occasionally subjective nature of this type of analysis.¹⁰⁴ During the second half of the twentieth century several scholars began to publish almost exclusively on the subject of the high crosses. Helen Roe (1895–1988) wrote three popular guidebooks; the *High Crosses of Western Ossory* in 1958, followed in 1959 by *The High Crosses of Kells* and in 1981 by

99 Arthur Kingsley Porter, *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland* (New York : Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1931). In a similar fashion to Romilly Allen's *Early Christian Symbolism* of 1887, this book was also based on a series of lectures which Porter delivered at the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1930. 3

100. Porter, *Crosses*, 4.

101. Porter acknowledged that *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland* had already gone to press when he received Henry's ‘interesting article’ *Les origines de l'iconographie irlandaise*, which was published in 1930. Porter, *Crosses*, xxiii.

102. Françoise Henry, *La Sculpture Irlandaise pendant les douze premiers siècles de de l'ère chrétienne* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1933); Françoise Henry, *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period (to 800 A.D.)*, *Irish Art during the Viking Invasions (800–1020 A.D.)*, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period (1020–1170)* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1965, 1967, 1970). The three volumes were published in English between 1965 and 1970 and the chapters on the crosses were described as ‘carvings 650–800’ in *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period*, as ‘carvings 800–1020’ in *Irish Art during the Viking Invasions* and ‘The Crosses, A.D. 1020–1170’ in *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*.

103. Henry, *Irish High Crosses*, 4. Helen Roe had already published on the Ossory Crosses (1958) and the Kells crosses (1959) but this was, surprisingly, the first publication to summarise current research on the crosses in five succinct chapters; general features, different types, the iconography, ornament and chronology.

104. Robert Stephenson, “The Chronology and Relationship of Some Irish and Scottish Crosses,” *JRSAI* 85 (1956): 84–96; Helen M. Roe, “Review of Irish High Crosses” in *Studia Hibernica* 5 (1965): 180–182; George F. Mitchell, “Review of Crois Sculptées Irlandaise” *Hermathena*, no. 103 (Autumn 1966) 85–86.

Monasterboice and its Monuments.¹⁰⁵ Her main contribution to scholarship in 1965 was her original theory regarding the symbolic nature of the different parts of the cross.¹⁰⁶ She suggested a fifth- to eighth-century origin for the form of the cross as the stepped base of the crosses was modelled on the Hill of Golgotha, while the capstone was based on Constantine's Church of the Anastasis, a theory later expanded on by Martin Werner.¹⁰⁷

From the 1970s onward, several studies focused on regional groups of monuments such as Nancy Edwards' study of the Ossory crosses, Liam de Paor's study of the Tihilly and Kinnitty crosses and Stalley's examination of the 'Muiredach master'.¹⁰⁸ Robert Stevenson and Judith Calvert explored the chronological and stylistic relationships between the Irish and Scottish high crosses.¹⁰⁹ Dorothy Kelly's publications on the likelihood of timber prototypes for some of the Irish crosses and the western Scottish groups included an examination of the use of Vitruvian principles for their design, and a reassessment of Henry's theory of the use of metal prototypes for the Ahenny crosses. She advocated that the crosses with solid rings should be considered as a class of their own, a reflection of the complex nature of categorisation.¹¹⁰ Robert Stevick examined the role of geometry in the setting out of the crosses and the relationships between the ring and the cross.¹¹¹ Ann Hamlin reviewed the early manuscript sources for references to crosses in order to examine their

105. Helen Roe, "Antiquities of the Archdiocese of Armagh: A photographic survey, Part I, II & III" in *Seanchas Ardmhaca*, 1:1, (1954): 101–114, 1. Part II, no.2 (1955): 107–114, Part III, 2, no 1, (1956): 79–89; Roe, *High Crosses of Western Ossory* (Kilkenny: Kilkenny Archaeological Society 1958). This group had also been identified by Françoise Henry as Group 1 in *Irish High Crosses*, 21–24; Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, (Dublin: Meath Archaeological and Historical Society 1959); Roe, *Monasterboice and its Monuments*, (Longford: County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society, 1981); Rory O'Farrell, Christine Bromwich, "Helen M. Roe (1895–1988) Champion of Medieval Irish Art and Iconography," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed., Jane Chance, (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, 2005), 467.

106. Helen Roe, "The Irish High Cross: Morphology and Iconography" *JRSAI* 95, no. 1/2 (1965): 220.

107. Martin Werner, "On the Origin of the Form of the Irish High Cross", *Gesta* 29: 1: 98–110.

108. Nancy Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory.", *JRSAI* 113 (1983): 5–46; Liam De Paor, "The High Crosses of Tech Theille (Tihilly) Kinnitty, and Related Sculpture" in, *Figures from the Past: Studies on Figurative Art in Christian Ireland: In Honour of Helen M. Roe*, ed. Etienne Rynne (Dun Laoghaire: Glendale Press for the RSAI, 1987), 131–58; Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*.

109. Robert B. K. Stevenson, "The Chronology and Relationships of Some Irish and Scottish Crosses." *JRSAI* 86, no. 1 (1956), 84–96; Judith Calvert, "The Early Development of Irish High Crosses and their Relationship to Scottish Sculpture in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries." PhD thesis, University of California, Berkley. 1978.

110. Dorothy Kelly, "A Sense of Proportion: The Metrical and Design Characteristics of some Columbian High Crosses" *JRSAI* 126, (1996): 108–145.

111. https://content.lib.washington.edu/insdsgnweb/media/stevick_1999_1.pdf. Accessed August 18, 2022.

names, function and locations within the monastic enclosure.¹¹² Roger Stalley published several scholarly papers on the European sources for the iconography and the date of its arrival in Ireland, which challenged Henry's theories of the Carolingian origins of the high cross iconography.¹¹³ Peter Harbison (1939–2023) made an incalculable contribution to the study of the crosses with his 1992 three volume publication *High Crosses of Ireland: An Iconographical and Photographic Survey*.¹¹⁴ He single-handedly produced the Irish *corpus* and it remains the most comprehensive reference work on the crosses.¹¹⁵ The text combines interpretation and inventory and the photographs demonstrate the piecemeal and random locations of many of the surviving fragments, identified and valued solely due to their iconographical content. He referenced the interpretation of the iconographical programmes if they differed from his, thus highlighting the lack of agreement sometimes associated with individual panels.

A paper by Robin Flower (1881–1946), published posthumously in 1954, provided a new direction for the interpretation of the iconography of the crosses and demonstrated how a familiarity with early medieval literature could yield new insights.¹¹⁶ A specialist in the field of Irish medieval manuscripts, he identified the performative aspect of the crosses. The iconography of the crosses reflected the 'ejaculatory, litanic and asyndetic' ninth-century Irish Church litanies and loricæ (prayers recited for protection).¹¹⁷ He used the Arboe cross in Co. Tyrone to illustrate how 'looking at the east face of the shaft of this [Arboe] cross, it is difficult to avoid the feeling that here we have, written in stone, the

112. Ann Hamlin, "Crosses in Early Medieval Ireland: The Evidence from the Written Sources," in *Ireland and Insular Art, A.D. 500–1200*, M. Ryan, ed. (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1987), 138–140.

113. Roger Stalley, "European art and the Irish high crosses," *PRIA* 90C, (1990):135–58.

114. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*. A web-based gazetteer was developed based on his work on the crosses which contains much of the information from the three volumes as well as additional research and links. <https://irishhighcrosses.com> compiled by the Rev. Barney R McLaughlin. Accessed May 20, 2023.

115. Volume 1 contains the text which includes a description of each cross, references to any previous publications and an interpretation of the iconography. Volume 2 contains the high quality photographs by the author while Volume 3 explores the iconography of the Irish panels beside relevant parallels in other materials from Europe so that the crosses are understood in the wider artistic context of Early Christian Europe.

116. Robin Flower, "Irish high crosses," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 17 (1954): 87–97. This paper was based on a lecture originally delivered in 1935 at the Warburg Institute.

117. Flower, "Irish high crosses," 90. The litanies were based on the *commendatio animae* prayer of the Roman Breviary and in the case of the Festology of Oengus, composed in Tallaght between 797 and 808, 'the recitation of his martyrology is in itself proclaimed a city of refuge, a protection against the evil ones'. The prayer included an appeal for help to God, the patriarchs, the saints and the martyrs in a list that echoes the iconography on the crosses.

prayer we have been studying'.¹¹⁸ This identification of the relationship between the liturgy and the iconography led to a reassessment of the programme on individual crosses.

Flower's theories were developed by Éamonn Ó'Carragáin in 2005 in his exploration of the performative aspect of the dream of the rood tradition and the Anglo-Saxon Ruthwell cross.¹¹⁹ He argued that the non-Roman celebration of Easter on the equinox, 25th March, guided the placement of the iconography on the cross which was read in a specific order directed by the path of the sun during the day and during the seasons. In a 2010 paper, the theory was expanded to include the iconographical programmes of crosses at Bewcastle, Ruthwell, Moone, the tower cross at Kells and Muiredach's cross at Monasterboice.¹²⁰ The path of the sun illuminated different panels on the cross at different times of the day and the movement of its shadow brought a new appreciation for the placement of the crosses in the monastery setting. It also highlighted the associated loss of this experience when they are moved indoors and the importance of placing replicas on the site if the cross considered to be in its primary position. In this move away from the comparative method, the crosses were considered to be dynamic objects, designed to interact with the sun's daily course' and 'in order to understand the crosses we have examined, we need to realise that these monuments were meant to be lived with'.¹²¹ Heather Pulliam explored the significance of the effect of rain on the outdoor crosses in 2011 by probing if the reflective quality of wet stone and the route that rivulets of water might take down the surface of the cross could be understood in the context of exegesis.¹²² In 2020, she interrogated the iconography of the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise in terms of 'audience, times of day, seasons, weather, viewing pathways and proximity to the beholder' to see if a phenomenological approach might provide new insights.¹²³

118. Flower, "Irish high crosses," 95.

119. Éamonn Ó'Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the Dream of the Rood Tradition* (London and Toronto: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2005).

120. Éamonn Ó'Carragáin, "Visual Theology within a Liturgical Context: The Visual Programmes of the Irish High Crosses" in *L'Irlanda e gli Irlandesi nell'alto Medioevo*, 707–49.

121. Ó'Carragáin "Visual Theology within a Liturgical Context," 748.

122. Heather Pulliam, "Blood, Water and Stone: The Performative Cross," in *Making Histories, Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on Insular Art, York, 2011*, ed. Jane Hawkes (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 262–78.

123. Heather Pulliam, "Between the Embodied Eye and Living World: Clonmacnoise's Cross of the Scriptures," *The Art Bulletin*, 102:2 (2020): 8–9. The phenomenological approach was originally developed by archaeologists where prehistoric cultural landscapes were decoded through the sensory experiences by placing human interactions at the centre. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00043079.2020.1676131> Accessed August 8, 2022.

The value of the crosses as symbols of Ireland's artistic heritage and cultural identity is central to Maggie Williams's research, which explores their role as 'vehicles for the construction of cultural identity'.¹²⁴ She brought a new perspective in her use of anthropological methods to bridge the gap between the historian's text-based research, the art historian's analysis of style and form and the results of recent archaeological excavations. Her approach explored the layers of meaning that the crosses accumulated over the years, using the Clonmacnoise and Tuam crosses as case studies. The role of the evolution of the role of the Tuam market cross as a symbol of cultural patriotism was explored in her essay of 2001 created a new level of understanding of the context of the late nineteenth century Celtic revival crosses.¹²⁵ This is not a biographical approach as the various relocations, reassemblies, and replicas of the Tuam crosses as are not discussed in any detail.¹²⁶ In her 2012 publication *Icons of Irishness from the Middle Ages to the Modern World* Williams examined other objects that contributed to the creation of Irish identity.¹²⁷

In 2019 by Jane Hawkes, criticized 'the iconographical approach, regarded as dominating modern Irish scholarship [...] primarily involv[ing] identifying the subjects depicted on the monuments and comparing them with known parallels'.¹²⁸ She described iconographical studies as 'a data-collecting exercise', which was 'now largely discredited' due to 'the resultant tendency to produce very loose generalisations'.¹²⁹ This approach was not confined to Ireland as there was 'considerable disquiet' expressed by some academics regarding the study of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, who found the practice of style analysis used

124. Maggie M. Williams, "The Sign of the Cross: Irish High Crosses as Cultural Emblems" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 200), 1.

125. Maggie M. Williams, "Constructing the Market Cross at Tuam: The Role of Cultural Patriotism in the Study of Irish High Crosses," in *From Ireland Coming: Irish Art from the Early Christian to the Late Gothic Period and its European Context*, ed. Colum Hourihane (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001): 141–60.

126. The Tuam cross was not displayed at the Irish Industrial Exhibition of 1853 although the fragments were brought to Dublin. Instead, a replica of an extremely tall cross was displayed that was made from five separate fragments from three different crosses. See case study 5, chapter 4, for details of this replica.

127. Maggie M. Williams, *Icons of Irishness from the Middle Ages to the Modern World* ((New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2012).

128. Jane Hawkes, "Studying Early Christian Sculpture in England and Ireland: the Object of Art History or Archaeology," in *Anglo-Saxon / Irish Relations before the Vikings*. J. Graham-Campbell and M. Ryan, eds. (London: British Academy, 2009), 397–408.

129. Hawkes, "Studying Early Christian Sculpture," 399.

by archaeologists and art historians to be out of date with modern methodologies.¹³⁰ The interdisciplinary direction of recent research on phenomenology, monument biography and cultural significance help to balance the dominance of the undoubted richness of the more traditional iconographical approaches and bring new insights and concerns to the study of the crosses.

1.3.2. The literature of assemblages.

The aims of surveys, inventories and *corpora* is to locate, examine, classify, and record the nature and extent of a selected group of monuments. The collection, analysis, and publication of data is a lengthy and expensive task although the publications have largely ceased and have now migrated on-line. A brief review of the different types of surveys undertaken in the British Isles shows that their terms of reference and ultimate purpose can vary. In order to create a manageable and useful study, a specific timeframe and geographical area is agreed in advance, a process that can be fraught with difficulty. The Scottish inventory, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, (*ECMS*) published in 1903, set a high standard in terms of line drawings, photographs, detailed descriptions and analysis of ‘every symbol and pattern’ on over 120 monuments and fragments. J. Romilly Allen began his work in 1893, funded by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, including three classes of monuments; a) pillar stones and slabs with ogham lettering, b) upright slabs with crosses on the front and Celtic patterns on the back and c) everything else (free-standing crosses, cross bearing slabs, stone coffins and architectural details). The survey included all known monuments of the period irrespective of their the broken and defaced condition (Fig.1.12 & 1.13).¹³¹ Their condition led Allen to the occasional censure; ‘it would be difficult to use too strong language in condemning the stupidity or carelessness which is responsible for having damaged beyond hope of repair one of the finest sculptured slabs in Scotland.’¹³² In 1993, the monumental *ECMS* was reprinted with an introductory essay by Isabel Henderson, in which she highlighted the need for a new survey as the number of known monuments had more than doubled in the intervening years.¹³³ In 2005, John Higgitt

130. Jane Hawkes, “Collingwood and Anglo-Saxon Sculpture: Art History or Archaeology?” in *Making and Meaning in Insular Art*, Rachel Moss, ed. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 142.

131. Allen and Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*.

132. Allen and Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, 3:31.

133. Allen and Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, reissued in 2 volumes in 1993 by the Pinkfoot Press, U.K., with an introduction by Isabel Henderson; <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland-2/2-current-state-of-knowledge/2-3-early-medieval/2-3-3-a-new-corpus/>. Accessed August 18, 2022.

set out the need for a new *ECMS* to record the early medieval pre-Romanesque sculpture of the geographical territory of modern Scotland which should be ‘unashamedly scholarly and scientific in its methods and should ...avoid oversimplification.’¹³⁴ This change in the proposed Scottish *corpus* from ‘Christian monuments’ to ‘pre-Romanesque’ raises the question of terminology and how collections are geographically defined. The question of an Irish *corpus* raises a similar issue as the collection is that of the entire island of Ireland irrespective of the European, and now international, border between the Republic and Northern Ireland. In 2005, a working party of scholars reviewed the best approach to the recording of Scotland’s early medieval carved stones to modern standards and set out their recommendations in a report.¹³⁵ In a new departure, they recommended that a formal conservation risk assessment was undertaken for each stone and appropriate digital scanning was used for recording.¹³⁶ To date, this proposed new Scottish inventory has not commenced, perhaps due perhaps to the scale of the undertaking and the lack of available funding for this lengthy and multi-disciplinary process.¹³⁷

The *ECMS* survey inspired Henry S. Crawford to create his own list of early crosses in Ireland between 1907 and 1918 but he lacked official funding and his survey remained a ‘handlist’ of ‘early Irish crosses’. His terms of reference included a wide variety of crosses, cross fragments and surviving bases, previously considered to be outside of the O’Neill and Roe’s ‘most interesting’ crosses. The list was extended in 1907 and again in 1918 indicating the on-going and expansive nature of this type of survey and it remained the only inventory

134. John Higgitt, “Towards a ‘new *ECMS*’: the proposal for a new corpus of Early Medieval Sculpture in Scotland,” in *Able Minds and Practiced Hands*, Sally M. Foster and Morag Cross, eds., (Leeds: The Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2005), 375–379.

135. Higgitt, “Towards a ‘new *ECMS*’: the proposal for a new corpus of Early Medieval Sculpture in Scotland.” 375–379.

136. The criteria for recording is as follows: Site name/Location and number, Concordance of names and numbers, Description – including geology and where appropriate following the Grammar of Anglo- Saxon Ornament (including the numbering of faces), Photographs – all sides, straight-on views; general and details as appropriate to ensure coverage of ornament, inscriptions, damage, weathering, tool marks and setting/site context, Drawings: Ideally at a scale of 1:10, with 1:5 where appropriate, History – a) Individual stones or group of stones, b) The site (including concordance of site names if necessary), Discussion – including an assessment of potential dating as part of a general discussion of the significance of the sculpture(s). Condition - a formal conservation risk assessment that may require liaison with Historic Scotland; each assessment to carry the date it was carried out, Bibliography: each report should be both fully referenced and include a full specific bibliography for each monument, author and date of field-work.

137. Higgitt, “Towards a ‘new *ECMS*’: the proposal for a new corpus of Early Medieval Sculpture in Scotland.” 375–379. For a review of recent efforts at recording see; <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland/2-current-state-of-knowledge/2-3-early-medieval/2-3-4-other-recording-efforts/> Accessed June 20, 2022.

to incorporate later medieval graveyard and wayside crosses until the Archaeological Survey of Ireland began in 1965.¹³⁸ A total of eighty-five sites with three hundred crosses were included in this first comprehensive inventory, which included sepulchral and termon crosses. He avoided any description of the iconography, directing the reader to the work of Stokes, Allen and O'Neill.¹³⁹ The drawings were not made to the same scale (Fig.1.14), which hindered an analysis of the relative size of the crosses, but each listing included references to information in journals and books, and illustrations in the RIA or the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland (RSAI) libraries. Crawford's photographic record of the crosses, including some Manx examples, was never published but copies were lodged in the NMI and RSAI libraries.

The English inventory, known as the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* or CASSS, began in 1977, principally funded by the British Academy. The scale of the task is seen in the length of time between publications, beginning in 1984 with the latest in 2018.¹⁴⁰ The *corpus* is organised on a county-by-county basis and thirteen volumes have been published but several more are due to be completed shortly (Fig.1.15). The general editor of the series was Rosemary Cramp (1929-2023) Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Durham University, while the most recent volume was completed by Jane Hawkes, Professor of Art History at the University of York indicating that, where stone sculpture is concerned, there is considerable overlap between the disciplines. The content of the volumes remains art historical and archaeological as the history chapter finishes with the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. All sculpture, thought to date between the seventh and the eleventh centuries, is surveyed with categories of evidence for discovery, present location

138. Henry Crawford, "Some Crosses not mentioned in the list of Irish Crosses," *JRSAI* 38, no. 2, (June 1908) 181–2, 'Supplementary list of Irish crosses', *JRSAI* 8, no. 2, (Dec. 1918) 174–9. A total of 300 different sites were included in the final list: many of the sites had more than one cross. For comparison, Harbison included 140 sites (he excluded crosses that had no iconographical carvings) in his *The High Crosses of Ireland; Surveying Our Heritage, the National Monuments Service: marking 50 years of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland* (Dublin: Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2013), 6–7.

139. Crawford "A Descriptive List of Early Irish Crosses," 188.

140. *The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* is the first comprehensive catalogue of the substantial amount of stone sculpture that survives from the pre-Conquest period of England. Since 1977 funding for the survey has come from a variety of non-government charitable and academic sources. See <http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/index.php> for details. The survey provides a comprehensive photographic record, including many previously unpublished or inaccessible pieces. The catalogue entries give a detailed description of each stone, and a discussion of its date and art-historical connections (both within England and beyond). Introductory chapters set the historical and stylistic contexts. The stone sculpture of Anglo-Saxon England is an important source for archaeologists and historians.

and a brief account of present condition. The *corpus* is readily available on-line and PDFs of all the volumes have been digitised.¹⁴¹ Volume eleven of the *CASSS* included approx. forty examples of free-standing crosses that survive in ‘Celtic’ Cornwall, but they have more in common with the Welsh and Irish crosses than with the English examples. The *CASSS* stops short at the Scottish border whereas the cultural context continues northward without regard to modern territorial constructs.

The *CASSS* is complemented by the *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture*, a digital born record of all late-eleventh to early thirteenth-century sculpture across the entire British Isles. While twelfth-century crosses are quite rare in England, Scotland and Wales, comprehensive records for the twelfth-century examples in Ireland are available on this fully searchable database.¹⁴²

The Welsh *corpus* was edited by Nancy Edwards and published in three volumes beginning in 2007 and finishing in 2013 with funding from several different sources.¹⁴³ It was closely modelled on the English *Corpus* but with an added emphasis on the inscriptions and the development of the insular Celtic Language. The Welsh *corpus* is available in book form only and is not available online. The Scottish, English and Welsh *corpora* are principally used for academic research, and they do not have a legislative role in the protection of monuments.

Peter Harbison’s three volume *The Irish High Crosses of Ireland* published in 1992 and discussed earlier in the chapter is the definitive Irish *corpus*. He was clear that the criteria for inclusion was their archaeological/art historic value and there is little reference

141. <http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/index.php> Accessed August 18, 2022.

142. <http://www.crsbi.ac.uk> Accessed June 15, 2023

143. Mark Redknap and John Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales. Volume 1: South-East Wales and the English Border*; Nancy Edwards, *South-West Wales, Volume. 2*; North Wales, Volume. 3 (Wales: The University of Wales, 2007–2013). Each volume provides consistent data and an informed analysis of the sculpture itself and includes several specialist chapters covering subjects such as the form and distribution of motifs, historical background and regional geology. Each volume consists of a full analytical introduction and a catalogue of individual monuments with discussions and numerous photographs and line-drawings. It includes a study of the form, ornament and iconography of 550 monuments, as well as the inscriptions, their formulae, languages (both Latin and Celtic) and epigraphy (including ogham). This project was funded in partnership with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Amgueddfa, Cymru, National Museum Wales and was initially promoted by the University of Wales Board of Celtic Studies. Volumes 2 and 3 have received grants from the British Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the University of Wales, Bangor University and the Cambrian Archaeological Association.

to their post 1200 life or their condition. He included crosses in Northern Ireland, but it is not surprising, given his cut-off date of 1200, that there is no reference to the fact that they were managed under a different political system. This work needs updating, as several crosses have since been relocated and there are new finds since 1992. It remains the essential reference work for the crosses but is out of print and unlikely to be republished. The recently initiated project *Digital Atlas of Early Irish Carved Stones 0-1200AD*, is a collaboration between academics in UCC and QUB, archaeologists and state bodies in the north and south of Ireland. It plans to create a digital map of sculpted material that will help to create searches for particular categories of sculpted material. As the project is still in its infancy, a full evaluation of its usefulness is not yet possible.

A different type of inventory of Irish monuments was undertaken by the Office of Public Works with survey work beginning in 1965 with the first publication in 1984 of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for Co. Louth.¹⁴⁴ The survey was intended to improve monument protection and included all the known monuments in an individual county and the crosses are in a category within the overall. The publications ceased in 2009 when the surveys went on line on the Department website.¹⁴⁵ In 1994, the revised National Monuments Act gave a legal function to the inventory, now the Record of Monuments and Places or RMP and each entry had the protection of the act.¹⁴⁶ There are over 150,000 monuments in the database so that information on the crosses, which was easily accessed in the individual county book publications, is less visible where the data is available only the website.¹⁴⁷ The search tool is for each individual county and has rather confusing categories. The crosses are not treated as a separate collection within the overall.¹⁴⁸ The RMP is designed to facilitate monument protection in Ireland and not to provide an overview of any particular category of monument. In Northern Ireland, the arrangements for monument protection are similar, with over 2,000 scheduled historic monuments, which includes

144. *Surveying Our Heritage, the National Monuments Service.*

145. A monument must be listed on the on Record of Monuments and Places or RMP in order to have statutory protection. The RMP lists monuments by number and marks their location on a series of maps. There is a corresponding file in the National Monuments archive. <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/> Accessed January 19, 2022.

146. <https://www.archaeology.ie/monument-protection>. Accessed January 19, 2022.

147. <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>. Accessed January 19, 2022.

148. The search tool can be used for a county with the categories of churchyard cross, churchyard cross (present location), High Cross, High Cross (present location), Market Cross, Market Cross (present location), Tau cross, Tau Cross (present location), Wayside cross, Wayside cross (present location), Inscribed pillar, Inscribed pillar (present location), Inscribed stone, Inscribed stone (present location), Slab, Slab (present location), Termon cross.

crosses in the care of the Department of Communities.¹⁴⁹ The schedule is digital, and is the responsibility of the central Government department that is tasked with the protection of all monuments. Ann Hamlin's *Archaeology of Early Christianity in the North of Ireland* included an extensive gazetteer of the material evidence of early ecclesiastical sites in the six counties.¹⁵⁰ Her survey is primarily physical. She described the condition of the northern crosses as 'unhelpful: some are badly weathered, like the fine cross at Arboe – and others mutilated as well as weathered' and noted that 'the surviving material may not reflect the original distribution and the pattern of survival is difficult to decide'.¹⁵¹

There is no doubt that comprehensive documentation is essential for effective policy making so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure the survival of monuments. While the Scottish, English, Welsh and Irish *corpora* provide a solid foundation for different types of research, such as a conservation risk assessment risk and an overview of the vulnerability of a group of monuments, this is not their primary function. At present there is no project underway in either Britain or Ireland that will systematically record the condition of the crosses or other carved stone sculptures despite the obvious vulnerability of these collections.

1.3.3. The literature of biography: Letting the stones speak.

There is a lack of research on the lives of the Irish crosses between the twelfth and early nineteenth centuries, when they began to come to the attention of antiquarians and latterly art historians and archaeologists. The nationalist agenda of Petrie and O'Neill explicitly promoted the crosses as a distinctively Irish typology that ceased to be made after the Anglo-Norman invasion. This is not actually the case, and Heather King was one of the first scholars to direct her attention to the occurrence of monumental crosses in the Irish landscape after 1200.¹⁵² In the last of a series of three articles, she traced the documentary

149. The National Monuments Service in Northern Ireland has had several departmental moves over the past years but is currently in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/scheduled-historic-monuments> Accessed March 15, 2022.

150. Ann Hamlin, *The Archaeology of Early Christianity in the North of Ireland* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008).

151. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 96. She describes the crosses as 'seventeen with figure decoration, twelve with geometric or other non-figure decoration and nine plain examples as well as two small figure-carved crosses at Down. Only one fragment in Co. Antrim (the Connor shaft) whilst there is a marked cluster near the river Blackwater in West Armagh and East Tyrone.

152. Heather King, 'Late Medieval Crosses in County Meath, c. 1470–1635', *PRIA* 84C (1984): 79–115; Heather King, 'Irish Wayside and Churchyard Crosses 1600–1700', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 19:1 (1985): 13–33; Heather King,

history for the erection of monumental crosses post-1200 noting at least some continuity during the thirteenth century and beyond. While her focus was primarily on the wayside and churchyard crosses of Meath, and crosses manufactured after 1600, she was one of the first to note a pattern in the re-erection of early, pre-1200 crosses during the reign of James II.¹⁵³ A brief mention of the fate of market crosses (including some of an early date) was included in studies of the fate of medieval urban architecture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Rachel Moss.¹⁵⁴ She extended study in her paper, delivered at the 8th International Insular Art Conference at Glasgow in 2017, to look at medieval and early modern sources for the history of the early crosses, reliquaries, and manuscripts.¹⁵⁵ For urban crosses, the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA)* series, published by the RIA has proved a valuable resource for those crosses that once occupied urban settings. Although references cannot always be directly matched to surviving monuments, the fascicles for Kells and Tuam have proven particularly valuable to this study, while complementary volumes have helped to build a prosopography for the crosses, usually back to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, in the collecting together of significant primary documentary and cartographic evidence.¹⁵⁶ The need for such information in monument specific studies applies particularly to those studies of phenomenology, the basis of which lies in establishing that the monument under discussion is in its primary location. Similarly, the notable absence of this type of information in the relevant conservation plans is directly at odds with the underlying policy of gaining a holistic understanding of the monuments to best inform future care. Roger Stalley's study of the work of the Muiredach master is a rare exception as the final chapter is an exploration of the later history of the crosses.¹⁵⁷ This chapter includes a discussion of the nineteenth century 'rediscovery' of the crosses, but the value of their long lives was not discussed. He did acknowledge that 'the fate of crosses like

"Late Medieval Irish Crosses and their European Background," in *From Ireland Coming*, Colm Hourihane ed., (New Jersey: Princeton, 2001), 333–50.

153 King, "Late Medieval Irish Crosses and their European Background", 333, 349–50

154. Rachel Moss, "Collective Memory and Municipal Identity in the Early Modern Irish Town" in *Le Passé dans la Ville*, Dany Sandron ed. (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2016), 165–182.

155. Rachel Moss, "Resilience, Restoration and Revival: Insular Art in Later Medieval Ireland," in *Peopling Insular Art: Practice, Performance, Perception*, Cynthia Thickpenny et. al. eds (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2020) 189–96.

156. Rachel Moss and Heather Pulliam eds. *Irish and Scottish Art: Survivals and Revivals 900-1900*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023).

157. Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 158–167.

those at Monasterboice is an obscure and confusing story that has never been studied in any detail'.¹⁵⁸

This study of the changing meaning and value of carved stone from the time of its creation to the present day is known as 'cultural biography'. There is an extensive literature associated with the origins of this approach initially in the field of anthropology,¹⁵⁹ and its later adoption by archaeologists as a means of broadening their analysis of material culture.¹⁶⁰ The biography of objects is the study of how 'people and objects gather time, movement and change, they are constantly transformed, and these transformations of person and object are tied with each other.'¹⁶¹ The significance of place is a central component of the biographical approach as the functions and values that are attached to monuments are intimately connected to their location. The strength of the attachment will often determine if they survive *in situ* or are moved or destroyed. The use of cultural biography is now well established in Scotland, and Mark A. Hall's 2015 paper "Lifeways in Stone" provides a comprehensive overview of its application in the study of early medieval stone monuments.¹⁶² An early example is the biography of the Ruthwell Cross from the seventeenth century to the present by art historian Brendan Cassidy in the 1992.¹⁶³ A second paper in the same publication, by the archaeologist Robert Farrell, examined the physical

158. Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 161.

159. Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Chris Gosden and Yvonne Marshall, "The Cultural Biography of Objects," *World Archaeology* 31, no. 2 (1999): 169–78.

160. Michael Schiffer and James Skibo, "The Explanation of Artifact Variability," *American Antiquity*, vol. 62, no. 1, 1997, 27–50; Robin Skeates, "Animate Objects; A Biography of Prehistoric 'Axe-amulets' in the Central Mediterranean Region," *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 61 (1995), 279–301.

161. Gosden and Marshall, "The Cultural Biography of Objects," 169.

162. Mark M. Hall, "Lifeways in Stone; Memories and Matter–Reality in Early Medieval Sculpture from Scotland," in *Early Medieval Stone Monuments, Materiality, Biography, Landscape*, Howard Williams, Joanne Kirton and Meggen Gondek, eds. (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2015) 182–215; See also Mark A. Hall, "The Meigle Stones: A Biographical Overview," *Northern Studies*, 46, (2014): 15–46.; Mark A. Hall, "Capturing Biographical Trajectories of Early Medieval Sculpture, Eliseg in Context," *Internet Archaeology* 39 (2015a); Mark A. Hall, Isobel Henderson and Simon Taylor, "A Sculptured Fragment from Pittensorn Farm, Gellyburn, Perthshire," *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal*, 4, (1998.): 129–44.

163 . Brendan Cassidy, "The Later Life of the Ruthwell Cross: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present," in: *The Ruthwell Cross. Papers from the Colloquium Sponsored by the Index of Christian Art. Princeton University, 8 December 1989*, ed. B. Cassidy. (Princeton: University of Princeton, 1992), 3–34.

cross, tracing its construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction.¹⁶⁴ This study showed the benefit of a multi-disciplinary approach to biography but also that the methodologies of the different disciplines remained distinct. The lines between the disciplines had begun to soften as the archaeologist, John Moreland, took a historical approach to the biography of the Bradbourne cross in 1999.¹⁶⁵ This paper was concerned with understanding the changes in meaning associated with the cross and demonstrated the suitability of this approach for early medieval carved stones, with their dramatic shifts in value and attendant physical impacts. Over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the value of the cross shifted drastically from ‘an interactive medium between this world and the next’ to ‘a monument of superstition to be feared, eradicated and destroyed.’¹⁶⁶ The biography ends at the rediscovery of the fragments in the nineteenth century, when the denial of a ‘Catholic’ past led to an interpretation of the cross as an icon of an early, proto-Protestant, native church. The paper is not overly concerned with the physical impact of these dramatic changes on the three surviving parts of the cross, but rather confirms the benefit of understanding the context in which this destruction and reconfiguration took place. Moreland’s description of the restoration of the cross in 1947 is applicable to many of the Irish crosses, ‘the fragments were brought together, reinterpreted and re-assembled to create monuments which, although bearing little resemblance to the original, nevertheless took on a life of their own and began their biographies anew.’¹⁶⁷ The multi-disciplinary approach to the 2000 biography of the Crieff Burgh Cross included reports on the art-historical context, the inscription, the landscape context, the artifacts and sites in the landscape, its relocation and reuse as a market cross and an account of the conservation work needed when it was moved indoors in 1998.¹⁶⁸

The composition of the interdisciplinary team required to write a biography varied according to the individual medieval carved stone or stones and as a result the content of the biography produced different types of knowledge and understanding. The site-specific

164. Robert T. Farrell with Catherine Karkov, “The Constriction, Deconstruction, and Reconstruction of the Ruthwell Cross: Some Caveats,” in *The Ruthwell Cross: Papers from the Colloquium*, 35–47.

165. John Moreland, “The World(s) of the Cross,” *World Archaeology* 31, no. 2 (1999): 194–213.

166. Moreland, “The World(s) of the Cross,” 195, 197.

167. Moreland, “The World(s) of the Cross,” 209.

https://chacklepie.com/ascopus/catvol13.php?pageNum_urls=65 Accessed May 10, 2023.

168. Mark Hall, Katherine Forsyth, Isabel Henderson, Ian Scott, Ross Trench-Jellicoe and Angus Watson, “Of Makings and Meanings: Towards a Cultural Biography of the Crieff Burgh Cross, Strathern, Perthshire,” *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal*, 6 (2000):154–188.

nature of the team of experts was demonstrated in the biography of the Hilton of Cadboll stone, published in 2008.¹⁶⁹ This time, the conventional art historical and archaeological analysis was augmented by an exploration of the meanings and values attached to the stone in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This material included folklore and oral histories as well as an ethnographic study of contemporary social values or the ‘diverse, complex and often intangible meanings’ held by the local community.¹⁷⁰ Gosden and Marshall describe these different types of approaches as ‘biographical variety’ due to the ‘great variety of ways an object might be understood to have a biography and a range of ways a biography of objects might be approached.’¹⁷¹ The biography of the object can illustrate changes in meaning that may accrue from social action and not necessarily be accompanied by physical modifications or changes in use.¹⁷² A collection of essays on a variety of early medieval stone monuments from Ireland, Scotland, Northern Britain and Scandinavia tackled the themes of materiality, biography and landscape under the heading ‘memory work’.¹⁷³ The *Maen Achwyfan* cross is described as ‘a rare instance of an early medieval stone monument still situated at, or very close to, its primary location,’¹⁷⁴ The interrogation of the materiality, biography and landscape aspects of the monument reveals how ‘many acts of remembering, forgetting, identity creation and negotiation were performed over the long term’ were performed around and upon the monument.¹⁷⁵ Nancy Edwards recently acknowledged that cultural biographies help in understanding changing attitudes to monuments over time.¹⁷⁶

The cultural biographies of early medieval carved stones are adapted and developed according to the author’s interest and the issues that are identified. There is no fixed formula for cultural biography other than the inclusion of an exploration of the changing meaning and values associated with the stone, but time frames and terms of reference can vary. The

169. Heather James, Isabel Henderson, Sally Foster and Siân Jones, eds. *A Fragmented Masterpiece: Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-Slab*. (Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 2008).

170. Foster and Jones, “Recovering the biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-slab,” in *A Fragmented Masterpiece*, 205–84.

171. Gosden and Marshall, “The Cultural Biography of Objects,” 176.

172. Gosden and Marshall, “The Cultural Biography of Objects,” 169.

173. Howard Williams, Joanne Kirton and Meggan Gondek, eds. *Early Medieval Stone Monuments, Materiality, Biography, Landscape*. (Suffolk, The Boydell Press, 2015), 1.

174. Williams, Kirton and Gondek, *Early Medieval Stone Monuments*, 2.

175. Williams, Kirton and Gondek, *Early Medieval Stone Monuments*, 5.

176. Nancy Edwards, “Afterlives: Reinventing Early Medieval Sculpture in Wales,” *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 169, (2020): 1-29.

biographical approach is based on human and other interaction with a monument, but it does not necessarily include or exclude an evaluation of its artistic merit, an analysis of the physical structure, its place in the landscape, or its contemporary political, spiritual or social value.

1.3.4. Conservation policies and values: where the past, the present and the future meet.

One of the most influential changes to conservation practice this century has been the acceptance of the idea that ‘heritage’ is not something static and unchanging but rather it constantly evolves as people interact with it.¹⁷⁷ This change in conservation approaches to the built environment is reflected in the seminal documents of the *Athens Charter* 1930, the *Venice Charter* 1967, the *Washington Charter* 1967 and the *Nara Document of Authenticity* 1994.¹⁷⁸ Loughlin Kealy summarised this change as; ‘in the first the public is to be informed of cultural value, in the second its involvement is important, in the third essential and in the last, an integral component of cultural value.’¹⁷⁹ This new thinking was formalised in the *Burra Charter* of 1992, which suggests a values-based approach to conservation rather than a material approach.¹⁸⁰ Heritage is no longer considered to be intrinsic but is instead, as described by Kealy, ‘the result of the continuous process of identifying and valuing, carried by the living cultures of people, and through which their common humanity is expressed’.¹⁸¹ What we choose to define as ‘heritage’, why we have selected a particular characteristic of culture and how we protect and preserve it has been discussed from different perspectives ranging from the historical to the archaeological to the social context, each probing in

177. Pearce, “The Making of Cultural Heritage,” 59–64; For a full list of conservation charters and policies see; https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/research_resources/charters.html#1990 Accessed November 3, 2020;

178. https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/research_resources/charters.html Accessed August 18 2023.

179. Loughlin Kealy, *Stones in Water, Essays on Inheritance in the Built Environment*, (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2022), 112.

180. This is the original publication date of the *Burra Charter*. The current plan was revised in 2013. See ICOMOS Australia for details.

<https://australia.icomos.org/publications/burra-charter-practice-notes/burra-charter-archival-documents/#BCOLDER> Accessed August 18, 2023; Siân Jones and Stephen Leech, *Valuing the Historic Environment: A Critical Review of Existing Approaches to Social Value*, (Manchester: University of Manchester, 2015), 7–24. Siân Jones, *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place*, 5–6; Siân Jones “Wrestling with the Social Value of Heritage: Dilemmas and Opportunities,” *JCAH* 4, no. 1 (February 2017): 22–26.

181. Kealy, *Stones in Water*, 4

different ways.¹⁸² Cultural heritage has been expanded into areas that were previously outside the definition, as it now includes ‘representation of beliefs about self and community which nests in with other related belief systems to create a holistic structure that ramifies through all areas – politics, economics, use of resources -where social life touches us as individuals.’¹⁸³ Cultural heritage is an expression of people’s identity, operating at different levels from the individual to the family, from the local community to the nation.¹⁸⁴

The translation of cultural heritage theories and values into conservation practice, i.e. when ideas become actions, was explored in two research reports from the Getty Conservation Institute; *Values and Heritage Conservation* and *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, published in 2000 and 2002 respectively.¹⁸⁵ The reports found that conservation discourse is no longer limited to materiality but in order to equip conservation professionals to deal with current challenges, research was needed on the economic, cultural and social forces that shape our response to heritage.¹⁸⁶ The *Burra Charter* methodology for assessing cultural significance based on values was described by Randall Mason as ‘fraught with difficulties.’¹⁸⁷ He demonstrated the subjectivity of defining value categories by offering his own interpretation of those associated with heritage sites.¹⁸⁸ His breakdown of the different types of historical value is useful as it accrued from the heritage material’s age, from its associations with people or events, from its rarity or uniqueness, from its technological qualities or from its archival/documentary potential as well as educational/academic value and artistic value.¹⁸⁹ Cultural/symbolic values are those shared

182. Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen London, 1983); David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain* (London: Verso Books, 1985); Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Kevin Walsh, *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-Modern World* (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 1992); Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum, History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995);

183. “Section one, The Cultural Heritage: Concepts, Values and Principals,” in *The Heritage Reader*, 13–149; Susan Pearce, “The Making of Cultural Heritage,” in Avrami, *Values and Heritage Conservation*, 59.

184. Pearce, “The Making of Cultural Heritage,” 61–64.

185. Avrami, *Values and Heritage Conservation*; de la Torre and Mason, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*.
http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf Accessed January 10, 2021.

186. Avrami, *Values and Heritage Conservation*, 6.

187. Randall Mason, “Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices,” in de la Torre and Mason, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, 5.

188. Mason’s alternative values are sociocultural values (historical, cultural/symbolic, social, spiritual/religious and aesthetic) and economic values (use/market value and non-use/nonmarket value).

189. Mason, “Assessing Values in Conservation Planning,” 11;

meanings associated with heritage that are not strictly speaking historic. The social value of a site includes activities that do not capitalise directly on the historical values, while spiritual/religious value emanate from beliefs and religious teachings. The aesthetic values are those related all the senses although the visual qualities of heritage are usually dominant. He warned that heritage sites do not always share the same values and these categories are a starting point that may be adjusted and revised for each project.¹⁹⁰

The categories of values teased out in *Future thinking on carved stone in Scotland*, published in 2016, are perhaps more relevant for carved stone on this side of the Atlantic.¹⁹¹ These categories are historical, aesthetic, social, spiritual/religious, economic, cultural/symbolic, political, and the temporal dimension of value. The final value is associated with the changing meaning and values that carved stone had from the point of creation to the present and will be discussed later in the chapter. The methodology for a values-based approach to guiding the future development of a place through an understanding of its cultural significance is the conservation plan.¹⁹² The production of a published conservation plan is now an accepted practical approach to change but it is an expensive process, usually reserved for relatively large projects with attendant budgets. However, this methodology is not infallible as the Irish plans for places with high crosses, discussed in section 1.2.1, largely overlooked the social, spiritual/religious and cultural/symbolic, economic, cultural/symbolic, and political and the temporal dimension of the value associate with the sites.

The *Burra Charter's* recommendation that the social, and spiritual values of all members of societies should be included in the cultural significance of a place was acknowledged in the *Nara Document's* recognition of the intangible aspects of culture such as traditions, rituals, languages, and social practices and¹⁹³ These concepts continue to create professional and academic unease in assessing heritage values.¹⁹⁴ The question of what values are categorised as tangible and intangible and how authenticity and integrity are

190 Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning," 103.

191. Foster, *Future Thinking*, 70–77.

192. James Semple Kerr, "The Conservation Plan," in *The Heritage Reader*, 322–30.

<https://australia.icomos.org/publications/the-conservation-plan/> Accessed January 3, 2020.

193 *The Burra Charter*, 1–4; *Nara conference on authenticity, Japan 1994 Proceedings* (Trondheim: Tapir Publishers, 1994).

194. Laurajane Smith and Gary Campbell, "The Tautology of "Intangible Values" and the Misrecognition of Intangible Cultural Heritage," *Heritage & Society*, 10, no. 1 (2017): 26–44.

negotiated are increasingly the subject of heritage studies, producing a multiplicity of literature.¹⁹⁵ These concepts of authenticity and integrity cannot be overlooked by heritage managers as they are central to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a site which leads to inscription on the World Heritage List.¹⁹⁶ The work of Sally Foster and Siân Jones is relevant as they have critically examined how authenticity, meaning and value are understood in relation to early medieval carved stone and their replicas.¹⁹⁷ Jones' 2004 report on the Hilton of Cadboll stone situates a tangible monument in the context of its conservation, setting out previous approaches to meaning, significance and value and how this has been changed by the inclusion of the 'less obvious' metaphorical, symbolic and other connotative meanings related to the community and the place.¹⁹⁸ The report found that the Hilton of Cadboll stone was the focus of strong public attachment, but this attribute was poorly understood due to the relatively minor role that social values played in heritage management decisions when compared with the historic, aesthetic and scientific values.¹⁹⁹ The research framework for carved stone in *Future Thinking on Carved Stone in Scotland* offers a holistic view of historic worked stone in shaping identity and a sense of place.²⁰⁰ The framework could be applied to any collection of carved stone in the British Isles and, although the details might be different, the principal approach is relevant. The framework examines the current state of knowledge regarding carved stone, how new knowledge and understanding is created, how we understand value and significance, the issues that need to be addressed in the future and how we engage people with the stones. Issues of authenticity and its relationship with materiality are examined as carved stones and their replicas are particularly suitable to exploring these complex questions. Cultural biography is identified as a suitable framework for investigating the changing meaning and values associated with

195. Cornelius Holtorf, "On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality in Archaeological Object Authenticity," *Anthropological Quarterly* 86, no. 2 (2013): 427–43. Laura Jane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. (Oxford: Routledge, 2006); Herb Stovel, "Origins and Influences of the Nara Document on Authenticity," *APT Bulletin* 36, no. 2/3 (2008): 9–17; Siân Jones, "Experiencing Authenticity at Heritage Sites: Some Implications for Heritage Management and Conservation," *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites* 11, no. 2, (2009): 133–147; Siân Jones, "Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves. Beyond the Deconstruction of Authenticity", *Journal of Material Culture*, 15, no. 2(2010): 181–203.

196. UNESCO *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, 2021. 29–31 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/> Accessed May 20 2022.

197. Foster and Jones, "Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-slab," 205–84.

198. Siân Jones, *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place*, 27.

199. Jones, *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place*, xi.

200. Foster, *Future Thinking*, 70–77.

carved stone, which ‘enable[s] us to identify how and on what (or not) our present values systems are based and to provide a hook to the interests of contemporary communities.’²⁰¹ The practical application of the theoretical framework of *Future Thinking* is explored in a wide selection of case studies that illustrate multi-disciplinary nature of stone conservation and the complexity of approaches. Foster continued to explore ideas of authenticity in her 2020 cultural biography of the replica of the St. John’s Cross in Iona.²⁰² This book is a composite biography that includes the ‘original’ stone cross, its concrete replica and the many other copies, arguing that authenticity is not restricted to the ‘original’ cross but is a more complex, nuanced concept that encompasses all versions.

Siân Jones has published widely on the relationship between value, identity, authenticity, and conservation approaches.²⁰³ Her work is inter-disciplinary bringing clarity to challenging topics such as the relationships between the decay of masonry monuments, heritage interventions and cultural values.²⁰⁴ Her most recent book, in collaboration with Thomas Yarrow, uses an ethnographic methodology to dissect the work of heritage professionals as they interact with the monuments in their care.²⁰⁵ In their view, conservation experts seek to ‘configure the present in relation to pre-existent material traces of the past, as the same time as remaking that past with specific futures in mind.’²⁰⁶ Conservation practitioners are faced with the dilemma that their own actions can threaten authenticity and significance as ‘those involved recognise how interventions can change or destroy the existing qualities of conservation objects...by forms of protection that ‘artificially’ prevent change and decay.’²⁰⁷ They also make the point that conservation plays a role in ‘reinforcing

201. Foster, *Future Thinking*, 77.

202. Sally Foster, *My Life as a Replica*.

203. Siân Jones, “Making Place, Resisting Displacement: Conflicting National and Local Identities in Scotland,” in: *Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Volume 4*. Laurajane Smith, ed., (London: Routledge, 2006), 150–173; Jones, “Experiencing Authenticity”; “Monuments, Memory and Identity: Exploring the Social Value of Place”, *Conservation Bulletin* 63 (2010): 22–24; “Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves. Beyond the Deconstruction of Authenticity”, *Journal of Material Culture*, 15 no.2,(2010): 181–203; “Wrestling with the Social Value of Heritage: Problems, Dilemmas and Opportunities”, *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*, 4 no.1 (2017): 21–37.

204. Rachel Douglas-Jones, John J. Hughes, Siân Jones, and Thomas Yarrow, “Science, Value and Material Decay in the Conservation of Historic Environments,” *Journal of Cultural Heritage* 21(September–October 2016): 823–33.

205. Siân Jones and Thomas Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation: An Ethnography of Heritage Practice*, (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2022)

206. Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 212.

207. Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 217.

power relations through privileging certain perspectives and marginalising others.’²⁰⁸ They ask the question, whether, in the context of climate change and diminished fundings, monuments should be consolidated and restored as in past conservation campaigns, or should be left to decay or be reburied.²⁰⁹ Their conclusion is that there are no answers to these questions as conservation is ongoing and never finished: monuments will continue to decay despite the considerable effort required to keep things ‘in being’ in a world of change.²¹⁰ The logical extension of this argument is explored in the literature of loss, particularly in the work of Caitlin DeSilvey. In *Curated Decay*, she explores what happens when we put aside the requirement to protect and conserve our buildings, objects and landscapes and allow the process of decay and disintegration to be productive by envisioning other ways of understanding material change.²¹¹ A recognition of the acceptance of change, rather than attempting to deny or deflect the transience and uncertainty that it creates, can be viewed as contrary to traditional conservation approaches. These themes are explored in the Heritage Futures research programme (2015-2019), which explores the potential for innovation and creative exchange across a broad range of heritage and related fields.²¹² This research acknowledges that humans have modified the climate to such an extent that the environment is no longer stable and that our attempts to conserve our cultural heritage are looking increasingly unsustainable.²¹³ There is, however, in Ireland, a lack of this type of theoretical discourse around the relationship between values and heritage and the nature of authenticity and loss in the face of climate change. Kealy noted that ‘conservation in Ireland eschews the vigour of theoretical and technical argument in favour of a principled pragmatism in intervention and a professional reticence in debate.’²¹⁴ His 2022 publication, *Stones in Water* is a rare exploration of how the built environment is understood and valued in the Irish context and the need for new knowledge to positively construct a sustainable future.

208. Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 219.

209. Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 221.

210. Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 224.

211. Caitlin DeSilvey, *Curated Decay: Heritage Beyond Saving* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2017).

212. <https://heritage-futures.org/about/> Accessed May 13, 2023.

213. Rodney Harrison, Caitlin DeSilvey, Cornelius Holtorf, Sharon Macdonald, Nadia Bartolini, Ester Breithoff, Harald Fredheim, Anthony Lyons, Sarah May, Jennie Morgan and Sefryn Penrose, *Heritage Futures: Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices* (London: UCL Press, 2020), 475-476.

214. Loughlin Kealy, “Conservation” in Andrew Carpenter, et. al. eds., *Art and Architecture of Ireland Volume IV: Architecture 1600–2000*, (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 513.

1.4. Methodology.

Several different theoretical approaches are used in this thesis, which combine to create new knowledge and understanding about the cultural significance of the high crosses and their future survival. The expansion of knowledge and understanding of the post-1200 lives of the crosses is initially approached from a historical perspective using a combination of primary and secondary documents that will focus on the period between the late twelfth century and the end of the seventeenth century. This lies between two major watersheds in Irish history, beginning with the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1170 and administrative reorganisation of the Irish Church as part of the wider Gregorian reformation, and concluding at the end of the Williamite wars in 1691, which established English control over the entire island. This research contextualises later adaptations and appropriations of the crosses in the context of their original setting and function, as they survived in association with the churches and cathedrals of a conservative, reorganised church. A small number of crosses of monastic origin evolved into market crosses in the towns that developed around them. The *Irish Historic Towns Atlases* provide an overview of the changing values associated with these market crosses. The timeline of the Reformation and the endurance of the Catholic faith in Ireland will be unravelled and contrasted with events in England and Scotland as a means to understand the changing values associated with what were, on the face of it, explicitly Catholic monuments. The attitudes and circumstances of Anglican clergymen and the Protestant Ascendancy during the eighteenth century are examined as the majority of the crosses survived in the graveyards of the Church of Ireland. The continuity of Catholic burials in these graveyards is also considered to have influenced the preservation of the crosses. Evidence from the eighteenth century onwards is to be found in primary records such as images, newspapers, official documents, letters, and other resources. During the nineteenth century the rival identities of Irish Protestants and Catholics came into sharp focus as the contested heritage of the crosses was claimed as part of their religious and political patrimony. The crosses emerge from relative obscurity to become ‘icons of Irishness’²¹⁵ influenced by the Romantic movement, a growing sense of nationalism, Catholic emancipation, and the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. Disestablishment marked the formal official designation of some of the crosses as national monuments, which led to a reassessment of their historic and artistic values. During the late

215. The term is borrowed from Williams, *Icons of Irishness*.

twentieth century, the OPW were involved in the relocation of several crosses, the values used to justify these projects was discussed above in section 1.2.2.

Having traced the agents of change that influenced the survival of the crosses, i.e. the way that people and events in the past have influenced the values associated with the crosses and shaped their survival, the focus is tightened to examine the long lives or cultural biographies of ten case studies of crosses.²¹⁶ The biographical approach has been discussed in the literature above but, to date, it has not been applied to the study the long lives of Irish crosses in order to explore the values that alternatively damaged or protected them. For the first time, the crosses are seen as a primary source and treated as significant historical documents in their own right as barometers of an often-traumatic history. The biography of the individual case studies is assembled through a combination of historical records, newspapers, personal accounts, artists' images, photographs, secondary research and any other relevant source of information. The historical research is enhanced by evidential field work using conservation techniques to record the physical condition of the individual crosses. This forensic examination of the crosses is the first time that they have been examined in this way. It is beyond the scope of the thesis to undertake a detailed study of all the surviving monuments, so case studies of ten crosses have been conducted. The results are recorded and analyzed to confirm or contradict the historical records and to create new knowledge, over and above the existing data, on the impact of changing values and meanings on the crosses.

The selection of the individual crosses for the case studies is not without difficulty. Guided by Harbison's criteria for inclusion in his *High Crosses of Ireland*, the presence of carved detail on the surface of the cross is an important consideration, as well as their survival as substantial, free-standing monuments. These have the advantage of being the subject of early academic studies and were instilled with a high level of artistic and historic value from an early time. Precedence is also given to those that suffered different types of damage in order to facilitate understanding of the impact of changing values over time. Sites that have more than one cross are also favored as they have different types of damage and can act as a control group for each other. Other influences are the type of location and perceived or actual ownership that leads to different values and treatments and are a strong

216. Foster, *Future Thinking*, 77.

<https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland/> Accessed May 3, 2023.

determiner of subsequent history.²¹⁷ Geographical range is also a consideration to determine if survival has regional patterns and the influence of local political and administrative systems. The existence of replicas of the Ahenny, Tuam, Kells, and Downpatrick crosses facilitates a discussion of their function, significance, relationship with the original and role in the future. Finally, it is desirable, but not essential, to have an appropriate level of documentation in order to examine the history of a cross. When little is known of their history, the physical analysis of the damage can produce new insights and knowledge. Of the ten case studies, three are in Ulster (Downpatrick, Armagh and Clones), two in Munster (Ahenny), one in Connaught (Tuam) and four in Leinster (Glendalough and Kells). Two of the Kells crosses are in an urban graveyard, while the third is in the town, where it formerly acted as a market cross. The two Ahenny crosses are in a remote rural graveyard and have been selected due to their high artistic and historic value and to balance the dominance of urban crosses. The cross at Glendalough is also in a rural location and has a history of fragmentation and reconstruction. The inclusion of the ‘market’ crosses in Armagh, Downpatrick, and Tuam is due to their complex survival stories, battered condition and location in towns of monastic origin. The Clones cross has been identified as a ‘market’ cross but is a later invention, a new monument created out of existing fragments. All ten crosses share their ability to tell their stories through their physical condition.

Each case study is presented in the same format including a general background to the history of the site, a description of the surviving structure, a discussion of the available historic images, and a discussion of the visible damage. The crosses are spatially complex objects with many different decorated surfaces, which have distinctive patterns of weathering and structural integrity. Original two-point perspective record drawings of each corner of the crosses were prepared by the author, which map the physical condition of the crosses with an emphasis on identifiable damage as well as missing material or the negative space.²¹⁸ These perspectives were developed as a tool for examining the three-dimensional aspect of the crosses and the articulation of the change of plane where two sides meet. A broken surface is often weathered to the same tone as undamaged stone so recording the

217. For a review of the different ownership of the crosses, see Appendix 2, which shows that the majority of crosses or 79%, survived in graveyards in the ownership of the Church of Ireland.

218. The concept of negative space in art refers to the space around and between objects. The positive space is the subject or object of the image. In the context of the recording of the crosses it is the parts of the crosses that have been removed, what is missing.

often-subtle nature of the loss in photographs is difficult. In the same way that forensic scientists record and analyse blood spatters to determine the type and cause of injury or death, the results of the surveys are analysed to determine the cause of the damage. Different colours are used to identify the categories of replacement stone, cracks, eroded or smooth surfaces, missing material, removal of roll mouldings, and mortar repairs. This is not an exhaustive study is not intended to be a detailed history or an archaeological exploration of each site. Neither is it a study of the contemporary social and spiritual values associated with the crosses. While this is an important and often neglected aspect of the cultural significance of the crosses, it is outside the scope of this thesis.

Based on the results of the case studies, a ‘lexicon of losses’ will be established, which will act as a ‘benchmark’ against which shared issues of loss and survival across the wider group of crosses can be measured. This will also draw on the contextual documentary evidence information contained in earlier chapters. The biographies of the individual crosses have gaps, but they can be combined to create a clearer picture. The visible damage may have an individual pattern that is unique to a single cross or it may be a shared across several crosses. The results are not always straightforward or clear-cut but some new patterns have emerged that are analysed in order to understand wider patterns of loss and damage that are shared across the wider group.

The final part of the thesis summaries of the key findings of the previous chapters and addresses how this new knowledge and understanding relates to the four key issues identified at the start of this chapter, that have led to the current lacuna in research and policy. Our understanding of authenticity and meaning is reappraised in the context of changes to the value of the crosses. The approach to protecting the cultural significance of the crosses is discussed in the light of this reappraisal, which is based on new knowledge and understanding. The discussion addresses the need for a forum in which policies and new thinking can be advanced, i.e. the gap in co-ordination between the relevant agencies and the absence of relevant research and useful policies. The issues around the lack of an accessible, current survey and audit of the crosses, together with the likely number that this would contain, are discussed. The issue of how further gaps in knowledge might be filled by future research will be addressed and some proposals are put forward that will contribute to broadening the conversation about how the significance of the Irish high crosses is secured in the twenty first century so that their long lives can continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

The research is contained within three volumes. Volume 1 comprises of the text including appendices, bibliography etc. Volume 2 comprises of the figures for chapters 1-3 and 5-6. The figures for Chapter 4, the case studies, are in volume 3 as the number of images was large enough to justify a separate volume.

Chapter 2. From creation to Restoration: the sacred to the profane.

2.1. Origin and function.

The free-standing crosses survived across a relatively long timeline, during which their original function and meaning evolved and changed, exerting a significant impact on their later biographies. The relationships between the primary setting of the crosses, the surrounding churches and later settlement patterns has been recognized but is, of course, dependent on their survival *in situ*.²¹⁹ Excavations and surveys at sites such as Clonmacnoise where some crosses, for example the Cross of the Scriptures, survived until recently in their primary location are particularly important in terms of understanding these relationships.²²⁰ In addition, various early and later medieval documentary sources provide information about early Irish church sites.²²¹

The selection of a location for an ecclesiastical site founded between the sixth and the ninth centuries does not appear to follow a standard formula, ranging from off-shore Atlantic islands, such as Skellig Michael, to busy riverside crossroads like Clonmacnoise.²²² Pagan ritual sites were sometimes appropriated for Christian worship such as at Kildare and

219. Tomás Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland: Architecture, Ritual and Memory* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010); *ibid.*, *Churches in the Irish Landscape AD 400–1100*. (Cork: Cork University Press, 2021); *ibid.*, “The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Relics in Early Medieval Ireland.” *JRSAI* 133 (2003): 130–76; Tomás Ó Carragáin and Sam Turner, eds. *Making Christian Landscapes in Atlantic Europe. Conversion and Consolidation in the Early Middle Ages* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2016); Williams, Kirton, and Gondek, eds., *Early Medieval Stone Monuments*;

220. Conleth Manning, “Clonmacnoise Cathedral,” in *Clonmacnoise Studies, 1*, Heather A. King, ed. (Dublin: Dúchas, The Heritage Service, 1998) 57–86; Heather A. King, ed., *Clonmacnoise Studies, 2 vols.* (Dublin: Dúchas 1994–1998); Jenny White Marshall and Grellan D. Rourke, *High Island: An Irish Monastery in the Atlantic* (Dublin: Town House and Country House, 2000); Walter William Horn, Jenny White Marshall and Grellan D. Rourke, *The Forgotten Hermitage of Skellig Michael* (USA: University of California Press, 1990); Jerry O’Sullivan and Tomás Ó’Carragáin, *Inishmurray: Archaeological Survey and Excavations 1997–2000* (Cork: Collins Press, 2008); Conleth Manning, “The Churches of Monasterboice and the Layout of the Site.” *PRIA121C* (Dublin: RIA, 2021): 125–155.

221. Ann Hamlyn and Kathleen Hughes, *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church* (Dublin: Fourcourts Press, 1977) 19–35. Charles Doherty, “The Monastic Town in Early Medieval Ireland”, in *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Russia from the ninth to the thirteenth century*, Howard B. Clarke & Annegret Simms eds. (Oxford: BAR Publishing 1985) 52–53.

222. Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (USA: Cornell University Press, 1966); Edel Bhreathnach, *Ireland in the Medieval World AD 400–1000 Landscape, Kingship and Religion* (Dublin: Fourcourts Press, 2014); Ó’Carragáin and Turner, *Making Christian Landscapes in Atlantic Europe*.

Armagh.²²³ Recent research has shown that ecclesiastical sites were often located along the borders of kingdoms as part of a strategy of defining and reinforcing territorial boundaries.²²⁴ Irrespective of the wider landscape setting, surviving examples show that ecclesiastical sites were enclosed by one or more circular or D-shaped enclosures made of stone or earth or a combination of both.²²⁵ The uniformity of early Church foundations with churches and crosses at the core surrounded by an enclosure or marked with termon crosses, can be understood in the context of the origins and function of sacred space.²²⁶ The enclosure established the essential difference between inside (protected, sacred) and outside (excluded, less sacred). From the outset, sites were instilled with sacred properties as the initial breaking of the ground involved a performative ritual based on precedents that extended back to the classical world.²²⁷ The rules governing the early Church in Ireland during the late seventh/early-eighth century were written in a set of legal canons, known as the *Hibernensis*.²²⁸ These specified that a town was so called ‘from a circular enclosure, because ancient cities were arranged in circles, or from a circular part of the plough, by means of which the walls were marked out.’²²⁹ The important ritual of the consecration of the boundary required ‘three personae...the king, the bishop, the people.’²³⁰ At Lastingham monastery in North Yorkshire, founded c. 651, the site was purified by ritual fasting and prayer as the founder, Cedda, had come from Iona and been trained in the Irish monastic traditions of personal asceticism by St. Aidan.²³¹

The instructions contained in *The Hibernensis* show the biblical origins of the layout of a monastery. The maximum size of a holy *locus* was the ‘length and width of the exterior

223. Anngret Simms, J.H. Andrews, *Kildare, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, I*. (Dublin: RIA, 1986); Catherine McCullough and W.H. Crawford *Armagh, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 18*, (Dublin: RIA, 2007).

224. Anne A. Connon. “Territoriality and the Cult of Saint Ciarán of Saigir,” in *Making Christian Landscapes*, 110–58.

225. Moss, ed., *Medieval*, 1, 121; Hamlin and Hughes, *The Modern Traveller*, 54–57.

226. Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 57–60; Jenkins, “*Holy, Holier, Holiest*”; Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 68–72, 78.

227. The walls of ancient Rome were imbued with the protective force of the *pomerium* which was a sacred ritual boundary marked out by a ploughing ritual. The line of the *pomerium* was marked by white stones markers known as *cippi*. Elmer Truesdell Merrill, “The City of Servius and the Pomerium,” *Classical Philology* 4, no. 4 (1909): 420–32; William Cooke Taylor, *The Student’s Manual of Ancient History* (London: John W. Parker, 1836), 387.

228. Roy Flechner, ed., *The Hibernensis, Book 2, Translations, Commentary and Indexes* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2019).

229. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:608.

230. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:724, 728,

231. Bede, *The History of the Church of England*, trans. T. Stapleton (Oxford: Proquest, 1930), 221.

court of the tabernacle and of Solomon's temple, which measures 100 cubits.²³² The text included a description of the number of boundaries of a holy *locus*; 'the first to which laymen and women enter, another, to which only clerics come. The first is called holy, the second more holy, the third most holy' or *sanctus, sanctior, sanctissimus*.²³³ These concepts of degrees of holiness had their origins in the Jewish faith and were transmitted via the bible to the early church.²³⁴ By the seventh/early eighth century, the role of crosses as indicators of sacred space was confirmed in the *Hibernensis*; 'all the consecrated boundaries of holy *loca* ought to have signs around them, that they may be separated from the fields...wherever you have found the sign of Christ's cross, you shall not offend.'²³⁵ In the context of the sacred and formal nature of the establishment of the boundaries, the placement of crosses was likely to have involved a ceremonial ritual, which imbued them with the power and authority to control space and access.

In the Old Testament, the cross was associated with an ignominious death as 'a hanged man is accursed by God.'²³⁶ During the fourth century the narrative of Christ's crucifixion was transformed into a symbol of triumph by Emperor Constantine's vision of a cross and the finding of the true cross in Jerusalem.²³⁷ David Jenkins used both archaeological and textual sources to demonstrate how early Irish exegesis merged ideas based on the Tabernacle and the Temple of Jerusalem with vernacular forms in order to create and control the topography of the monastery.²³⁸ The layout of a monastery was based on practical considerations and vernacular precedents but was also underpinned by

232. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:729.

233. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:729.

234. Louis Jacobs, *A Concise Companion to the Jewish Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Within the Jewish tradition, the idea of different degrees of purity and holiness are expressed in the laws of *tumah* and *taharah*, which are the state of the individual being ritually "impure" and "pure" respectively and was given physical expression in the Temple of Solomon, built in mid tenth century BCE, to house the Ark of the Covenant. The arrangement of the sections, described in Exodus 36:8; 39:43, was originally applicable to a mobile tented structure used by a nomadic people. When the solid structure of the temple in Jerusalem was built, the same principles of degrees of sanctity were applied. This elaborate code of degrees of holiness of place, purity of person, purity of objects and specific times is used to create order in society. One moves from the outside towards the center, through a series of concentric circles, inward towards God's altar, the centre of the universe, the navel of the world.

235. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:728

236. *Deuteronomy*, 21:22–23

237. Robin M. Jensen, *The Cross, History, Art and Controversy*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 2017) 49–73

238. Jenkins, *Holy. Holier, Holiest*, 170–82.

theological and liturgical concerns.²³⁹ Helen Roe argued that the source material for the Irish crosses had already reached Ireland by the fifth century and their unique form was a symbolic representation of Christ's triumph over death.²⁴⁰ The stepped base of the cross was modelled on the Hill of Golgotha in Jerusalem, while the capstone was based on Constantine's Church of the Anastasis. Hilary Richardson agreed with this interpretation that the ninth and tenth century crosses were symbolic representations which 'conserve much earlier features and are survivors of a stage largely unrepresented in western sculpture.'²⁴¹

The earliest crosses that marked the boundary of the termon were most likely made from timber but the damp Irish climate would have shortened their lifespan.²⁴² During the ninth and tenth centuries, timber churches and the crosses were replaced with stone.²⁴³ The chronology and stylistic analysis of the development of crosses from early pillars and flat inscribed slabs has been the focus of research but has been hampered by the fragmented nature of the surviving collection and their relocation and re-appropriation.²⁴⁴ The texts relating to Clonmacnoise and Armagh contain descriptions of a multitude of crosses and their recorded names may provide clues to their individuality and function.²⁴⁵ Some caution is needed as it is difficult to be certain if the names were associated with the crosses from their creation or were adopted at a later time. Crosses derived their names from cardinal points (south and north), from the name of a bishop or a saint (e.g. the cross of Bishop Eogan at Armagh), from a physical description (e.g. 'High Cross' and 'Cross of the Scriptures' at Clonmacnoise), from their role or function (e.g. the 'Cross of Executions' at

239. Jenkins, *Holy. Holier, Holiest*, 104–23; Clare Crowley, "The Origin of the Curvilinear Plan-form in Irish Ecclesiastical Sites: A Comparative Analysis of Sites in Ireland, Wales and France," PhD thesis, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2009.

240. Roe, "The Irish High Cross: Morphology and Iconography," 213–26.

241. Richardson and Scarry, *An Introduction to the Irish High Cross*, 26.

242. Heather King, "Burials and High Crosses at Clonmacnoise," in *Death and Burial in Medieval Europe: Papers of the Medieval Europe Brugge 1997 Conference*. Guy de Boe and Frans Verhaeghe, eds. (Zellik: Inst. Voor het arch. Patrimonium, 1997), 127–31.

243. Moss, *Medieval*, 146.

244. Françoise Henry, "Les Origins de l'iconographie Irlandaise," *Revue Archéologique*, 5e serie, 32 (1930):II, 89–109; Françoise Henry, *Early Christian Irish Art* (Dublin: Three Candles Press, 1954); Françoise Henry, *Irish High Crosses*; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*; Calvert, "The Early Development of Irish High Crosses."; Kelly, "The Heart of the Matter: Models for Irish High Crosses," 105–45.

245. Hamlin, "Crosses in Early Ireland," 138–140.

Armagh) or from their location (e.g. the cross of the door of the close, the market cross at Armagh).²⁴⁶ Crosses outside the ecclesiastical enclosures may have played an interactive ritual role for prayer, confession and penitence. They were erected to mark burials, the location of specific events and pilgrim routes to monasteries and churches.²⁴⁷

2.2. Sanctuary and non-violence.

The function of the boundary or ‘termon’ was described by Hamlin as both spiritual and legal as ‘the circuit delineated the legal area belonging to the monastery, which was regarded as holy and was to be free from aggression.’²⁴⁸ The belief that consecrated space was an area of non-aggression or ‘sanctuary’ was subsumed into the Christian Church from earlier cultures. The right to asylum was derived from the Roman and Greek practice of offering protection to slaves, debtors and criminals who fled to temples, altars and sacred groves for refuge and protection.²⁴⁹ The concept of sanctuary was both a belief system and a physical place, based on a pre-determined architectural code which was understood by the society in which it operated. The key features were *temenos* (walls), *propyla* (gateways) and altars.²⁵⁰ Pre-Christian Ireland had an equivalent protection named in the Brehon law texts as *maigen digona* or ‘a place of non-wounding.’²⁵¹ Sanctuary was offered within a lord’s household and breaches in the protection were referred to as *sárugud*.²⁵² The Christian Church continued this practice and offered protection in a similar way by defining the

246. Hamlin “Crosses in Early Ireland,” 138.

247. Hamlin, “Crosses in Early Ireland,” 139.

248. Hamlin and Hughes, *The Modern Traveller*, 54.

249. John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Boundaries were not always physical. Sometimes temples had invisible lines drawn between particular points, prominent trees or rocks to mark out sacred space. Walls could be more symbolic than practical, but they signaled the point at which the visitor passes from the profane to the sacred. Some sanctuaries were protected by large fortifications such as the Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Eleanis and surrounding the Acropolis in Athens.

250. The *propylon* is the gate building that marks the entrance to the *temenos*. The function of the *propylon* was to point out the entrance: its symbolic function was to signal a site of power, authority and reverence. The altar was the most important point in the sanctuary, the focus of ritual activity. It is where the participants in the rituals gathered, the animals were sacrificed, and libations poured.

251. Lawrence Ginnell, *The Brehon Laws: A Legal Handbook* (London: T.F. Unwin, 1894), 208–210.

252. Dáibhi Ó’Cróinín. *Early Medieval Ireland 400–1200* (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2016), 75.

precinct of a church as a ‘sanctuary’.²⁵³ The *Hibernensis* confirmed this practice with the warning that anyone who ‘sinned in holy *loca* is deserving of death, and who ever has violated pure things is deserving of penance.’²⁵⁴ In 1037, Cu Chaille mac Cennetoch and his son were dragged from the altar and slain in front of the church at Lorrha, Co. Tipperary, a breach of the sanctuary of the church sufficiently shocking to be recorded in the annals.²⁵⁵

2.3. The place of judgement and punishment.

The relationship between internal sanctuary (protection) and the external world (unprotected) was based on exegesis that identified the threshold of the temple as the most suitable place to make legal judgements. The *Hibernensis* devoted a chapter ‘concerning judgement’ and identified the ‘entrance to the tabernacle’ as ‘the place in which judges ought to judge.’²⁵⁶ The safety of the sanctuary was assured as ‘it is resolved that if someone has entered the city of refuge after committing an unlawful deed, he shall not be removed until the elders of the city have decided his case with the consent of the clerics.’²⁵⁷ Moses made his judgements at ‘the entrance to the tabernacle that he might convene a multitude of people and the elders.’²⁵⁸ The appointments of judges and magistrates was to be made ‘in all your gates...that they may judge the people in judgement.’²⁵⁹ Punishments took place outside the sanctuary as ‘offenders must not be killed within the precincts of the city of refuge.’²⁶⁰ The Bible instructed ‘Take the man or woman who has done this evil deed to your city gate and stone that person to death.’²⁶¹ The *Hibernensis* affirms this instruction; ‘every guilty man shall be brought to the city gate and punished in the presence of witnesses.’²⁶² The annals recorded that in 1197 Mac Gilla-Eidich, who robbed the great church of Columcille, was hanged in Armagh at the ‘cross of executions’.²⁶³

253. Linda Rabben, *Sanctuary and Asylum : a Social and Political History*. (Seattle, London: University of Washington Press, 2016) 53. This practice endured in Britain until 1632 when it was abolished by James I.

254. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:731

255. *AI*, 203, <https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T100004/index.html>. Accessed June 25, 2022.

256. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:559–577.

257. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:611.

258. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:561.

259. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:562.

260. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2:610.

261. Deuteronomy 17:5

262. Flechner, *The Hibernensis*, 2,594.

263. *AU*, 1197.2 It is not clear if he was hanged on the cross itself, like Jesus or hanged on a gallows beside the cross. <https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T100001A/index.html> Accesses May 13, 2023.

Both the bible and the *Hibernensis* confirm that the function of the open space beyond the eastern gate of the termon was associated with the ecclesiastical courts and their accompanying punishments. The gate represented the liminal space between the sanctuary of the inner enclosure and the settlement that grew around it as the space beyond the gate developed into the marketplace.²⁶⁴ It is not clear at what point the appellation ‘market’ was applied to the monastic crosses which stood at the eastern entrance of the *vallum* or if, indeed, they were the inspiration for later medieval market crosses.²⁶⁵ The churches retained their role as sanctuaries until the sixteenth century when the practice gradually ceased with the introduction of new canon laws.²⁶⁶ The origins of the function of the crosses that stood at the eastern entrances as a focal point for punishment has not been previously acknowledged, although their role as objects of religious devotion, political power and boundary markers has been recognised and documented. The role at focal point for punishment endured throughout the medieval period for both the early and later medieval market crosses. The influence of the strict zoning of the monastic precinct into holy, holier, holiest also exerted an unexpectedly long-term influence on the plans of the towns that developed around them.²⁶⁷

2.4. The twelfth-century watershed and the Irish Church.

The twelfth century marked the beginning of fundamental changes to the Irish Church which brought it into alignment with the Roman Church, changing it ‘to an extent perhaps undergone by few other Churches in medieval Christendom.’²⁶⁸ The reforms introduced a geographically-based diocesan structure under episcopal jurisdiction, which replaced the existing structure of loosely organised federations of so-called monasteries associated with the founder or patron saint.²⁶⁹ The twelfth-century reforms also saw the introduction of the

264. Anngret Simms, “The Monastic Town,” <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/annngret-simms-monastic-town>. Accessed January 20, 2021.

265 Leo Swan ‘Monastic Proto-towns in Early Medieval Ireland: The Evidence of Aerial Photography, Plan Analysis and Survey’ in *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*, 99.

266. Karl Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages, 400–1500* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011).

267. Anngret Simms, “The Monastic Town,”.

268. John A. Watt, “The Irish Church in the Middle Ages,” in *Christianity in Ireland, Revisiting the Story*, Brendan Bradshaw and Dáire Keogh, eds. (Dublin: Columba Press, 2002), 44.

269. Hamlin and Hughes, *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*; Ó’Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland*, 147–229.

monastic orders from Europe, particularly the Cistercians and the Augustinians, who brought with them a model of communal life based on new rules and a radically different architecture.²⁷⁰ During the second half of the twelfth century, the English Crown claimed political control of Ireland by the assertion of Lordship over most of the island.²⁷¹ Gaelic Ireland was transformed by these events to the extent that, in terms of Irish history and society, there is a sense of ‘before and after’ the twelfth century which is reflected in the historiography of the crosses.

The twelfth-century changes were part of the ‘Gregorian’ reforms, which originated in Rome under Gregory VII (1073–1085) and formally began with the synod of Ráith Breasail in 1111, where the diocesan hierarchy was created under two archbishops at Armagh and Cashel.²⁷² The Irish foundations, such as the network of ‘Columban’ houses, were previously under the authority of an abbot who could also be a bishop but, in terms of continuity, was the *coarb* or successor of the foundation saint.²⁷³ Over many generations powerful clans such as the Uí Néill of Ulster and the Uí Bhriain of Munster filled the position of *coarb* with family members, thus creating a strong sense of ownership between Church and state.²⁷⁴ In many ways, the success of the reorganisation of the Church along geographical lines was partly due to the recognition of these territorial claims. The Archbishop of Armagh, who held the hereditary position of *coarb* of Patrick, was created Primate of All Ireland in recognition of the importance of continuity with the early Church and its foundation saints.²⁷⁵ This continuity was confirmed by the presence in Armagh of important relics of the saints, sacred objects, a round tower and several crosses.²⁷⁶

At the synod of Kells in 1152, the diocesan structure was amended to include four archbishoprics with their associated dioceses although Armagh still retained its primacy.²⁷⁷ Acceptance of change was slow due to the controversial demotion of previously important

270. Aubrey Gwynn and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland with an Appendix to Early Sites*, (London, Longman: 1970).

271. A papal letter, known as *Laudabiliter* was issued by the English pope, Adrian IV to Henry II authorising a conquest of Ireland in the interests of reforming the Irish church.

272. John A. Watt *The Church in Medieval Ireland*, (Dublin; Gill and Macmillan, 1972), 1–27; Watt, “The Irish Church in the Middle Ages”, 44–51.

273. Brian Lacey, *Saint Columba, his Life and Legacy*, (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2013).

274. M.E. Collins, *Ireland 1478–1610*, (Dublin: The Educational Company of Ireland, 1980), 38–45.

275. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 47–101.

276. Watt, “The Irish Church in the Middle Ages”, 44–50.

277. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious House*, 47–57, 62. Tuam and Dublin are the additional archbishoprics.

and influential monastic centres and the promotion of others. Important pre-reform ecclesiastical settlements such as Ardmore, Co. Waterford, with its strong association with St Declan, were not content with their relegation to non-cathedrals status at the synod of Ráith Breasail and were successful in having their status reversed at Kells. The status of a site depended on many factors, but the pedigree (real or otherwise) of the foundation saint was an important factor. This continuity was confirmed by the physical proof of possession of secondary relics of the saint, high crosses and oratories, ensuring their survival throughout the later medieval period. The structure of the dioceses that was agreed at the synod of Kells endured largely unchanged for the remainder of the medieval period and, it could be argued, survives to the present time.²⁷⁸

2.4.1. The twelfth-century crosses: continuity and innovation.

Some indication of the role and value of the high crosses in this volatile world can be seen in the renewal of the practice of marking significant locations with crosses at many of the new cathedral sites during the twelfth century. Peter Harbison describes them as ‘crosses of the later grouping’ and they are characterised by large dominant figures in high relief, often incorporating ‘Urnes’ style geometric panels and ‘pelleting’ around the borders of the panels.²⁷⁹ Françoise Henry’s opinion of these later crosses was that they had little in common with the earlier groups due to their form and the widespread use of animal interlace which showed the influence of Scandinavian culture.²⁸⁰ This later group is stylistically diverse and, like the earlier crosses, displays regional and stylistic variations.²⁸¹ It is not clear if it represents a continuation of the craft of stone carving in Ireland or a revival but the crosses in this group continued the tradition of secular and royal patronage, with its concern with territorial boundaries and the prestige of the ecclesiastical foundation. The importance of the crosses as expressions of continuity with the earlier crosses is also expressed in the choice of their prominent locations within the ecclesiastical setting.

Tuam was confirmed as a diocese in 1111 and elevated to archdiocese status in 1152. The inscription on the Tuam cross indicates a date between 1123 and 1156 which implies that its creation was connected to either the attempt to gain this higher status or a celebration

278. Watt, *The Church in Medieval Ireland*, 24. Four Archbishoprics or ecclesiastical provinces were established in 1152 with thirty-eight dioceses.

279. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:383–84.

280. Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*, 123.

281. Richardson and Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*, 19.

of its achievement.²⁸² The so-called ‘market’ cross at Glendalough has been dated to the second quarter of the twelfth century, which places its creation at a period when the diocese was subject to intense investment to confirm its episcopal status in competition with Dublin.²⁸³ Kilfenora lost its episcopal status at Ráith Bressail but was confirmed as a bishopric at the synod of Kells. The three crosses, now displayed at the cathedral, all belong stylistically to the later phase and have creation dates ranging from the end of the eleventh century to the second quarter of the twelfth century.²⁸⁴ The ‘Doorty’ cross features two large-scale figures that are ‘usually interpreted as displaying Christ and his episcopal representatives overseeing the twelfth century reform of the church at potential or newly created diocesan sees (Fig.2.1).’²⁸⁵ The newly created archbishopric of Cashel had an unusual twelfth-century cross, which also featured a large sized figure of Christ on one face and an ecclesiastic who may be a bishop on the other (Fig.2.2). Excavations at this site in 1982 confirmed that the cross had been relocated to this position suggesting a later medieval or even a post-medieval date for the plinth on which it stood.²⁸⁶ The building of the great gothic cathedral c. 1240 may have been the reason for relocating the cross to stand directly outside the main entrance porch of the new building.²⁸⁷ The new cathedral was also carefully positioned to avoid the twelfth-century Cormac’s chapel, indicating a respect for the earlier church buildings during the thirteenth century.²⁸⁸ The church at Roscrea failed to achieve diocesan status at Ráith Bressail but was successful at the Synod of Kells. A twelfth-century cross was located outside the church of St. Cronán in Roscrea and another similar cross is close by at the early monastic site of Mona Incha (Fig. 2.3 & Fig.2.4). There are some crosses in this later group that are not associated with cathedral sites such as at Inis Cealtra, Dysert O’Dea and Inis Mór but they are thought to be expressions of royal patronage and territory.²⁸⁹ Sites that already had ninth-/tenth-century crosses were not bestowed with twelfth-century crosses indicating that the earlier crosses retained their religious

282. Moss, *Medieval*, 155.

283. Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 235–254.

284. Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*, 123.

285. Moss, *Medieval*, 157

286. Ann Lynch, “Excavations at the base of St. Patrick’s Cross, Cashel”, *NMAJ* 25 (1983): 9–18.

287. Rachel Moss, “Reconstructing Cashel,” in Roger Stalley, ed. *Irish Gothic Architecture, Construction, Decay and Reinvention* (Dublin: Wordwell, 2012), 100.

288. Roger Stalley, “The Construction of Cashel Cathedral,” in *Irish Gothic Architecture*, 56–58.

289. Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*, 123–47.

significance. Jennifer Ní Ghrádaigh examined the change in style between the ninth-/tenth- and twelfth-century crosses and concluded that, for the twelfth-century viewers, the iconography was less important than earlier but that the commemorative and landmark functions retained their value.²⁹⁰ The tradition of making stone crosses would persist into the later medieval period as wayside, churchyard and later medieval market crosses continued to be made. However, the end of the twelfth century marks the end of the creation phase of the early medieval crosses and from this time forward their narratives are of survival and adaptation.

2.4.2. The conservative church: building on tradition.

The Irish Church, before the twelfth century, was conservative in nature, concerned with the lineage of its early saints and their associated landscape features. Tomás Ó Carragáin confirmed this concern with ancestry and the past was a guiding principle in his examination of pre-Romanesque church architecture.²⁹¹ The travels and actions of the early saints were (according to later hagiography) imprinted on buildings and objects and linked to each other across an ecclesiastical landscape. At Fore, Co. Westmeath, the inscribed cross under the lintel of the door of St. Fechin's church was believed to have been placed there by the saint.²⁹² Ó Carragáin demonstrated how functions that were dispersed around the enclosure, such as baptism at the holy well, veneration of the saint's tomb and prayer at the base of the high cross were linked together by movement, prayer and ritual.²⁹³ The sanctity of the site and the position of the *coarb* as the legitimate successor of the saint was confirmed on pattern days by processing along these routes while carrying relics.²⁹⁴ The churches were 'nodal points within sacred geographies that were articulated and experienced dynamically.'²⁹⁵ The traditional practices of pilgrimage and prayer extended the ritual movement out across the landscape, creating networks of sacred places linked together by cross-marked routes.²⁹⁶ During the twelfth century, the competition to gain or retain episcopal status tended to reinforce this conservative attachment to tradition, as the authority

290. Jennifer Ní Ghrádaigh, "A Stone in Time," in *Early Medieval Stone Monuments*, 216–40.

291. Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 143.

292. G. T. Stokes, "St. Fechin of Fore and His Monastery," *JRSAI* 2, no. 1, (1892): 8.

293. Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 211.

294. Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 212.

295. Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 211.

296. Peter Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People* (London: Barrie & Jenkins; 1991).

of the newly formed bishoprics was based on the original evangelisers rather than on any new rule. The architectural expression of the newly confirmed cathedrals, such as at Clonmacnoise, Glendalough and Roscrea, was imbued with the symbolism of the early Church in the retention of archaic features such as the original masonry and antae, the single cell plan, the western doorway and the existing relationships with high crosses.²⁹⁷

The ‘Gaelic Recovery’ which began in the fourteenth century and lasted until the middle of the sixteenth century was a time of extensive church building when relationships with earlier components of the ecclesiastical landscape were carefully retained.²⁹⁸ An early example, from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, was the rebuilding of the south wall of the cathedral at Clonmacnoise in an archaic style. Conleth Manning identified this as ‘Phase 3’, which involved building a new wall two meters to the north of the existing one with anachronistic antae built at either end to mimic the tenth century wall it replaced.²⁹⁹ A further building project, Phase 4, dated to 1450, included works to the west wall which respected and maintained the axial relationship between the cross of the scriptures and the west door.

The reorganised twelfth-century Church was grafted onto a structure that was imbued with traditions that stretched back five hundred years. The relatively slow adoption of the Romanesque style of architecture and the survival of many high crosses and other objects associated with the early Church is evidence of this continuity.³⁰⁰ Despite the arrival of the new monastic orders and the reforms of the diocesan structure, the ties that bound the Church to its past seem to have strengthened after the twelfth century. The newly established Augustinian canons actively promoted traditional pilgrimage sites such as St. Patrick’s Purgatory and Mona Incha and commissioned new lives of Irish saints and missals.³⁰¹

297. Ó’Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 26–28, 43–47.

298. A phrase describing the gradual emancipation of the Irish chieftaincies from the control of the English king partly due to the decline of the Anglo-Irish colony and partly due to military action. S. J. Connolly, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2002), 226.

299. Conleth Manning, “Clonmacnoise Cathedral,” 57–86; Henry A. Jefferies, “A Church ‘in Decline’? The Pre-reformation Irish Church”, *History Ireland*, 14, no.6 (Nov.–Dec. 2006): 13–18.

300. Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, (3 vols., Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1990), 2:25–28.

301. Rachel Moss, “The Material Culture of the Canonical Movement in Medieval Ireland,” in Martin Brown and Colmán N. Ó Clabaigh eds *Households of God: the Regular Canons and Canonesses of St. Augustine and of Prémontré in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2019), 191–206.

From the thirteenth century onwards the *ecclesia inter Hibernicos* or Gaelic church remained under the administration of Armagh, Cashel and Tuam while the *ecclesia inter Anglicos* was under the control of the English colony based in Dublin and in the Pale.³⁰² The Gaelic Church retained the dynastic system of episcopal and abbatial succession up to the fifteenth century resulting in clan control of the dioceses and continuity of the relationship between the Church and secular authority.³⁰³ The administration of the medieval Church was further complicated by the way that the parish tithes were paid to other churchmen or monasteries (appropriate) or paid to individuals outside the church (inappropriate).³⁰⁴ In the Anglo-Norman lordships the majority of the tithes were appropriate to the religious houses founded by the local lord.³⁰⁵ Despite the divisions of two languages and two church cultures as well as the complicated financial and other relationships with the monastic orders, the Church in Ireland shared a belief system based on the sacraments and the liturgy and all sides acknowledged the authority of the pope as the head of the Roman church.³⁰⁶ Although little is known of the crosses during this period, it is likely that they retained their religious significance as proof of the lineage of the foundation saint.

2.5. Pilgrimage, practices, relics and cures.

The interlinked development of pilgrimage routes with their attendant hospitals, lodgings, wayside crosses was a feature of the Roman Church from the fourth century onwards.³⁰⁷ The body of a saint, or parts of it, provided corporeal relics, while objects that had been used by the saint were associative relics.³⁰⁸ Gregory of Tours (c. 538–594) described how the earth

302. Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, “Rethinking Settlement Values in Gaelic Society: The Case of the Cathedral Centres,” *PRIA* 119C, (2019): 71–75.

303. Watt, *The Church in Medieval Ireland*, 183–89.

304. Colm Lennon and Ciaran Diamond, “The Ministry of the Church of Ireland, 1536–1636,” in T.C. Barnard and W.G. Neely, eds. *The Clergy of the Church of Ireland 1000–2000, Messengers, Watchmen and Stewards*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), 55–66; Raymond Gillespie, “The Church of Ireland Clergy, c. 1640: Representation and Reality,” in *The Clergy of the Church of Ireland 1000–2000*, 72–73; Ana Dolan, “The Large Medieval Churches of the Dioceses of Leighlin, Ferns and Ossory: A Study of Adaptation and Change,” in *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies* 2 (1999): 38–41.

305. Adrien Empey, “Irish Clergy in the high and late Middle Ages,” in *The Clergy of the Church of Ireland*, 22.

306. Watt, “The Irish Church in the Middle Ages,” 56.

307. Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 11–22.

308. Holger Klein, “Sacred things and Holy Bodies: Collecting Relics from Late Antiquity to the Early Renaissance,” in *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, Martina Bagnoli and Holger Klein, eds. (London: The British Museum Press, 2010), 55–56.; Ragnhann Ó’Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries of the Middle Ages*. (Dublin: Town House and Country House, 1994)

from the tomb of Christ was dug up and made into clay tokens which were transported throughout the Christian world and used to cure the sick as ‘faith believes that everything that the sacred body touched is holy’.³⁰⁹ This transfer of divine grace into physical objects allowed the healing power of sites associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus to be transported to distant Christian communities.³¹⁰

Relics were used in less damaging rituals that involved bodily practices, prayer and other non-material expressions of continuity. A text in the *Leabhar Breac* describes how the clerics walk *deiseal*, i.e. clockwise around the church, just as the early saint did when consecrating the site.³¹¹ The ‘cursing stones’ or *Clocha Breacha* on Inishmurray, Co. Sligo were activated by going around the stations against the sun and then turning the stone anticlockwise three times while reciting the curse.³¹² Although usually such activities might have a relatively benign impact on monuments, similar customs sometimes encouraged destruction. For example, on Iona in 1772 stones known as the *clach-a-brath* were placed on the base of a cross to the north-west of St Oran's Chapel in *Reilig Odhráin* where ‘numbers who visit[ed] this island [thought] it incumbent on them to turn each of these thrice round, according to the course of the sun’.³¹³ Some years later, it was noted how the superstition attached to these stones — that the *brath*, or ‘end of the world’, would not come until the stone [cross base] on which they stood was worn through.³¹⁴ A similar tradition is recorded for the cross base at Boho in Co. Fermanagh.³¹⁵ The practice of lying backward on the cross in order to mimic the suffering of Jesus survived at Mona Inch, Durrow, Lough Derg and Emly.

2.5.1. Marking the territory.

From the early medieval period, cross-decorated stone slabs, pillars, and boulders were used to mark pilgrimage routes throughout Ireland.³¹⁶ In landscapes without rivers or other

309. Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Martyrs* translated by Raymond Van Dam. (Liverpool University Press, 1988), 9.

310. James Robinson, *Finer than Gold, Saints and Relics in the Middle Ages* (London: The British Museum Press, 2011), 19.

311. Ó'Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 211.

312. Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 102–3, 226–28.

313. Thomas Pennant, *A Tour of Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides 1772*, part 1 (Chester: John Monk, 1774), 288.

314 John MacCulloch, *The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland*, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1824), iv, 181

315 Colm Donnelly et al, ‘Excavations at Boho High Cross, Toneel North, County Fermanagh,’ *UJA* 62 (2003): 121–42.

316. Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 191–98.

permanent features, parish and other types of boundaries were often defined by an annual event known as the ‘beating the bounds.’ The local cleric and his parishioners walked the boundaries from marker to marker in a performative ritual that imprinted the limits of the territory on the participants. The boundaries of the Liberties of Dublin were defined in a Charter of 1192 and three of the boundary markers were crosses; the ‘old’ cross in Blackrock, the stone cross at Bishop street and the Kilmainham cross at an unknown location.³¹⁷ The importance of boundary markers continued into the later medieval period as in 1592 Robert Taylor was before the court in Esker accused of ‘breaking down a certain boundary or landmark between the land of Tyrrell and that of the said Robert.’³¹⁸ He was fined and the jurors undertook to survey and restore the boundary.

A late seventeenth century account of Co. Wexford describes how stone crosses were set up to mark the boundaries of Church lands and defined ‘where the respective powers of the king’s or sheriff’s, the palatine’s and the churchmen’s authority terminated’.³¹⁹ Wayside crosses continued to be erected in Co. Meath during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which have survived due to the influence of the families that erected them.³²⁰ Many did not survive, as an account of the Cromwellian soldiers campaign in Wexford in 1650 described how every roadside cross they encountered was ‘totally defaced, broken or burned.’³²¹ As late as 1803, the municipal boundary of Sligo town was proposed as one Irish mile in every direction from the market cross in the center of the town.³²²

2.6. The urban market crosses of monastic origin.

The presence of a market cross at the center of a market place was a standard feature of towns in Ireland throughout the medieval period.³²³ The market crosses of monastic origin are a small sub-set which, being of early medieval origin, are distinguished from the larger

317. Howard B. Clarke. *Irish Historic Towns Atlas. No. 11, Dublin, part I, to 1610* (Dublin: RIA, 2002), 12.

318. Edmund Curtis, “The Court Book of Esker and Crumlin, 1592–1600.” *JRSAL*, Sixth Series, 19, no. 1 (1929): 46.

319. Herbert F Hore, “An Account of the Barony of Forth, in the County of Wexford, Written at the Close of the Seventeenth Century.” *JRSAL* 4, no. 1 (1862): 69.

320. King, ‘Late Medieval Crosses in County Meath, c. 1470–1635’, 79–115; King, ‘Irish Wayside and Churchyard Crosses 1600–1700’, 13–33; King, ‘Late Medieval Irish Crosses and their European Background’, 333–50.

321. Hore, “An Account of the Barony of Forth, in the County of Wexford,” 69.

322. Fíona Gallagher & Marie-Louise Legg, *Sligo, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, No. 24* (Dublin: RIA, 2012), 8.

323. Rachel Moss, “An Art-historical Perspective on the Irish Historic Towns Atlas,” in *More Maps and Texts, Sources and the Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, H.B. Clarke and Sarah Gearty eds., (Dublin: RIA, 2018.) 229–33; *ibid.*, *Medieval*, 383–84.

group by their age, form and style. They are found in towns that developed around early monasteries, usually located in the market place to the east of the central core.³²⁴ As part of the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* project, Anngret Simms categorised five towns of monastic origins where the circular form of the monastic enclosure survives in the street pattern; Kildare, Kells, Downpatrick, Armagh and Tuam.³²⁵ A key feature is a centrally located church within a roughly circular enclosing wall, marking the sacred core of the monastery, and the presence of an open market place on the eastern side of the monastic enclosure.³²⁶ Leo Swan, who identified this feature, also claimed that crosses, where they survived, were generally located at the eastern entrances to the inner enclosure.³²⁷ The endurance of these relationships indicates that these early crosses potentially remained in their primary location without any major change to their form, despite their gradual appropriation to the function of market cross, i.e. relating to trade, public dramas, the reading of proclamations and public punishment. Kildare is the only town of these five that has no surviving evidence of a market cross but a likely location is the marketplace outside the south-eastern entrance to the cathedral enclosure. There is a free-standing market house in the centre, which may have replaced a cross and a large cross base survives in the cathedral grounds. The four surviving crosses will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4.³²⁸

2.6.1. Medieval market crosses

The origins of the market place and the market cross in Britain has not been identified but, Alfred Rimmer, writing in 1875 in one of the few books on the subject, claimed that ‘crosses were introduced originally, it would seem, in the southern and western parts of the island,

324. Simms, “The Monastic Town,” in <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/ann-gret-simms-monastic-town> Accessed April 5, 2022.

325. The Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA) project aims to record the topographical development of a selection of Irish towns both large and small. Each new publication brings a deeper understanding of the origins and development of Irish towns and cities and facilitates the identification of patterns and typologies. <https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/irish-historic-towns-atlas>. This is a long-term research project undertaken by the RIA, Dublin. Patrick J. Duffy “Armagh and Kells” and Paul Gosling “Kildare and Tuam” in *Maps & Text, Exploring the Irish Historic Towns Atlas*; Simms, “The Monastic Town,”.

326. Swan “Monastic Proto-towns in Early Medieval Ireland: The Evidence of Aerial Photography,” 99; Clare Crowley, “The Origin of the Curvilinear Plan-form in Irish Ecclesiastical Sites: A Comparative Analysis of Sites in Ireland, Wales and France,” PhD thesis, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2009, 294–96. <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1083&context=sciendoc> Accessed April 10, 2022.

327. Swan, “Monastic Proto-towns,” 99.

328. Tuam, Kells, Armagh and Downpatrick.

and travelled slowly, and by no means uniformly, to the north...crosses are more common in the west of this country in consequence of the earliest preachers having come from Ireland...the similarity between the Cornish and Irish crosses is very striking.’³²⁹ The truth or otherwise of this claim is outside the scope of this thesis, but there have been few studies of the Scottish or English market crosses and even fewer on the Irish examples, possibly due to the complexity of regional variations and poor survival rates.³³⁰ In a pre-industrial society, the economy of a town was based on commerce, manufacturing and services as distinct from rural settlements that relied on agricultural production.³³¹ The separation of functions between Church and town may not have been as well defined as in the earlier monastic foundations as a text, dated 1308, banned the holding of fairs and markets in the churchyards suggesting that the boundaries were not always respected or understood.³³² The images of market crosses in medieval maps of Irish towns are unlikely to be accurate and the topic has not been studied at any depth.³³³ Cartographers used a standard style to indicate the location of market crosses (Fig.2.5). James Drummond’s 1861 study of market crosses in Scotland is a useful record with some informative illustrations.³³⁴ In Scotland, the crosses began as a simple shaft and cross head mounted on series of steps (Fig.2.6) and developed into small covered structures with a column mounted on top (Fig.2.7). The market crosses evolved, increasing in size and complexity and were eventually replaced by covered market building.³³⁵ The Irish crosses may have followed a similar template but their survival rates, which are discussed later in the chapter, are so poor that it is difficult to be certain.

2.6.2. Buying and selling: the witness in the market place.

329. Alfred Rimmer *Ancient Stone Crosses of England* (London: Virtue and Co. 1875) 8–11.

330. Lindsey Jane Thomson, “Scottish Market Crosses: The Development of a Risk Assessment Model.” PhD thesis, Robert Gordon University, 2000; James Drummond, “Notice of Some Stone Crosses, with Especial Reference to the Market Crosses of Scotland.” *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 4, no. 1. (1860–1862): 86–115; John W. Small, *Scottish Market Crosses*. (Stirling: Eanas MacKay, 1900); William George Black, *Glasgow Cross. With a Suggestion as to the Origin of Scottish Market Crosses* (Glasgow: W. Hodge & Co. 1913).

331. Mary V. Valante, “Reassessing the Irish ‘Monastic Town’,” *IHS*, 31, 121, (1998): 17.

332. *Stat. Ire., Hen VI*, 257.

333. J. H. Andrews, “Mapping the Past in the Past: The Cartographer as Antiquarian in pre-Ordnance Survey Ireland”, in *Rural Landscapes and Communities: Essays Presented to Desmond McCourt*, Colin Thomas ed. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), 47.

334. For a collection of drawings and paintings see;

https://canmore.org.uk/search/image?SIMPLE_KEYWORD=Market%20cross Accessed August 22, 2022.

335. Rimmer, *Ancient Stone Crosses of England*, 56–69.

One of the earliest records for markets in Ireland is for *Oenach Macha*, the market place of Armagh, a term which dates from the ninth century.³³⁶ From the twelfth century onwards a licence was required to hold a market in a town as the inhabitants lived primarily from commerce and trade but many earlier settlements held markets without licences.³³⁷ In recognition of these earlier markets that were operated by the church, the English king granted a charter to a town with the right to hold a market provided that they did not damage other markets.³³⁸ The Anglo-Normans recognised the benefits of a market place and a cross as they were a common feature of their new towns, (see Appendix 3: The Evidence for market cross in the *IHTA*). Many of the larger towns and cities had several markets that traded in specific goods and the crosses were named accordingly. Dublin had a ‘high’ market cross at the junction of High Street and Christchurch Place, a ‘butter’ cross in Bishop Street and St. Kevin's cross in Bride Street.³³⁹ The crosses performed the role of a witness for the traders encouraging them 'to inculcate silently but forcibly the lesson of honesty and integrity in the fulfilment of their bargains and the regulation of their business transactions.'³⁴⁰ The link between a market cross and well-regulated, law-abiding market trading could be interpreted as a type of quality mark for traders in the town, a symbolic reminder of the regulatory oversight of local officials and the moral imperatives of divine authority.³⁴¹ In Scotland during 'rude and lawless times...a paction of any sort [was] considered binding, if contracted at a cross'.³⁴² The use of religious objects, such as crosses and bibles, as a divine witness to oath taking and the making of all kinds of contracts was a common practice during the medieval period.³⁴³ The surviving base of a market cross in Clonmel is known as ‘the bargain stone’ and both parties placed their foot on the top to seal

336. Catherine McCullough and W. H. Crawford. *Armagh, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 18* (Dublin: RIA, 2007) 17; Oenach (fair) c. 830 Bethu Phátaric, 141; Whitley Stokes, ed. *The Tripartite Life of Patrick: with Other Documents Relating to that Saint*, 2 vols, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 1: 238.

337. R. H. Britnell, 'English Markets and Royal Administrations before 1200,' *The Economic History Review New Series* 31, no.2 (May, 1978) 189.

338. James Masschaele, "Market Rights in Thirteenth-Century England," *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 422 (1992): 80.

339. Clarke. *Dublin, part I, to 1610*, 27.

340. John G. A. Prim, "The Market Cross of Kilkenny", *JRSAI* 2 (1853): 222.

341. James Davis, *Medieval Market Morality, Life, Law and Ethics in the English Market Place, 1200–1500*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 3–4.

342. Drummond, *Scottish Market Crosses*, 91; Hall, "Lifeways in Stone," 197–92.

343. Davis, *Medieval Market Morality*, 68–72.

a contract.³⁴⁴ The crosses of early monastic origin were not mounted on top of a series of steps like later medieval crosses, but there does not appear to be any difference in their assumed commercial and legal role.

By the seventeenth century market crosses were gradually replaced by market houses, which sometimes functioned as the town hall and a court house of the town. In the large image of the battle of Kinsale, 1601, in Trinity College, Dublin, a market cross is shown in a prominent location in the center of the town at a wide intersection of four streets. Whether this is a real or an imagined cross is not known, but the market house in Kinsale was built c. 1610, making it one of the earliest surviving examples in Ireland.³⁴⁵ The early medieval association between the cross at the eastern entrance to the inner church enclosure and breaches in the legal, moral and ethical codes of behavior persisted in the later medieval period as market crosses became increasingly valued as symbols of secular as well as ecclesiastical authority.

2.6.3. Crime and punishment.

From the twelfth century, acts of penance in the market place were used to correct a variety of sins including those that involved an infringement of clerical privilege.³⁴⁶ Throughout the medieval period, many of the devices used for public punishment were located beside the market cross, which continued to be the location for both civil and ecclesiastical punishments.³⁴⁷ Offenders were sometimes restrained using 'jougs' or iron rings made in two hinged half round sections which were secured around the neck and fastened with a padlock and a chain to the 'church door, a tree in a churchyard, the post of a church gate [or]

344. Patrick Lyons, "Norman Antiquities of Clonmel Burgh," *JRSAL* 6, no. 2 (1936): 288–89.

345. <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/20851076/kinsale-museum-market-square-townplots-kinsale-cork> Accessed June 1, 2022

346. Paul Hair. *Before the Bawdy court. Selections from Church Court and Other Records Relating to the Correction of Moral offences in England, Scotland and New England, 1300–1800*. (London: Elek, 1972), 411.

347. James Masschaele, "The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England," *Speculum* 77, no. 2, (2002): 411. The instruments of punishment included stocks (heavy wooden blocks clamped around an offender's legs), thews (a simple form of neck ring attached to a post, used mainly to punish women) and pillories (blocks of wood on a post clamping the arms and neck of an offender). Hall, "Lifeways in Stone," 197–201

a market cross.’³⁴⁸ Early medieval attitudes to the human body and punishment were suffused with the Church’s approval of physical punishment for the atonement of sins, often involving long term fasting and beatings. In 1174, King Henry II allowed himself to be publicly humiliated and beaten to atone for his part in the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket.³⁴⁹ In c.1223, the Archbishop of Dublin erected a pillory to indicate his ecclesiastical authority, it may be same one mentioned in 1395 associated with the Archbishop’s residence, the Palace of St. Sepulchre’ in Kevin Street.³⁵⁰ These ritual public punishments were often repeated in several different locations and at different dates such as at Worcestershire where several men who had assaulted a cleric were punished on five separate days at different markets.³⁵¹ In 1383, Kilkenny had a whipping post, a pillory and a tumbrel most likely adjacent to the market cross.³⁵² The Kilkenny Corporation Minute book of 1737 recorded that the stocks in the High Street were beside the market cross.³⁵³ In the Fethard Corporation minute book in 1707 ‘a set of stocks are to be made’ and they are mentioned again in 1720.³⁵⁴ In the image of the Kilkenny market cross c.1760 (Fig.2.8) the stocks are shown mounted on top of the high stepped platform beside the cross.³⁵⁵ In Sligo the stocks were located at the junction of Castle Street and Market Street, beside the market cross and a pillory was erected as late as 1806.³⁵⁶ Following the Reformation in England, from the 1560s to the 1580s, the influence of puritanical reform led to a revival of judicial and ecclesiastical punishments in the form of public humiliation in the market place.³⁵⁷ By the early sixteenth century, some ecclesiastical authorities had begun to view penance as ‘individual, private and personal’ rather than performative public humiliation.³⁵⁸ None the less, as late as the seventeenth century clerics were themselves punished for infringements,

348. William Andrews, *Bygone Punishments* (London: William Andrews & Co, 1898), 195.

349. Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, 1986), 270.

350. Clarke, *Dublin, part I, to 1610*, 23.

351. Clarke, *Dublin, part I, to 1610*, 411.

352. John Bradly, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, No. 10, Kilkenny* (Dublin: RIA, 2000), 15; Charles McNeill. ed. *Liber Primus, Kilkenny City Records*. (Dublin: IMC 1931) 77.

353. Bradly, *IHTA Kilkenny*, 15.

354. Tadhg O’Keeffe, *Fethard Irish Historic Towns Atlas. 13* (Dublin: RIA, 2003), 10.

355. Prim, “The Market Cross of Kilkenny,” 9.

356. Terence O’Rorke, *The History of Sligo: Town and County* (Sligo: repr. Dodd’s Antiquarian, 1986), 15.

357. Dave Postles, “Penance and the Market Place: A Reformation Dialogue with the Medieval Church, c. 1250–c. 1600,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54, no. 3, (2003): 442.

358. Postles. “Penance and the Market Place,” 452.

as in 1627 when a minister who married a young couple without the consent of their parents ‘did penance at Paul’s Cross.’³⁵⁹ As the reforms of the eighteenth and nineteenth century began to modernise the judicial system, the practice of public punishment was gradually replaced with a move away from corporal punishment and a desire to reform the miscreants. The emergence of a justice system with jails and prisons may have helped to end the judicial role of the cross. Progressive thinkers, such as John Howard (1726–1790) Sheriff of Bedfordshire, viewed the medieval punishments as barbaric and advocated reform of the prison system to make it more humane.³⁶⁰ The reforms signalled the removal of crosses that had survived into the eighteenth century, not as part of an iconoclastic programme, but due to their obsolescence as witnesses to transgressions of the moral and civil code.

2.6.4. The political, civic and public market cross.

From the early thirteenth century, the English kings used the market crosses as a means of communicating with the common people who attended the markets, perhaps the only time when the urban and rural populations gathered in the same space. The earliest record of a proclamation in a market dates from 1204 when King John announced a reform of the coinage and later in 1276, Henry III used public proclamations as a way to summons his subjects for military service.³⁶¹ Alfred Rimmer interpreted the function of the market cross as an outdoor pulpit, ‘approached by a tall flights of steps, from which it is not improbable that an ecclesiastic may have addressed the rustics.’³⁶² The Kilkenny market cross, erected in 1335 but most likely rebuilt in the fifteenth century, was an elaborate structure with a raised platform covered by a vaulted roof supported on four columns. The clergy found it a convenient place for preaching to the people ‘in the most frequented thoroughfare, and the elevated stand which its base afforded them.’³⁶³ It was also the location for Corpus Christi celebrations when ‘the young men of the town were accustomed from an early period to perform, for the public entertainment, those curious old religious plays, termed mysteries.’³⁶⁴ John Bale, (1495–1563) Bishop of Ossory, was a renowned reformer

359. Thomas Birch *The Court and Times of Charles the First* (London: Henry Colburn Publisher 1849), 249.

360. Leonard H. Roberts, “John Howard, England’s Great Prison Reformer: His Glimpse Into Hell.” *Journal of Correctional Education* 36, no. 4 (1985): 136–39.

361.. J. R. Maddicott, “Politics and People,” in *Thirteenth Century England*, Janet Burton, Phillipp Schofield, Björn Weiler eds. (Suffolk: Boydell Press 2013), 7–8

362. Rimmer, *Ancient Stone Crosses of England*, 11.

363. Prim, “The Market Cross of Kilkenny,” 222–3.

364. Prim, “The Market Cross of Kilkenny,” 222.

and ‘frequently preached at the market cross when he was in the diocese.’³⁶⁵ Preaching at the cross, rather than in a church, may have indicated a reluctance to conform to orthodox Protestant theology and a willingness to reach a wider, less privileged audience.

The Puritan iconoclasts of the English Commonwealth recognised market crosses as locations of significance and used them for proclaiming civil and government business. They retained the platforms and shafts but removed the religious insignias from top. The reforming Committee of Estates, who governed Scotland during the turbulent 1640s, ordered that their declarations ‘be printed, and published at the market crosses of the several Burroughs [sic] of the Kingdom...that none pretend ignorance thereof.’³⁶⁶

The survival rates for market crosses in Ireland will be discussed in Chapter 5, but it is remarkable that the only late medieval market cross to remain *in situ* in Ireland is the fragmentary remains of a medieval monument in Athenry, Co. Galway (Fig.2.9). The early modern market cross in Newtownards in Co. Down, a Scottish town founded in 1613, was built in the Scottish style in 1636 and has a central pillar similar to those in Aberdeen and Preston (Fig.2.10). It was an octagonal structure which Samuel Lewis claimed was destroyed by the insurgents of 1641 but the lower part survived and is now capped with a conical roof.³⁶⁷ The base of a market cross or ‘bargain stone’ survives in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary but is now built into the wall of an adjacent building.³⁶⁸ The removal of market crosses in Irish towns has not been studied, but the last one of non-monastic origin to survive was likely the Sligo cross which was replaced by the Lady Erin Memorial in 1899.³⁶⁹ The stone from medieval market crosses has been lost or was re-used such as at Ennis where the cross was taken down in 1711 and the stone used in building a quay.³⁷⁰ The market crosses of early monastic origin have a better survival rate, but none of them are in a definite original position in the marketplace. The Kells market cross is the only one that may have stood in its primary location until it was hit by a bus and relocated in 1996.³⁷¹ The remaining six

365. Prim, "The Market Cross of Kilkenny," 222–3.

366. John Rushworth, *Historical Collections, the Fourth and Last part, Containing Principal Matters which Happened from the Beginning of the year 1645 to the Death of King Charles the Fifth 1648 Wherein is a Particular Account of the Progress of the Civil War to that Period* (London: Browne, 1721), 853.

367. Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 2 vols. (London: S. Lewis & Co, 1837) 2: 435.

368. Patrick Lyons, "Norman Antiquities of Clonmel Burgh," *JRSAL* 6, no. 2 (1936): 285–289.

369. Gallagher, and Legg, *Sligo*, 23.

370. Brian Ó Dálaigh, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 25, Ennis, 19* (Dublin: RIA, 2012), 19.

371. See chapter 4, Kells market cross, case study 1.

market cross of monastic origin were either re-assembled in the market place from the scattered fragments of one cross (e.g. Glendalough c.1876, Downpatrick in 1897, Armagh 1916), from the fragments of more than one cross (e.g. Clones c.1700, Tuam in 1874) or from sections of a cross from an unknown location (Lisnaskea in 1842).³⁷² The carvings on the surface of the fragments ensured their identification as ‘antique’ and worthy of antiquarian interest which perhaps ensured their survival when their civic role had become obsolete.

2.7. The Reformation in Ireland.

The contrasting outcomes of the Reformation in Ireland and Great Britain have been described by Henry A. Jefferies as having ‘profound consequences for Anglo-Irish relations over subsequent centuries and still affect life in Northern Ireland to this day’.³⁷³ The complexities of the survival of the crosses in Ireland can be understood in the context of the timeline of the different phases of the establishment of the Church of Ireland and the dispossession of the Roman Catholic Church. As discussed in the previous chapter, Church reforms of the twelfth century had formalised the diocesan structure under the leadership of the bishops and, as a result, the early ecclesiastical sites became parish or cathedral churches or declined into obscurity and redundancy.³⁷⁴ Churches that remained on the pre-twelfth century ecclesiastical sites were altered and adapted according to the liturgical and financial requirements of the parish over the following centuries.³⁷⁵ The evidence of surviving crosses and fragments shows that the majority survived close to or in their primary location in ecclesiastical settings, now the graveyards of parish churches and cathedrals.³⁷⁶ The main exceptions to this pattern, discussed in the previous section, are market crosses, which had developed a secular role and became part of the urban fabric of medieval towns.

By the second half of the sixteenth century, the process of making England a Protestant nation was well underway but the impact of the Reformation on Ireland was

372. See Chapter 4 for the biographies of six market crosses; Glendalough, Armagh, Downpatrick, Kells, Tuam and Clones.

373. Henry A. Jefferies, “The Reformation in Ireland: Interpretations Old and New; *ibid.*, “Why did the Protestant Reformation fail in Ireland?”, *HI* 24, no. 2 (March–April 2016): 14–17.

374. Gwynn and R Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 47–57.

375. Dolan, “The Large Medieval Churches of the Dioceses of Leighlin, Ferns and Ossory, 26–65; Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*.

376. See Appendix 1.

limited to the areas under crown control.³⁷⁷ England was a devout Catholic country but due to the determination of its government and clerics, within three generations it had become a profoundly Protestant nation.³⁷⁸ Nicholas Canny has argued that this was the crucial period in Ireland when the Reformation could have succeeded if the British crown had ‘enforced religious compliance and fostered a new spirituality within its newly acquired jurisdiction.’³⁷⁹ Alan Ford attributed the delay in starting the Reformation in Ireland and its subsequent lack of success to the absence of ‘a unitary civil authority, a university, a printing press, and a suitable public fora for debate and discussion.’³⁸⁰ It is generally accepted that the Reformation failed in Ireland, not from any native opposition to Church reform, but as a reaction to the unpopular and coercive policies of the Elizabethan and later administrations, which identified the reform of the Church with the colonial conquest and alienated the elites of Irish society.³⁸¹ The policies of conquest used in Ireland were summarised by Canny as; military victory over all opponents to reform, the forfeiture of their estates and regrant to supporters who shared the religion, language and culture of the dominant monarchy, the expulsion of the opposing clergy from the country, the introduction of legislation that required documentary proof of attendance at prescribed religious services and state support for a largely non-native clergy to evangelise a population whose mother tongue was different.³⁸² Edmond Spenser (c. 1552–1599) advocated that the ‘barbarous natives’ must first feel the sharp end of the sword before religious Reformation could be

377. Eamon Duffy, *Reformation Divided: Catholics, Protestants and the Conversion of England* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2017); Alan Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland, 1590–1641* (Frankfurt: Verlag Peter Lang, 1985), 9–16; Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape. Religion, Identity & Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

378. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 377–477; Andrew Spicer, “Iconoclasm,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2017): 1007–22.

379. Nicholas Canny, “The Debate about the Irish Reformation: Some Reflections on Twentieth-century Historiography” in *The Church of Ireland and its Past, History, Interpretation and Identity*, Mark Empey, Alan Ford and Miriam Moffitt, eds., (Dublin: Four Courts Press 2017), 248.

380. Alan Ford, “Shaping History: James Ussher and the Church of Ireland” in *The Church of Ireland and its Past*, 19.

381. James Murray. “After Bradshaw; the Debate on the Tudor Reformation in Ireland,” in *The Church of Ireland and its Past*, 248, 266–85; Nicholas Canny, “Why the Reformation failed in Ireland,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30, no. 4 (March 2011): 432–5.

382. Canny, “The Debate about the Irish Reformation,” 248–47.

achieved.³⁸³ The conversion project was handicapped by the lack of that cornerstone of the Protestant faith, access to the bible in the vernacular language. The New Testament was not translated into the Irish language until 1603 and the Old Testament in the 1680s. Many of the clergy, such as Hugh Brady, Bishop of Meath (c. 1527–1584) sought to use persuasion in the form of preaching, education and vernacularisation of scripture to convert the native population despite holding extreme puritan beliefs.³⁸⁴ The differences between the two views of the conversion project were shaded with ambiguity as Brady, who preached in Irish and English and endowed local schools, also conceded that penal laws had a function in maintaining law and order. In England, the deployment in equal measures of the sword and the word had propelled the Reformation forward while in Ireland ‘the advocates of the disciplinary strategy...gave a definite precedence to the sword, to the neglect of the word.’³⁸⁵

The reform process was further complicated by the fact that, as a legacy of the Suppression of the Monasteries, half of the church tithes were in the hands of local recusant families who often failed to supply a reforming cleric and allowed the catholic clergy to remain in their parishes.³⁸⁶ The reversal of the policies of religious persecution under Queen Mary in 1553 led to further confusion, and were restored again under Elizabeth in 1558. The removal or destruction of crosses was perhaps not a priority for any of section of society, as they remained at sites within the Protestant Pale such as Monasterboice and Kells. This survival was perhaps due to the lack of a coherent reform programme and the fact that crosses were part of the landscape and had no part in the divisive liturgical activities within the church buildings. Crosses also survived in the territories under Anglo-Norman or Old English³⁸⁷ as well in the traditional Gaelic controlled areas such as at Ahenny, Killamery, Durrow, Drumcliff, Kilfenora and Carndonagh.

383. Brendan Bradshaw, “Sword, Word and Strategy in the Reformation in Ireland,” *HJ*, 21, no. 3 (Sept. 1978): 482.

384. Helen Coburn Walshe, “Enforcing the Elizabethan Settlement: The Vicissitudes of Hugh Brady, Bishop of Meath, 1563–84,” *IHS* 26, no. 104 (1989): 369.

385. Bradshaw, “Sword, Word and Strategy in the Reformation in Ireland,” 477, 499.

386. Walshe, “Enforcing the Elizabethan Settlement,” 363.

387. ‘Old English’ is a term used to describe the descendants of the Anglo–Norman conquerors of the twelfth century. They described themselves as Englishmen born in Ireland. The new cohort of arrivals after the Tudor Conquest were referred to as ‘New English’. For more see *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*. S. J. Connolly, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2002), 428.

2.7.1. The seventeenth-century Irish Church after the Tudor Reformation.

Henry A. Jefferies has challenged the accepted view that the Irish Church was in decline before the Tudor reforms, by suggesting that there was a underlying propaganda motive in many of the official documents which described a neglected church with a large number of absentee clerics.³⁸⁸ A report on the parishes of Derry, compiled c. 1609, described a post-Reformation, pre-plantation Ulster church, strongly connected to the traditions of the past, where little progress had been made in its ‘anglicising or Protestantising.’³⁸⁹ The dense network of parishes was based on the traditional *paruchia*³⁹⁰ and for three-quarters of the forty-eight parishes the named patron was an early medieval Irish saint from the fifth or sixth centuries.³⁹¹ Each parish had rectors and vicars with little evidence of pluralism or absenteeism, despite the recent ending of the nine years war. The presence of *erenaghs* in each parish, often with the same surname as the rector, suggests a Church that was organised according to early Gaelic traditions.³⁹² The *coarb* or clergyman and the *erenagh* maintained the Church and lands on behalf of the clan as well as providing the ancient ‘monastic’ obligation of hospitality to pilgrims, strangers and travellers.³⁹³ Amongst the details of salmon fisheries, profitable lands and woods there is a rather unreformed description of a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the little chapel near Kilrea ‘into which there was frequent pilgrimage’.³⁹⁴ Ulster was the strongest remaining Gaelic stronghold before the seventeenth century and it is reasonable to assume that the *coarb* and the *erenagh* would have valued surviving relics of its founders and any damage sustained by the crosses was due to the recent nine years war. It is not clear to what extent the traditions of the early medieval Church survived elsewhere in the country, but it is likely they continued in the parishes *inter Hibernicos* outside the Pale. The relationship between parish churches and medieval monastic sites involved complex arrangements of

388. Jefferies, “A Church ‘in Decline’,” 13–18.

389. The report was made followed the appointment of George Montgomery as Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry, Raphoe and Clogher in 1605 which placed him in the heart of the territory of the recently pardoned Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone. Henry A. Jefferies, “Bishop Montgomery’s Survey of the Parishes of Derry Diocese: a Complete Text from c. 1609”, *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society* 17 (1996–97): 1,17.

390. Colmán Etchingham, “The Implications of Paruchia.” *Ériu* 44 (1993): 139–62.

391. The patron saints include Patrick, Columba, Guaire, Comgall, Adomnán, Cadan, Canice and Muiredach.

392. Jefferies, “Bishop Montgomery’s Survey,” 44–76.

393. Jefferies, “Bishop Montgomery’s Survey,” 39.

394. Jefferies, “Bishop Montgomery’s Survey,” 58–59.

advowson tithes but high crosses also survived at ecclesiastical sites that were later associated with the Augustinian Canons. The canons, described by Rachel Moss as ‘able custodians of the ancient past throughout the tumultuous later Middle Ages’ had a strong respect for the past and sites such as Duleek, Co. Meath, Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow and Clogher, Co. Tyrone retained high crosses.³⁹⁵

2.7.2. Dismantling the theology and rituals of faith.

As Christian crosses are found in many shapes, forms, and materials, as well as in intangible gestures and prayers, different strategies were required for their suppression following the Reformation. In England, during the second half of the sixteenth century, the processes of reform and iconoclasm were closely connected as objects associated with specific rituals and practices were targeted for removal or destruction.³⁹⁶ In England, the primary concerns of the episcopal visitations of 1560 and 1561 were the removal of specific objects such as all altars, images, holy-water stoups, mass wafers and vestments and service books ‘not allowed by law.’³⁹⁷ Although these removals were officially sanctioned, the process often descended into violence and illegality, as books, figures from timber rood screens and paintings were often hidden to protect them from destruction.³⁹⁸ Portable objects such as vestments, plate, metal crosses and lecterns were often sold or confiscated by the crown. Immovable stone carvings and statues in churches were defaced by the removal of noses, eyes and hands and stone altars were broken up and removed.³⁹⁹ Later medieval churchyard crosses associated with liturgical practice, such as the Palm Sunday processions became obsolete and were removed. There is little evidence that other, older stone crosses in the graveyards of the churches in Ireland were associated with any specific formal liturgical function of the church, and as they lacked any monetary value except as building stone or re-use as grave markers they were left alone.

The crosses that marked boundaries continued to be part of the popular practice of marking the parish boundary or the Rogation Procession, which was not suppressed and endured as a religious thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth and a means of

395. Moss, “The Material Culture of the Canonical Movement in Medieval Ireland,” 206.

396. Alexandra Walsham, *Relics and Remains* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 9–36.

397. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 571–72.

398. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 94–125, 377–448.

399. C. Pamela Graves, “From an Archaeology of Iconoclasm to an Anthropology of the Body: Images, Punishment, and Personhood in England, 1500–1660,” *Current Anthropology* 49, no. 1 (February, 2008): 35–60.

preserving boundaries with the addition of a suitable Protestant form of prayer.⁴⁰⁰ The ceremony known as ‘creeping to the cross’ was particularly offensive to the reformers but continued well into the reign of Elizabeth I.⁴⁰¹ On Good Friday, a day of deep mourning in the Christian calendar, a veiled Crucifix was slowly revealed as the congregation and the clergy crept barefoot on their knees to kiss the foot of the cross which was then wrapped and buried in a ‘sepulchre’ only to be rediscovered on Easter Sunday. The practices at Irish pilgrimage sites of worship on bare knees before a cross, the repetition of the ‘rounds’ of barefoot prayers and the penitential aspect of medieval pilgrimage have an element of continuity with these Easter ceremonies.⁴⁰² As Duffy has observed, the pre-Reformation Church exerted ‘an enormously strong, diverse, and vigorous hold over the imagination and the loyalty of the people’ and even after ‘Protestantism had done its worst, enough of the old imagery and old resonances remained in the churches in which the new religion was preached to...compromise the new teachings’.⁴⁰³ In Ireland a hybrid church survived into the seventeenth century that was Protestant in name but tied to its past through complicated relationships of clan ownership, tithes, enduring practices of faith and a less than coherent response from the crown.

2.8. The development of two historiographies.

By the 1620’s the Catholic and Protestant faiths had begun to develop their separate foundation myths and the right to claim direct lineage from the early Irish Church which would influence attitudes towards the crosses over the next centuries. The surprising battleground for the two conflicting historiographies was the claim that St Patrick had founded their Church.⁴⁰⁴ The reforming cleric, James Ussher, used historical texts to construct ‘an ethnic origin myth, designed specifically for Protestants in Ireland, a fusion of New English and Anglo-Irish identities, which enabled them to identify themselves as English-Norman by origin, Irish by nationality and Protestant

400. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 136–37, 568.

401. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 29–30.

402. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 190–200.

403. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 4.

404. Raymond Gillespie, *Seventeenth-Century Ireland, Making Ireland Modern* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006), 74–88.

by religion.⁴⁰⁵ The Catholic priest, Geoffrey Keating, (1569–c.1644) of Old English descent, wrote his account of Ireland’s glorious past *Foras feasta ar Éirinn* c. 1635 in Irish, which became the ‘key text of popular Catholic history in the seventeenth century.’⁴⁰⁶ Both the Old English and the Gaelic Lords could relate to this text, described by Ford as ‘a common identity of faith and fatherland...this new syncretic view of Ireland’s past – legend, folklore, origin-myth, and history – brought together with consummate skill.’⁴⁰⁷

During the early seventeenth century, the different religious communities began to create their separate polarised Irish identities, primarily through their ecclesiastical histories, which were mainly written by clerics and would influence later attitudes and writing in their communities.⁴⁰⁸ This polarisation allowed separate religious communities to hold entirely different Irish identities and prejudiced views of each other.⁴⁰⁹ The events of the seventeenth century shaped the historiography of the following centuries and had a profound effect on the way that the past and its material culture was valued and understood.⁴¹⁰ The events of 1641 were embellished and exaggerated to heightened the Protestant sense of insecurity and their desire to claim their legitimate Irish identity while native Irish clung to a vision of their glorious past.

2.9. The uprising of 1641 and its legacy.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Irish society and culture had undergone profound trauma and irreversible change.⁴¹¹ The century began with the defeat of the Irish and Spanish forces by the English at Kinsale in 1601, followed by the ‘Flight of the Earls’,

405. Alan Ford, “James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity,” in *British consciousness and Identity, The making of Britain, 1533–1707*, Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 132.

406. Geoffrey Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn: the History of Ireland, 1634*, David Comyn and P.S. Dinneen, eds. 4 vols, (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902–14).

407. Ford, “James Ussher”, 185–212.

408. Ford, “James Ussher ”, 122.

409. Marianne Elliot, *When God Took Sides, Religion and Identity in Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2–16, 32–40.

410. Alan Ford, “High or Low? Writing the Irish Reformation in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 90, no. 1 (April, 2014): 93–112.

411. William J. Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory. A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland c. 1530–1750*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 2006), 345–83.

the Plantation of Ulster, the Uprising of 1641, the Irish Confederation of Kilkenny, Cromwell's campaign in Ireland, the Restoration of the Monarchy and the Williamite war of the three kingdoms.⁴¹² The most extreme change was experienced in the north of Ireland with the collapse of the last stronghold of tradition Gaelic society, which had been maintained under the Lordships of the O'Neill in mid-Ulster and the O'Donnell in Donegal.⁴¹³ By the end of the century, Ulster had not only become the most Protestant part of the country but also the most Presbyterian.⁴¹⁴ The Plantation of Ulster had begun in 1553–58 with the introduction of Scottish Presbyterians to Co. Antrim. The Jacobean plantation that followed the collapse of the Gaelic Lordships in 1608, replaced the native Catholic population with Scots Lowlanders and English planters, including a group of London livery companies who were granted Co. Coleraine, which was renamed Londonderry.⁴¹⁵

The process by which Ulster became Protestant and Presbyterian had impacts on the survival of crosses in Ulster, which arose from the polarisation of society along deeply divided religious lines. Acts of iconoclasm or 'the destruction of the external symbolism of a defeated ideology or regime' were recorded such as the destruction of the 'Stone of Kings' in Tullaghoge, the traditional inaugural site of the O'Neills of Tír Eoghain, by Lord Deputy Mountjoy in 1601.⁴¹⁶ Archaeological excavations carried out in 1982 at the early medieval church site Derryloran founded by St. Lurán in the sixth century, but later renamed 'Kirktown' by the Scottish settlers, showed that the church erected by the planter Allan Cook in 1622 was built on the footprint of the medieval walls, which had been completely demolished to ground level and used as the footing for the new walls.⁴¹⁷ During the Irish uprising of 1641, the destruction of the bible was the primary focus of Catholic anger and iconoclastic destruction. Crosses were the site of public displays of rebellion, as for example when Protestant books and bibles were burned at the Belturbet cross in Co. Cavan and at the market cross in Longford in

412. Gillespie, *Seventeenth-Century Ireland*.

413. Colm J. Donnelly, *Living Places. Archaeology, Continuity and Change at Historic Monuments in Northern Ireland*, (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1997), 119–21.

414. Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 374–77.

415. Jonathan Bardon, *The Plantation of Ulster*. (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian, 2011).

416. Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003), 1; Jonathan Bardon, *The Plantation of Ulster*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian, 2011), 10.

417. Donnelly, *Living Places. Archaeology, Continuity and Change*, 109–11.

1641.⁴¹⁸ In his 1642 deposition, Edward Slake of Co. Fermanagh claimed the rebels threw his bible into a puddle of water and ‘lept and stamp’t upon it, saying a plague on this book hath bred all the quarrel, saying they hoped that within three weeks all the bibles in Ireland should be used as that was or worse and that none should be left in the Kingdome’.⁴¹⁹ The widescale destruction of crosses in England, Scotland and Wales during the English civil war and the Commonwealth period was likely absent from Ireland due to the Catholic Confederation of 1641–9 which controlled much of the country.⁴²⁰

Following the flight of Protestants at the outbreak of the rising in 1641, many Irish churches were reclaimed for Catholic worship.⁴²¹ The full fury of Oliver Cromwell (1600–1658) was unleashed on Ireland in 1649 and the now ‘Catholic’ cathedrals were a particular target of the pious wrath of the Parliamentary army.⁴²² In Kilkenny, following the outbreak of the rebellion, Catholics had regained possession of St. Canice’s cathedral for eight years until the arrival of Cromwell and his army in 1650.⁴²³ After the surrender of Kilkenny, the aisles of the cathedral were used for stabling the army horses and the elaborate market cross was fired on by muskets and suffered the loss of the arms of the cross sitting on top of the structure.⁴²⁴ Its survival is surprising, as a collection of Depositions relating to the Rebellion (now in Trinity College Dublin Library) noted that in 1642 the heads of two government officers and five soldiers, who had been killed in battle by the Confederate army, were ‘hung upon the market cross on the next market day creating a great sensation in the city.’⁴²⁵ Another surprising survivor is St Patrick’s cross in Cashel as the cathedral was attacked by Lord Inchiquin

418. William J. Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 130; Gearty, Morris and O’Ferrall, *IHTA*, 22, Longford, 13.

419 T.C.D. MS 835, fols. 170r–171v; Raymond Gillespie, “Destabilising Ulster, 1641–2,” in *Ulster 1641, Aspects of the Rising*, Brian McCurta, ed. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2020), 116.

420. The Catholic Confederation was an alliance between the Ulster Irish and the Old English which established their headquarters in Kilkenny in order to secure law and order in the country during the English Civil War.

421. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 36. Murphy claimed that during the Catholic Confederation the cities of Derry, Cork, Dublin and the towns of Youghal, Kinsale, Bandon, Dundalk, Castlefergus and Drogheda remained under English control.

422. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 316.

423. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 316.

424. Prim, “The Market Cross of Kilkenny”, 224.

425. Prim, “The Market Cross of Kilkenny”, 223.

in 1647 when ‘the very cemetery itself is disputed inch by inch, until of those that remained outside the church, not one survived’.⁴²⁶ The large crucifix inside the cathedral had its head, hands and feet struck off. In Finglas, Co. Dublin, the Parliamentary Army reportedly attacked the stone cross which they pulled down on their way to besiege Drogheda. They abandoned the task but on their return two weeks later, the broken cross could not be found as it had been buried by the inhabitants ‘in order to save it from further desecration.’⁴²⁷

Although Cromwell only spent nine months in the country, almost every townland in Ireland has an account of his destructive actions.⁴²⁸ His army remained on in Ireland under the command of Henry Ireton and in c. 1650, Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands, was occupied by Cromwellian troops who demolished four of the surviving six churches at Killeany to provide stone to build Arkin Castle.⁴²⁹ The survival of the more remote Temple Benan and Tighlagheany was likely due to the inconvenience of transporting stone across long distances. The stone crosses there were not as fortunate, although the broken fragments of a shaft and base survive at Killeany, while three fragments of a shaft survive at Tighlagheany as well as a recently discovered broken cross head.⁴³⁰ Fragments of three badly damaged crosses survive at Temple Breacan, including the seven fragments of the south cross, which were collected by Sir William Wilde in 1848 and are now cemented together on a plinth (Fig. 2.11).⁴³¹ The severe damage suffered by these crosses gives credence to the claims that they were broken by Cromwell’s army

The events of 1641 and the second half of the seventeenth century created a long-lasting Protestant mindset of a beleaguered, minority population, surrounded by hostile forces which could strike at any moment.⁴³² The survival of some of the crosses suggests an element of protection from the full impact of the type of iconoclasm experienced

426. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 389.

427. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 83.

428. Máirín Ní Cheallaigh, “Mechanisms of Monument-Destruction in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Antiquarian Horror, Cromwell and Gold-Dreaming,” *PRIA* 107C (2007): 134–37.

429. Conleth Manning, “Archaeological Excavations at Two Church Sites on Inishmore, Aran Islands,” *JRSAI* 115, (1985), 96.

430. Manning, “Archaeological Excavations at Two Church Sites on Inishmore,” 118–19;

431. John Waddell, “The Archaeological Survey of Temple Breacan, Aran,” *JGAHS* 33 (1972/1973): 24–25.

432., Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 464–68.

elsewhere in the British Isles, but the evidence is difficult to interpret due to a lack of information regarding the original numbers of the crosses and their locations.

2.10. The Restoration and a revival of Catholic hopes.

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was followed by the re-establishment of the Church of Ireland which reasserted the authority of its bishops in January 1661 with the consecration of twelve new bishops in St Patrick's cathedral.⁴³³ Charles II was a supporter of the episcopal Church as it aligned with his own belief in the divine right of kings.⁴³⁴ The Church of Ireland's rejection of the more extreme interpretation of biblical iconoclasm can be seen in the six year-long house arrest of Presbyterian ministers who refused to obey their Bishop, Robert Leslie.⁴³⁵ In 1661, Jeremy Taylor, the newly appointed Bishop of Down and Connor, ejected thirty-six non-conformist ministers from their parishes because they refused to use the liturgy of the Church of Ireland.⁴³⁶ In 1672, Charles II issued a Declaration of Indulgence designed to heal the wounds of the civil war and ease the position of non-conformists and Catholics alike.⁴³⁷ This revival of Catholic interests generated a new interest in the high crosses, which can be seen in the dedication on the cross of St. Tola at Dysert O'Dea which was repaired and inscribed by Michael O'Dea in 1683. Charles II was succeeded by his brother James II, a Catholic convert, in 1685 who issued a second Declaration of Indulgence in 1688, which suspended religious and civil restrictions against Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters.⁴³⁸ This event is marked on the west side of the market cross in Kells, which proudly records that the cross was erected by the Catholic Robert Balfe who was 'sovereign' of the corporation, dated 1688.⁴³⁹ This cross is on the side of the street, and the Dysert O'Dea cross is in a field outside the graveyard so neither was considered the property of the Church of Ireland.

433. James McGuire, "Policy and Patronage: The appointment of bishops, 1660–1661" in *As by Law Established, The Church of Ireland since the Reformation*, James McGuire and Kenneth Milne, eds. (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1995), 112; Raymond Gillespie, "An Age of Modernisation," in John Crawford and Raymond Gillespie eds. *St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin: A History*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), 186–90.

434. Laurence Kirkpatrick, *Presbyterians in Ireland, An illustrated history*, (Dublin: Booklink, 2007), 31.

435. Kirkpatrick, *Presbyterians in Ireland*, 34.

436. Kirkpatrick, *Presbyterians in Ireland*, 32.

437. Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, 240–41.

438. S. J. Connolly, "Reformers and Highflyers: The Post Revolution Church" in *As by Law Established*, 153.

439. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 35. See chapter 4, Case study 1, the market cross, Kells for further details.

The Protestant Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Henry Hyde, appointed in 1685, found the country to be in a volatile state due to Irish expectation of a reversal of the land settlements.⁴⁴⁰ By 1687 Hyde was replaced by the Old English Catholic, Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell.⁴⁴¹ An increasingly nervous Protestant population watched as Irish Catholics entered the military and civil offices, while vacant Church of Ireland bishoprics were left unfilled.⁴⁴² The reinvigoration of the hopes of Gaelic Ireland produced a number of publications written from a native Irish perspective. Roderick O'Flaherty's (1629–1718) *Ogygia*, published in Latin 1685, treated the Irish origin myths as partially true and claimed that the *Gaeil* and the Kingdom of Ireland had their origins in Phoenician civilization and was thus older than those of Scotland and England.⁴⁴³ The Williamite war of the three kingdoms, began in 1688 with William III's arrival in England, was fought on Irish soil, ending in 1691 with the Treaty of Limerick and the flight of the 'Wild Geese.'⁴⁴⁴ The departure to mainland Europe of Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone and Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnel in September 1607, known as the Flight of the Earls, is seen as the symbolic end of the old Gaelic order in Ireland. The path was now clear for the dominance of English interests in Ireland and the position of the Church of Ireland was finally secured but characterised by a distrust of the more extreme puritanical beliefs on the one hand and of the catholic majority on the other.

2.11. The legacy of the seventeenth century.

At the close of the seventeenth century, the majority of the crosses that survived were in the graveyards of the newly re-established Church of Ireland. They had not yet been recognised as symbols of Irish national identity and their survival was due in part to their religious value to the Catholic community and the delay in establishing the Reformation in Ireland. The relative peace of the first forty years of the seventeenth century was shattered in 1641, after which Ireland was largely outside English control. This period coincided with the height of puritanical iconoclasm in England and

440. Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, 240–43.

441. Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, 272–77.

442. Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, 282.

443. Roderic O'Flaherty, *Ogygia seu rerum Hibernicarum Chronologia*, James Hely, trans & ed, 2 vols. (Dublin: W. M'Kenzie, 1793, originally published in 1685); Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, 277–78.

444. Gerard Fitzgibbon, *Kingdom Overthrown: Ireland and the battle for Europe, 1688–91* (Dublin: New Island Books, 2015).

Scotland. The main iconoclastic impact of Cromwell's brief but violent campaign in Ireland was felt by the cathedrals and churches of the Old English towns, which had been traditionally loyal to the British Crown. The crosses that came into contact with his army did suffer extreme damage. The Restoration reconfirmed the position of the Church of Ireland, which sought a moderate position between the equally feared Roman Catholic and Dissenter populations. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the divisions between what had previously been a complex and multi-layered bilingual society had begun to soften as the differences between the elites of the Old English and the Gaelic Irish moderated under the impact of the penal laws.⁴⁴⁵ In the future, the defining cultural characteristic of Irish identity would be associated with religion.

Issues of security lay at the heart of the successful conquest and colonisation of Ireland which rejected the idea that a complex and ancient Gaelic culture had existed before the twelfth century. The justification for the colonisation process was partly justified by the bringing of culture and civilization to a 'barbaric and uneducated' people. The native Irish responded by promoting the longevity of their religion and the richness of their language as a testament of their unique and sophisticated Gaelic culture. As the Church of Ireland had barely survived the seventeenth century, it was anxious to regard itself as 'catholic' in the sense of returning to the pure state which existed before the corruption of the medieval church. In the absence of evidence of race and culture, the Irish credentials of the Church of Ireland were largely based on its foundation by St Patrick. Trinity College began to acquire evidence of this longevity by the acquisition of James Ussher's library of early manuscripts and codices following his death in 1656 and the Book of Kells and the Book of Durrow in 1661 from churches in his former diocese of Meath. Over the next century, the desire to possess the past would become an obsession for both sides of the religious divide. Each faith created and maintained its identity through their interpretation of the evidence from the past, initially through ancient manuscripts which supported increasingly polarised cultural historiographies and later through the surviving material culture.

The events of the seventeenth century resulted in the largest change in land ownership that Ireland had ever experienced, although there are different interpretations of the extent of the land transfers. Catholics owned approximately

445. Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 138–63.

twenty percent of the overall land area after the Restoration settlement, compared with fifty one percent in 1641.⁴⁴⁶ By the end of the seventeenth century, the Catholic community could no longer access the traditional parish church for baptisms, marriages and funeral services but they continued to bury their dead in their family plots in the graveyards. This was the setting of the majority of the crosses, they were not objects that could easily be transported or bought or sold and their survival was likely due to their solid, constant nature. By the end of the seventeenth century, the security of land, tradition and stability had been lost and the desire to reconnect with the past would be a key influence on the future of the crosses.

446. Connolly, ed, *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, 502; Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972*, 115—116.

Chapter 3. Remembering and forgetting: the creation of Irish identity.

3.1 The long eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century in Ireland was a period of prosperity and stability for the ‘ascendancy’ class who were at the zenith of the power and influence.⁴⁴⁷ This elite society built impressive houses and improved the landscape until peace was brought to a sudden end by the 1798 Revolution and the Act of Union of 1801, which created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. However, a deeply divided society lay behind this prosperity. The ‘Protestant’ population was divided into rival Anglican and Presbyterian/Dissenter communities, while the majority of the population were Catholic. The ‘settler’ groups were identified by the various plantation programmes beginning with the earliest ‘Old English’ of the Anglo-Norman invasion of the twelfth century to the latest arrivals or ‘New English’ of the Cromwellian plantation. The Scotch-Irish had emerged as a separate identity in the north-east of Ireland.⁴⁴⁸ Rural society was composed of landlord and tenant, which was not necessarily defined by religion or ethnicity. The discriminatory penal laws were enacted during the early eighteenth century when the threat of a Jacobite invasion was still present. At least 15% of the population died in the famine of 1740 which increased immigration to North America. The native Irish maintained close connections with Europe as Catholic priests were educated abroad and Irish soldiers fought in continental armies. It was against this background that ethnic antagonisms continued, as sections of Irish society viewed the English as foreign invaders who in turn saw the Irish as a barbarous and uncivilized people who benefited from being colonized. The cultural representations of the Irish reflected this view despite the development of eighteenth-century antiquarian societies and an awareness of early medieval Irish art and the long histories of ecclesiastical ruins.⁴⁴⁹ These developments helped to maintain the Protestant

447. The term ‘ascendancy’ is used to describe the Protestant landed elite that dominated Irish society under the penal laws of the 18th century and saw themselves as the leaders of Irish Society. For more see; Elliot, *When God Took Sides*, 194–95; Michael McConville, *Ascendancy to Oblivion, The Story of the Anglo-Irish* (London: Quarter Books, 1986); Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Gill Books, 2009); Finola O’Kane, *Ireland and the Picturesque, Design, Landscape painting and Tourism 1700–1840* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 1–7.

448. This term is North American in origin and is used to denote the Irish-born Presbyterians of Scottish descent who were an important influence on the colonial and revolutionary period in the United States. Connolly, ed, *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, 529–30.

449. Joep Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the 19th Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), 68–156. The Physico-Historical Society was founded in 1744 and disbanded in 1752. The Royal Irish Academy was founded in 1785.

historiographies, noted in Chapter 2. The question of Irish identity remained a preoccupation for all sections of society throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and some of these tensions can be seen in the survival, appropriation, and reconstruction of the crosses during this period.

3.2. The Church of Ireland in the eighteenth century.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the majority of high crosses were under the jurisdiction of the Church of Ireland and their survival may be due in part to the immense problems the clergy faced in their parishes.⁴⁵⁰ In contrast to the comfortable life of the English clergymen and the wealth of the Irish aristocracy, the Irish clergy often had no suitable place to live, their incomes were low, their parishioners were sparse and scattered over a wide area of parish unions, and their churches were in ruins.⁴⁵¹ Their poverty was principally due to the lay impropriation of the tithes, a legacy of the suppression of the monasteries. The parish of Aghourd in the Ferns dioceses was an example where the Colclough family provided £35 for a curate from an income of £300 a year.⁴⁵² Tithes were sometimes withheld by the protestant congregation if the minister was not resident, and the Catholic community were often unwilling or unable to pay.⁴⁵³

By the end of the century, the newly appointed Archbishop of Armagh, William Stuart, (1755–1822), described the Church of Ireland as ‘the most scandalous Christian denomination in Europe.’⁴⁵⁴ His report to the English Parliament on the state of the Church of Ireland coincided with the Act of Union of 1801.⁴⁵⁵ It revealed the deplorable condition of the clergy with decayed churches, abandoned glebes and impropriate tithes. Archbishop Stuart’s report showed that 700 of the 1125 benefices had no clerical residence or glebe, which resulted in non-residency of the clergy.⁴⁵⁶ The English Parliament was sufficiently shocked by this report to invest heavily in the provision of churches and glebes delivered

450. Marie-Louise Legg, “The Parish Clergy of the Church of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Clergy of the Church of Ireland, 1000–2000*, 128–41.

451. Alan Acheson, *A History of the Church of Ireland, 1691–1996*. (Dublin: The Columba Press, 1997) 105–23.

452. Legg, “The Parish Clergy of the Church of Ireland,” 132.

453. For a summary of the complexities of the tithes and tithe wars in Ireland see S. J. Connolly, ed, *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, 573–74.

454. Edward Brynn, “Some Repercussions of the Act of Union on the Church of Ireland, 1801–1820,” *Church History* 40, no. 3 (1971): 284–96.

455. [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1868-03-30/debates/699c1b0f-0cf6-4d37-b8a5-baf61d65aea5/EstablishedChurch\(Ireland\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1868-03-30/debates/699c1b0f-0cf6-4d37-b8a5-baf61d65aea5/EstablishedChurch(Ireland)) Accessed July 10, 2022.

456. Brynn, “Some Repercussions of the Act of Union,” 284–96.

via the Board of First Fruits.⁴⁵⁷ Despite these improvements, the membership of the Church of Ireland continued to decline, between 1834 and 1861 the numbers dropped from 853,160 to 693,357.⁴⁵⁸ Its position as the ‘established church’ was further threatened by the passing of the last Catholic Relief Act in 1829 which was followed by the Church Temporalities Act of 1833. This reduced the revenue of the Church of Ireland, suppressed ten of its sees and eroded its status as a self-governing corporation.

The question of how the crosses survived through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is also intertwined with the survival of Catholic Ireland when discriminatory legislation was at its height.⁴⁵⁹ Although greatly disadvantaged by the Penal Laws, a realistic level of toleration was necessary given that the vast majority, roughly 90%, of the population in Ireland were Catholic.⁴⁶⁰ An indication of the protective Catholic attachment to place can be seen in an account by Jonas Blaymires following his survey of the churches and graveyard at Clonmacnoise in 1738.⁴⁶¹ As word spread that he was employed by the Protestant Bishop of Meath to arrange the demolition of the ruins in order to build a new Church, he was accosted by several priests who came ‘over the Shannon, some from ten or twelve miles away’.⁴⁶² This notion ‘would have proved fatal to me’ but ‘however, after all, I bless God, I am safe at the clerk’s house in Clonfert.’⁴⁶³ The authorities in Dublin Castle were also unwilling to enforce the tough anti-Catholic legislation as they feared it could destabilise the political system.⁴⁶⁴ In the absence of a professional police force, rioting could break out at any time, such as in 1754, when a ‘mob’ of between 500 and 3,000 Catholics staged a successful rescue of Father Daniel Neal when he was being transported from Clonmel Gaol to Limerick.⁴⁶⁵ Although Irish Protestants controlled the civil and military administration, the unspoken bargain of the penal era was that religious tolerance of Catholics would continue provided that they showed deference and subordination.⁴⁶⁶ In other words ‘the penal code permitted the Ascendancy to admire its own confident self-

457. Dolan, “The Large Medieval Churches,” 2:52–62.

458. Acheson, *A History of the Church of Ireland*, 169.

459. Maureen Wall, *Catholic Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1989), 1–60.

460. Sean Duffy, ed. *Atlas of Irish History* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1997), 76.

461. Conleth Manning, “The Earliest Plans of Clonmacnoise.” *AI* 8, no. 1 (1994): 18–20; 19–20.

462. Manning, “The Earliest Plans of Clonmacnoise,” 19–20.

463. Manning, “The Earliest Plans of Clonmacnoise.” 19–20.

464. McBride, *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 222.

465. McBride, *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 215–45.

466. McBride, *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 239.

portrait, undisturbed by the continuing challenge posed by the resilience of the majority faith on the island.⁴⁶⁷ In Ulster, this unspoken bargain was not required as the Protestant population had successfully replaced Catholic interests and the impact of this, in conjunction with the dominance of members of the Presbyterian faith, resulted in poor survival rates for crosses in Northern Ireland.

3.3. Pilgrimage and patterns.

In 1639, all incoming Church of Ireland churchwardens were asked a series of questions which including ‘are all monuments of idolatry and superstition abolished in your Church or church-yard?’⁴⁶⁸ The lack of progress on this issue can be seen in an account of the pilgrimage site of Emly, Co. Tipperary in Sir James Ware’s (1594–1666) 1705 edition of *De Hibernia et antiquitatibus eius disquisitiones* edited by Walter Harris.⁴⁶⁹ From the earliest time, the crosses retained their religious significance, embedded in the traditional celebration of the pattern day celebrated on a specific day at a site associated with an Irish saint.⁴⁷⁰ A cross and a holy well survived in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland which was originally an early Christian monastic site founded by St. Ailbe.⁴⁷¹ The two pre-Reformation relics in the graveyard and their associated pattern day rituals were held ‘in great veneration by the superstitious Irish who flock hither in vast multitudes to celebrate the Festival of the Patron.’⁴⁷² Archbishop Palliser (1694–1727) granted two neighbouring

467. McBride, *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 243.

468. Michael O’Neill, ed, *Episcopal Visitations of the Diocese of Meath, 1622–1799* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2017) Appendix. 1. 338–39.

469. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 80–152.

470. Philip Dixon Hardy, *The Holy Wells of Ireland: containing an authentic account of those various places of pilgrimage and penance which are still annually visited by thousands of the Roman Catholic peasantry. With a minute description of the patterns and stations periodically held in various districts of Ireland* (Dublin: Hardy and Walker, 1840); Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, “The Pattern,” in James S. Donnelly and Kerby Miller eds. *Irish Popular Culture 1650–1850* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 201–21; Stiofán Ó Cadhla, *The Holy Well Tradition. The Pattern of St Declan, Ardmore County Waterford, 1800–2000* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002). St. Declan’s pattern in Ardmore is held on the 24th July. There were three small stone crucifixes over St. Declan’s well, only two now remain.

471. Walter Harris, *The Whole Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland, revised and improved. Written in Latin, newly translated into English, and continued by Walter Harris, Esq.* vol.1. (Bell & Fleming Dublin 1739), 490.

472. The National Folklore Collection of School children’s accounts of local practices, Emly (B.) (roll number 16059) recorded in 1937 includes an account of people making the sign of the cross on the stone cross using three smaller stones which are laid on top of it. Back pains were cured by lying back against the stone or backs would be strengthened by the same method. On the pattern day, the 12th September, people would do the rounds of the well saying the rosary and take home the water and sprinkle it on their gardens.

<https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4922298/4868116/5019664?ChapterID=4922298> Accessed July 12, 2022.

magistrates a license to demolish the cross and stop up the well, ‘being Encouragement to Idolatry, and the cause of some Disorders in the Country.’⁴⁷³ The well was eventually closed over, but the cross remains in the graveyard today and the pattern continues indicating that the local magistrates were unwilling to provoke the local population.

Walsham surmised that the practice of pilgrimage, although deeply entrenched in pre-Reformation Ireland, become more widespread during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to the displacement of Catholic worship from the churches to outdoor locations.⁴⁷⁴ The German Lutheran, Ludolf von Münchhausen wrote an early post-Reformation account of the pilgrimage site at Monaincha in Co. Tipperary, dated 1591, which included a description the pilgrim’s dynamic interaction with the cross while performing of the ‘rounds.’⁴⁷⁵ He recounted that on arrival to the island

‘it is the custom of the pilgrims to take off their shoes and socks and do eight times the rounds of the island.... afterwards they crawled on their knees to the altar of the small chapel and then of the big church... whoever after all this, was able to embrace the stone cross with his back to it (actually an easy task), was without sin and his penance was over.’⁴⁷⁶

An early image of the pilgrimage site at St Patrick’s Purgatory, Lough Derg, Co. Donegal dated 1666, shows a cross in a prominent location in the ritual landscape (Fig.3.1). John Richardson (1669–1747) the rector of the parish of Belturbet, made a scathing attack on the practice of pilgrimage to St Patrick’s Purgatory, , in 1717. He noted of the Catholics there that ‘Their devotions at these places of imaginary sanctity is founded upon ridiculous fables and legends, and made up of many foolish and absurd rites.’⁴⁷⁷ His examination of pilgrim practices included a valuable account of the pattern associated with the high cross at Arboe. He rejected the Irish origin of the crosses and described a continuity of the role of the *erenagh*.

There is a Tradition among the Irish that St. Patrick brought three Crosses from Rome to Ireland and that St. Colman set up one of them near Ardbo Church in the County of

473. Harris, *The Whole Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland*, 490.

474. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 544–47.

475. ‘Doing the rounds’ was a site-specific series of movements and prayers which were usually performed on a particular date known as the Pattern Day.

476. Ludwig von Munchausen, *A German visitor to Monaincha in 1591*. 230–231.

<https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T100083/index.html> Accessed July 21, 2022.

477. John Richardson, *The Great Folly, Superstition and Idolatry of Pilgrimages in Ireland*, (Dublin: J. Hyde, 1727), Preface.

Tyrone on the Brink of Loughneagh. This Cross is about Eighteen Foot high, four. Foot square, and pretty well cut, having Images of their Saints on every side. They believe that it is better to Pray before it, than in any common Place, and that the Water directly opposite to the Cross, hath great Vertue in it for healing Man or Beast. The Pilgrims go thrice round the Cross upon their Knees, saying their Beads and at the west Side of the Cross they Bow to it. When they have done they leave a piece of Silver on the Pedestal, for the use of a Family descended (as they suppose) from Colmans Clerk, pursuant to the Saints own Order and Direction in his Life time.⁴⁷⁸

The Protestant community had already abandoned the site by the time he recorded the activities around the cross.⁴⁷⁹ Some delicate thread of events protected the Arboe cross which remains the only surviving, relatively complete, sculptured cross in Northern Ireland.⁴⁸⁰ The more remote pilgrimage locations were often on islands that had evolved from the eremitical tradition of the early church and their survival was due to their isolation from the reach of official authority.⁴⁸¹ When Richard Pocock visited the remote Inch (Island) in Donegal in 1752, he found a church and a very old cross ‘work’d on it in bas relief and many ornaments round it.’⁴⁸²

The reputation of pattern days was not entirely religious as when the devotions or the rounds were completed, the pilgrims dedicated themselves to dancing and carousing for the rest of the day which often descended into chaos.⁴⁸³ This led on occasion to the deliberate destruction or removal of crosses. On the evening before the festival of St Kevin at Glendalough in 1714, the ‘Protestants of the county... rode all night and met at the seven churches by four in the morning of...the usual anniversary day’. The pilgrims dispersed

478. Richardson, *The Great Folly, Superstition and Idolatry of Pilgrimage*, 66.

479 William Roulston, “An agreement to Build a New Church in Arboe Parish in 1710”, *UJA* 3rd ser. 61 (2002): 148;

480. Francis Joseph Bigger and William Fennell. “Ardboe, Co. Tyrone: Its Cross and Churches,” *UJA* 4, no. 1 (1897): 1–7. The ‘top stone’ fell in 1817 and ‘the upper portion including the arms’ in 1846. They were subsequently restored. One of the upper quadrants of the ring is missing, but otherwise the cross is complete.

481. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 59–62. Examples of sites in remote and inaccessible locations are Lough Derg, Co. Donegal, Scellig Michel, Co. Kerry, Mona Incha, Co. Tipperary, St. Kevin’s bed, Co. Wicklow, Devenish Island, Co. Fermanagh and Gougane Barra, Co. Cork.

482. Richard Pococke, *Richard Pococke’s Irish Tours*. John McVeagh, ed. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995);

Michael McCarthy, “Extending the grand tour: Dr. Pococke’s travels, 1737–41,” in *Pathfinders to the Past*, 30–34, 46.

483. Hardy, *The Holy Wells of Ireland*, 59, 94.

and their ‘superstitious crosses’ were pulled down and holy wells filled in and destroyed.⁴⁸⁴ At Fassaroe, on the Wicklow Dublin border, Anne Plumptre, writing a century later, noted that St Valery’s Cross had been moved some time ago as ‘it became such an object of devotion [...] that it was [...] found expedient to remove it to a situation where the devotion be paid’ without trespassing on the grounds of private estate in which it sat.⁴⁸⁵ The crosses retained their significance as fixed (or near fixed) points on sites that embodied personal relationships with saints, expressed through intangible practices associated with the movement of the ritual rounds and the reciting of specific prayers. An account of the pattern at Gougane Barra from 1813 describes how slates pieces were used to inscribe deep crosses on the wall of the well which were later sold as relics along with little glass bottles of well water which were either drunk on the spot or applied to infections.⁴⁸⁶ The Gougane Barra pattern was banned in 1818 due to faction fighting and profane behaviour. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the pattern days were associated with extreme drunkenness and violence and both the Catholic clergy and the civil authorities sought to discourage assemblies at the sites. Eventually the popularity of the patterns waned under the combined forces of Church and State.⁴⁸⁷

3.4. The parish and burial rights.

Even when not the focal point of pilgrimage or devotional practices, the survival of crosses in Protestant parish church yards appears at first to be incongruous. The parish itself as an idea was ‘virtually indestructible: its burial grounds, sites and boundaries were indelible in the landscape and embedded in local memory.’⁴⁸⁸ The parochial organisation provided baptism, marriage and burial rites within an area defined by well-known boundaries determined by walking distances and/or population density. From the thirteenth century onwards the indicator of a parish church was the presence of a baptismal font and an enclosed graveyard for burials.⁴⁸⁹ Another component of the medieval parish was the

484 William Edward Hartpole Lecky. *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, Volume 1 (London, Longman Green, 1898), 263–64.

485 Anne Plumptre, *Narrative of a Residence in Ireland During the Summer of 1814, and that of 1815* (London: Henry Colburn, 1817), 211.

486. Thomas Crofton Croker, *Researches in the South of Ireland*, (London: John Murray, 1824), 277–83.

487. Gary Branigan, *Ancient and Holy Wells of Dublin*. (Dublin: History Press Ireland, 2012), 11.

488. Clodagh Tait, *Death, Burial and Commemoration in Ireland 1550–1650*. (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 59–84.

489. Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, “The Material World of the Parish,” in Charles Doherty, Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, Raymond Gillespie, eds. *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), 63.

payment of tithes, which provided a sense of ownership and permanence to parishioners, and it continued to be cessed on the Catholic community after the Reformation.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the services inside the churches were increasingly of the Protestant faith but Catholics, by virtue of the tithe, retained their rights of burial in the ancestral graveyards. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, established parish graveyards were shared by both communities although, as the Protestant minister received the fee for burial, the grounds of the suppressed monasteries were also a popular alternative for Catholics.⁴⁹⁰ The graveyard at St. James's churchyard in Dublin, for example, allegedly generated nearly £2,000 a year in revenue which resulted in considerable strain on the mutual tolerance required to enable the dual system to operate.⁴⁹¹ These arrangements continued until the repeal of the Penal Laws led to the establishment of separate burial grounds from 1830s onwards.⁴⁹² Throughout the eighteenth century, the interdenominational nature of the graveyards as well as the financial and other difficulties experienced by the Church of Ireland clergy, are likely to have influenced the survival of the crosses in these locations. The removal of the penal laws in 1829 allowed Catholics to build churches and graveyards in prominent locations away from back lanes. The initial extensive wave of Catholic church building was halted by the Great Famine of 1845–9 but resumed afterwards with even more fervour.⁴⁹³ Following the successful campaign against the tithes, known as the tithe wars of 1830–1833, the burial places of the two churches began to separate and the Catholic community increasingly moved their burials to their new church sites.

The survival of cross fragments by virtue of their re-use as later burial markers and gate posts was a common occurrence before their recognitions as important monuments. The best-known example is the Doorty Cross in Kilfenora, Co. Clare where the lower part of the shaft was used by the Doorty family as a tombstone, dated 1752, hence the name. (Fig.1.12)⁴⁹⁴ The carvings on the shaft were not visible as it was deeply inserted upside-down in the ground indicating that it was valued purely as a piece of stone, rather than by

490. Niamh NicGhabhann, "Gothic Ruins and Remains: Disorderly Burials and Respectable Bodies in Irish Medieval Ecclesiastical Buildings, 1824–1900," *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* 16 (Autumn 2017): 41–66; Wall, *Catholic Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 51.

491. William J. Fitzpatrick, *History of the Dublin Catholic Cemeteries* (Dublin: Catholic Cemeteries Committee, 1900), 1–11.

492. Patrick J. Duffy, "The Shape of the Parish," in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland*, 33–34.

493. John J. Robinson, "Churches of the Nineteenth Century," *The Furrow* 4, no. 6 (1953): 315–21.

494. Liam De Paor, "The Limestone Crosses of Clare and Aran," *JGAS* 26, no. 3/4 (1955): 53–71.

historical association with the past. The other section of the shaft and the head were kept in the ruined chancel of the Cathedral. It is difficult to know if the carvings were a significant factor in the case of the cross shaft in Connor, Co. Antrim which was used as a grave marker ‘for many years’ until it was identified by Canon Fitzgerald as ‘an important relic of antiquity’ and removed to the vestry of the church.⁴⁹⁵ The family who owned the grave were not happy to have it removed without their permission, although they had not inscribed their name on the shaft and may have been unaware of its historical significance. The Canon had the shaft placed in the vestry of the church, but the owners of the grave forced the door ‘at the dead of night’ and smashed the stone leaving the pieces outside the church.⁴⁹⁶ The Canon had the sections put back together and placed in the rectory and the repaired shaft now stands in the church. Canon Fitzgerald had assumed that the Church of Ireland were the owners of the cross, but his actions violated the sense of ownership held by the family resulting in a swift and brutal response.

At Camus, Co. Derry the cross survived in the graveyard of the parish church until c. 1760 when it was ‘tumbled down from the pedestal by some ill-disposed persons’ and broken.⁴⁹⁷ The shaft and the base were set up again but there is no mention of the head which had disappeared. The shaft was used as the gate-pier at the entrance to the churchyard, the carvings were visible on three sides so the insertion of an iron gate lug into the centre of one of the panels may be an act of iconoclasm as much as re-use. It remained in use as the gatepost until 1905 when it was reunited with the base which was still in the graveyard. The description of the work included the removal of the iron gate hanging and its replacement with cement and sandstone made by grinding a piece of the tenon on the bottom of the shaft.⁴⁹⁸

Excavations at Boho in Co. Fermanagh revealed that the high cross there was not in its original location. It was apparently erected to mark a charnel pit containing human bones which are believed to have been disturbed during construction of the adjacent Catholic church in the 1830s. It is suggested that the cross was uncovered at the same time and re-

495. G. R. Buick “A Further Notice of the Connor Oghams, and on a Cross at Connor,” *JRSAI* 32, no. 3 (1902): 239–45.

496. Buick, “A Further Notice of the Connor Oghams,” 241.

497. Maxwell Given, “The High Cross of Saint Comgall at Camus-Juxta-Bann, in the County of Derry.” *UJA* 11, no. 4 (1905): 147.

498. Given, “The High Cross of Saint Comgall at Camus-Juxta-Bann,” 152.

erected over the human remains.⁴⁹⁹ Although the relationship between the two denominations had deteriorated by the nineteenth century, by then the crosses were safeguarded by their symbolic importance to the Church of Ireland clergy as part of the legacy of the early church and the increase in antiquarian interest in their survival.

3.5. Antiquarianism

From the eighteenth century onwards, the development of interest in the crosses was part of a wider study of ruins and the rise of antiquarian societies throughout Europe.⁵⁰⁰ Antiquarians sought to provide information in a scientific and dispassionate way, probing the physical remains without bias. Until the second decade of the nineteenth century, the crosses had been viewed largely as objects of superstition, or at best as objects of an ancient past, the details of which were unclear. Inclusion of the crosses in the art of the late eighteenth century such as Van Leberghe's aquatint of Glendalough '*View of the 'Seven Churches' with a Procession of Catholics at Christmas*' dating from c. 1775 (Fig.3.2), focused on the almost supernatural mystery of ceremonies conducted around the monuments undoubtedly influenced by Edmund Burke's 1757 publication on ideas of the sublime and beautiful which recommended that darkness is more productive of the sublime.⁵⁰¹ Two images related to James Ware's (1594–1666) *De Hibernia et antiquitatibus eius disquisitiones* demonstrate an awareness of the status of the crosses as part of the patrimony of Clonmacnoise.⁵⁰² An illustration from 1658 showed a three-dimensional bird's-eye view that included a cross and base style image of both the cross of the scriptures and a second cross, but the south cross is not shown.⁵⁰³ (Fig.3.3) A second illustration from Walter Harris's (1686–1761) heavily edited 1739 edition included an engraving that showed elevations of the cross of the scriptures and the south cross and a plan (Fig.3.4). Both Ware and Harris recognised the crosses to be as significant as the churches by including them in the illustrations of the monastic complex. This recognition of the importance of the crosses continued into the early nineteenth century, although in a more Romantic style, as evidenced by George Petrie's painting '*The Last Circuit of Pilgrims at*

499. Colm Donnelly, Philip MacDonald, Eileen Murphy, and Nicholas Beer. "Excavations at Boho High Cross, Toneel North, County Fermanagh," *UJA* 62 (2003): 129–30

500. Charles Doherty, *Pathfinders to the Past*, xii.

501. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. (London: J. Dodsley, 1757), XIV.

502. Diarmaid Ó Catháin, "Walter Harris and the whole works of Sir James Ware," in *Pathfinders to the Past*, 14–29.

503. Manning, "The Earliest Plans of Clonmacnoise," 18–20.

Clonmacnoise’ made in c. 1828, (Fig.3.5). Petrie’s near contemporary account of the pilgrims at Clonmacnoise in 1820 described how they crept on their bare knees in silent prayer at the base of the ‘gorgeously sculptured stone cross stone cross...which they afterwards kiss with the utmost fervency of devotion; and now, hurrying rapidly along to some more distant object of worship.’⁵⁰⁴ At a distant location, John Howard Burgess’ (1817–1890) painting of the distinctive Arboe cross in Co. Tyrone, confirms the practice, showing it surrounded by pilgrims on their knees praying (Fig.3.6). An etching known as *The Blind Girl at the Holy Well* by Henry Thomas Ryall after Frederick William Burton showed a small, richly carved cross perched precariously on top of a well (Fig.3.7). The horseshoe placed at the base of the cross was perhaps a veiled comment on the absurdity of healing blindness at a holy well. These images and paintings show that the characteristic shape of the high cross surrounded by kneeling figures had a particular appeal for artists and became one of the set pieces that depicted Ireland during the eighteenth century and later. Artists romanticised the activities around the crosses, depicting simple peasants going about their daily lives amidst the ruins of an earlier civilisation.

As noted in Chapter 1, George Petrie was one of the pioneers of the academic study of the crosses. Prior to his publications, the approach to crosses had been in a similar vein as images of them. Inaccurate descriptions and drawings, staffed with either peasants or gentlemen viewers that recounted folktales of their (non-Irish) origins and the folklore associated with them.⁵⁰⁵ As part of the work on compiling the first Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI), Petrie employed artists to document, in archaeological detail, the remains of antiquities that would be marked on the maps.⁵⁰⁶ One such artist was George Victor Du Noyer (1817–1869). He was Petrie’s pupil in his drawing academy and employed in the OSI from 1834, spending the remainder of his career with the Geological Survey of Ireland from 1847.⁵⁰⁷ Many of his sketches of crosses were in notebooks and although quickly executed, they are accurate and detailed. He was primarily a technician or recorder rather than an analyst and restricted himself to drawing objects, often including detailed

504. Stokes, *The Life and Labours in Art and Architecture of George Petrie*, 31

505. Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland*; Daniel Grose, *Antiquities of Ireland – A Supplement to Francis Grose*, Roger Stalley ed. (Dublin: Irish Architectural Archive, 1991).

506. Murray, *George Petrie, the Rediscovery of Ireland’s Past*; Paul Walsh “George Petrie: His life and work” in *Pathfinders to the Past*, 44–71.

507. Fionnuala Croke, *George Victor du Noyer, 1817–1869: Hidden Landscapes* (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1995), 21–22

measurements and an occasional comment. He did not confine himself to the more complete examples, as his notebooks were filled with unpretentious quickly executed drawings of fragments of crosses found in fields, broken heads, broken shafts, surviving bases and strange combinations of bases and heads (Fig.3.8-Fig.3.9). The brief titles of the drawings are unambiguous, frequently using the word ‘mutilated’ to describe many of these survivors. The images of the crosses are closer to the reality of their survival, showing broken and discarded fragments lying casually in graveyards, many of which have since disappeared or been restored. These drawings belong to the emerging discipline of archaeology in their factual nature and exclusion of people and other extraneous details.

Petrie and Du Noyer’s work coincided with a burgeoning of interest in Irish antiquities.⁵⁰⁸ Both Petrie, and his arch-rival Henry O’Neill published their discourses on architecture and the high crosses through the auspices of one of the earliest of the Irish antiquarian societies, the Royal Irish Academy founded in 1787.⁵⁰⁹ The academy also provided a forum for lectures and salons where members would display or discuss their ever-growing collections of Irish antiquities. Throughout the middle decades the numbers of learned societies began to expand. One particularly successful society, now known as the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland (RSAI) had the recording and preservation of historic monuments among its founding principles. Together with the acquisition of existing records (it purchased some of Du Noyer’s sketch books and watercolour albums from his widow following his premature death), it also pioneered the first tentative steps toward the preservation of monuments that it felt were not being well cared for by the Church. This included work at sites with crosses, including Clonmacnoise and Glendalough.

From the late eighteenth century onwards, the protection and re-erection of crosses required considerable resources that frequently involved members of the aristocracy and Church of Ireland clergymen, who in many cases were also the owners. As a result, the Protestant elite and the antiquarian societies that they founded considered the custodianship of the past and particularity of the crosses to be their prerogative. Henry O’Neill’s plates from *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland* reflected this sense of ownership of the crosses as top-

508. Clare O’Hallaron, “Phoenicians and Goths: The Milesian Origin Myth Undermined 1770–1810,” in *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, c. 1750–1800* (Cork, Cork University Press, 2004), 41–70; Leerssen, “*Remembrance and Imagination*,” 68–156.

509 John Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology* (Dublin: Wordwell, 2002), 191–97.

hatted members of the gentry earnestly admired them while the rustics turn away from them (Fig.3.10–Fig.3.11). As discussed earlier, there is no doubt that the interventions of the antiquarian societies were well intentioned, and many crosses and cross fragments were saved as a result of their efforts. However, it must also be acknowledged that the outcomes of their activities were not always beneficial to the crosses, but this was more than offset by their survival, albeit with some damage. The intervention of the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club led to the loss of the lowest part of the shaft of the Downpatrick cross in order to create a new tenon (Fig.4.CS8.22) but it survived due to the restoration work.⁵¹⁰ The records in the various societies' and field club's journal should be examined closely with a degree of uncertainty but much of the work undertaken by them is probably unrecorded.

3.6. Royal approval and recognition; The Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853.

International exhibitions and world fairs grew in popularity from the mid-nineteenth century. These gatherings gave nations the opportunity to display their artistic, technical and scientific ingenuity and in juxtaposing different world cultures, they encouraged trade relations and promoted art and industry. The primary aim of the Dublin Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853 was to showcase modern industry and manufacturing but there was also a section dedicated to *Relics of Ancient Art and the Royal Irish Academy*.⁵¹¹ The inclusion of early medieval Irish objects was the result of a growing appreciation of their historical significance within antiquarian circles.⁵¹² Interest in the remains of earlier Irish cultures had increased from the middle of the eighteenth century but remained within a narrow group composed of private collectors and the educated and leisured members of the antiquarian societies. The Great Exhibition was the pivotal event in terms of a wider recognition of the crosses as part of the legacy of early Christian Ireland and objects of national pride.⁵¹³ High crosses were presented in the exhibition in three different forms; two original crosses, four plaster casts of crosses and a selection of Henry O'Neill's drawings of Kilkenny crosses.⁵¹⁴ The 'cross of Saints Patrick and Columba, or 'tower' cross, described as 'of very great antiquity and mentioned in early records' was brought to Dublin from the graveyard in

510. See Chapter 4, Case Study 8. The market cross, Downpatrick.

511. Fergus Mulligan, *William Dargan: An Honourable Life, 1799 – 1867* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2013); *Official Catalogue of the Great Industrial Exhibition, in Connection with The Royal Dublin Society, 1853*. Third edition.

512. Peter Harbison, "The Hibernian Antiquarian Society," in *William Burton Conyngham and His Irish Circle of Antiquarian Artists* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), 31–37; O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 158–82.

513. Williams, *Icons of Irishness* 73–76.

514. *Official Catalogue of the Great Industrial Exhibition*, 24.

Kells, Co. Meath by permission of the Very Rev. T.A. Stopford, D.D., Archdeacon of Meath and Rector of Kells. This cross was clearly the property of the Church of Ireland, who facilitated the transfer to Dublin. There is no mention of any permission associated with the second cross, ‘the stone cross from the Market-Place of Tuam’, which was brought to Dublin in possibly five separate pieces.⁵¹⁵ A contemporary account by J. H. Smith described how the crosses had attracted the attention of Lord Talbot De Malahide, ‘one of our most judicious archaeologists’ who had commissioned casts of ‘the finest and most characteristic specimens of these interesting objects’ specifically for the exhibition.⁵¹⁶ Smith echoed the reservations of the time, and was conflicted by his appreciation of the crosses and his prejudice against the native Irish. He admired how ‘the elegance of their varied forms exhibits a degree of attainment in design, at one time displaying itself in proportions of massive solidity, at another of the most airy lightness’ while also finding ‘it altogether incredible that they should have been the chance productions of a barbarous and uncultured age.’⁵¹⁷

The exhibition ran for the five months from May to October with receipts showing that over a million paying visitors entered the exhibition.⁵¹⁸ The opening event made the front page of the *Illustrated London News* on June 4th 1853 which featured an image of the Kells tower cross (Fig.3.12). For the majority of visitors, this setting is likely the first encounter that they had with the crosses, separated from their traditional graveyard setting and a pilgrim’s prayers. In James Mahony’s painting of the royal visit, the crosses are shown in the central hall; the Kells tower cross is in the foreground and the top of the tall shape of the Kilkieeran plaster cast is glimpsed behind (Fig. 3.13). The setting is utterly modern, the people around the Kells cross are turned away from it as they talk to each other and look towards the royal visitors. The Kells tower cross was not displayed as a holy or sacred object but instead was part of a larger collection of objects of artistic and national significance that could be moved and used in exhibitions. The four plaster casts were made as part of the wider tradition of copying important immovable heritage, which could then

515. *Official Catalogue of the Great Industrial Exhibition*, Item 1871; See the Tuam Market Cross case study in Chapter 4 for details of the exhibition.

516. J. H. Smith, "Ancient Stone Crosses in Ireland", *UJA Ist Ser.*, 1, 53–57. The four plaster-casts of crosses made for the exhibition included St. Boyne’s stone cross (the cross of Muiredach) and the great stone cross at Monasterboice (the tall cross), the cast of Kilcrispin, Co. Tipperary (Ahenny) and the Kilkeiran cross, Co. Kilkenny.

517. Smith, "Ancient Stone Crosses in Ireland," 3–57.

518. Fergus Mulligan, "William Dargan, the 1853 Dublin Exhibition and the National Gallery of Ireland," *Dublin Historical Record* 67, no. 2 (2014): 54–70.

be widely reproduced and distributed. Although the catalogue describes the Tuam cross as the original one, it is most likely that a plaster cast was displayed, made from the mismatched parts.⁵¹⁹

The Exhibition was an attempt to demonstrate the skill and artistic achievement of the crosses away from the clutter of marketplaces, graveyards, and attendant pilgrims. Local veneration and attachment to the crosses, as well as size and weight, meant that moving them away from these locations was problematic. The manufacture of the casts was a significant technological breakthrough and would lead to museums like the Victoria and Albert in London and National Gallery of Ireland, both of which grew out of great industrial exhibitions, building specially designed Cast Courts to display their collections. This permitted remote monuments to be displayed as museum artefacts, which could be admired and studied in an indoor temple of knowledge.⁵²⁰

By the end of the Exhibition, the crosses were acknowledged as objects worthy of royal admiration and their reputation was confirmed by the relocation of the plaster casts of the crosses to the exhibition at the Crystal Palace in Sydenham in 1854 (Fig.3.14).⁵²¹ The process of replication facilitated the distribution of replicas crosses to museum and international exhibitions around the world, thereby creating an independent life for the replicas separate from the original cross in its graveyard or urban setting.⁵²² As so many of the original crosses were in relatively obscure locations, this international exposure led to the popularity of the form as a grave marker.

3.7. The ‘Celtic’ cross: memorials and grave markers.

It was not evident during the mid-nineteenth century that the crosses would ultimately become one of the most widely recognised symbols of ‘Celtic’ or Irish identity. This came to pass largely because of the presence of plaster casts at multiple international exhibitions, and ultimately in a number of museum exhibitions which elevated the cross to a symbol of national identity.⁵²³ Petrie’s early adoption of the memorial cross for

519. See the Tuam Market Cross case study in Chapter 4 for details of the exhibition.

520. The Victorian and Albert Museum. <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/history-of-the-cast-courts> Accessed July 21, 2022.

521. Jeffrey Auerbach, “Empire under Glass: The British Empire and the Crystal Palace, 1851–1911,” in John McAleer and John M. MacKenzie, eds. *Exhibiting the Empire: Cultures of Display and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 11–143.

522. Ragnall Ó Floinn, “Reproducing the Past: Making Replicas of Irish Antiquities,” in *A Carnival of Learning, Essays in Honour of George Cunningham*, 146–57.

523. Williams, *Icons of Irishness*; *ibid.*, “Constructing the Market Cross at Tuam,” 141–60.

O'Connell's grave (Fig. 1. 6), discussed above, may have influenced recognition of its suitability for the role. Stone replicas were initially favoured by both sides of the community as grave markers and public memorials. Typically, it was only the overall form that was mimicked, rather than full-scale copies of ornamentation. Colleen Thomas has described how the development of the monument type involved a complex intertwinement of 'many strands of historical narrative, social affiliation, and cultural agendas.'⁵²⁴ She noted how two almost identical stone crosses were erected in 1866 and 1868 as public memorials to the Anglo-Irish Henry Herbert and the Catholic Thomas Redington, both prominent members of the government who had directly engaged with the British monarchy on their visits to Ireland.⁵²⁵ In Scotland, Celtic crosses were popular war memorials for Scottish regiments and not necessarily associated with nationalistic aspirations.⁵²⁶ In 1883, a fine Celtic revival cross was erected at Bolton Abbey, North Yorkshire, as a memorial to Lord Frederick Cavendish who had been murdered by the Irish Nationalists known as the Invincibles in 1882 shortly after he arrived in Ireland (Fig.3.15). A memorial to Alfred, Lord Tennyson, the Victorian Poet Laureate, erected in 1897 stands on the highest point of Tennyson Down on the Isle of Wight (Fig.3.16).

In the aftermath of partition, Megan Henvey has claimed that the association between the crosses and Irish nationalism was strong enough to lead the largely unionist government of Northern Ireland to neglect the crosses in their care.⁵²⁷ The reality is more nuanced than that, as it is clear that the crosses were used by both sides of the religious divide as symbols of their Irish identity. Henvey used the example of the Bandon controversy over a ringed cross in the graveyard to demonstrate 'how embedded the encircled cross had become as a symbol of Irish Catholicism within the religio-political circumstances of pre-Partition Ireland.'⁵²⁸ However, this case was not so much a rejection of the 'Celtic' nature of the cross but rather the puritan belief that any representation of a cross, of any kind, was unacceptable.⁵²⁹ The graveyards in the north of Ireland that have a predominantly

524. Colleen Thomas, "Invoking the Authority of the Middle Ages in Nineteenth-century Ireland: The 'Irish Crosses' of Earleys and Powells," in *Figures of Authority in Nineteenth-century Ireland* Raphaël Ingelbien, and Susan Galavan, eds. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 192.

525. Thomas, "Invoking the Authority of the Middle Ages in Nineteenth-century Ireland," 198–206.

526. The adoption of Celtic revival crosses as grave markers in Scotland is discussed by Murdo Macdonald who has advocated for more research on the subject. 2.7. "Public Monuments" in Foster, ed. *Future Thinking*, 39–42.

527. Henvey, *The High Crosses of 'Northern Ireland'*, 52–53.

528. Henvey, *The High Crosses of 'Northern Ireland'*, 52–53.

529. *The Cork Examiner*, November 23, 1903, 8.

Presbyterian community have no crosses of any kind on their memorials. That is not to deny that towards the end of the nineteenth century, the ringed cross was increasingly associated with Irish republicanism rather than Irish nationalism. The ringed cross was reproduced in a truncated form in the Gaelic Athletic Associations first all-Ireland Gaelic football medals in 1884, an organisation that was infiltrated by extreme Republican organisations. Further research is needed to determine the degree of appropriation of the high cross as a symbol of Irish republicanism but, in the next section, it is clear that it remained a potent symbol for both sides of the religious and political divide.

3.8. Church of Ireland clergymen and the ‘restoration’ of crosses.

The dominance of Church of Ireland clergymen in antiquarian circles is explained by Toby Barnard as the difficulty of separating the antiquarian, archaeological and aesthetic impulses from the religious and sectarian.⁵³⁰ Barnard traced the strong relationship between antiquarian societies and the Church of Ireland clergy, finding that they were well placed to engage in their enquiries having the necessary analytical skills as university graduates and many enjoyed leisure and social standing.⁵³¹ Their churches were the oldest buildings in the landscape and they were eager to explore their history and establish their lineage from St Patrick.⁵³² The County Kildare Archaeological Society was established in 1891 by Lord Walter Fitzgerald and the dean and archdeacon of Kildare together with the canons of the cathedral and catholic bishop.⁵³³ In 1893 the society undertook an ambitious project at Moone, Co. Kildare, which involved the separation of the base and head of the cross⁵³⁴ and the insertion of a third piece of the shaft.⁵³⁵ Henry O'Neill may have provided the inspiration for the project, as, in Plate 17 of *Ancient Cross of Ireland* he illustrated the shorter cross but also included the newly located shaft on Plate 18 (Fig.3.17). In the society's description of the work, published in 1894, the shaft was described as ‘found some eighteen or nineteen years ago’ or c. 1874 whereas it had been found much earlier,

530. Toby Barnard, “Writing the History of the Church of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Church of Ireland and its Past*, 59.

531. Barnard, “Scholars and Antiquarians: The Clergy and Learning, 1600–2000,” in *The Clergy of the Church of Ireland*, 249.

532. Barnard, “Scholars and antiquarians,” 233

533. Barnard, “Scholars and antiquarians,” 255.

534. The head and base had been discovered buried in the churchyard and assembled c. 1835.

535. “Report of Local Secretary, Co. Kildare: The Restoration of the High Cross of Moone,” *JRSAI*, 5th series, 4, no.1(Mar. 1894): 75–76.

as O'Neill illustrated it in 1855. The base and the head of the cross were damaged during the separation process, but this was not mentioned in the society's report.

The relationship between the Church of Ireland's clergy and the crosses can be seen in the erection of a group of 'composite' crosses near their churches, a process that began during the eighteenth century and continued until 1916. Composite crosses are composed of parts of different crosses that have been reconstructed without too much concern for their original arrangements.⁵³⁶ The composite crosses are also somewhat different to the curious arrangements, illustrated by Du Noyer, where heads were fixed directly to bases in order to secure loose fragments (Fig.3.8 – 3.9) but there is no attempt to make a new monument in these assemblages.⁵³⁷ The 'restoration' of crosses was not a new development as the 1683 composite Dysert O'Dea cross erected by the Catholic Michael O'Dea was an effort to recover ownership of the church sites and a symbol of political recovery. The re-erection of the Kells Market cross was similarly motivated by Catholic recovery and shows that the crosses retained their cultural significance. The symbolic value of the 'restored' cross was more important than the evidence that the parts did not belong together (Dysert O'Dea) or respecting the carvings on the original cross by carving new inscriptions.

The tradition of constructing composite crosses in Ulster lasted over one hundred and seventy years and, due to their locations in Church of Ireland graveyards, a reflection of the clergy's concerns with the retention of cross fragments, a desire to demonstrate the antiquity of the site and the continued cultural importance of the crosses.⁵³⁸ A disregard for the obvious incompatibility of the parts combined with the selection of prominent locations are features of these crosses, indicating that there was a political aspect to their re-erection. The crosses had a political and ideological value, which outweighed concerns for the original form. The creation of these new monuments, which used the monumental form of the crosses, was an expression of religious and political control of the past. The prevalence of iconoclastic activity in the North, either due to Puritanical belief or warfare, is attested by the number of crosses that were broken. The fact that so many of the fragments survived long enough to be re-erected is a testament to the value that they held for the Church of

536. A composite cross is made from parts of different crosses, whereas a reconstructed cross has missing parts replaced but the original parts came from the same cross.

537. The shaft of a cross was the most suitable part for use as a building stone. The head of the cross was not as easily adapted, and the bases were likely too cumbersome to remove from the graveyard.

538. Ann Hamlin, "William Reeves, 1815–92," in *Pathfinders to the Past*, 86–98.

Ireland and is perhaps a reflection of the tensions between the Dissenter and Anglican communities.

The map of the composite crosses (Fig.3.18) shows that there is a cluster in Ulster that are located in prominent public locations beside churches. The Clones cross was likely in position in the middle of the diamond *c.* 1741 and was confirmed as the property of the Church of Ireland in the transfer to the OPW following Disestablishment.⁵³⁹ The Donaghmore cross in Co. Tyrone (Fig.3.19) was set up in 1776 by the Reverend Richard Vincent in a prominent position at the top of the town between the Church of Ireland and the graveyard.⁵⁴⁰ The head and upper part of the shaft are from one cross while the lower part of the shaft is from another cross. The Tynan village cross in Co. Armagh (Fig.3.20) was set up *c.* 1840 at the intersection of three roads but the fragments were originally were in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland.⁵⁴¹ The Dromore cross in Co. Down (Fig.3.21) was set up in 1887 on an elevated section of the graveyard of St. Patrick's Church of Ireland cathedral beside the road leading to the bridge.⁵⁴² This is an example of anastylosis, which is informed by an understanding of the original structure and makes up missing parts with obviously new material. The location of the cross indicates a certain ambivalence as it is placed on church land, but separated from the graveyard by elevating it to road level and placing a retaining wall around it. The memorials in the graveyard surrounding the cathedral are uniformly plain with an occasional obelisk but, unlike Catholic graveyards, there is an absence of modern Celtic cross gravemarkers of any kind. The similarly named Donaghmore cross in Co. Down (Fig.3.22) was set up in the graveyard in 1891 on the south side of the Church of Ireland and has the head on one cross mounted on the shaft and base

539. The Clones cross is discussed in Chapter 4, case study 4. This cross consists of the base and shaft of one cross with the head of a smaller cross mounted on top.

540. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 381; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 64–67, 2: Figs. 191–200

541. The Tynan 'village cross' is made of parts of at least two and possibly three crosses, with the head and upper shaft of one set on the lower shaft and perhaps base of a second. It has been moved at least twice within the village and repaired, possibly at the same time as the first documented move in the 1840s. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 252–54. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 181–2, 2: Figs. 635–638.

542. The cross was used as a support of the stocks in the marketplace until it was 'thrown down' by Puritans in the seventeenth century. The head, the lower shaft and the base are thought to be original and from the same cross. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 296–297; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 69–70, 2: Figs. 211–112.

of a second.⁵⁴³ At Clogher, Co. Tyrone, (Fig.3.23) the two very mismatched composite crosses were set up 1912 directly outside the entrance to the cathedral and consist of the fragments of at least four crosses.⁵⁴⁴ The sometimes crude junctions of the fragments and the prominent locations of these new monuments demonstrated a concern with display, antiquity, and lineage rather than the original composition of the fragments. The re-erection of the composite Tuam cross in 1874 is discussed in the next chapter but its biography shows the Church of Ireland Bishop Plunket's reluctance to release the fragments of the cross under his control to the Town Commissioners. Further research is needed to explore the meaning of these monuments and how their 'restoration' is a shared response to the political and social environment of Northern Ireland. It is clear that from the seventeenth century, the possession of an early medieval cross was a symbol of prestige and the pedigree of a church site.

3.9. Appropriations: garden ornaments.

Several crosses were 'rescued' from their original settings and moved to the estates and gardens of the local gentry. It is not clear if the motive was to preserve the fragments or to beautify and enhance the lineage of the secular settings. In 1821, Dr. Mant took one of the crosses from the Cathedral in Kilfenora and erected it in his garden in the Bishop's Palace in Killaloe (Fig.5.28). The cross is now in the interior of Killaloe cathedral but a small sign in the glass-roofed north transept of Kilfenora cathedral reminds visitors of its absence. Fairview House in Co. Armagh was remodelled in 1813 and renamed Tynan Abbey.⁵⁴⁵ There are three crosses in the grounds, the first was originally in the village of Tynan and was moved c. 1834 and is known as the terrace cross.⁵⁴⁶ It was used to enhance a picturesque setting with little regard for its religious function or original location and was described by James Graves as 'a very graceful object' at the end of a yew walk.⁵⁴⁷ Two more crosses were brought from Glenarb in Caledon, Co. Tyrone c. 1840 to enhance the grounds. One was set up over a well in a pastiche of the relationship between holy wells

543. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 291–292; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 61–64, 2: Figs. 182–190.

544. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 373–74; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 42–43, 2: Figs. 115–120.

545 James Graves, "Excursion to Emania, Tynan and Its Crosses, and Caledon Hill Demesne," *JRSAI* 6, no. 59, (1884): 409–31; Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 386–387; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 42–43, 2: Figs. 115–120.

546. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 254; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 30, 2: Fig. 82.

547 James Graves, "Excursion to Emania, Tynan and Its Crosses," 422.

and crosses while the second one was on an island in a lake mimicking a remote monastic site. The fragments of two other crosses remained in Glenarb until c. 1872 when the Earl of Caledon brought them to his estate and set them up as a composite cross over a well.⁵⁴⁸ By the time of this relocation, antiquarian societies were less likely to approve of such appropriation, so James Graves added that ‘the removal from its original site was justified by the injury it had received, the head or cross portion being used as a ‘pushing stone’ but no such explanation was required for the crosses that had been moved forty years earlier. Castlebernard Castle in Co. Offaly was rebuilt c. 1833 by the Pain Brothers.⁵⁴⁹ The grounds are enhanced by the Castlebernard cross which has lost its arms and ring and is said to have to originally come from the graveyard in the village of Kinnitty, or possibly Drumcullen, but this is not certain (Fig.3.24).⁵⁵⁰

The practice was not confined to Ireland as the Ruthwell cross was reconstructed in 1823 by Henry Duncan who gathered all the pieces together and erected it the manse garden.⁵⁵¹ It was moved into the adjacent church in 1887. In 1856 the Trelill Cross in Cornwall was moved from the holy well to the garden of Glynn Grylls.⁵⁵² The appropriation of crosses to enhance the grounds of large houses ceased around the middle of the nineteenth century as antiquarian interest in them increased. The crosses that were appropriated for use as garden ornaments remain in these locations today as when they were set up in the nineteenth century as their ownership had passed into private hands.

3.10. The Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and the move towards state care.

The process of separating the Church of Ireland and the State during the nineteenth century, known as the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, had long term consequences for the ownership of many of the crosses. The Church of Ireland and England had been united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, ‘by law established,’ by the 5th article of the Act of Union of 1801.⁵⁵³ Opposition to Disestablishment was part of the struggle to maintain the United Kingdom and reject Home Rule in Ireland, which would logically lead to a full separation of the two countries. The Tithe Rentcharge Act of 1838 ended the prolonged

548. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 386; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland* 1: 180–181, 2: Figs. 631–634.

549 <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/14936011/kinnitty-castle-castletown-and-glinsk-offaly> Accessed June 20, 2021.

550. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 35–36, 2: Figs. 97–100.

551 <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/SM90256> Accessed June 20, 2021.

552. Wendron 4 or Trelill, *Cornwall*, vol. 11, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*.

553. James Golden, “Irishness, foreignness and national identity,” in *The Church of Ireland and its Past*, 151–52.

campaign known as the Tithe Wars, but the legacy of a minority church supported by a tax on the entire agricultural system was a major influence on Disestablishment.⁵⁵⁴ The population had recovered in the years after the famine as by 1861 the census of the total population of 5,750,000 showed that 4,500,000 were Catholics and 700,000 were Anglicans of the Established Church. Despite the major rebuilding project undertaken under the aegis of the Board of First Fruits between the years 1800 and 1823, many of the most historically important churches, such as the cathedral in the Rock of Cashel, were unroofed ruins.⁵⁵⁵ The Irish Church Act of 1869 reduced the number of cathedrals to eight and all other churches would have parish status. The churches still in use were vested in the Representative Church Body (RCB) while the residual, not in use, but important in terms of age or architectural merit were vested in the Office of Public Works (OPW).⁵⁵⁶ In the report of the Irish Church Temporalities Commission for the period 1869–80 presented to both Houses of Parliament, the ruins of ancient cathedrals, churches, chapels, towers and crosses, no longer required by the Church, were listed ‘after consultation and correspondence with the most eminent archaeologists’, most likely the Rev. Reeves.⁵⁵⁷ The Commissioners controlled the selection of the one hundred and thirty seven sites that were to be handed over to the Board of Works, a task described as ‘by no means an easy one.’⁵⁵⁸ A sum of £50,000 was transferred to the OPW for their ‘needful repair and permanent preservation.’ Appendix 10 of the report is the order vesting these structures. Thirty-three of the 137 sites, or twenty four percent, mention a cross as part of the transferred structures.⁵⁵⁹ One condition attached to the transfer, which was intended to thwart Catholics’ hopes of regaining the ancient places of worship, was that they would be ‘preserved as National Monuments and not to be used as Places of Public Worship.’⁵⁶⁰

The list confirmed the status of the crosses as an important part of the patrimony of the Church as in the case of five sites, a single cross was vested in the OPW without any

554. Connolly, *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, 573–74.

555. Rachel MacRory, “The Evolution of Policy for the Conservation of Historic Monuments in Ireland” (Masters in Urban and Building Design thesis, University College Dublin, 1994);

556. Dolan, “The Large Medieval Churches,” II, 148–149.

557. By email with Dr Susan Hood, Librarian, Representative Church Body Library. 7/4/2022.

558. Irish Church Temporalities Commission, *Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the period 1869–80*. (Dublin: Alex. Thom & Co. 1880) 11; Kenneth Milne, “Disestablishment– In the nick of time,” *History Ireland* 27, no. 6 (2019): 24–27.

559. A similar number of sites included a round tower in the vesting.

560. MacRory, “The Evolution of Policy for the Conservation of Historic Monuments in Ireland”, 134.

other accompanying structures. These were the ‘Ancient Irish cross’ at Dromore, Co. Down and four ‘stone crosses’ at Inishmacsaint, Co. Fermanagh, Killamery, Co. Kilkenny, Kilkeeran, Co. Kilkenny, and Donaghmore, Co. Tyrone. The vesting of Cranfield in Co. Antrim included ‘Ruins of a Church, Black Oak Cross, &c.’ This was the only timber cross mentioned in the text, and it was associated with a nearby holy well, which was the subject of intense pilgrimage. The Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland created the title of ‘national monument’ and originated the involvement of the state in their protection. The status of the crosses as worthy of the title ‘national monument’ was confirmed by the Irish Church Act of 1869 and precipitated the role of the OPW in their care. The earliest actions of the OPW were the straightening up of the Clonmacnoise crosses and the installation of railings around the bases of many of the crosses.⁵⁶¹ The ban on the use of the transferred site for religious purposes may have been the catalyst for enclosing the crosses with railings.

3.11. Making and remaking Irish identity.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the two principal religious denominations sought reassurance and comfort from their different versions of the past. However, Irish society was more complex and nuanced than that implied by the simple division of religion belief. Some members of the gentry class were Catholic and at least some priests were well-educated and against un-orthodox veneration of the crosses. Alan Ford has described how an obsession with historical roots, legitimacy and ‘defining one’s tradition in exclusive terms and affirming its superiority’ is a persistent concern for Irish people.⁵⁶² The Anglo-Irish Protestant ascendancy, in particular their clergymen, were mindful of issues around Irish identity and the legitimacy of their claim to the churches and the crosses in the graveyards. The effort to create a coherent Protestant identity depended, in part, on establishing the historical legitimacy of the Church of Ireland. James Ussher had based this claim on the purity of the early Church of St. Patrick, which, he argued, was subsequently corrupted by the forces of the Antichrist in the twelfth century, as the Roman Church descended into superstition and corruption.⁵⁶³ The Reformation had brought the Church

561. John Scarry, *Monuments in the Past, Photographs 1860-1936*. (Dublin: The Stationary Office for the OPW, 1991).

562. Alan Ford, “Standing one’s Ground: Religion, Polemic and Irish History since the Reformation,” in *As by Law Established*, 10.

563. Alan Ford, “James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity,” in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University

back into its original state of purity and the importance of the crosses lay in this symbolic connection to the ideal past. These beliefs were reaffirmed during the nineteenth century as the privileged position of the Church of Ireland was contested and gradually undermined.

The historical and artistic significance of the crosses were filtered through visions of a glorious past on which separate memories and identities are imprinted. The most privileged, well-travelled and educated sections of society were the first to recognise the significance of the crosses although their understanding was limited.⁵⁶⁴ The initial disbelief that an earlier Irish society could have produced such works of art was gradually replaced by an acceptance that this was the reality. For many, the crosses were part of a collection of symbols that represented an idyllic time before the Anglo-Norman invasion. Some nineteenth-century images of crosses were relatively sympathetic, with ‘romantic’ native Irish kneeling in religious veneration, but many of the written accounts mocked and condemned this as superstitious behaviour.

In the uneasy grip of the minority Protestant population, the Irish crosses were a symbol of control and ownership. Before and after the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, the creation of new high crosses and the securing of any fragments that that might be appropriated was a reflection of this need for identity and control. The survival of the crosses was part of the story of how the different strata of society struggled to create their Irish identities in the face of what Declan Kibert has described as ‘inventing Ireland’ after centuries of colonialism.⁵⁶⁵ The different communities compiled their versions of Irish history celebrating what supported their narrative and forgetting or ignoring elements that didn’t fit their viewpoint. The damage to many of the Irish crosses, and indeed to other monuments, was often attributed to Oliver Cromwell who could be equally vilified by Irish Protestants and Catholics alike. Máirín Ní Cheallaigh has described this evocation of Cromwell as ‘a convenient way of physically and metaphorically projecting blame for such destruction outside the community in both past and present.’⁵⁶⁶ In order to dig deeper into this history, detailed studies of the physical impacts of individual crosses are vital. The

Press, 1998), 185–212; F. S. L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 142–47; Kenneth Milne, “Disestablishment— in the nick of time,” 24–27.

564. Ford, “Standing one’s Ground,” 2.

565. Declan Kibert, *Inventing Ireland, The Literature of the Modern Nation*, (London: Random House, 1995).

566. Máirín Ní Cheallaigh, “Mechanisms of Monument-Destruction in Nineteenth-century Ireland: Antiquarian Horror, Cromwell and Gold-Dreaming,” *PRIA*, 107C (2007): 127–45.

events described in this, and earlier, chapters provide a backdrop to the case histories that follow in the next chapter where the precarious survival of the crosses is examined in detail.

Chapter 4. The case studies: decoding the losses.

“Physical evidence cannot be intimidated. It does not forget...it sits there and waits to be detected, preserved, evaluated and explained...only the evidence never lies.”⁵⁶⁷

4. Introduction.

The selection process and methodology for the ten case studies is described in Chapter 1, section 1.6. As discussed, the effectiveness of the physical assessment as a means of creating new knowledge and understanding can be best seen with crosses of high art/historical value. These have already been extensively studied due to their extensive iconographical programmes and abstract, Insular designs. The biography of each case study is built on a large body of work already completed in the field, in some cases drawn together for the first time. But the forensic examination and analysis of the physical cross in particular is an original contribution. The structure of each case study varies slightly depending on the available information, but is organised into five sections: background, structure, a critical assessment of visual historic images of damage, a discussion of the findings and in Volume III the images and record drawings of the current condition. Each case study is identified by the number of the chapter, 4, the number of the case study, CS1, and the number of the figure, beginning with Fig. 4.CS1.1.

This type of fieldwork survey and documentation is used in conservation projects to record change and provide insights into the current condition of a monument and predict how it will behave in the future. It is based on a visual inspection, sometimes with ladder access, and is not a detailed record of the condition of the surface of the stone or the type or rate of decay present. A key to the six different types of damage/loss identified on the case study crosses is illustrated in Fig.4.1 and these are used throughout the case studies drawings in Volume II. This is not a stone conservator's report that would require specialised equipment and ideally extends across a longer timeline, an approach that is outside the scope of this thesis. Neither is it intended to be a detailed historic or archaeological account of each cross, but is more in the way of providing a framework for examining the physical condition of the crosses to understand the impact of how they were understood, valued and spurned in the past.

567. Alfred Alan Lewis with Herbert Leon MacDonell, *The Evidence Never Lies: The Casebook of a Modern Sherlock Homes* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1984).

4.1. Case study 1. The market cross, Kells, Co. Meath. (CS1).

4.1.1. Background.

The town of Kells in Co. Meath needs little introduction due to its association with St Colmcille's monastery, the Book of Kells, and the surviving crosses.⁵⁶⁸ The three Kells crosses that are included in the case studies are known as the 'market' cross, the 'tower' cross (or cross of Saints Patrick and Columba) and the 'broken' cross.⁵⁶⁹ Roger Stalley attributed the market and the tower cross to the craftsman whom he named the 'Muiredach Master' in his recent publication, *Early Irish Sculpture and the Art of the High Crosses*.⁵⁷⁰ Stalley, Roe and Harbison have all produced studies of the iconographical programmes on the three crosses, which are well known and documented.⁵⁷¹ Heather King attributed the appellation 'market' to John Healy in 1930, as she found no mention of this title in the medieval or later literature.⁵⁷² The Down Survey of 1655 recorded that there were two 'great crosses' in the town but this refers to the tower and broken cross.⁵⁷³ In 1658, Richard Stephens, a Cromwellian Lieutenant Colonel, was in possession of the town and declared that it was totally ruined and left as a heap of rubbish by the events of the recent rebellion, but the condition of the crosses is not noted.⁵⁷⁴ In 1688 the newly crowned Catholic convert King James II suspended religious and civil restrictions against Catholics and Protestant Dissenters⁵⁷⁵ and in the same year he granted a new charter to Kells as a free borough with a sovereign and burgesses.⁵⁷⁶ In celebration, the newly appointed Catholic 'soveraigne of

568. Anngret Simms, and Katharine Simms, *Kells, Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, 4, (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1990); Bernard Meehan, *The Book of Kells: An Illustrated Introduction to the Manuscript in Trinity College Dublin* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd; 1995); Heather Pulliam, *Word and Image in the Book of Kells*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006).

569. The fourth cross, known as the unfinished cross was excluded due to the absence of carved panels.

570. Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 177–80; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:108–11, 2: Fig.345–59.

571. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 26–43; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:100–12, 2: Figs. 326–63; Heather King, "Moving the High Cross from the Medieval Market Place of Kells, Co. Meath" in *Ríocht na Midhe* 17 (2006): 32–49.

572. Heather King, "Excavation of the High Cross in the Medieval Market Place of Kells," in *From Megaliths to Metal: Essays in Honour of George Eogan*, Helen Roche *et al.* eds., (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), 240–41.

573. Simms, *Kells, Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, 8.

574. Simms, *Kells, Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, 3; Robert Johnston, and Robert C. Simington. "Valuation of Kells, 1663, with Note on Map of Kells c. 1655." *Analecta Hibernica*, 22 (1960): 231–68.

575. S. J. Connolly, "Reformers and Highflyers: The Post-revolution Church" in *As by Law Established*, 153.

576. Simms, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Kells*, 4.

the Corporation of Kells' had an inscription carved on the west side of the cross⁵⁷⁷ dated 1688 which records that it 'was erected at the charge of Robert Balfe of Gallirstowne esq'⁵⁷⁸ It is not known if Robert Balfe brought the cross from the graveyard and erected it on Cross street, or if it always stood at this location but had fallen over and he had arranged to have it re-erected and inscribed. An earlier valuation from 1663 describes properties on 'Cross street', which indicates that the cross may formerly have occupied this position before Balfe's intervention. The location, at the eastern entrance to the monastic enclosure, is the expected one for a market cross of monastic origin (Fig.4.CS1.1).⁵⁷⁹

Following the Battle of the Boyne (1691) and removal of Catholics once more from local administration, the prominence of the cross became problematic. In 1694, the local assembly gave notice to the Roman Catholics of the town, that 'if they wish[ed] to preserve the cross that they remove it into another place, for that the judgement of the said assembly [wa]s that the said cross now blocks the way, where it stands in the market street and that it should be removed from thence'.⁵⁸⁰ The cross was likely taken down at this point and later reports record that it lay in the street 'opposite the castle'.⁵⁸¹ In 1837, Samuel Lewis claimed that the cross was raised again by Dean Swift (1667–1745) 'from the prostrate situation in which it was found' and John O'Donovan recorded the same account in a letter of 1836.⁵⁸² The cross stood on the side of the road (Fig.4.CS1.2) until it was moved again in 1893. This time it was mounted on top of an impressive three-tier stepped base, a project paid for by James O'Ferrall and recorded on an inscription on the side of the new stone. This new arrangement afforded some level of protection to the cross from traffic and provided a

577. I have followed Helen Roe's cardinal points in her description of the faces of the cross. She in turn followed Crawford's suggestion that the Crucifixion faced west which also bears the inscription. Peter Harbison called this the north face which was its true orientation when on positioned on Cross street. The cross has been moved since and in its new location it corresponds to Helen Roe's descriptions.

578. King, "Excavation of the High Cross in the Medieval Market Place of Kells," 238–39; Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 35.

579. Simms, "The Monastic Town," <https://www.ria.ie/annget-simms-monastic-town>. Accessed August 23, 2022.

580. Headfort Estate Papers, NLI, MS 25446, Records of the Corporation of Kells, 1685–1787, 26 Mar., 1694, quoted in Annget Simms, 'Change and Continuity in an Irish Country Town: Kells 1600–1820,' in *Provincial Towns in Early Modern England and Ireland: Change, Convergence and Divergence* Peter Borsay and Lindsay Proudfoot, eds (London: British Academy, 2002), 137.

581. Robert Thompson, *Statistical Survey of the County of Meath, with Observations on the Means of Improvement* (Dublin, Graisberry and Campbell, 1802), xi.

582. King, "Excavation of the High Cross in the Medieval Market Place of Kells," 239; Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* 2 vols (London: S. Lewis & Co, 1837), 2:37.

generous seating area (Fig.4.CS1.3).⁵⁸³ The large, stepped base dramatically changed the appearance of the cross from a rather informal arrangement on the side of the street to the quintessential 'market cross' mounted high on steps above the marketplace.

The plinth protected the cross when it was hit by a bus in December 1996, which caused it to move and spin but luckily the cross remained undamaged (Fig.4.CS1.4). In January 1997, the OPW removed the cross to the depot in Trim, an event that made the national news that evening.⁵⁸⁴ The cross remained in the Trim depot where it was cleaned, and a realistic resin replica was made suitable for an outdoor location.⁵⁸⁵ The original intention was that the replica would stand in Cross street and the stone cross would be in the Heritage Centre. A heated debate raged in the town about the fate of the cross, as opposition to this plan was based on a rejection of the replica in favor of retaining public access to the stone cross.⁵⁸⁶ As the ownership of the cross rested with the Kells Town Council, it was their decision to place the stone cross in front of the Heritage Centre underneath a glass and steel roof and place the replica inside the Heritage Center (Fig.4.CS1.5).⁵⁸⁷ However, the replica is not used in the exhibition, which features replicas of the Book of Kells and the Kells Crozier. The town councils have since been abolished, and ownership of the cross is now with Meath County Council, based in Navan. Although there was local support to return the cross to its central location, in the intervening twenty-two years it seems to be accepted that it will remain in front of the Heritage Centre. The new roof has altered the sculptural quality of the cross which is no longer free standing as it is enclosed by four vertical steel posts. The scale of the cross has also been reduced by the close-fitting glass and steel roof overhead. The high stepped plinth has also been altered to a single low step, perhaps to discourage sitting at the base of the cross. In terms of social value, the greatest loss may be that the cross is no longer the central focal point of the social and business life of the town.

583. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 26.

584. <https://www.rte.ie/archives/2022/0115/1267933-kells-market-cross-moves/> Accessed June 15, 2021.

585. The OPW craftsmen, David Little and Eamon McNulty had trained in Germany to make the resin replicas for Clonmacnoise. They made the Kells replica in the Athenry depot.

586. *The Meath Chronicle*, 19th February 2000.

587. The issue of where the cross would be placed on its return to Kells was complicated by the fact that the town would be by-passed by the new motorway within six years, which raised the possibility of returning it to cross street when the traffic was re-routed. The new Heritage Centre created more choice and the intention was to put the cross inside as part of the display. Local opposition to this idea resulted in the unusual result, which was the replica went indoors and the cross remained outside.

4.1.2. Structure.

The market cross consists of two pieces of stone, the cross and the base, both made from a medium grained siliceous sandstone, probably quarried locally. The two parts of the cross together stand at 3.3 meters in height and are placed on top of a large modern limestone plinth (Fig. 4.CS1.5). The two parts are joined together by a mortice and tenon joint. It has been generally accepted that this shaft and base belong together as the style of the carvings, particularly the depiction of the stags, is consistent across both pieces.⁵⁸⁸ There are figurative panels carved on the surface of the shaft and base and some geometric panels on the arms and the ring. The individual iconographical panels are set within an inner frame which is in turn surrounded by a prominent roll moulding on the corners of the shaft. The edges of the arms and the ring and the central panel are also surrounded by a roll moulding, much of which is missing.

The base is a truncated pyramid in form, narrowing from the base towards the top and roughly square in plan. There are four carved panels on the sides of the base, each one featuring a clockwise parade, i.e. from right to left, of exotic animals, horsemen, centaurs, and warriors who march across a carved platform. Each side panel was originally framed by a wide roll moulding on the corners of the base, but it only survives on the south-west edge. The top of the base is not carved.

The shaft, the ring and side arms are elaborately carved from a single piece of stone. There are four volutes or rolls attached to the main body of the cross, a pattern that is repeated on the tower cross. The capstone is missing but an unusually deep mortice on the top of the cross confirms its original existence. When the capstone fell, the tenon broke the thin side of the mortice causing a large area of damage to the top of the cross. Parts of the upper ring at the junction with the shaft were also damaged by the break. The arrangement of this joint is different to that on the tower cross where the tenon is on the top of the shaft. The missing cap stone would have added an additional 0.5 meters bringing the height to an approx. 4.0 meters.

4.1.3. Historic images.

The earliest accurate image of the market cross is an engraving in Thomas Kitson Cromwell's *Excursions through Ireland (1820–1821)*, which was based on a pen and ink drawing by George Petrie (Fig.CS1.6). This is a realistic representation of the north-east view that showed the full extent of lost material and the ragged and uneven edge, confirming

588. The style of the carvings on the base is similar to those on the base of the tower cross.

that by 1820 the cross had already suffered most of the damage that is evident today. Petrie omitted the background, but the street surface is rough and uneven. William Wilde's drawing of 1849 (Fig.4.CS1.7) is a direct view of same side but less accurate as the roll moulding on the south-east corner, which was damaged in Petrie's drawing, is shown intact. Wilde's drawing shows a certain idiosyncratic recording of damage, as he included the loss on the north-east corner and the end of the south arm. David Frederick Markham's image is out of proportion and is missing an entire panel but includes the ubiquitous shawled figure sitting on the base with her back to the cross (Fig.4.CS1.8). James Henry Brocas drew the cross head too big for the shaft, but the missing material is clearly shown (Fig.4.CS1.9). Henry O'Neill illustrated the west and east faces of the cross in Plate 33 of *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland* (Fig.4.CS1.10). O'Neill described the cross as 'very much injured' and regretted that a 'panel was cut away to make room for the inscription.'⁵⁸⁹ He understood that the crucifixion scene should have faced west, but that the cross was placed 'in accordance with the direction of the street.'⁵⁹⁰ O'Neill's image of the east face shows much less damage to the north-east corner than Petrie's earlier image, although he included the missing corners. His west face is less damaged than the current condition and he showed the inscription as if complete (Fig.4.CS1.11). It could be interpreted from plate 33 that the removal process was still active after 1855 but the evidence of Petrie's earlier illustration contradicts this. In Plate 34, O'Neill placed images of the Arboe cross in the center, but the individual panels of the south view of the market cross are on the right while the north view is on the left (Fig.4.CS1.12). His approach is inconsistent, as the missing material on the shaft was accurately shown but all the missing roll mouldings in the ring and arms were 'restored'.

In November 1865, eight years after the publication of O'Neill's work, George V. Du Noyer made several pencil drawings of the cross. He accurately recorded the missing material when it had an impact on the detail of the iconography (Fig.4.CS1.13) but was less interested in the missing roll moulding and occasionally filled it in with a fine line such as the end of the arm on the east face (Fig.4.CS1.14). The inconsistencies in Du Noyer's and O'Neill's images can be seen when the two versions of the south face of the shaft are placed side by side (Fig.4.CS1.15). The comparison between their depiction of the end of the south arm with the reality (Fig.4.CS1.16) implies that the removal of the right and bottom sections

589. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 11.

590. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 11.

of the roll moulding occurred post-1865. However, their inconsistent approach in other areas undermines this theory. The artists' eye was focused on recording the carved panels rather than the surrounding frame.

The earliest photographs of the cross from c. 1860 show it standing precariously, directly on the surface of the street at the corner of Cross Street and John Street, placing the inscription at eye level when approached from Castle Street (Fig.4.CS1.2). The street has a steep incline so loose stones are propping up the lowest side of the cross to make it sit level on the sloping ground. There is a suggestion that the lowest part of the base is roughly shaped to follow the incline of the street.

4.1.4. Discussion.

The base and main body of the cross have suffered a number of different types of damage, which are indicated on the drawings (Fig.4.CS1.17 – Fig.4.CS1.20). The damage includes the following: blade marks on the base, the loss of the capstone, the removal of edge roll moulding, the removal of sections of the carved panels, damage associated with the cutting of the inscription, the loss associated with the shaping of the base of the shaft to fit the tenon, the later damage to the inscription and the loss associated with weathering.

The base of the cross has several narrow deep cuts on the upper surface (Fig.4.CS1.21) which are mostly parallel to the side but some smaller ones at right angles and a few diagonal cuts close to the corners. They were thought to be the result of knife or blade sharpening, with one local tradition recording that they were used to sharpen the blades of cavalymen passing through the town.⁵⁹¹ Conor Newman has suggested that they are part of a wider phenomenon associated with an enduring ritual of symbolic sword sharpening during the medieval period.⁵⁹² He suggested that the cross base was used to bestow Christian authority on the sword, which was then used in other ceremonies.⁵⁹³ Newman also identified the presence of burnished surfaces associated with the blade marks and the upper surface of the base is worn smooth. This may be due to its use as a seat before it was raised on the stepped plinth.

There is some evidence of a higher step on the south side of the base. The upper roll moulding sits slightly below the level of the top of the base and above this, there is an

591. Anthony Cogan, *The Diocese of Meath: Ancient and Modern* (Dublin: J.F. Fowler, 1862), 205

592. Conor Newman, "The Sword in the Stone: Previously Unrecognised Archaeological Evidence of Ceremonies of the Later Iron Age and Early Medieval Period," in *Relics of Old Decency; Archaeological Studies in Later Prehistory, Festschrift for Barry Raftery* (Dublin: Wordwell, 2009), 425–36; Hall, "Lifeways in Stone," 190–92.

593. Newman, "The Sword in the Stone," 432–33.

indication of the edge of a worn roll moulding (Fig.4.CS1.22 & Fig.4.CS1.23). If there was a higher step, like that on the tower cross, it was removed some time in the past, making the theory of the early ceremonial use of sword cuts is unlikely. The theory of a higher step on the base is supported by King's measurements of the tenon as 32 cm in length, while the mortice was shallower at 22 cm.⁵⁹⁴

The removal of the corner roll moulding on the base was relatively cleanly executed with minimal damage to the carved panels (Fig.4.CS1.24). This loss is difficult to detect except for the presence of a single surviving section on the south-west corner. The upper roll moulding survives on three sides but is worn smooth on the west face, which faced downhill towards the marketplace and, most likely, provided a convenient seat. The carved panels have lost a considerable amount of detail and are in a fragile condition.

The insertion of the 1688 inscription at the base of the west face of the shaft involved the removal of some original carvings, but it was executed with a degree of respect for the cross as it was neatly fitted into a single compartment. This is a political statement, celebrating the return of Catholics to the town council and showed that the cross was valued as a symbol of power and control but that the religious content of the carvings was less important. The edges of the inscription were roughly broken before *c.* 1749 when Isaac Butler visited the town.⁵⁹⁵ The removal appears to be part of the removal of the corners rather than any direct attack on the inscription (Fig.4.CS1.25).

The Discovery Programme 3-D scan of the cross (Fig.4.CS1.26) shows the full depth of the mortice on the top of the upper arm which extended into the center of the cross, beyond the junction with the upper arms. The depth of the mortice created a structurally fragile intersection around the hollowed-out ring with thin walls. The edges of the remaining damaged stone are still sharp and the carvings to the top of the ring and the east and west face are relatively undamaged, which indicates the loss of the capstone was due to a single event such as structural failure or an isolated iconoclastic attack. The capstone may have been pulled off deliberately or, if the cross had begun to lean over, the weak sides of the tenon may have failed.

The roll moulding on the corners of the shaft and the ring have been extensively damaged (Fig.4.CS1.17 – Fig.4.CS1.20) but have a better survival rate on the western side of the cross, which faced down the slope towards the marketplace, than on the eastern side

594. King, "Excavation of the High Cross in the Medieval Market Place of Kells," 235–36.

595. King, "Excavation of the High Cross in the Medieval Market Place of Kells," 239.

which faced up the hill. In a similar pattern, the roll moulding on the ends of the arms have been removed on the eastern side and underneath the southern end while they survive elsewhere. All four corners have suffered extensive losses beyond the roll moulding including the removal of some of the carved panels. The losses extend beyond the roll moulding into the body of the shaft but are all related to the corners, so that the central part of all the carved panels remains intact. Despite the depth of the removal, the shaft remains structurally stable and the exposed face of the cut back stone is neat and smooth (Fig.4.CS1.27). This could indicate either an organized methodical removal or a 'cleaning up' of rough edges. It does not appear to be the work of iconoclasts, as the removal of the stone has not affected the structural integrity of the shaft and is carefully finished. The cutting back of the surface of the stone associated with the removal of the roll moulding is notably deeper on the shaft of the market cross than on other crosses. The areas where the removal went beyond the roll moulding and damaged the panels are within easy reach of the ground.

The lowest panel on the east face of the cross has been adjusted and cut back which suggests that the shaft was not a perfect fit with the base (Fig.4.CS1.28). Photographs of the exposed tenon, taken in 1997, show a substantial chamfer one side while the other side is flat (Fig.4.CS1.29). The asymmetric shape of the tenon and the adjustment of the east face raises some doubts about the fit of the shaft and base which may not have originally belonged together. It may provide further evidence that the base was originally higher, and that it has lost an entire upper step, perhaps removed to facilitate knocking the cross over.

Both the cross and the base show the impact of exposure to the elements. Carved details have become rounded with a loss of sharpness (Fig.4.CS1.30) and small vulnerable elements such as feet have broken away and some of the roll moulding on the upper ring may have been eroded rather than deliberately removed. A vertical crack on the east face (Fig.4.CS1.31) runs from the roll moulding of the base of the central panel through the top part of the Adam and Eve panel. This crack seems to be of natural origin and follows the bedding plane of the stone.

The evidence for an iconoclastic motivation for the damage to the cross is weak due to the retention of the majority of the carvings, the continuity of structural stability and the limited nature of the damage associated with the removal of the capstone.

In summary, the new knowledge taken from this case study is that the extensive removal of the corner mouldings and the edges of the panels did not threaten the structural stability of the monument and the central part of the panels survived in all locations. Taken

with the clean removal of the capstone, these losses are unlikely to be associated with iconoclastic activity. It could be suggested that the loss of the moldings was due to ropes or chains attached to the body to pull down the cross, but the removal is more extensive than what might be associated with this activity. The shaft and base do not fit perfectly together indicating that there may have been, in the past, more interference with the structure than previously considered. The relevance of the location on Cross Street may not have been fully appreciated as the relocation of the cross has reduced its historical and sculptural importance in the town. Finally, the potential of the replica has been undervalued due to a lack of a coherent brief for its use.

4.2. Case study 2. The tower cross, Kells, Co. Meath. (CS2)

4.2.1. Background.

The tower cross, also known as the south cross or the cross of Saints Patrick and Columba, is located close to the round tower in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland church in Kells, Co. Meath (Fig.4.CS2.1– Fig.4.CS2.2).⁵⁹⁶ There are two other crosses in the graveyard, the broken cross and the unfinished cross, as well as a cross base, all in the ownership of the Church of Ireland. On the south side of the graveyard, the ground rises sharply towards the base of the round tower, the door of which faces directly towards the cross. Roger Stalley believed the tower cross to be the early work of the ‘Muiredach Master,’ possibly carved before the market cross.⁵⁹⁷ Helen Roe suggested a date of sometime in the second half of the eighth century based on the carvings and described it as the earliest and most complete of the crosses in Kells.⁵⁹⁸ Stalley and Nancy Edwards considered that this cross marked the transition from the early crosses that have mainly abstract art such as Ahenny to the later scriptural crosses.⁵⁹⁹

Detailed survey notes, made as part of the mapping of the town for the 1655 Down survey, record two crosses standing in the graveyard at the time, one ‘about 9 foot long and 3 broad’, which corresponds to the measurements of the tower cross.⁶⁰⁰ In 1853, the cross was brought to Dublin for the Great Industrial Exhibition and was featured in newspaper coverage and paintings of the event (Fig.3.12–Fig.3.13). It was returned to the graveyard after the exhibition, but it is not known if it was returned to its exact earlier location. It now stands on a level piece of stone paving, four-meter square, which is clear of headstones.

4.2.2. Structure.

The cross consists of two parts, the base and the ringed cross and shaft, both carved from a grey sandstone that has weathered to a uniform colour (Fig.4.CS2.3). The base is pyramidal in shape and narrows towards a shallow top step and a flat top, which contains a large socket or mortice into which the tenon of the shaft sits. Each face of the base features a carved

596. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:108–11; 2: Figs 345–59

597. Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 177–80; Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:108–111; II, Figs 345–59.

598. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 10–25.

599. Nancy Edwards, “A Reassessment of the Early Medieval Stone Crosses and related Sculpture of Offaly, Kilkenny and Tipperary” (PhD diss, University of Durham, 1984), 276–77; Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 177–80;

600. Charles McNeill, “Copies of Down Survey Maps in Private Keeping” *Analecta Hibernica* 8 (Mar, 1938): 419–27.

The ‘unfinished’ cross was erected by the OPW in 1892 see “Proceedings,” *JRSAI* 2, no. 3 (1892): 311–48.

panels surrounded by a simple roll moulding border. The two larger east and west faces feature a parade of animals, birds and horsemen who march clockwise across the lower roll moulding, i.e. from right to left (Fig.4.CS2.4 & Fig.4.CS2.5). The carvings are in poor condition, the details of the figures have lost definition and there are large diagonal cracks running diagonally across the panels. On the upper step of the base, there is a small roll or plinth which is undecorated except on the east side where there is a carved inscription in Latin which reads *PATRICII ET COLUMBAE CRUX*, the cross of Patrick and Columba.⁶⁰¹

The main body of the cross is relatively slender and the combined height of the cross and base is 3.3 meters. The entire surface is carved with scenes from the scriptures and lively abstract decorations which are not contained within any panels or subdivisions. Like the market cross, the original capstone is missing. The sides of the mortice of the capstone would have been relatively thin as the stone tenon, which protrudes from the top of the cross is relatively large compared to the upper arm (Fig.4.CS2.6). The arrangement of the mortice and tenon is different to that of the market cross but both joints failed either due to structural issues or deliberate damage, and the capstones were lost.

4.2.3. Historic images.

An early image from 1792, draw by Daniel Grose, shows the cross sitting directly in the ground without any suggestion of a base (Fig.4.CS2.7). It is not known if it was still in the base, which is deeply buried, or if it has been re-erected by burying the shaft in the ground. The drawing shows a substantial part of the shaft and the tenon buried in the ground, so it could have stood independently without a base. The outline of the cross was drawn using a wavy line which indicated the missing roll moulding on the edges. Grose drew in pen and ink with a sharp and clean line style when drawing monuments such as the Kentstown tombs, which contrast with the wavy line used for the cross (Fig.4.CS2.8).

Henry O'Neill devoted two plates to the tower cross in his *Crosses of Ancient Ireland*. Plate 28 showed two realistic axonometric views of the south-east and north-west faces in their graveyard setting with trees in the background. In a letter dated 1853 to John Windele, O'Neill described how he *will* select and measure the most interesting of the crosses for his publication implying the cross was drawn after it was returned from Dublin and re-erected on the base.⁶⁰² The north-west image shows the missing roll mouldings and

601. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 10–11.

602. Letter from O'Neill to John Windele. *Royal Irish Academy*, 4/B/13/62(i).

the carvings in a realistic manner (Fig.4.CS2.9) but some of the arrangements are less accurate on the south-east face (Fig.4.CS2.10). The top of the base on the north side is shown intact and the base of the lowest panel is shown complete although both are damaged. The missing stone on the south-east corner of the shaft is not shown. In Plate 29 (Fig.4.CS2.11) each panel on the narrower south and north faces is shown separately so that the iconography and abstract art can be fully appreciated. This is a more stylised approach as each plane on the cross is depicted as an individual flat image starting with the sculpture on the base and then moving up the side of the shaft, the underside of the ring and arm, the end and top of the arm and finally the side of the upper arm. In this way, preference is given to the artistic value of the carvings rather than the form of the cross. The depiction of the roll moulding is inconstant as the edges of the shaft are shown complete whereas the missing roll moulding on the ends of the arms is illustrated, but the extent of the damage is understated (Fig.4.CS2.12).

George Du Noyer also made extensive pencil drawings of the crosses *c.* 1865 but his interest lay in the recording of the carvings rather than in their condition. He drew faint lines when the roll moulding was missing (Fig.4.CS2.13) but otherwise his drawings are an accurate record of the carvings (Fig.4.CS2.14).

4.2.4. Discussion.

The base of the cross has suffered considerable damage although the four carved panels on the sides and the inscription have survived, albeit in poor condition, and are legible. A large crack runs right across the base splitting it into three parts on a north-south line. The composite image shows this crack which, if it continues to open, has the potential to compromise the structural stability of the cross (Fig.4.CS2.15). In an unusual arrangement, the entire shaft appears to function as a tenon and is fitted into the mortice in the base. The upper step or plinth of the base has been cut back on the north and south sides, apparently to widen the mortice to fit the too large shaft (Fig.4.CS2.16 – Fig.4.CS2.17). The shaft may have been adjusted as well as the lower part of the bottom panels of interlace on the east and north face of the shaft have also been dressed back to facilitate the fit into the base (Fig.4.CS2.16). It is possible that this is not the correct base for the cross and the process of adapting the base for the tenon/shaft may have contributed to the splitting of the base. As a consequence of this crack, the shaft is now loose in the base and not sitting plumb, displaying a significant lean towards the north (Fig.4.CS2.18). The roll moulding survives on the northeast corner of the base but is missing elsewhere.

The record drawings indicate the extent of the removal of the roll moulding from the base, the shaft, the lower ring quadrants and arms (Fig.4.CS2.19 – 4.CS2.22). It is not immediately obvious that the edges have been stripped away as the carvings have a vibrant, disorganised appearance due to the lack of inner frames and the roll mouldings and all the surfaces have weathered to the same colour. The upper quadrants of the ring and the tops of the arms have lost their roll mouldings but the soft, rounded powdery finish indicates that it is due to exposure to weather rather than deliberate removal. The loss of the protective capstone may have contributed to this but the pattern of increased exposure and loss on the upper part of the cross is typical of the natural decay process. The removal of the roll moulding has been carelessly executed on the south-east and north-west corners causing some damage to the adjacent carved panels (Fig.4.CS2.20 & 4.CS2.21).

A series of diagonal cracks run across the ring and the center of the cross, particularly around the junction of the lower section of the ring and the shaft. The west face of the cross has a pattern of diagonal cracks which start on the upper section of the southern ring (closest to the round tower) and continues across the southern arm, the central ring, the lower ring and the main shaft (Fig.4.CS2.23 & Fig.4.CS2.24). The cracking is also visible on the eastern face, following the same diagonal pattern across the central panel of the cross (Fig.4.CS2.25). It is not clear if these cracks are the result of the normal weathering process of diagonal bedding planes or if they are due to structural stress of supporting the cantilevered arms on the shaft or a combination of the two forces. A series of horizontal cracks on the west face could in time result in loss of parts of the figures (Fig.4.CS2.26). The surface of the stone is in poor condition due to weathering with an accompanying loss of detail to the carvings such as on the north face of the shaft (Fig.4.CS2.27). The flow of water down the east face has created bands of white organic growth which hinder viewing the carvings and accelerate the loss of surface detail (Fig.4.CS2.28).

Despite the loss of the capstone and the majority of the roll mouldings, the iconographical and abstract carvings on the cross are legible. The removal of the roll mouldings avoided the carved panels and caused minimal damage to the structural integrity of the cross. It is difficult to date when this happened but Grose's image from 1792 indicates that either it was at an advanced stage by the close of the eighteenth century or it had ceased by that time. The removal of the roll molding was undertaken with a degree of care and most likely over a long period of time. It could be suggested that a degree of official sanction was required this removal due to its proximity to the church.

In summary, the weathering of the upper arms and the body of the cross is a natural process for sandstone of this age and the result of the decay of the binder between the sandstone layers. The rate of decay and its potential to undermine the structural stability of the arms is not known but is ongoing and progressive. There is a degree of uncertainty that the cross and base were originally together due to the alterations that were necessary to join the shaft and base together, the early image of the shaft possibly separated from the base and the fact that it may have been assembled in its present form for the exhibition in 1853. There is no evidence of any iconoclastic damage to the cross although the cap stone is missing. This loss is not unusual and is a common occurrence with the crosses.

4.3. Case study 3. The broken cross, Kells, Co. Meath. (CS3).

4.3.1. Background.

The broken cross, also known as the west cross, stands in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland church in Kells to the north-west of the tower cross. The head, capstone and upper part of the shaft are missing but the surviving shaft and base are large enough for Peter Harbison to describe it as one of the most imposing of all Irish high crosses if it had remained intact.⁶⁰³ The shaft and base are almost 3.5 meters in height and stand in the center of a clear 4m square paved area (Fig.4.CS3.1) in a graveyard that is still in use for burials. A marginal note by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh (1590–1643), in his transcription of the *Martyrology of Donegal*, compiled in c. 1630 noted that Gormlaith, daughter of Flann, was buried under the ‘great cross’, and that she had come to meet Brian na mBarrog, to ask for a flag to be put over her body. On a stone in the cemetery Ó Cléirigh noted the presence of a slab beside the cross which read in translation ‘I place this stone over thee, O Gormlaith.’⁶⁰⁴ This was clearly the one of the crosses referred to in the 1655 survey mentioned above, where its measurements are given as 15 foot long and 5 broad’, meaning that it originally extended to a height of roughly 4.6m and was intact into the middle of the seventeenth century.⁶⁰⁵

The four sides of the shaft are carved with biblical scenes and abstract art panels, each contained within clearly defined rectangular panels. The frame encloses each scene and loops back on itself at the center creating a distinctive double line on the horizontal border. (Fig.4.CS3.2). The east face has one broken and five complete scenes from the New Testament while the west face has one broken and four complete scenes from the Old Testament.⁶⁰⁶ The narrower south face has one broken and four complete panels of abstract art while the north face has one broken and four complete panels of artwork. Peter Harbison suggested that the cross is not in its original location as the Old Testament scenes normally face east.⁶⁰⁷ Roger Stalley was not convinced that it was the work of the ‘Muiredach Master’ who made the market cross as the carvings are of a lesser quality and later in date.⁶⁰⁸

603. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:100; Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 144–54.

604. *The Martyrology of Donegal: A Calendar of the Saints of Ireland*, ed. John O’Donovan (Dublin: Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1864), xl

605. McNeill, “Copies of Down Survey Maps in Private Keeping”, 419–27.

606. Harbison, *Irish High Crosses with figure sculptures explained*, 2: Figs 326–29.

607 Harbison, *Irish High Crosses with figure sculptures explained*, 1:40.

608. Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 64, 156.

4.3.2. Structure.

The surviving parts of the cross consist of three separate pieces; the base, and the upper and lower parts of the broken shaft which have been joined together. The lowest part of the shaft has the customary tenon that sits into a deep mortice in the base. The joint between the two is open leaving a large gap on the northeast corner where the base of the shaft has been broken (Fig.4.CS3.3 & Fig.4.CS3.4).

The base is a large block of stone measuring 1.5 meters by 1.35 meters at ground level. It has a truncated pyramid shape and is plain except for a large roll moulding which articulates the change of plane at the corners and the junction with the upper surface of the base (Fig.4.CS3.5). Each side has a smaller inner frame on the corners and upper edge of the uncarved panel except the east face where the inner frame encloses all four sides. The top of the base steps in to create a low flat upper step which elegantly surrounds the large cavity of the mortice. This upper step is damaged on the south side but, despite some missing parts, is largely intact on the other three sides.

The broken shaft is repaired and a stone collar, used to provide additional strength to the mortice and tenon joint with the head, partially survives on the top of the upper part (Fig.4.CS3.6). When this joint failed and the head fell, the sides of the mortice were broken leaving a large open rectangular cavity on the top of the shaft.

4.3.3. Historic images.

Henry O'Neill featured the broken cross on two plates in his *Crosses of Ancient Ireland*. Plate 29 (Fig.4.CS3.7) showed the east face of the shaft with its long tapered tenon but the break in the shaft is incorrectly marked. It is drawn as if it was on the opposite west face and his depiction of the damage to the roll moulding does not match the actual condition. The second illustration, Plate 30 (Fig.4.CS3.8) placed the west face in the centre with the south and north faces on each side. This is a conjectural reconstruction drawing where the shaft is unbroken and the head of the unfinished cross, which was lying in the graveyard, is fixed on top. In the accompanying text, O'Neill confirmed that the two parts of the broken shaft were in separate locations in the graveyard.⁶⁰⁹ He suggested that the mortice in the base fitted the tenon in the shaft and this inspired his proposed reconstruction. His reconstruction of the broken cross was partially realised sometime between this publication and 1865 when the shaft and base were united, but the base was turned to face in the opposite direction. The head was not added to the broken cross but instead was correctly placed on

609. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 10.

the shaft of the third ‘unfinished’ cross in the graveyard. (Fig.4.CS3.9) The reconstruction drawing was used by O’Neill’s was to show that the crosses were made in Ireland and not ‘brought from Italy, or any other distant country.’⁶¹⁰ He claimed that by bringing the three separate pieces together, it demonstrated a work in progress; the shaft had been completed but the base and the head were ‘unfinished’ as the work was ‘arrested in its execution.’⁶¹¹ O’Neill’s reconstruction images of the broken cross are unreliable with regard to the condition of the crosses, some damage is shown correctly but, in general, it was recorded in an inconsistent manner (Fig.4.CS3.10). His reconstruction of the north face of the cross repaired all damage so that the artwork could be seen undamaged (Fig.4.CS3.11). He was not very precise about what parts of the roll moulding were missing but he clearly showed that the edges are damaged.

By the time George Du Noyer drew the crosses in 1865, the two sections of the shaft of the ‘headless cross’ (Fig.4.CS3.12) had been joined together. His drawings have the appearance of being accurate but are no more reliable than O’Neill with regard to condition, as he replaced the missing roll moulding and drew the break with a single line on the south face, but omitted it on the east and west faces. The light line is correctly positioned but implied a crack rather than the more damaging break on the south face. This capacity to ignore the condition of the cross continued in the second drawing of a seemingly unbroken east face (Fig.4.CS3.13). Du Noyer also drew the base of the broken cross without the shaft (Fig.4.CS3.14). He omitted any measurement for the depth for the mortice so it is likely that the shaft was in position when he drew the base. He also sketched the ‘unfinished cross’ and the ‘unfinished head’ in the graveyard as they had not yet been joined together (Fig.4.CS3.15). The focus of both artists was on the abstract art and iconography, and they illustrated the crosses as if undamaged to show the quality of the carvings.

4.3.4. Discussion.

The condition of the crosses is summarized in the four drawings of the corners (Fig.4.CS3.16 – Fig.4.CS3.19). The rectangular proportions of the base are harmoniously repeated on the shaft, but some adjustments were required to achieve a comfortably fit with the base. The joint between the shaft and the base has some large gaps at the corners and a ruler can be inserted to a depth of 300mm into the socket joint (Fig.4.CS3.20). There is some damage at the junction of the two, which gives an awkward appearance to the

610. O’Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 11.

611. O’Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 10.

connection (Fig.4.CS3.21). The joint is now fully open and as a result the shaft is loose and can be rocked in the socket. Water runs down the face of the shaft into the mortice cavity and drains out through an opening on the west side of the base (Fig.4.CS3.22). The carved frame that surrounds the blank panel on each side of the base does not extend across the lower edge of the base on the southern, western and northern sides which may indicate that it was buried deeper in the ground than the current arrangement (Fig.4.CS3.22). The base is in good structural condition but displays the effect of exposure to the weather over long periods of time but as there are no carved figures or panels on the base, this loss of surface detail is not an immediate concern.

At some time in the past, the shaft was roughly broken into two pieces, but it is not known if this happened at the same time as when the head and capstone were lost. The shaft is complete as the top of the upper section contains the mortice recess for the tenon of the cross head. The two pieces of the shaft have been repaired but they do not sit smoothly together as each section has lost a considerable amount of material in the vicinity of the original break (Fig.4.CS3.23). The upper section does not sit evenly onto the lower section but there is no doubt that the two pieces are correctly assembled as the carvings continue across the break between the two sections. The edges of the stone around the break are rough and there are large gaps where material is missing indicating a forceful break (Fig.4.CS3.23 & Fig.4.CS3.24). The edges of the break on the south and east face are sharper with little loss of fabric while the break on the north and west side has more extensive loss of fabric and the edges are rounder (Fig.4.CS3.23, Fig.4.CS3.24, Fig.4.CS3.26). The extent of the loss of stone in the vicinity of the break is more than would be expected from a simple break. The entire roll moulding on the north-east corner, both above and below the break has survived in good condition. (Fig.4.CS3.25) The roll moulding on the other three corners of the shaft has been removed except for a section which survives on the upper south-east corner. This continuity of the condition of the roll moulding above and below the break indicates that the removal of the moulding pre-dated the breaking of the shaft (Fig.4.CS3.26). The survival of one corner of the roll moulding on the shaft while all other sides have been removed indicates that each piece was removed in sequence. The removal process proceeded up each side until some unknown event brought it to an end leaving the upper south-east corner and the entire north-east corner intact.

Sometime between 1857 and 1865, the broken shaft of the cross was repaired and re-erected on the plain base. Iron dowels were used for the repair, and they have now begun to expand as the characteristic vertical hairline cracks are visible above and below the

junction of the two parts (Fig.4.CS3.25 & Fig.4.CS3.27). The presence of a mortar or stone plug underneath the joint indicates that there could also be an iron bar which was inserted at an angle to strengthen the repair.

The broken mortice acts as a reservoir for rainwater which is then channelled down the west face of the shaft creating a wet area identified by a white organic growth and increased erosion of the carvings (Fig.4.CS3.4 & 4.CS3.28). The visible damage to the shaft is limited to the loss of the roll moulding at the corners and the material in the vicinity of the break. All the surviving iconographical panels are intact, but the abstract panels have suffered more losses and are not as complete.

Helen Roe described the broken cross as ‘cruelly damaged’ with the head ‘irremediably shattered by the 17th century iconoclasts; its mutilated fragments, perhaps, lying covered by the earth of the graveyard.’⁶¹² While there is no doubt that the cross fell, or was knocked, over and the cap and head are lost, it is not certain that this was the work of iconoclasts. As noted above, it was still intact in 1655, following both the Reformation and worst of the Cromwellian attacks. The original cross was very large with a correspondingly top-heavy head, which could have toppled over if it moved out of vertical alignment as a result of ground failure. The principal damage associated with the loss of the head is the broken sides of the mortice, which indicates that the head fell towards the north-west corner as the south-east corner is relatively intact. The edges to the break in the shaft are sharp on the north-east corner which indicate a clean break. (Fig.4.CS3.24) The edges to the break on the north-west side are rounded and there is a large loss of material around the junction. (Fig.4.CS3.26). This could indicate that the pieces were apart for a long period of time when the edges were eroded and rounded.

The removal of the roll mouldings on the corners was carefully executed as the inner frames are left undamaged in order to preserve the iconographical panels. The iconographical panels were higher value than the abstract art as they were treated it with less care and caused more damage when the roll mouldings were removed. Despite this, they are largely intact with the north-west corner treated the most severely. It is not certain if this assembly of base and shaft is original as there has been some adaptation to both parts to create a good fit.

612. Roe, *The High Crosses of Kells*, 44.

4.3.5. Discussion of the three Kells crosses.

These three case study crosses demonstrate that there was a previously unnoticed degree of reassembly and adaption associated with them, particularly with regard to the fit between the shafts and the bases. This aspect of the design of the crosses is surprisingly poor given the high quality of the workmanship in the crosses themselves, leading to an uncertainty about whether or not all three shafts are sitting in their original bases. The unfinished cross also displays this poor fit and the stone and finish on the base is different to that of the shaft (Fig.4.CS3.9). The upper parts of the crosses have poor survival rate as no capstone remains, the head of one cross is missing and the cross from the surviving base is also lost. Further research is needed to determine the quality and nature of the fit between crosses and bases but the other works of the 'Muiredach Master' have a more tailored fit.⁶¹³ The removal of the corner roll mouldings is extensive but varies in quality from being careful and respectful of the carved panels to disorganised and injurious. This removal does not threaten the structural stability of the cross. The evidence suggests that the cross was felled from the north side as a result of iconoclastic activity. However, the head of the cross was a substantial piece of stone and the cross could have fallen over as a result of moving out of the vertical.

613. The Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise and the Durrow Cross.

4.4. Case study 4. The market cross, Clones, Co. Monaghan. (CS4)

4.4.1 Background.

The so called ‘market cross’ in Clones stands in a prominent position in the centre of the marketplace which in Northern Irish towns is also called ‘the diamond’, a feature of plantation towns laid out after 1660 (Fig.4.CS4.1).⁶¹⁴ St Tighernagh founded a monastery in Clones in the sixth century and an early Christian round tower and a house-shaped shrine survive in the central graveyard; a small ruined church called the ‘wee abbey is nearby.’⁶¹⁵ A pre-plantation image of Clones, c. 1561, shows a group of ecclesiastical buildings including the round tower and a single cross in a dispersed arrangement, with little evidence of an urban settlement (Fig.4.CS4.2). During the Irish rebellion of 1641–1649, Clones was in the intensively disputed zone between the area under Protestant control and the Confederate Catholics.⁶¹⁶ The parish church was a focal point for the Protestant community, as in 1641 it served as their final place of defence and was where eighteen Scots settlers were hanged by the rebels.⁶¹⁷ The battle of Clones in 1643 was a resounding victory for the British forces over the Irish leader Eoghan Roe O’Neill.⁶¹⁸

The Protestant parish church of St Tighernach was rebuilt in 1696 in a prominent location on the highest point in the town, an expression of dominance in the newly rebuilt plantation town.⁶¹⁹ Protestant wealth and influence in Clones can be seen in the ongoing investment in their church, which was completely rebuilt in 1822–5 with funds from the Board of First Fruits and then extended and remodelled in 1857–8 and again in 1881.⁶²⁰ The cross may have been erected around 1692 as part of the construction of the new church, as

614. The Diamond is a Scots-Irish term for the central square in a town, derived from the shape. Valerie Mulvin, *Approximate Formality: Irish Town Morphology* (Dublin: Anne Street Press, 2021), 130.

615. SMR Reference: MO011-010002, MO011-010004, MO011-010005.

<https://maps.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/> Accessed August 24, 2022

616. For a map of the disputed territory see; Smyth, *Map-making, Landscape and Memory*, Fig. 4.8, 140.

617. Brian Mac Cuarta, “Religious Violence against Settlers in South Ulster, 1641–2,” in *Age of Atrocity, Violence and Political Conflict in Early Modern Ireland*, David Edwards, Pádraig Lenihan and Clodagh Tait, eds. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007) 154–76; Smyth, *Map-making, Landscape and Memory*, 143; D. H. Schlegel, “A Clones Chronology: October 1641 to July 1642,” *Clogher Record*, 21, no.1(1997): 79–93. Raymond Gillespie, “Destabilizing Ulster, 1641–2,” in *Ulster 1641, Aspects of the Rising*, 107.

618. Jonathan Bardon, *The Plantation of Ulster* (Dublin, Gill and MacMillan, 2012), 283.

619. Theo McMahon, Sean Slowey, and Maire O Neill, “Inscriptions from St Tighernach’s Church of Ireland Graveyard Clones,” *Clogher Record* 13, no.1 (1988): 90–91.

620. National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Reg. 41304032. <https://maps.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/> Accessed August 24, 2022.

it stands directly in front of the tall flight of steps leading up to it. The cross belonged to the Church of Ireland rather than the municipality, as it was part of the transfer of properties from the Irish Church Temporalities Commission to the Office of Public Works in 1869. It was listed as item 112, the ‘ruins of old cross in the Diamond of Clones’.⁶²¹ The Church of Ireland’s ownership of the Clones market cross is unusual, as market crosses typically belonged to town councils and were part of the secular rather than the ecclesiastical fabric. This ownership suggests that it may have been moved from the ancient graveyard that contains the round tower, as this too was in the ownership of the Church of Ireland.

4.4.2. Structure.

The Clones cross is a composite type, assembled from the parts of two different crosses. It consists of six sections; the base, the shaft, the head, two sections of the upper ring and the upper arm/cap stone (Fig.4.CS4.3). The shaft fits comfortably into the base so both parts are likely to come from the same cross. The plain base is rectangular in plan (1.5 m x 1.35 m) and 1m in height. It is undecorated and stepped in two tiers with sharp, undamaged edges. The head is quite different in style, size and shape to the shaft indicating that it came from a different cross. The missing upper ring on the head was completed with two smaller stones, which may be original to the head of the cross, but this is not certain without closer inspection. The entire surviving lower section of the shaft of the head was used as a tenon and inserted into the mortice of the shaft. A relatively modern upper arm/cap stone has been placed on the top of the cross to complete the missing upper section of the head of the cross and hold the three fragments of the ring in place.

The shaft has a strong sculptural profile due to the stepped-out collar around the top and the slightly tapering, arrow-like shape of the lowest section. The original head, which belonged with this shaft, is missing and the upper collar now provides a plinth-like surface for the much smaller head from a different cross. The overhanging collar feature provided additional strength and mass around the deep mortice needed to secure the original head and this feature is shared with a number of other crosses.⁶²² The shaft is rectangular in plan; the wider south-east and north-west faces feature figurative carvings laid out in panels while there are abstract art panels on the narrower south-west and north-east faces.⁶²³ Each face

621. *Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities*, 139.

622. Crosses with collars include the tall cross at Monasterboice, the broken cross at Kells, the Drumcliff cross and the Arboe cross.

623. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:45–47, 2:Figs.126– 129. This case study uses Peter Harbison’s orientation of the faces of the cross.

is laid out in three vertical panels with a fourth on the projecting collar. On the south-east and north-west faces, the three panels are separated by a wide flat horizontal band on which the figures stand. The three panels are surrounded by a narrow inner frame, a double row of small pellet decoration around the sides and the top as well as a roll moulding on the corners of the shaft (Fig.4.CS4.4). The uppermost panels on the collar were originally enclosed by a similar frame and double row of pellets but the upper section survives only on the south-west face. The decoration on the panels of the collar survives best on the narrower sides and consists of a number of raised bosses.

Françoise Henry placed the Clones cross in her Group V, known as the ‘Northern Crosses’, which included Arboe, Donaghmore (Tyrone), Camus (Derry), Downpatrick (Down) and Connor (Antrim).⁶²⁴ In her view, they shared similar iconographical programmes, but the validity of this classification has been recently challenged by Megan Henvey.⁶²⁵

4.4.3. Historic images.

The earliest detailed image of the town of Clones dates from 1741 and shows the church with a tall square tower commanding the skyline from the highest point in the town (Fig.4.CS4.5). The Diamond is surrounded by buildings in good repair, but the round tower is missing its cap and the ‘wee abbey’ is in ruins. A tall column-like structure stands in the current location of the cross directly in front of the church steps. This appears to be the market cross, missing the upper part of the ring and drawn by an artist unfamiliar with the form. A number of people stand at the base, the one on the left conducting an outdoor service. A second pillar, which no longer survives, is shown on the western side of the Diamond.

The cross was not illustrated by either O’Neill or Petrie and seems to have eluded most antiquarian interest. An image from 1855 shows the cross standing on the type of stepped platform associated with market crosses and with the ubiquitous figure seated at the base (Fig.4.CS4.6). A pen and wash image from 1857 has a little more detail of the head which is missing one side of the upper ring and the upper arm/capstone (Fig.4.CS4.7). Two undated lantern slides from the *RS&I* collection show the cross on its stepped stone platform, with a complete ring on the head, but without railings (Fig.4.CS4.8). A photograph from

624. Henry, *Irish High Crosses*, 30–31.

625. Henvey, “The High Crosses of Northern Ireland.”

the Lawrence Collection, dated sometime between 1865 and 1914, shows the railings in position around the stepped base (Fig.4.CS4.9). A second photograph from the Lawrence Collection shows a crowded market day in the Diamond (Fig.4.CS4.10). The railings were erected c. 1880, most likely by the OPW after the cross came into the care of the State.

Writing in 1875, William Wakeman described the cross as ‘one of those wonderful evidences of the artistic taste and mechanical power of our early cross builders’ but he added that it is ‘far from perfect’ and the effect of ‘engrafting the two separate crosses together was artistically unhappy.’⁶²⁶ Wakeman justified this strange combination by the fact that the head of the cross, ‘a beautiful example of its class’, was now ‘placed beyond the reach of iconoclasts’ implying that this threat still remained in the late nineteenth century.⁶²⁷

4.4.4. Discussion.

The base is in good condition and there is no evidence of loss to the faces other than some surface pitting as a result of weathering (Fig.4.CS4.11 & 4.CS4.12). The sandstone of the base is a different colour to the shaft, which raises some suspicion that it may not be original base but was carved to facilitate the cross’s re-erection. However, in terms of shape, it is similar to several other stepped cross bases, which indicates that it is an authentic early medieval piece rather than a new addition (Fig.4.CS4.13).

The abstract carvings on the narrower panels of the south-west and the north-east faces appear to be similar in content and arrangement but there is a marked difference in their survival. The carvings on the south-west face are in reasonable condition and easily read. They consist of three long rectangular panels, the central one has raised bosses and there is interlace on the panels above and below (Fig.4.CS4.14). The condition of the north-east face is different as the three panels have been dressed back to create a smooth surface, resulting in the removal of all carvings. The surviving surface of the stone is almost level although some traces of the interlace carvings are visible on the top and bottom panel. The north-east face is the only one that has been cut back and made level and it is difficult to understand the motive behind this removal of the surface. The upper and lower collars remain proud of the dressed back surface, so it was not removed to create a smooth surface to facilitate the re-use of the stone for building purposes. The removal of the corner roll moulding pre-dates the dressing back, as the rough edge of the broken stone has also been

626. William. F. Wakeman, “On the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Cluain-Eois, now Clones, County of Monaghan,” *JRSAI* 3, no. 21 (Jan., 1875): 327.

627. Wakeman, ‘On the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Cluain-Eois,’ 327.

dressed back and is smooth (Fig.4.CS4.15). Perhaps, the smoothing of the north-east face was an attempt to improve the appearance of the broken corners of the shaft, but only one side was completed. The wider south-east face has a flat edge on the right-hand side and uneven edges on the left (Fig.4. CS4.16). The opposite is the case for the north-west face. The roll moulding on the western and southern corners have been partially removed and some small sections of the original survives undamaged (Fig.4.CS4.17). The discontinuous removal of the small roll mouldings from the west and south corners of the shaft was most likely carried out when the cross was standing as it would be difficult to carry out this action if the cross was prone. If the dressing back of the north-east face is associated with the erection of the cross *c.* 1692, then the removal of the roll mouldings from the corners was already complete at this time.

The top of the collar is damaged on the south-east face (Fig.4.CS4.11 & CS4.12) but it is not clear if this is the result of some adjustments required to insert the shaft section of the head into the mortice on the top of the shaft. It could be earlier damage, perhaps associated with the loss of the original head when the upper panel of the south-east face of the shaft was damaged in the process.

It is not clear if the two sections of the ring, added sometime after 1855, were originally part of the cross or newly carved to match the existing one (Fig.4.CS4.18). The carving on the new upper arm is typical of eighteenth century funeral motifs with a skull on the south-east face and two crossed bones on the north-west face. The head has been asymmetrically positioned off center on the top of the shaft, closer to the south-east face than the north-west (Fig.4.CS4.19). It has suffered some losses of the roll moulding on the north-west face and shows signs of rough treatment. The shaft of the head was originally longer as some surviving figures from a broken panel can be seen at the base of the south-east and the north-west faces (Fig.4.CS4.20). All the figures are weathered and much of the carving is rounded with a corresponding loss of detail making them difficult to read. (Fig.4.CS4.21)

There may be some metal dowels holding the modern cap stone in place but there is no evidence of splitting or cracking. The carvings on both the shaft and the head of the cross are equally weathered with a resultant loss of detail. Both the north-west and south-east faces are equally worn so that the original orientation is hard to interpret.

The association between St Tighernagh and the cross was valued by the Protestant community who used the name for their church and re-erected the cross. The mismatched

nature of the parts was not a concern, as the cross was used as a political and religious statement rather than concern for its artistic merit or civic role. It remained a part of the church property but was sufficiently important to be transferred on its own to the OPW. The ring of the cross was not completed until the second half of the nineteenth century, either as a protective measure or to restore it to its former shape. It is unlikely that the two additional parts of the ring belong to the original cross. The shaft does have some curious damage for which there is no obvious explanation. The railings remain in position today although the cross now stands on a pedestrianised area in a quiet part of the town.

4.5. Case study 5. The market cross, Tuam, Co. Galway. (CS5)

4.5.1. Background.

The Tuam market cross, cleaned and extensively restored, now stands in a prominent position in the tranquil setting of St. Mary's Church of Ireland cathedral (Fig.4.CS5.1). It is difficult to imagine that, during the second half of the nineteenth century, this cross was the focus of a bitter and public dispute between the Tuam Town Commissioners and the Church of Ireland. The views of the opposing parties that were recorded in the minutes of the Town Commissioner's meetings and published in the *Tuam Herald* provide insights into the way that the cross was valued by different sections of the community. This case study also demonstrates the challenges associated with the biography of composite crosses where fragments of several individual crosses survive, each with complex histories of damage and relocation. The history of a second cross shaft, known as the inscribed pillar, is also included as both narratives are closely entwined.

The urban street pattern of Tuam (Fig.4.CS5.2) suggests the lasting footprint of the inner and outer circular enclosure of an early monastic holy *locus* reputedly founded by St. Jarlath in the sixth century.⁶²⁸ During the twelfth century that Tuam enjoyed its heyday, thanks to the patronage of Tairdelbach Ua Conchobair (d. 1156) who ruled Connacht from 1106 and Ireland from c. 1150.⁶²⁹ In 1127, Tairdelbach set about reshaping the ecclesiastical settlement at Tuam creating a great enclosure.⁶³⁰ It was probably shortly after this that the ecclesiastical boundary was demarcated by his commissioning of several new monumental stone crosses. Tairdelbach's patronage of at least two crosses is confirmed by the inscriptions on the base of the 'market cross' and the 'inscribed pillar', which both requested prayers for him and abbot Áed Ua hOissin, confirming a period between c. 1128 and 1156

628. J. A. Claffey, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 20, Tuam*, (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2009), 1–3.

629 . Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 98–100.

630. *A. Tig*, s.a. 1127.

for their creation.⁶³¹ This investment was rewarded in 1152 at the Synod of Kells when Tuam was elevated from dioceses to archdiocese status.⁶³²

The first historical reference of the crosses dates from 1653 when Cromwellian soldiers were reported to have pulled down the high cross and the statues of the four evangelists in the cathedral.⁶³³

Due to the relaxation of restrictions on Catholic participation in public life, Tuam was granted a new charter in 1687 by James II with provision for a corporation of twenty burgesses mainly composed of Catholics from Galway.⁶³⁴ A cross, either whole or composite, could have been re-erected at this time, although there is no evidence that this was the case.

The presence of a market cross in Tuam was confirmed in a legal deed, dated 1734, which referred to it as a prominent landmark where three streets intersected.⁶³⁵ The head of the market cross was reputedly removed from there in 1742, and placed on the grave of Archbishop Synge, close to the east window of the cathedral.⁶³⁶ However, there is no historical basis for this, and the story may have been a later invention to justify the ultimate amalgamation of the base and shaft fragments from the market place with this head from a different cross. The shaft of the market cross was broken into two parts at some time during the eighteenth century, allegedly knocked over while used for bull baiting.⁶³⁷ As both parts were rectangular in shape, they were suitable for use as building stone. The smaller, upper section of the shaft was incorporated into the fireplace of a house built in 1782 on the Mall by Dean Burton.⁶³⁸ The larger, lower, section was taken to St. Mary's cathedral possibly for re-use as a grave slab. Although it was later claimed that Dean Burton was concerned

631. The inscriptions have been used as proof of the date of the building of the cathedral. Petrie, *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language*. 2:74–8; George Petrie, 'On the Stone Cross of Tuam' in *PRIA* 5 (1850–53): 470–74; Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*, 124–25; Roger Stalley, 'The Romanesque Sculpture of Tuam,' in *The Vanishing Past, Studies of Medieval Art, Liturgy and Metrology Presented to Christopher Hohler*, Alan Borg and Andrew Martindale, eds (Oxford: Archeopress, 1981), 182–86.

632. Claffey, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Tuam*, 5.

633. John Lynch, *De praesulibus Hiberniae potissimis catholicae religionis in Hibernia, serenade, propagandae, et conservandae auctoribus*. 2 vols J.F. O'Doherty. ed. (Dublin: IMC, 1944), 2:214.

634. Claffey, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Tuam*, 6.

635. Registry of Deeds, Dublin, 76/465/55424; Claffey, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Tuam*, 7.

636. J.A. Claffey, "The History of the High Cross of Tuam, Part 7," *Tuam Herald*, April 23, 1966.7.

637. J.A. Claffey, "The History of the High Cross of Tuam, Part 5," *Tuam Herald*, April 23, 1966. 2.

638. Tuam Town Council Minutes, 7.7. 1873.

to preserve the shaft, this seems unlikely given that the parts were separated in this manner.⁶³⁹

The base of the market cross remained in the market-place where c. 1822 it was recorded by George Petrie (1790–1866). He described it in his diary as ‘in the fish market [...] covered over with a heap of stones and rubbish’. He also noted that two further parts were ‘lying in the church yard.’⁶⁴⁰ He drew the base and recorded its inscriptions, noting ‘the beauty of the designs [...] and the similarity they bear to the ornamental designs of our ancient manuscripts.’⁶⁴¹ The ‘inscribed pillar’ in the cathedral had been interpreted as a memorial by James Ware (1594–1666) in 1654, who noted that Archbishop Ua hOissín was ‘buried in his cathedral under a stone inscribed with an Irish Epitaph’.⁶⁴² Petrie identified this pillar as a cross shaft in 1822, ‘found near the communion table of the present choir’.⁶⁴³ The presence of an inscription may have provided a degree of protection to this piece, which is the only surviving section of a large cross. Petrie assumed that all the surviving cross fragments belonged to a single cross and suggested that they should be collected together and set up in their ‘original’ state.⁶⁴⁴ Samuel Lewis echoed this view in 1837, when he described the ‘ancient market cross’ as ‘suffered to fall into decay’ with ‘part of the base still to be seen in the meat market’ and two other parts lying in the church yard of St. Mary’s cathedral.⁶⁴⁵ In his 1845 publication, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, Petrie used both the inscription on the base of the market cross and the one on the side of the inscribed pillar as proof of the twelfth-century date for the building of the cathedral. He included accurate drawings of both inscriptions, lamenting that the shaft, head and base that ‘justly rank[ed] as the finest monument of its class and age remaining in Ireland’ were in three different locations in Tuam.⁶⁴⁶ Petrie’s interest in the cross and the inclusion of the drawing of the base in his *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland* of 1845

639. J.P. Bourke, ‘Tuam Market Cross, Old Tuam Society Lecture,’ *Tuam Herald*, March 10th, 1945, 3.

640. Stokes, *The Life and Labours of George Petrie*, 298.

641. Stokes, *The Life and Labours of George Petrie*, 299.

642. Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 314.

643. Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 314.

644. Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 314.

645. Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 2: 646.

646. Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 314.

may have been a catalyst for its inclusion the Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853, described in Chapter 3 and below.⁶⁴⁷

After the exhibition, the various parts of cross were returned to Tuam, where their eventual location was determined by their ownership. The ‘inscribed pillar’ was returned to the interior of St. Mary’s Church of Ireland cathedral and the head of the cross was mounted directly on top of the other two shaft fragments close to the east window of cathedral (Fig.4.CS5.3). This questionable assembly secured the head of the cross and would endure as the accepted arrangement in the parts to the present day. The base was now considered to be an important artefact in the ownership of the town commissioners. As the Catholic Archbishop John MacHale (1789–1881) had ‘expressed a desire to see the base’ it was ‘wheeled directly to the grounds of the Catholic cathedral where it remained for some twenty years.’⁶⁴⁸ (Fig.4.CS5.4). The recently built cathedral had been consecrated by Archbishop MacHale in 1836 but its foundation stone was laid in 1827, two years before the introduction of Catholic Emancipation. This new location for the cross base may have been considered a temporary safe place, but it also lent an air of ancient authority to the building, so drawing the battle lines for a dispute over the future of the cross.

The Church of Ireland Diocese of Tuam had recently lost its archdiocesan status as a result of the Church Temporalities Act of 1833. The first Anglican Bishop of Tuam was Thomas Plunket, who, inherited the title of 2nd Baron Plunket in 1854. He was an unpopular landlord in Tourmakeady, Co. Mayo, where he had evicted Catholic tenants for refusing to send their children to Church of Ireland schools.⁶⁴⁹ The town commissioners approached him in May 1857 as they were planning to build a new town hall and wished to replace the existing old market house with ‘that fine relic of antiquity – the old market cross of Tuam, which at the late Dublin exhibition had attracted the notice of Royalty

647. See the earlier section on the Great Exhibition in Chapter 3. Maggie Williams has analysed the value of the Tuam cross in terms of a symbol of Irish nationalism in *Icons of Irishness*, 73–6. She also described the various exhibitions and world fairs in her Chapter 3, ‘Meet me at the Fair’, 67–96.

648. Archbishop John MacHale was a nationalist and a close associate of Daniel O’Connell. He was the first post-Reformation Catholic archbishop to be entirely educated in Ireland, spoke Irish and English and frequently preached sermons in Irish in the Cathedral. Daniel O’Connell christened MacHale ‘the Lion of St Jarlath’s’ due to his defence of his congregation. Hilary Andrews, *The Lion of the West, A Biography of John MacHale* (Dublin; Veritas 2001); Bourke, ‘Tuam Market Cross,’ Old Tuam Society Lecture,’ 3; <https://www.dib.ie/biography/machale-john-a5220>. Accessed July 3, 2022.

649. *Tuam Herald*, July 17th, 1857, 3; Pádraig G. Lane, “Lord Plunket and the Partry Mountains: A Case Study of 1850s Landlordism,” *JGAHS* 46, (1994) 156–72.

itself'.⁶⁵⁰ Bishop Plunket had reservations about moving the cross from the graveyard, where he claimed it had 'remained undisturbed', despite the fact that it had been to Dublin and back.⁶⁵¹ He sought legal assurance that the sections of cross in the ownership of the Church of Ireland would be returned, if they were ever relocated in the future. In addition, he had some concerns that the re-erected cross would be in 'an objectional locality' where it could become an 'an object of over-religious veneration to the people'.⁶⁵² The Town Commissioners felt that a resolution on their part was sufficient security and sent a deputation to the bishop to assure him of their good intentions. However, he was not persuaded to release the parts of the cross under his control and so matters rested until his death in 1866. The late bishop's tomb in Tourmakeady was marked by a fine example of a Celtic revival Irish cross as an indication of his admiration of the form (Fig.4.CS5.5).⁶⁵³

Following the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869, which transferred all Church property to the Representative Church Body (RCB), the Town Commissioners made a new request for the release of the parts of the cross.⁶⁵⁴ An article in the *Freeman's Journal* attempted to raise the issue above local politics by claiming that the re-erection of the cross would 'give great satisfaction not merely to the town of Tuam but the country at large.'⁶⁵⁵ The RCB appeared to be reluctant to interfere in local issues and in January 1872 they side-stepped the matter by claiming releasing the parts of the cross might interfere with private rights.⁶⁵⁶ The response of the Town Commissioners indicated the depth of feeling regarding the cross.

The attempt to establish a claim to it as private property has awakened a feeling of most bitter public indignation and when moreover the present piecemeal condition of the Cross is a standing disgrace and a barbarous feature which strangers might

650. *Tuam Herald*, May 16, 1857, 3.

651. *Tuam Herald*, July 17th, 1857, 3.

652. The Representative Church Body was incorporated by charter in 1870 under the provisions of the Irish Church Act of 1869 to hold property on behalf of the Church of Ireland. It is based in Dublin.

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/about/about-us> Accessed July 3, 2022; *Tuam Herald*, November 5, 1870, 2.

653. See the discussion in Chapter 3 regarding the use of Celtic crosses as popular memorials that were not necessarily associated with nationalistic aspirations. .

654. Bourke, "Old Tuam Society lecture abridged," 3.

655. *Freemans Journal*, October 29, 1870, 3.

656. Bourke, "Old Tuam Society lecture abridged," 3.

naturally, if erroneously, interpret as representative of religious rancour between the Catholics and the Protestants of Tuam.⁶⁵⁷

They reminded the Church of Ireland authorities that the shaft had stood in the marketplace until 1790, when it was removed for safe keeping and to hinder the practice of bull-baiting.⁶⁵⁸ In January 1874, Archbishop MacHale agreed to transfer the cross base from the front of the Catholic cathedral back to its owners, the Town Commissioners. The RCB also agreed to hand over the portions under their control, but only when the base of the cross was in position and a strong protective railing was ready to be put in place.⁶⁵⁹ The ‘market cross’ was finally re-erected at the end of 1874, but there is no evidence of an official ceremony to celebrate the event, indicating the distrust and lack of cooperation between the two Churches in the town (Fig.4.CS5.6). By the end of the nineteenth century, the ringed ‘Celtic’ cross had become a symbol of Irish Catholic nationalism. This association was violently illustrated in Tuam in 1921 during the War of Independence when a ‘black and tan’ (a former British army soldier recruited to the local constabulary) attempted to topple the cross by backing a lorry into it but fortunately, the strong railings saved it from destruction.⁶⁶⁰

O’Neill’s 1855 conjectural image and the plaster cast of an immensely tall cross, described in Chapter 3, cast a long shadow over the actual cross which, in its reconstructed composite form, appeared to be incomplete and ‘lesser’ than its supposed original form. However, this was not the view in Tuam in 1920, when Professor of Archaeology, R.A.Stewart Macalister (1879–1950) dared to suggested that the cross was composite and that the head came from a different cross which resulted in an indignant article in the *Tuam Tribune* stating that ‘the learned Professor is not writing with his usual accuracy.’⁶⁶¹ The unappealing location of the cross in the centre of a busy road junction surrounded by stout railings made it particularly inaccessible and difficult to study. Perhaps for this reason, another plaster cast was made of the ‘market cross’ as it stood, for display in the National Museum of Ireland in 1941. This copy is now in storage, in University College Cork.

The Tuam ‘market cross’ was the subject of one further disagreement that began in 1989 when the members of the Old Tuam Society and the Town Commissioners asked the

657. Bourke, “Old Tuam Society lecture abridged,” 3.

658. Town Council Minutes, *Tuam Herald*, July 25th, 1873.

659. Town Council Minutes, *Tuam Herald*, July 25th, 1873.

660. Jarlath Deignan, *Troubled Times: War and Rebellion in North Galway, 1913–23* (Cork: Lettertec, 2019).

661. *Tuam Herald*, February 14, 1920, 2.

OPW who were responsible for national monuments at the time, to move the cross due to the danger from passing traffic and pollution (Fig.4.CS5.7). Mr. J. P. Burke, President of the Old Tuam Society recommended that it be removed to a safe location, which he believed should be St. Mary's Church of Ireland cathedral, where the cross 'stood originally'.⁶⁶² The spokesman for the OPW agreed on the basis that the Church of Ireland 'own[ed] the cross and were agreeable to having it returned.'⁶⁶³ However, the plan was postponed following an 'emotive public meeting [...] where a large number of people said they were opposed to the cross being moved'.⁶⁶⁴ A new organisation named the Tuam Town Cross Preservation Society was elected and the chairman, Michael McGrath, announced that the cross was considered to belong to the people of Tuam who had strong and divergent views about the need for consultation regarding its future.⁶⁶⁵ The exchange of views between the Tuam Town Cross Preservation Society and Old Tuam Society became so heated that the town commissioner Gay Browne requested that all sides 'cease fire' on the subject for six months rather than 'dividing the town over it.'⁶⁶⁶ By April, tempers had cooled and after a 'lengthy' meeting between the OPW, the Town Commissioners, members of the Old Tuam Society and the Town Cross Preservation Society all parties agreed to move the cross to the Church of Ireland cathedral. When asked to provide a replica of the cross for the marketplace, the OPW architect replied that they did not have funds to provide a replica and that 'by putting a replica in place you would devalue the original cross.'⁶⁶⁷ In 1992 the cross was finally moved and by July it was in position in the north transept of the cathedral, where it remains today.

4.5.2. Structure.

The base of the cross is a single massive piece of sandstone, measuring 1.66m by 1.1m at ground level and is 0.65m in height tapering in towards the top.⁶⁶⁸ It is elaborately carved on all sides with decorative mouldings on the corners and around the top edge. The inscription along the base of the north face, which piqued Petrie's interest in 1822, was likely instrumental in its survival. The narrower east and west faces have circular

662. *Tuam Herald*, March 11, 1989, 1.

663. *Tuam Herald*, March 11, 1989, 1.

664. *Tuam Herald*, March 11, 1989, 1.

665. *Tuam Herald*, March 11, 1989, 1.

666. *Tuam Herald*, April 15, 1989, 3.

667. *Tuam Herald*, April 15, 1989, 3.

668. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 175–78; 2: Figs. 600–18.

protrusions, which correspond with small rectangular recesses in the base of the shaft. The wider north and south faces have two figures side by side who stand on the edge of the lower plinth and extend to the full height of the base and are flanked by panels of curving *Hiberno-Urnes* style interlace.⁶⁶⁹

The tapering shaft is 2.88 meters in height and 72cm x 30cm at the lowest part. The two parts of the broken shaft were re-united before or just after the Industrial Exhibition of 1853. The prominent iron stain on the north-west corner indicates that the cross may have been originally painted. The interlace patterns continue across the two sections confirming that they are correctly restored.

The origin of the current head of the market cross is unknown but it belongs to a different cross.⁶⁷⁰ It may have always been in the vicinity of the cathedral and survived when the rest of the cross was destroyed at an unknown date, possibly by Cromwell's soldiers in 1653. There are two narrow vertical slots on the upper parts of the arms of the north side of the head which are symmetrically arranged to the left and right of the central figure. Stalley and others concluded that the slots in the head were used to hold further sculptures in place, a device that may have also been used to attach an object via the rectangular mortice on the south face to the market cross shaft.⁶⁷¹ On either side of the vertical slots, the surface is smooth and uncarved to facilitate the insertion of a decoration.

The inscribed pillar was interpreted as a memorial by James Ware in 1654.⁶⁷² The narrower sides of the stone must have been visible in order for him to have read the inscription, indicating that it either lay on the ground with the sides visible or it was free standing. The presence of an inscription may have provided a degree of protection to this piece, which is the only section of the cross to survive. In 1838, John O'Donovan described it as originally 'sunk under the earth where the communion table is now' but now 'standing against the west gable close to the entrance.'⁶⁷³ It is likely to have been indoors since it became separated from its now missing base and head, as the inscriptions and carvings on the pillar are in better condition than those on the market cross. With the exception of the

669. Viking-age art style featuring slender animals with elongated pointed eyes and long jaws with lappets curled back and over them. They are usually shown in asymmetrical designs interlaced in combat scenes with thinner, snake-like creatures and thin ribbons which may have animal heads. Dates from around the early twelfth century in Ireland.

670. Claffey, "The History of the High Cross of Tuam. Part 7," *Tuam Herald* April 23, 1966, 7.

671. Stalley, "The Romanesque Sculpture of Tuam," 182.

672. Sir James Ware, *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*, (Dublin: A. Crook, 1702), 2.

673. John O'Donovan, OSI letters, 14 C 20/8, September 3, 1838.

journey to Dublin and back in 1853, the inscribed pillar has been inside the cathedral since at least the middle of the seventeenth century and its condition has not deteriorated or altered significantly since that time.

4.5.3. Historic images.

One of the earliest images shows the head of the cross was drawn by Daniel Grose *c.* 1792 (Fig.4.CS5.8) standing erect without any indication of how it was supported.⁶⁷⁴ The cross head has a relatively short shaft section, so it is unlikely that it stood upright on its own. The north face is illustrated, although the outward taper of the arms is omitted, some carved areas are shown blank and parts of the detail of the figures are inventions of the artist. The pattern underneath the east arm bears no relation to the actual pattern but the outer edges of the ring are depicted with an irregular wavy line which corresponds with the uneven edge of the missing roll moulding. A second illustration by Mary Anne Turner, named *Cross on the Ground* from *c.* 1820–1840, also shows the missing roll moulding (Fig.4.CS5.9). The details of the figures are well drawn, and the edges of the ring and arms are rough, indicating the missing roll moulding. The removal of the roll moulding pre-dated *c.* 1792 and the cross head was prostrate by *c.* 1820. Petrie's 1845 illustration of the base of the cross (Fig.4.CS5.10) shows the missing top right-hand corner of the south face is not connected to the mortice as it is in O'Neill's later illustration (Fig.4.CS5.20). An image from the *Illustrated London News* (Fig.4.CS5.11) shows the opening of the Great Industrial Exhibition in May 1853 with an improbably tall slender cross towering over the admiring crowd.⁶⁷⁵ Five sections of crosses from Tuam appear to have been assembled to make a single cross of exceptional height; the base from the marketplace, the lower part of the shaft from the graveyard, the upper part of the shaft from the fireplace, the inscribed pillar and the head from Archbishop Synge's tomb. This image is likely to be of a plaster cast as the surviving sections of the cross show no evidence of the type of engineering that would be required for this reconstruction. A later image from *c.* 1860 of the Crystal Palace exhibition in London (Fig.4.CS5.12) confirms the existence of the plaster cast of the tall Tuam cross in the Court of Christian Art, possibly attached to the structure for support. It is not clear if this vision of the tall Tuam cross was the work of Petrie or O'Neill, as both were involved

674. Peter Harbison's nomenclature for the sides of the cross from *The Irish High Crosses* is used throughout. The north side is now facing the south window in the south transept of the cathedral.

675. A faint image of a second cross can be seen on the right, but it is difficult to identify.

with the exhibition, but the plaster cast in the Crystal Palace is modelled on O'Neill's version (Fig.4.CS5.15).⁶⁷⁶

Henry O'Neill devoted three plates to the Tuam cross in his 1857 *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*. The remarkably detailed illustrations on Plate 12 and 13 (Fig.4.CS.13. & Fig.4.CS5.14) showed the sides of the cross in a two-dimensional, flattened style which emphasises the graphic quality of the art.⁶⁷⁷ The conjectural reconstruction of the cross on Plate 11 (Fig.4.CS5.15) included three blank sections, which overcame the obvious dimensional incompatibilities of the surviving parts from three different crosses. In his accompanying text, O'Neill took the credit and justified the consolidation of the separate sections in some detail claiming that the shaft had neither a tenon or a mortice as 'this stone has suffered so much injury, and been subjected to such wanton destruction, that the tenon being long gone is not surprising.'⁶⁷⁸ The head of the cross had both a mortice at the base and a tenon on the top, which justified the inclusion of the blank sections above and below it. O'Neill theorised that the rectangular cuts in the sides of the shaft and the slots in the head had been used to fix it to the wall of the cathedral and provide support for the ungainly structure. The inscription on the 'third part of the shaft' now twenty feet above the floor, could be read 'from some part of the cathedral, which allowed the spectator to get near to, and on a level with that part of the cross'.⁶⁷⁹ O'Neill used his illustrations to overcome the obvious physical incompatibilities that would influence antiquarian efforts to re-erect composite crosses over the next fifty years.

The theory of the 'complete cross' was reinforced by a new conjectural reconstruction drawing made in 1930 by the artist John J. Merne.⁶⁸⁰ Merne's cross was 26 ½ ft in height with the gaps between the parts confidently filled with interlace panels that mimicked the original designs (Fig.4.CS5.16). Merne explained the protrusions on the east

676. Petrie, "On the Stone Cross of Tuam," 470–74. He was aware that the inscriptions described Ua hOissin as 'coharb' on the inscribed pillar and 'abbot' on the base of the cross but chose to consider them as belonging to a single cross.

677. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*. In the publication O'Neill switched between a realistic three-dimensional depiction of the crosses and the flat two-dimensional style. His images of Tuam are all in the latter style. He may have been influenced by Daniel Wilson's *The Archaeology and prehistoric annals of Scotland*, published in 1851 had a chapter devoted to the sculptured standing stones which is illustrated in the same flat two-dimensional style. Owen Jones' *The Grammar of Ornament*, published in 1856, also used a flat two-dimensional style and coloured the interlace patterns in a similar way to O'Neill's Plate 25 which was published a year later.

678. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 5.

679. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 5.

680. John G. Merne, *A Handbook of Celtic Ornament* (Dublin: Educational Co. of Ireland, 1931).

and west side of the cross (Fig.4.CS5.17) by inserting additional side supports to the extremely tall shaft. This drawing was accompanied by a robust defence of the single cross theory by the ardent nationalist and assistant keeper of antiquities at the National Museum of Ireland, Liam S. Gogan, who dismissed all claims that the head belonged to a different cross.⁶⁸¹ In a paper on the sculpture of Tuam, Roger Stalley provided definitive evidence that O'Neill's reconstruction drawing comprised the remains of three crosses: the 'inscribed pillar' was stylistically different and inferior to the cross base and associated shaft pieces, and the head belonged to a third cross.⁶⁸²

4.5.4. Discussion.

The damage to the base of the cross can be seen in the photograph of the base outside the Catholic Cathedral in Tuam taken before 1874 (Fig.4.CS5.4). The losses are on the lowest part and only the south-east corner remains intact. It was most likely damaged by rough handling when it was in the marketplace. The figures on the base have survived but the details of the faces and parts of their feet are lost (Fig.4.CS5.18). The concrete repairs to the missing corners can be seen in the photographs taken in 1992 in advance of moving the cross (Fig.4.CS5.19). The three corners have now been re-built using a matching mortar and it is difficult to read the damaged areas. The only deliberate damage to the base appears to be the clean removal of several rectangular sections of the upper south-east corner (Fig.4.CS5.20). In his 1845 drawing, Petrie may have focused on the artwork rather than the damage to the base and thus simplified the shape of the area that was removed. It is unlikely that further material was removed after this date, as Petrie showed the edges of the cut back to be clean and sharp as they are today. O'Neill simplified the edge and connected the mortice and the broken edge whereas Petrie showed them unconnected. The side of the base could have broken when the shaft fell over as the damage to the south-east corner of the base coincides with damage to the same side of the shaft. The broken edge could have been 'tidied up' at the later date.⁶⁸³ Despite its history of damage and relocations, the carved panels and inscriptions on the base are still legible.

The current arrangement of the cross dates from 1874 when it was re-erected in the marketplace (Fig.4.CS5.21 & Fig.4.CS5.22). The horizontal break between the two pieces of the shaft indicates that this was an original joint and the tenon broke under horizontal

681. *Tuam Herald*, March 18th, 1961, 2. This is a reproduction of the original article, which is described as published in *The Standard*, (Dublin) 1930 and written by Liam S. Gogan, M.A.

682. Stalley, "The Romanesque Sculpture of Tuam," 184.

683. The cleaning up of broken edges was also seen at the market cross in Kells, Case Study 1.

pressure. All the damage associated with the break is on the upper section of the shaft, whereas the lower section survives relatively intact. The upper and lower parts of the shaft are correctly joined together, but the match is not perfect, indicating that the upper surface of the lower part of the shaft has been trimmed back to provide an even platform for the upper section (Fig.4.CS5.23). The break is very clean on the north face with little damage to the carvings (Fig.4.CS5.24) but there is a substantial section of missing material in the vicinity of the joint on the south face of the cross (Fig.4.CS5.25). The shaft broke towards the south face, lifting cleanly away from the north face, while compressing and breaking the corners of the south face when falling. The removal of the corner roll mouldings runs above and below the joint in the shaft, indicating that it occurred before the shaft was broken, i.e. sometime before c. 1790 (Fig.4.CS5.26 & Fig.4.CS5.27). The carvings on the upper section of the shaft are also more damaged than those in the lower section which is likely to be associated with its role as part of a fireplace. This may also be the reason why a section of the carvings on the south-east corner, above the mortar repairs, is rounded and is worn smooth (Fig.4.CS5.27). There are a number of loose stone flakes on the corners of the cross indicating that the sandstone layers are beginning to separate but this is no longer a concern as the cross is now protected from the impacts of weathering. (Fig.4.CS5.28)

The head of the cross features two rectangular cut-out recesses on the north face, symmetrically arranged to the left and right of the central figure, which appear to be original to the composition (Fig.4.CS5.29). In contrast, the cuts below the central figure on the same side, appear to be a later adaptation as the base of the staff that originally curved down and into the mouth of the serpent is now roughly broken off. (Fig.4.CS5.30) O'Neill's tendency to repair missing sculptural details in his plates is shown on plate 12 where he drew the staff unbroken and connected to the mouth of the serpent but paradoxically, has shown the outer edges of the ring ragged and uneven (Fig.4.CS5.31). A pattern of horizontal lines survives at each side of the missing area which indicates that the original pattern was cut or was interrupted by the now missing feet of the figure. The cutting back of the carving and the creation of two shallow tenons may be associated with fixing the head securely to the grave of Archbishop Synge in 1742.

The 'inscribed pillar' is the shaft of a cross, which has been inside the cathedral since the middle of the seventeenth century or perhaps earlier.⁶⁸⁴ It is difficult to see the west face in its current position, directly against a piece of furniture in the north transept but,

684. The 'inscribed pillar' was brought to Dublin for the Great Exhibition in 1853.

fortunately, Harbison had already photographed it⁶⁸⁵ (Fig.4.CS5.32). The interlaced *Hiberno-Urnes* style carvings on the west face of the shaft have lost some detail but the other three faces are in reasonable condition with minimal loss of detail (Fig.4.CS5.33). A part of the surface at the base of the horizontal inscription on the south side is missing but the letters are complete while the inscription on the north side is vertical and almost complete. The damage to the lower section of the shaft may be the result of the break from its original base. The upper part of the north-east corner appears to have suffered two or more heavy blows resulting in missing material (Fig.4.CS5.34). Harbison's photograph showed that the removal of the roll moulding on the northwest upper corner was rectangular and neat and deliberately avoided damaging the carved panel on the west face (Fig.4.CS5.35). The removal of the roll moulding on the opposite lower south-east corner is more local and irregular (Fig.4.CS5.35). The removal of the roll mouldings was likely completed before the middle of the seventeenth century, as its location in the cathedral chancel would have made it inaccessible to all but the local clergy.

The Tuam market cross case study demonstrates the difficulties of unravelling the history of cross fragments when there is a degree of misinformation and conjecture about the location and movements of the various parts. This lack of clarity may be associated with the desire on the part of different religious and social groups to retain possession of crosses. In Tuam this was further exacerbated in the nineteenth century by the belief that the cross had originated in the cathedral precinct and had later been moved to the marketplace. Leo Swan's paper on market places and publication of the Tuam *Historic Towns Atlas* in 2009, confirmed the importance of the relationship between the cross and the monastic enclosure but it is not proof that the cross always stood in the market place.⁶⁸⁶ If it was the primary location then this cross and the market cross in Kells are rare examples in Ireland of crosses surviving at the eastern entrance to the monastic enclosure.

This case study provides a degree of certainty around the dates for the removal of the roll mouldings on the corners. The indications are that the mouldings were removed from the shaft of the market cross before *c.* 1790, from the cross head before *c.* 1792, and from the inscribed pillar/shaft before 1654. The presence of the inscriptions on the base and the inscribed pillar provided a level of protection as the names of kings and bishops were important to James Ware who was tracing the succession of Irish bishops.

685. Harbison's nomenclature of the faces of the cross is used throughout.

686. Swan, "Monastic Porto-Towns in Early Medieval Ireland," 77–102.

The relationship between the original parts of the various crosses and the reconstruction drawings and plaster casts is a web of assumptions and denials. Stalley's examination finally laid to rest the idea of the larger cross and his emphatic conclusion was that there were 'at least three carved crosses' in Tuam as the inscribed pillar was stylistically different and inferior to the market cross while the head belonged to a third cross.⁶⁸⁷ The earliest plaster cast, created for the 1853 exhibition, was a conjectural reconstruction driven by a nationalist agenda to showcase the skills of the original creators and overcome the incompatibilities of the real fragments. This may have been based on a reconstruction drawing prepared by O'Neill's in advance of his 1855 publication *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*. Both the plaster cast and the image showed a better, more complete cross than the present, less than perfect structure. The second replica was based on the actual reconstructed cross in Tuam and was intended to demonstrate its unique design, and facilitate study of the *Urnes* style carvings. This replica took its place amongst a group of casts of the best of the collection on display in the National Museum of Ireland. A third replica was requested by the Tuam Community to mark the empty center of the marketplace but was never made.⁶⁸⁸ Each replica had a different relationship with the original fragments; the first plaster cast notionally bound the actual surviving fragments together while at the same time overshadowing them. The second cast legitimised the current arrangement of the 'market cross' by positioning it amongst the best of the collection. The lack of a replica in the town center denied the significance of the location in the market place.

The presentation of the cross in the cathedral gives no background to the material losses that contributed to its history as signage and information is basic. The repairs to the corners of the base by the OPW craftsmen in the Athenry depot include the rebuilding of missing features such as the rounded corners. The new mortar repairs are an exact match of the cleaned stone so that it is now difficult to distinguish between them and the original stone (Fig.4.CS5.36). The missing southeast corner of the top of the base has not been restored but it is difficult to see that the corner of the shaft is rebuilt (Fig.4.CS5.37). Photographs of the cross taken before the railings were replaced, reveal the full beauty of the base and shaft (Fig.4.CS5.38). The solid iron railings, which were designed to keep heavy traffic at bay, were replaced in the cathedral so that it is still difficult to examine or

687. Stalley, "The Romanesque Sculpture of Tuam," 179, 184.

688. The town of Tuam is now bypassed by the M17, which takes traffic around the outside of the town. The situation is like that at Kells, where the traffic at the locations in which the crosses stood in the towns has reduced considerably.

photograph the base of the cross. The cathedral transept is a sufficiently lofty space to showcase the cross but the bright light from the south window makes it difficult to see or photograph the south face, while the north face is in deep shadow. The inscribed pillar is positioned against a piece of timber furniture and surrounded by the fittings and furniture of the cathedral (Fig.4.CS5.32). The remains of the head of a fourth cross, found when digging the foundations of a new bank building in 1926 lie behind a screen to the right of the entrance to the cathedral⁶⁸⁹ (Fig.4.CS5.39) This broken head is lying unassembled and almost forgotten propped casually on a timber wedge on a table in the corner of the nave arcade. It must be acknowledged that the main function of the cathedral is to serve the congregation as a place of worship and the display of monuments and artefacts is a less important minor role. From an art/historical and conservation perspective the fragments of all the crosses are secure and their condition will not deteriorate further. However, the connection to the local community has been weakened as previous generations in Tuam had gathered at the base of the cross and seen it on a daily basis.

This biography demonstrates how the privileged position of the Church of Ireland and their ownership of the ancient places of worship was challenged by the growing authority and confidence of the Catholic Church in Ireland during the nineteenth century. The late twentieth-century disagreement about moving the cross from the market place showed a resentment at the lack of consultation regarding the loss of an integral part of the identity of the town which had recently lost its economic mainstay. The undeniable art/historical value of the cross has perhaps overshadowed other values and distorted conservation approaches to their protection.

The value of an object lies in the observer, and within a few years the cross base went from being covered in stones and rubbish in the market place to an exhibit in a modern glass building visited by Queen Victoria. Maggie Williams has described how it then became an emerging symbol of nationalist identity in the nineteenth century.⁶⁹⁰ At the same time it symbolised the division between the Christian churches in the community, affecting ‘the social life of the town deeply and painfully.’⁶⁹¹ The move to the cathedral showed how the dominance of the art/historical values diverted attention away from other aspect of its significance such as its local social and cultural importance.

689. Etienne Rynne, “A Fourth High Cross at Tuam”, *JGHAS* 40, (1985–86): 125–29.

690. Williams, *Icons of Irishness*, 67–79.

691. Claffey, “The History of the High Cross of Tuam Part 1,” *Tuam Herald*, March 12, 1966.

4.6. Case study 6. The market cross, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow. (CS6)

4.6.1. Background.

Glendalough has been a sacred place for many centuries due to its association with St. Kevin or Cóemgen, the founding saint who died c. 618.⁶⁹² It attained diocesan status in 1111 and developed into an important ecclesiastical centre until uniting with Dublin in 1214, which effectively ended its independent status and precipitated a slow decline.⁶⁹³ Throughout the medieval period Glendalough and its seven churches remained an important pilgrimage site, accessed by a route known as St. Kevin's Road that passed through the Dublin mountains.⁶⁹⁴ The so-called 'market cross' at Glendalough is now located in the OPW visitor centre and is a central part of the exhibition on the early monastic history of the site (Fig.4.CS6.1). The term 'market cross' is probably incorrect but has been remarkably long-lasting and is still used today.⁶⁹⁵ The editors of *Glendalough, City of God* sought to rebalance research on Glendalough in a move away from the material remains by focusing instead on the less obvious aspects of the site, such as its European connections, the way that space was organised and the function and rituals of burial.⁶⁹⁶ Ragnall Ó Floinn's definitive essay on the cross focused on its history, unique form, function and art historical importance, so little needs to be said on these topics.⁶⁹⁷ In her preface, Linda Doran placed Ó Floinn's essay in the section devoted to archaeology, demonstrating the difficulties of categorising the study of crosses within the overall scholarship.⁶⁹⁸ A map from c. 1779 illustrated the locations of the seven churches spread across the valley floor as well as a marketplace in front of the entrance to the holy *locus* (Fig.4.CS6.2).⁶⁹⁹

Following the rebellion of 1798, a British military encampment was established near Glendalough (at Laragh castle) to pursue the rebels who had hidden in the Wicklow

692. Pádraig Ó Riain, "The Lives of Kevin (Caoimhghin) of Glendalough," in *Glendalough City of God*, Charles Doherty, Linda Doran and Mary Kelly, eds (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 137–44; Ailbhe MacShamhráin, "Uí Máil and Glendalough," in *Glendalough City of God*, 183–210.

693. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 80–82; Ragnall Ó Floinn, "The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough," 100–1.

694. Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 141–44; Ann Hamlin, "Pilgrimage" in *A Report for Dúchas towards a Re-working of the Display* (unpublished internal report, 2001), 31–35.

695. Ó Floinn, "The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough," 104–8.

696. Doherty, Doran and Kelly, *Glendalough City of God*.

697. Ó Floinn, "The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough," 80–111.

698. Linda Doran, *Glendalough City of God*, xxiv.

699. Rachel Moss, "Architectural Sculpture in Glendalough," and Máirín Ní Cheallaigh, "From 'City of God' to a Blueprint for the Future: Glendalough in the Nineteenth Century," in *Glendalough City of God*, 260–77 and 301–13.

mountains. The English political philosopher, William Godwin (1756–1836) visited the valley in 1800 and described how the soldiers had removed the gravestones from the Glendalough cemetery and used them as a pavement in the camp, ‘causing much distress to the families who still worshipped at the seven churches.’⁷⁰⁰ The pattern day, celebrated on the 3rd June, was an important event in Glendalough but a description by William Lecky in 1714 expressed a distinct note of Protestant disapproval and a concern for law and order.

‘The sheriff, accompanied with a great number of Protestants, inhabitants of the said county, well mounted (but very badly armed) rode all night and met at the seven churches by four in the morning of...the usual anniversary day. The rioters immediately dispersed so we pulled down the tents, threw down and demolished their superstitious crosses, filled and destroyed their wells.’⁷⁰¹

Even with Glendalough’s reputation as a place of withdrawal and contemplation, there are less exalted aspects to its history, particularly in the nineteenth century before the monuments benefited from state protection. In 1873 William Wilde (1815–1876) recalled attending the pattern day, where ‘immense crowds of people’ were putting up tents and cooking ‘throughout the space of the sacred enclosure’ on the night before the pattern.⁷⁰² In the morning the guides ‘arranged the penitential routes’ where ‘bare headed venerable pilgrims and bare kneed voteens’ crowded into the river ‘wading, walking and kneeling...going their prescribed rounds.’⁷⁰³ All the while, the more profane activities of dancing, drinking and other amusements continued but Wilde usually left in the afternoon before the faction fighting commenced. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church had suppressed the pattern day but probably not before the associated harmful behaviour had caused damage the more vulnerable monuments.⁷⁰⁴

The pattern was not the only threat to the monuments in the valley as, in the aftermath of the 1798 rebellion, the English government built the Wicklow military road to facilitate

700. Pamela Clements and Jenny McAuley, “A Nation in its Last Moments: William Godwin’s Visit to Ireland 1800,” *HI* 23, no 4 (July/August 2015): 23.

701. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century, Volume I*, (London, Longmans, Green and Co, 1898), 263–64.

702. William Wilde, “Memoir of Gabriel Beranger, and his labour in the cause of Irish art and antiquities, from 1760 to 1780”, *JRSAI* 12 (1872–3): 449.

703. Wilde, “Memoir of Gabriel Beranger,” 449.

704. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, “The Pattern” in *Irish Popular Culture*, 214–17.

the movement of troops into the mountains. The road was completed in 1809 and opened up the interior of the county to north-south traffic so that a visit to Glendalough became a popular part of the tourist itinerary known as the ‘Wicklow tour.’⁷⁰⁵ In 1841, Mr. and Mrs. Hall described a visit to Glendalough and the impact of tourism on the site. Initially they were surrounded by ‘a most vociferous group of all ages and sizes’ offering to be their guides and then, having selected two suitable candidates, they continued to be surrounded by followers ‘each and all had something to exhibit’ including ‘a splinter of the yew tree that St. Kevin had planted with his own hands.’⁷⁰⁶ They purchased ‘nearly the last’ piece which was ‘a sure preservative from fire and shipwreck and ‘of inestimable value to ladies who love their lords.’⁷⁰⁷ On a later visit they were unable to find any fragment of the yew tree which was ‘entirely exhausted.’⁷⁰⁸ They were also shown ‘the base of a cross, weight about 3 cwt; those who contrive to carry it between their teeth thrice round the ground without pausing to take breath, will never afterwards have a toothache – one of Mr. Wynder’s stories to which we may, at least, attach credit.’⁷⁰⁹ It is doubtful that this feat could be accomplished with the relatively heavy base of the market cross and is likely to be another fragment. The Halls expressed surprise at the absence of finely sculptured crosses in the churchyard which ‘we have met with elsewhere’ finding only one, which was ‘entirely without ornament, although the broken fragments of several smaller ones are scattered about, as headstones to the graves.’⁷¹⁰

In 1844, a visitor from New York described the ‘thick array’ of ‘poor peasantry’ that surrounded him and the ‘consummate nonsense’ of the guide amid ‘the rude, defaced and dilapidated stones’ of the graveyard.⁷¹¹ The deep holes in the graves of five priests were due to the extraction of ‘the consecrated clay’ which ‘we were informed could cure all diseases

705. Finola O’Kane, *The Military Roads of County Wicklow*, <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-military-roads-of-county-wicklow> Accessed [24 August 2022]

706. Mr. & Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland: its Scenery, Character, &c.* (London: Jeremiah How, 1846), 216.

707. Hall, *Ireland*, 217.

708. Hall, *Ireland*, 217.

709. Hall, *Ireland*, 219.

710. Hall, *Ireland*, 220.

711. Asenath Nicholson, *Ireland’s Welcome to the Stranger or Excursions Through Ireland in 1844 & 1845*. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1847), 56.

however obstinate’ as the curative powers of a saint are accessed by mixing the earth from the tomb with holy water to create a potion with healing powers.⁷¹²

In 1861, William Wakeman published a grim description of the combined impact of official neglect and tourist exploitation that continued to degrade the site. Any object, be it stone, wood or earth, that had an association with St. Kevin was thought to possess some curative power, which was exploited for its a commercial value. Wakeman had visited Glendalough twenty years earlier but now found that ‘it was melancholy to contemplate the wanton ruin which had fallen upon the venerable city since the period of our first visit....several very early and quaintly carved crosses...have disappeared altogether.’⁷¹³ The chancel of St. Kevin’s church had been ‘lately destroyed’, the doorway of the Lady’s church had been almost wrecked by ivy and all the inscribed monumental flagstones at Reefert were gone due to ‘desecration, ruin and neglect.’⁷¹⁴ He claimed that the last remaining slab at Reefert, which had been recorded by Petrie, had been broken up by the ‘so-called guides’ and ‘sold in fragments of about the size of a half-crown as specimens of the tomb of a real “Hirish” king.’⁷¹⁵ On his previous visit, Wakeman had also seen the ‘venerable yew tree of immense size’ that the Halls had mentioned. By 1861, it had been ‘literally hewn to pieces by the guides who sold fragments to tourists in the rough state or manufactured into paper folders, card cases or snuff boxes...the very roots were grubbed up.’⁷¹⁶ The more durable monuments in the valley such as St. Kevin’s cross and St. Kevin’s bed were associated with performative ritual such as bathing or hugging or prayer circuits. St. Kevin’s cross was used ‘for the benefit of unmarried persons, who, if they can embrace it backwards will be certain of a partner within a year.’⁷¹⁷

By 1870 the Kilkenny Archaeological Society considered undertaking conservation work at Glendalough as Dr. J. A. Purefoy recommended that the loose stones lying about the site be gathered up and placed under lock and key in St. Kevin’s church to preserve them from the ‘guides’ who had previously sold fragments of an inscribed tombstone to sight-seers.⁷¹⁸ In 1873, Wilde described the churches as ‘more and more dilapidated’ when

712. Nicholson, *Ireland’s Welcome to the Stranger*, 56; <https://triskeleheritage.triskelepublishing.com/mediaeval-mythbusting-blog-10-arrow-stones/> Accessed August 24, 2024.

713. William |F. Wakeman, “A Day at Glendalough,” *Duffy’s Hibernian Magazine*, 3, no. 17 (November 1861), 246.

714. Wakeman, “A Day at Glendalough,” 244–245.

715. Wakeman, “A Day at Glendalough,” 245.

716. Wakeman, “A Day at Glendalough,” 245.

717. Nicholson, *Ireland’s Welcome to the Stranger*, 57.

718. Aileen M. Ireland, “Glendalough: the RSAI’s contribution,” in *Glendalough City of God*, 337.

compared with their condition during Gabriel Beranger's visit of 1779.⁷¹⁹ As a consequence of the Irish Church Act in 1869, the site was vested in the Board of Works who began conservation work at the site under the direction of the architect Thomas Deane.⁷²⁰ In the annual report of 1876–7, Deane described how the fragments of a beautiful cross were found in different places, which had been put together and erected within St. Kevin's church.⁷²¹ Some of the fragments of the head of the cross are relatively small and it is remarkable that they not only survived but were identified as part of the larger cross. Deane reported that a local man 'had turfed over, and concealed for many years from injury the moulded and sculptured stones' of St. Saviour's church.⁷²² This account refers to a location further down the valley but demonstrates how these small fragments might have survived due to concealment and burial.

The primary location of the cross is not known, but Ó Floinn carried out a comprehensive assessment of the evidence and concluded that it was in the graveyard close to the cathedral rather than in the market place.⁷²³ Recent work by Conleth Manning on the placement of eighth- and ninth-century crosses within a monastic setting, particularly in relation to the cathedrals and churches at Clonmacnoise and Monasterboice, provides a plausible rationale for the layout of the inner enclosure.⁷²⁴ However, the Glendalough cross is later in date and, due to the flat back of the base and the two dominant forward facing figures, was designed to be seen primarily from the front or east face. Many of the later eleventh- and twelfth-century crosses are axial⁷²⁵ rather than the earlier nodal⁷²⁶ designs, indicating a change in the way that their audience interacted with them. The Glendalough cross may not have functioned like those at Clonmacnoise and Monasterboice, but despite its small size, it is made from a robust granite so is likely to have been outdoors. The creation of a secure stone store in St. Kevin's church and the activities of the Kilkenny

719. Wilde, "Memoir of Gabriel Beranger," 451.

720. Ireland, "Glendalough: the RSAI's contribution," 340–43.

721. Appendix to the 45th *Annual Report of the Board of Works* (1876–7), 70–74.

722. 'Proceedings', *JRSAI* 24, no.12. (1872–3): 449.

723. Ó Floinn, 'The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough,' 95.

724. Conleth Manning, "Clonmacnoise Cathedral", *Clonmacnoise Studies*, 1, 57–86; *ibid.*, "A Puzzle in Stone: The Cathedral at Glendalough," *Archaeology Ireland* 16, no.2 (2002): 18–21; *ibid.*, "The Churches of Monasterboice and the Layout of the Site," *PRIA* 121C (2021):125–55.

725. An axis is set up by creating a design element or facade with regular geometry which projects an imagined straight line into the space around which elements are arranged.

726. A sculptured cross that is accessed on all sides creates a central reference point in the landscape, an *axis mundi* around which its shadow rotates.

Archaeological Society undoubtedly saved the cross from destruction and dispersal. It remained in St Kevin's church surrounded by 'a large collection of stones bearing inscriptions and ornamentation and tracery of antique character' (Fig.4.CS6.3), which the caretaker had gathered despite being offered considerable sums of money by American tourists for some of the stones.⁷²⁷ The cross was transferred into the visitor centre in 1988 without any changes to the 1876 reconstruction, which remains intact today. (Fig.4.CS6.4)

4.6.2. Structure.

The cross is made from the local granite and originally consisted of three separate pieces; a base, a shaft and a head which together measure 1.66m in height. It has no ring but there are small semi-circular volutes in the armpits and roll mouldings on the shaft and the upper and lower faces of the arms⁷²⁸ (Fig.4.CS6.1).

The base has a flat back instead of the traditional pyramidal shape and there are two central figures standing together on a rectangular plinth on the lower edge of the front or east face. The two panels to the left and right may have contain figures, but the carvings have lost too much detail to be understood.

The shaft is largely undamaged, and three fragments of the head survive. Despite the damage to the head, the Glendalough cross is 'complete' in the sense that the parts are present and legible, although injured. Françoise Henry has argued that the Glendalough cross was made before the Tuam market cross but by the same artist.⁷²⁹ Roger Stalley has made the same connection but both he and Ó Floinn reversed the order of creation, maintaining that Tuam came first.⁷³⁰

The re-assembly of the cross c.1876 is an early example of anastylosis carried out by the OPW (Fig.4.CS6.5 – Fig.CS6.8).⁷³¹ On the east/front face of the cross, the missing section of the front of the head has been replaced with a block of granite which provides structural support. The missing section on the west/back face of the head has been replaced with a second block of granite which provides additional support. The head and shaft are correctly positioned relative to each other as the torso of the Christ figure is correctly aligned

727. Rena Logan, *Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works*. (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 1994), 110.

728. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:95; 2: Figs 304–07.

729. Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period*, 143.

730. Stalley, "The Romanesque Sculpture of Tuam," 102.

731. The reassembling of existing but dismembered parts so that the material used for integration should always be recognizable and its use should be the least that will ensure the conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form. *The International Charter for the Conservation and restoration of monuments and sites*, (The Venice Charter, 1964.)

across the two surviving sections of the head and the shaft. The smallest surviving fragment of the head is the east or front face of the upper arm. This piece was not sufficiently stable to be reattached to the head without additional support, which is provided by an untidy collection of at least four pieces of stone (Fig.4.CS6.7 & CS6.8). They are held together by large lumps of mortar, and none appear to be original parts of the cross. As the cross previously stood in front of the western wall of St Kevin's Church, the supporting stones were not visible from the front, but this is no longer the case as the cross is now free standing in the exhibition hall.

4.6.3. Historic Images.

From the second half of the eighteenth-century Glendalough attracted painters and illustrators who were drawn to this remote location in the Wicklow mountains. The images of the valley produced by these artists, particularly those by Berenger, Bigari and Wheatly, contain accurate antiquarian and topographical information despite the dominant influence of the picturesque.⁷³² An early painting of the pattern from 1813 (Fig.4.CS6.9) by Joseph Peacock (c. 1783–1837) placed the round tower in the center surrounded by the festivities as various strata of society enjoying the celebration but with a dark undertone of faction fighting in the distance.⁷³³ Maria Spilsbury Taylor (1776–1820) painted the same subject (Fig.4.CS6.10) but St Kevin's cross is the focal point with a small figure embracing the shaft.⁷³⁴ Edward Ledwich published a strange drawing of St Kevin's cross with a curious carved capstone (Fig.4.CS6.11). Ó'Floinn speculated that this was the base of the market cross shown upside down on top of the cross but this is not certain.⁷³⁵ In *The Antiquities of Ireland* Ledwich also described how the 'pedestal' of the market cross was 'only remining part' left in the center of the marketplace in Glendalough.⁷³⁶

732. Peter Harbison, "Little-known Drawings of Glendalough, c. 1777–1850," in *Glendalough City of God*, 302–13; Peter Harbison, "Glendalough drawings of 1779 in the Royal Irish Academy" in *Above and Beyond: Essays in Memory of Leo Swan*, Tom Condit and Christiaan Corlett, eds. (Bray: Wordwell Press, 2005), 445–60; Finola O'Kane, *Ireland and the Picturesque, Design, Landscape painting and Tourism 1700–1840* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013) 120–23; <https://glendalough.wicklowheritage.org/people/glendalough-etched-sketched-painted>. Accessed [24 August 2022].

733. Brendan Rooney, *A Time and a Place, Two Centuries of Irish Social Life*, (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 2006) 153–54.

734. A person who embraced the cross on the pattern day was supposed to be married within the year.

735. Ó'Floinn, "The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough," 91–94.

736. Edward Ledwich, *The Antiquities of Ireland: the second edition*, (Dublin: J. Jones, 1804), 167.

The earliest record of the cross fully assembled in the form we know today is a drawing by Thomas Dean *c.* 1876, which shows it mounted on two modern steps. (Fig.4.CS6.12). The cross remained in St Kevin's church and was drawn by Harold Leask for the official guidebook (Fig.4.CS6.13) and this structure has endured to the present time. The practice of embracing St. Kevin's cross for good luck, shown in Taylor's earlier painting, continued into the present (Fig.CS6.14).

4.6.4. Discussion.

The base is extremely worn, and the four corners are smooth, indicating that it was accessible from all sides, perhaps for 'doing the rounds' by kneeling pilgrims or exposed to daily wear and tear in the market place (Fig.4.CS6.5–Fig.4.CS6.8). It may have survived in its primary location after the loss of the upper two sections and continued to be the focus of a ritual associated with the pilgrimage. The top of the heads of the two figures on the base are particularly worn (Fig.4.CS6.15) indicating that it was in a location that was accessible, possibly until it was moved into St Kevin's church *c.* 1870. A neat shallow rectangular section has been cut out of the north-east corner of the lower plinth, most likely an early intervention as the surviving exposed surface is smooth indicating a continual rubbing after the removal. The upper part of the north-west corner has also suffered damage and loss of material, but the surface is broken and appears to be the result of a blow (Fig.4.CS6.7). This damage could be associated with the separation of the shaft from the base if a crowbar was used to lever the two sections apart. The broken surface is worn and rounded either as a result of weathering or rubbing or a combination of both. A market cross is shown centrally located in the marketplace on the *c.* 1779 plan (Fig.4.CS6.2). It was accessible from all sides which could match the wear pattern on the base, but it could have been positioned elsewhere with a similar result.

The shaft of the cross is in noticeably better condition than the base, as the carvings are legible and relatively undamaged on all four sides. A lantern slide from the *RSAI* collection is the earliest image of the shaft before it was re-assembled with the rest of the cross. (Fig.4.CS6.16). The upper surface of the shaft is flat and there is no evidence of a tenon or any damage. It is likely that there is a mortice recess on the top for the tenon of the head. The condition of the carvings on the north face is sharp and legible and the damage shown on the slide remains unchanged today. The narrow north and south faces and the wider west face of the shaft have zoomorphic, strap interlace patterns, which retain definition and are less weathered than those on either the head or base (Fig.4.CS6.17). The irregular interlace pattern on the back/west face of the cross is in good condition and

contrasts strongly with the matching pattern on the west face of the base, which is in poor condition (Fig.4.CS6.18). The shaft has not survived unscathed, as the face, hands and staff of the ecclesiastic figure on the east face of the shaft are all damaged (Fig.4.CS6.19). This has the appearance of a rough removal, possible the result of a blow associated with iconoclastic activities. There is some damage around the knees of the Christ figure at the upper section of the shaft, close to the junction with the head, which is possibly the result of a forced separation of the two pieces (Fig.4.CS6.5 & Fig.4.CS6.6). The roll mouldings on the edges of the shaft are largely intact except for the upper northeast corner, which has been roughly removed (Fig.4.CS6.4). There is a corresponding removal on the north-east corner of the head indicating that this removal happened before the separation of the head and the shaft. There are three neat rectangular cuts on the east face of the shaft which vary in size and depth (Fig.4.CS6.6). The largest is centrally located on the southeast corner of the shaft and cuts into the edge of three of the large pellets on the east face but avoids damaging the interlace on the south face (Fig.4.CS6.19 & CS6.20). A shallow rectangular section has been removed from underneath the feet of the ecclesiastic. There is a third neatly executed removal at the base of the north-east corner, which has damaged the edge of the interlace on the north face and the lowest pellet on the east face (Fig.4.CS6.6). Two further sections of roll moulding are missing on the north-west corner; the upper one is small but the lower one has also damaged the interlace pattern on the north face (Fig.4.CS6.7). Both have rough rounded edges and are different to the three neatly executed cuts discussed above. The south-west corner has three discrete missing sections of roll moulding; the upper one is deep but has not damaged the carvings on either side, the middle one is relatively minor and the lowest one has caused some damage to the edge to the interlace on the south side (Fig.4.CS6.8). The roll mouldings of the shaft are relatively intact, with some minor damage to the carved panels. From an art historical perspective, the shaft carvings are in good condition and their interpretation has not been compromised by any of the damage.

The head of the cross has suffered catastrophic damage with a loss of half of the original material. The damage is not the result of weathering or falling over, as considerable force was required to shatter the stone into many pieces, three of which have survived; the lowest part of the east face with the torso of Christ, the main part of the head with the head of Christ including the two arms and the east face of the upper arm. The main break follows a diagonal line from the chest of the Christ figure in a downward direction towards the back of the cross (Fig.4.CS6.6). Despite the losses, a surprising amount of the distinctive carving

survived, which facilitated the correct reassembly of the cross. It is likely that this damage occurred sometime after the head was separated from the shaft of the cross. This theory is based on a comparison of the good state of preservation of the shaft indicating that it was at that time in a safer location. The difference in condition may be because the head was targeted due to the imagery, and once this came off there was less concern with the non-religious imagery on the shaft. The largest surviving piece of the head retained the crucifixion figure on the east face, part of a marigold pattern on the west or back face and the two arms. Sufficient evidence of the vertical rolls on the sides, back and face of the head survived to allow these unusual design features to be understood (Fig.4.CS6.21).⁷³⁷ The condition of the carvings on the ends of the arms are quite different, the animal interlace on the end of the south arm survives despite the removal of the roll moulding but the interlace on the end of the north arm is smooth with considerable loss of detail (Fig.4.CS6.21). The removal of the roll mouldings on the ends of the arms is likely to have taken place before the cross as broken when the head of the cross was on top of the shaft and four sides of the ends of the arms accessible. The end of the north arm is smooth, while the carvings on the end of the south arm retain definition suggesting that the north arm was exposed to touch while the other arm remained inaccessible, perhaps buried in the ground. The head of Christ has survived but the features of the face are smooth suggesting that face was deliberately damaged and then, in a similar fashion to the base, smoothened out by subsequent rubbing. A curious feature of the cross is the three regularly drilled round recesses on the east face; one centrally located on the chest of the figure, a second partially survives on the broken surface of the north arm and a third is on the shaft to the left of Christ's torso (Fig.4.CS6.5). The central recess appears to be part of the original design but due to their irregular placement, the other two may be secondary. A further series of four, square, holes are located on the top section of the two arms, two to each side, located between the rolls. Their regular placement suggests that they are part of the original design and used to attach a decoration to the cross. The front part of the draped garment which lies over the lower part of the torso of Christ is worn smooth. Although the fragment is damaged sufficient carved detail survives to understand the arrangement of the horizontal roll mouldings, the figure of Christ and the pelleting.

This case study demonstrates how different patterns of survival can be understood by examining the physical condition of the parts that have suffered significantly different

737. For a discussion of these mouldings see Ó Floinn, "The 'Market Cross' at Glendalough," 96–97.

impacts. Although little is known of their narratives before they were gathered into the safety of St Kevin's church, a certain amount of their history can be ventured with a degree of certainty. It is likely that the base remained exposed to day-to-day wear and tear for a longer period than either the head or the shaft. The shaft was protected, possibly by burial, from the impacts of weathering, tourists and pilgrims. It appears to have suffered iconoclastic damage to the head of the figure, which may have prompted its protection. The removal of the rectangular sections and the roll moulding pre-dated the hiding of the shaft as the carving remain sharp and legible. The head of the cross has had the most traumatic history having suffered a violent attack, possibly during or after its separation from the shaft. The condition of the carvings on the head, where they survive, are not as good as the shaft but they are considerably better than those on the base. Fortunately, the survival of the unusual roll mouldings and the detail of the figure allowed the fragments to be identified as part of the whole.

The original location of the cross remains the subject of speculation, as does the time and the sequence at which the cross was dismembered. After the Reformation, the cross may have been a target for iconoclasts who damaged the faces of the figures and broke the head of the cross. Glendalough attracted large crowds on the pattern day which generated a violent and possibly sectarian response from the local sheriff and the Protestant community which may have endangered the cross. The most damaging impacts may have resulted from its importance as a pilgrimage site for over a thousand years and the veneration attached to relics of St Kevin. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the vogue for the picturesque established Glendalough as a tourist 'honey pot' which lead to further abuse of the physical remains of the monastic setting. The development of tourism brought an additional monetary value to the surviving 'relics' of St Kevin which was exploited by the local people. During the later nineteenth century antiquarian interest in the fragments led to their collection and survival. It is remarkable that sufficient fragments of the cross survived to facilitate its re-assembly and identification in the chronology of the later Irish crosses.

4.7. Case study 7. The market cross, Armagh, Co. Wicklow. (CS7)

4.7.1. Background.

The city of Armagh is the ecclesiastical capital of both the Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church, and the two archbishops are also Primates of All Ireland. The city's authority is derived from its association with St Patrick, who allegedly described it as 'the place he loved more than any other.'⁷³⁸ The street plan of Armagh retains the outline of the early medieval monastic enclosures with the marketplace and cross at the eastern entrance (Fig.4.CS7.1). The early manuscript sources contain descriptions of at least nine named crosses but the actual number was probably less than that.⁷³⁹ Throughout the medieval period, St. Patrick's crozier, known as the *Bachall Iosa* and his bell were used to assert the authority of Armagh and to grant indulgences and witness oaths.⁷⁴⁰ After the Reformation, the *Bachall Iosa* was burned in Dublin in 1538 by Archbishop George Browne in an act of reforming zeal but St. Patrick's bell and the Book of Armagh survived.⁷⁴¹ The crosses were not portable objects and the only survivors are the so called market cross and the stump of a shaft and a base outside the cathedral but the fate of the others is unknown.

Throughout the later medieval period, the connection to St Patrick remained important as in 1407, a land deal between Arthur O'Neill and the Church in Armagh was sealed by swearing on 'the gospels, the crosses of St Patrick and many other relics.'⁷⁴² Traditional ecclesiastical life continued under the patronage of the Irish Gaelic chieftains as Armagh remained outside Anglo-Norman and English control until the seventeenth century.⁷⁴³ The end of the nine years war and the departure of Hugh O'Neill (c.1550–1616) in 1607 marked the beginning of the Ulster Plantation and the transfer of the ecclesiastical structures in Armagh to the Protestant Church of Ireland. According to James Stuart, the city was burnt

738. Chris Lynn and Jacqueline McDowell, "The Oldest City in Ireland," in *Pieces of the Past*, Ann Hamlin and Chris Lynn, eds. (Belfast: H.M. Stationary Office, 1988), 58.

739. Mc Cullagh and Crawford, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Armagh*. The crosses are named as the Northern cross, the Southern cross, the Ardachaid cross, the cross of Brigit, the cross of Bishop Eógan, the cross of Columcille, the cross of St. Sechnall, the market cross, the cross of the door of the close and the cross of Kings. The number of crosses is unknown, as several different names could be associated with the same cross.

740. Myles V. Ronan, "St. Patrick's Staff and Christ Church," *Dublin Historical Record* 5, no.4, (June–August 1943): 121–29.

741. Ronan, "St. Patrick's Staff and Christ Church," 128–29

742. Brendan Smith, ed. *The Register of Nicholas Fleming, Archbishop of Armagh, 1404–16* (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2003), 36.

743. Fitzpatrick, "Rethinking Settlement Values in Gaelic Society," 71–76.

down sixteen times between 672 and 1642, initially due to territorial wars between the northern chieftains, and later because of its strategic position on the front line during the seven years war.⁷⁴⁴ The city was burned in 1557 by the English Lord Deputy, Thomas Radclyffe (1525–1583) who spared the cathedral and rebuilt the city but Shane O’Neill destroyed them both in 1566.⁷⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, by 1575, the cathedral was ‘all down’ and the town ‘miserable.’⁷⁴⁶

The first evidence that any of the crosses survived into the early modern period is in a 1602 map of Armagh (Fig.4.CS7.2) by the military cartographer Richard Bartlett.⁷⁴⁷ His image of Armagh shows a city in ruins, the large cathedral on the highest point in the city is partially unroofed and surrounded by the empty shells of ecclesiastical buildings. Bartlett’s map showed a surprising survivor, a cross standing outside the partially destroyed wall of the ecclesiastical enclosure. (Fig.4.CS7.3) It stands on a large solid base indicating its monastic origin rather than the standard stepped type associated with market crosses used by cartographers. (Fig.2.5) The cross is depicted as a ‘Latin’ type, without a ring, but it may have already lost the upper part, which is missing in the later images of the cross. A large pile of loose stones are heaped in front of the base emphasising the miraculous nature of its survival amidst the chaos. This location, at entrance to the cathedral complex, is the expected place for a ‘market’ cross of monastic origin in a town that developed from an early monastery and it may also be the cross that was named ‘the cross at the door of the rath’ in the year 1166.⁷⁴⁸

Armagh was incorporated as a borough in 1613 as part of the Plantation of Ulster and the survival of a market cross was likely due to its association with the commercial and civic life of the town. However, Armagh was an exception to the normal administrative arrangements, as the Archbishop retained ownership of the cathedral city and the right to organise fairs and markets.⁷⁴⁹ In a survey of 1618, a house was described as ‘in the back

744 Christopher Mohan, “Archbishop Richard Robinson Builder of Armagh,” *Seanchas Ardmhach*, 6, no.1 (1971): 105.

745. McCullagh and Crawford, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Armagh*, 1–2.

746. McCullagh and Crawford, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Armagh*, 1–2.

747. Richard Bartlett, *Plan of Armagh City and Mountjoy Fort on the Blackwater River*. 1602, Dublin, NLI, MS, 2656. (3); J. H. Andrews, *The Queen’s Last Map Maker*, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2008), 30–31, 106.

748. *AU*, ii, 153. See Chapter 2.3.1.

749. McCullagh and Crawford, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Armagh*, 13.

lane from the cross' indicating it was standing in the town⁷⁵⁰ Further grants for markets were obtained by Archbishop Ussher in 1634 who 'warned all parties that Armagh was the property of the archbishop and no one should dare to take any initiative there without his knowledge and approval.'⁷⁵¹ The cross may have benefited from the protection of the church as its survival underpinned Archbishop Ussher's theory that St. Patrick was the founder of the Church of Ireland.⁷⁵² A later account of property rentals from 1660 described a number of leases located in 'Cross Street' but the cross itself may not have been standing after the events of the 1640s.⁷⁵³ There is little factual detail from the late seventeenth century but tradition says that the cross was overthrown during this turbulent time.⁷⁵⁴ The cross was 'down' in 1744 when the Corporation of Armagh arranged for it to be 'erected securely in its original position above the ancient well' but within twenty years they paid to have it 'raised' again and repaired in 1763.⁷⁵⁵ Another account gives the different date of 1756 for its re-erection.⁷⁵⁶ A description, written in 1796–97, claimed that 'a few years ago, among some ruins was found an ancient cross of stone in one piece, with strange looking figures thereon carved....It has been erected in the market place.'⁷⁵⁷

The importance of retaining a market cross in the square after the Plantation of Ulster might be explained by the tradition of swearing oaths and payment of rents on a sacred object. The tomb of Strongbow in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin was a popular locus for the swearing of oaths and payment of rents being 'within sight of the Holy Cross.'⁷⁵⁸ It was destroyed during the seventeenth century, but following the return of English control, the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, instructed that a suitable ancient replacement was procured from one of the dissolved houses at Drogheda and brought to Dublin as a replacement. The

750. Michael Glancy, "The Incidence of the Plantation of the City of Armagh," in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, 1, no. 2 (1955): 120.

751. McCullagh and Crawford, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Armagh*, 2.

752. See chapter 3 for a discussion of Archbishop Ussher's role in promoting the Patrician foundation of the Church of Ireland.

753. Michael Glancy, "The Incidence of the Plantation of the City of Armagh," 134.

754. Christopher Mohan, "Archbishop Richard Robinson Builder of Armagh," *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 6, no.1 (1971): 105.

755. T. G. F. Paterson, "Old St. Malachy," *Seanchas Ardmhacha* 1, no. 2 (1955): 190.

756. Paterson, "Old St. Malachy," 190.

757. De Latocnaye, *A Frenchman's Walk through Ireland 1796–7*, trans, John Stevenson (Belfast, McCaw, Stevenson & Orr, 1917), 256.

758. Walter Fitzgerald, "Dublin: Christ Church Cathedral," *JAPMDI*, 7 (1908): 299–300.

symbolic role of the tomb was retained despite the substitution and the function continued until the restoration of the cathedral in 1871.⁷⁵⁹

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the significance of the cross as a landmark can be seen in Rocque's detailed map of the city in 1760, which named it in the legend (Fig.4.CS7.4). The city had prospered under the generous patronage of Richard Robinson (1709–1794) who became Archbishop of Armagh in 1765. He was described as an Englishman 'of moderate principals' who respected the history and traditions of the city rather than an 'early Protestant bigot of a Scotchman.'⁷⁶⁰ Robinson's ambitious building programme included an extensive renovation of the cathedral. Despite his patronage, when Richard Twiss visited the town in 1775 he made only two observations; 'the cross of two stones with old basso-relievos, representing Christ on the cross between the two thieves and some ingenious fret-work' and the 'presence of a single church despite its archbishopric status.'⁷⁶¹ Twiss attempted to interpret the carvings on the cross but his remarks were confined to the carvings on the head and there is no mention of those on the shaft.

On July 2nd 1813, the cross was 'prostrated at night and broken into pieces by some miscreants actuated by motives of bigotry and party spleen.'⁷⁶² A more lurid account of the night described how 'a few wretches, styling themselves *Bible* Christians, tore it down for the last time and shattered it in fragments so that its re-erection might be impossible'⁷⁶³ The fate of the various missing pieces of the cross is unknown, although some fragments were brought into the cathedral churchyard. The large base was 'no longer useful' and, as it was difficult to remove, was 'blown into fragments with gunpowder.'⁷⁶⁴ In 1860, the Rev. William Reeves described the surviving parts as a 'pillar' that had 'long being lying neglected and treated pretty much like rubbish.'⁷⁶⁵ He complained about this condition as the fragments were 'prostrate and dismembered' when 'mural tablets of very questionable

⁷⁵⁹ John Hunt, *Irish Medieval Figure Sculpture, 1200–1600*, 2 vols (Dublin, 1974), 1:136; 2:Figs. 2, 17; C.L. Kingsford, ed. *Report on the manuscripts of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley: preserved at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols (London, 1925–66), I, 433.

⁷⁶⁰ Mohan, "Archbishop Richard Robinson Builder of Armagh," 105–9.

⁷⁶¹ Richard Twiss, *A Tour in Ireland in 1775* (London: printed for the author, 1776), 77.

⁷⁶² Paterson, "Old St. Malachy," 190.

⁷⁶³ John Gallogly, *The History of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh*, (Dublin: Gill & Sons, 1880), 146.

⁷⁶⁴ James Stuart, *Historical Memoirs of the City of Armagh* (Newry: Lonfmans, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819), 510.

⁷⁶⁵ William Reeves, "The Ancient churches of Armagh: Read before the Armagh Natural History and Philosophical Society on the 14th March 1860," *UJA* 4, no.4 (July 1898): 213.

merit....and of modern date... are comfortably housed and exhibited in the cathedral.’⁷⁶⁶ In 1880 the arms of the cross were described in rather vague terms as having been seen ‘some time ago and perhaps at present’ in the graveyard of the Protestant Cathedral.⁷⁶⁷

In 1916, two of the surviving sections, the lower part of the head and the shaft, were re-assembled in the cathedral but the central part of the head remained detached.⁷⁶⁸ (Fig.4.CS.5) In 1955, when Helen Roe described the iconography of the re-assembled cross the head of the cross was described as ‘close by on the floor’; it is now mounted on two pillars.⁷⁶⁹ One face of the head can no longer be seen as it is positioned directly against the wall but fortunately Peter Harbison photographed both sides before the current arrangement was put in place.⁷⁷⁰ The reassembled cross is located in the west end of the north aisle of the cathedral surrounded by the furniture, memorials and notices of community life. The location in the market square, where the cross once stood, is now marked by a new plain granite ringed cross placed there as part of major environmental improvement scheme carried out by the Department of the Environment in the early 90s (Fig.4.CS7.6). This project confirmed that the location of the market cross is still a significant part of the urban landscape of the city.

4.7.2. Structure.

When the cross was knocked in 1813 three substantial fragments survived including two large fragments of the head and part of the shaft. The three fragments are made from the same type of sandstone and have a similar appearance and colour. For clarity, the two sections of the head will be described as ‘the head’ and ‘the lower section of the head’ while the third surviving part of the original cross is referred to as ‘the shaft.’ The head is separate, but the re-assembled shaft and the lower section of the head will be referred to as ‘the cross’ (Fig.4.CS7.7). They are connected by a large mortar joint which was needed to compensate for the missing material. The cross is mounted on top of a modern stepped base in the north transept of St. Patrick’s cathedral. Bell’s engraving, discussed below, confirms that the upper part of the re-assembled cross, as currently arranged, was the lower section of the head (Fig.4.CS7.8)

766. Reeves, “The Ancient Churches of Armagh,” 213.

767. Gallogly, *The History of St. Patrick’s Cathedral*, 146–47.

768. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2:Figs 50–51.

769. Roe and Glancy, “Antiquities of the Archdiocese of Armagh,” 109.

770. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2:Figs 50–51.

Peter Harbison described the cross as ‘composite’ partly due to the mismatched proportions between the lower part of the head and the shaft, but also due to the differences in size between the bars separating the panels on the two pieces.⁷⁷¹ He noted that the figures on the lower section of the shaft were executed in higher relief than those on the head. Usually, the identification of a composite cross is straightforward, but the evidence is less clear in the case of the Armagh cross. The head and the lower section of the head belong together and the omission of the head from the reconstruction was perhaps due to the physical complexity and cost of the task.

4.7.3. Historic images.

One of the earliest images of the cross, from 1804, (Fig.4.CS7.9) is found in a distinctly non-antiquarian publication dedicated to ‘observations on the means of improvement’ of Co. Armagh drawn up the Dublin Society.⁷⁷² The cross is shown with framed panels, which contain improbable, mysterious symbols and scenes, described as ‘much obliterated’ and a ‘kind of rude ornamental fret-work rather than any distinct characters.’⁷⁷³ A more accurate and skilful pencil drawing by Charles Varley from 1808 showed the urban context in which the cross was located, standing detached from its surroundings on a steep slope in the market place (Fig.4.CS7.10). This image confirms that the cross consisted of four pieces; a rough stone pedestal, a pyramidal stone base, the shaft and the head (Fig.4.CS7.11). It shows the volume of material that has been lost since the cross was ‘thrown down.’ The head and the shaft are not aligned indicating that the parts are either from different crosses or a middle section is missing. The roll mouldings on the corners of the shaft are missing, indicated by a jagged line but they appear to survive on the head. Two vertical iron bands are shown which join the mismatched shaft and the head together. The iconography on the west face of the head is clearly identifiable but the details of the panels on the shaft are less clear. In terms of size and scale, the stepped base appears to be an original part of the cross but a series of vertical lines on the face appear to be drill marks from quarrying. The prominent location of the cross and its role as a landmark is confirmed in a contemporary oil painting

771. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:20.

772. The illustration of the cross is amongst five others showing ploughs, a harrow, a hay hoist and a cromlech. Sir Charles Coote, *Statistical Survey of the County of Armagh with Observations on the means of Improvement under the Direction of the Dublin Society* (Dublin: Craisberry and Campbell, 1804), 320.

773. Coote, *Statistical Survey of the County of Armagh*, 321.

from 1810 which shows a distant view of the town, including a perhaps exaggeratedly large market cross clearly visible in the open space of the market place (Fig.4.CS7.12).

An engraving dated 1812 by John Bell (Fig.4.CS7.13), published after the cross was ‘thrown down’, in Stuart’s *Historic Memoir* of 1819 shows a rather idealised view of the cross without any missing roll mouldings and with the shaft and the head perfectly aligned.⁷⁷⁴ The base of the cross is shown as a regular rectangle sitting on top of a rough boulder with a flat top. There is no evidence of the iron straps used to hold the cross together but the details of the iconography on the east and north faces are clearly drawn and show the opposite side to the one shown by Varley. The two parts of the cross in the cathedral are reassembled according to the arrangement shown in Bell’s engraving, which was probably considered to be a reliable source of information about the arrangements of the cross and contributed to the myth that it had been in good condition before the attack.

In 1852, Henry Dryden made two pen and ink illustrations of the three pieces of the cross which had been placed in the cathedral yard, the same three pieces that survive today. (Fig.4.CS7.14 & Fig.4.CS7.15) Dryden added a later note to the drawing to say that he had not seen the etching in ‘Stuart’s book’ which showed the cross in a ‘more perfect state’ and that he had ‘laid the pieces in this order and drew them before I saw it.’⁷⁷⁵ The lower section of the head has now been shorn of the two surviving stumps of the ring which Dryden illustrated in 1852. The panel frames on the right-hand side of the east face are now lined up to create a convincing match between the parts. (Fig.4.CS7.16) Bell showed a short, seemingly complete, panel above and below the joint but omitted the surviving section of a cut panel on the lower part of the head (Fig.4.CS7.16). The large, easily identifiable, circular recess in the head of the cross shown in Varley’s drawing of the west face is now on the upper part of the cross (Fig.4.CS7.17) and the square recess on the west face of the lower part of the head is identifiable as the top end of the iron band.

4.7.4. Discussion.

Peter Harbison’s description of how the ‘disturbing history’ of the three surviving pieces of the cross have ‘left its scar’ is certainly appropriate.⁷⁷⁶ The upper section of the shaft of the cross is missing as the top panel has been cut back leaving the damaged lower part visible

⁷⁷⁴. Stuart, *Historical memoirs of the City of Armagh*, 147; Paterson, “Old St. Malachy,” 105.

⁷⁷⁵. H. Dryden, February 1852, *RIA*, drawing 3D2 (51)

⁷⁷⁶. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:19.

on the north, south and east face (Fig.4.CS7.18 - Fig.4.CS7.21). The corner roll mouldings have been removed except for a small surviving section on the north-west corner (Fig.4.CS7.20). This extensive removal has damaged the on the right side of the interlace pattern on the north face moulding (Fig.4.CS7.20 & Fig.CS7.22). On the east face, the three complete panels are in better condition and more easily identified than those on the opposite west face⁷⁷⁷ (Fig.4.CS7.18 & Fig.4.CS7.20). The carvings on the north face of the shaft are in better condition than those directly above on the lower part of the head which are illegible (Fig.4.CS7.23). On the opposite south face, the rough removal of the roll mouldings has resulted in severe damage, leaving the iconography barley legible (Fig.4.CS7.24). A shallow, hemispherical recess was cut into the left-hand side of the third panel on the west face of the shaft (Fig.4.CS7.20 & CS7.25). The edges are relatively sharp, and its position indicates that it is secondary. The tenon of the shaft survived and is shown on two earlier images but with different dimensions (Fig.4.CS7.26). A number of small square holes associated with the iron straps will be discussed below.

The lower part of the head is a solid, roughly rectangular piece of stone, which has lost a great deal of its carvings as well as much of the roll mouldings on the corners. The principal difference between the parts that survive today and Dryden's drawing from 1852 is that the two small surviving stubs of the ring have been removed or 'tidied up' (Fig.4.CS7.14 & Fig.CS7.15). Dryden showed a shallow tenon on the base of the head of the cross, which is unlikely to be the original one due to its location at the mid-point of an iconographical panel. The tenon may be associated with the eighteenth-century reconstruction and was cut without any regard for the carvings. The carvings on the south face have been extensively damaged, although it is still possible to identify two beasts with curved backs with two human heads underneath (Fig.4.CS7.27). A small square recess was cut into the stone, just below the lower beast, to hold the end of the iron strap (Fig.4.CS7.28). The west face has a deep circular recess (not hemispherical) with sharp sides which is roughly centred in the upper panel (Fig.4.CS7.29). The carvings on the west face have been interpreted by Peter Harbison as four rows of six heads and their condition deteriorates significantly from the bottom to the top of the panel. A small square shape has been cut into the face of the stone above the first line of heads which secured the end of the iron straps (Fig.4.CS7.30). The north and east faces also have a deeper centrally positioned

777. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2:50–51, 19–23; Roe and Glancy, "Antiquities of the Archdiocese of Armagh," 108–110.

square recesses (Fig.4.CS7.19). If Bell's engraving of the east face in 1812 is accurate, the surviving carvings have since lost a great deal of material and definition (Fig.4.CS7.16). Although the roll mouldings and the frames of the panels have been roughly removed, Bell showed the upper panel as complete, but the right side is now missing and may have been 'cleaned up' as the edges of the area that was removed are sharp and straight. The distinctive lower frame of the panel steps down and can be seen on both the surviving piece and in the engraving. The lowest broken panel has three heads below the frame whereas Bell omitted this half panel completely to give the impression that the cross was complete.

The now separate head is a substantial piece of stone measuring 1.2m across, 0.85m high and 0.34m deep. It is supported on two modern pedestals and positioned against the wall between a radiator and a memorial, so that only the east face is visible (Fig.4.CS7.31). Bell's engraving shows the complete composition (Fig.4.CS7.13) consisting of the crucifixion scene with bossed decorations at the constriction.⁷⁷⁸ There are two shallow hemispherical depressions cut into the face of the head (Fig.4.CS7.32 & Fig.4.CS7.33). The west face, which is turned towards the wall was drawn by Varley and photographed by Peter Harbison.⁷⁷⁹ (Fig.4.CS7.34) The entire north arm, which was illustrated by both Varley and Bell, is missing, as well as the end of the south arm (Fig.4.CS7.11 & Fig.4.CS7.13). The upper arm/capstone was missing in the earlier illustrations.

Despite the extensive loss of corner roll mouldings, the surviving carvings can still be interpreted as shown in by Harbison and Megan Henvey.⁷⁸⁰ The date of the removal of the roll mouldings is uncertain but the process was methodical and thorough on all three surviving pieces. It is likely that it took place when the cross was vertical as all sides are equally damaged. The removal on the main east and west faces was executed without extensive damage to the carved panels but the narrower north and south faces suffered greater losses of the frames and panel details. Given the high platform on which the cross was raised after 1744, the removal may have happened before this date.

The analysis of the three pieces raises the question of whether all the parts belong to a single cross or come from two different crosses. Harbison has described the cross unequivocally as a composite cross and provided his reasons, quoted above. Henvey

⁷⁷⁸ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:20.

⁷⁷⁹ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2: Fig. 51.

⁷⁸⁰ Henvey, "The High Crosses of 'Northern Ireland,'" 106–44.

considered all the pieces to be from the same monument despite some difficulties with the iconography of the fourth panel on the east side (Daniel in the lion's den), which does not match that on the panel above (human heads).⁷⁸¹ Her theory is that, despite the historic images, the east face of the upper section has been orientated incorrectly and may be the west face. The historical images of Varley and Bell showed a flat horizontal joint between the head and the shaft with a surviving half panel on the top of the shaft. The majority of crosses that have a horizontal joint between different sections also have complete iconographical panels above and below the line of the junction although abstract panels often continue across a joint.⁷⁸² If the alignment of the parts was askew, either a blank half panel might be inserted on the top of the shaft to complete the composition, or the design was adjusted to create a smooth transition. The tall cross at Monasterboice has a half panel above a complete panel to make up the distance to the joint whereas evidence the Drumcliff cross has an extra deep horizontal bar to make the fit (Fig.4.CS7.35). In both of these examples there is a degree of awkwardness around the joint but more research is needed to examine this type of arrangement. At Armagh, the lower part of the head of the cross and the top of the shaft have mismatched half panels at the junction, which implies that broken uneven surfaces have been cut back to create a level horizontal surface and, possibly, to create a new mortice and tenon joint to facilitate the reconstruction. This cropping of the two pieces is likely to have happened when the cross was re-erected in 1744 or when repaired in 1759 or 1763 and could explain the misalignment of the surface planes of the carvings, i.e. the smooth transition between the two pieces has been interrupted by the removal of material from both pieces. The other possibility is that the head is from a different cross, which was adapted to fit on top of the shaft of the cross which may have survived in the market place.⁷⁸³ Both theories explain how the four carved faces of the lower section of the head are on a different vertical plane to those on the shaft.

The small square recesses on the lower part of the head can be explained by the iron straps which Varley drew in 1808, used to link the head and shaft. But there is a difficulty with the ones on the shaft, which do not match the pattern shown by in the image (Fig.4.CS7.36). In the present arrangement, the recesses are on the lowest panels of the

781. Henvey, "The High Crosses of 'Northern Ireland'," 114–15.

782. Iconographical images do not cross over the joint but are complete within a frame on each part of the cross. The Downpatrick cross has a half panel on the base where it was re-cut to make a new tenon.

783. Stuart, *Historical Memoirs*, 509.

shaft implying that it was upside down in Varley's drawing (Fig.4.CS7.37). The detail of the iconographical panels on the head are legible in Varley's drawing (the west face) but those on the shaft are rather vague and difficult to identify (Fig.4.CS7.8). The presence of a substantial tenon on the lower part of the shaft means that if the shaft was upside down, this tenon was inserted into a mortice on the underside of the head. This theory is further complicated by the shallow tenon on the underside of the lower part of the head in Dryden's drawing. This could indicate the tip of a broken tenon still secured in the mortice or a broken tenon which makes the inversion of the shaft impossible as there is also a tenon on the base. The evidence of the surviving parts (tenons on two parts that could not have been joined) and the historical material (evidence of square recess and straps which are consistent with the shaft being inverted) are contradictory. However, it should be noted that the relationship and location of the mortice and tenon did not follow a fixed pattern and varied between different crosses.⁷⁸⁴

Varley also showed that the cross was erected on a rough stone base which was placed on top of a large boulder. Stuart said that the cross was re-erected about the year 1763 when it was 'placed in the centre of the street on a large block of calcareous stone', which implies that it was a new stone.⁷⁸⁵ The lower stone has the appearance of an erratic boulder while the upper stone base has a roughly stepped pyramidal shape which could be the original early medieval base. The ensemble is rather unusual and, without some strong internal connections to hold it all together on sloping ground, the four parts of the cross would have been an unstable structure. The use of the erratic boulder is reminiscent of an inauguration stone.

The three parts of the Armagh cross have a further anomaly, which is the circular recesses of various depths and diameters cut into the face of the carvings (Fig.4.CS7.38). There are four in total and they appear to be secondary as they vary in size and depth. The deepest one is centrally positioned on the west face of the lower section of the head whereas the remaining three are hemispherical and cut across carved panels. On the west face of the shaft, the recess is positioned to the bottom left of the panel and cut into the carvings. Harbison interpreted this panel as the *Baptism of Christ* and described it as 'badly damaged' due to the presence of the secondary circle.⁷⁸⁶ Henvey concurred with this interpretation of

784. The broken cross at Kells has a mortice on the top of the shaft so the missing head had a tenon on the lower part.

785. Stuart, *Historical Memoirs*, 509–10.

786. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:20–21.

the iconography but incorporated the circle into the design, describing it ‘part of the original scheme, depicting the source of the Jordan’ while agreeing that the other three are secondary.⁷⁸⁷ It is unlikely that one of the four is original, while the other three are secondary as the position of three of the circles on the faces of the carvings appears to be random. The circle on the west face of the lower part of the head is more likely to be original given its (almost) central position. There is no obvious explanation for their function and they are another conundrum associated with this cross.

When the condition survey of the cross is analysed in conjunction with various images it is clear that there are many lacunae in its known history. The physical evidence contradicts some of the visual images, casting doubt on the current arrangements of the parts. The question of whether it was made from one or two crosses cannot be definitively answered but the difference in the proportions of the two parts indicates that this could be the case. The survival of an additional shaft fragment and base in the church yard confirms the former existence and partial survival of at least one other cross in Armagh. The loss of much of the original material after 1813 and its unrecorded reassembly in 1816 add to the uncertainty. The known facts and records relating to the cross demonstrate that all assumptions need to be questioned and that the truth about actual events is often illusive.

787. Henvey, “The High Crosses of ‘Northern Ireland,’” Fig. 3.67b, 132–33.

4.8. Case study 8. The market cross, Downpatrick, Co. Down. (CS8)

4.8.1. Background.

Downpatrick was an early medieval ecclesiastical foundation, of which little is known before the second half of the eighth century, when the names of some of its abbots are recorded in the annals.⁷⁸⁸ It is associated with the burial place of St Patrick, although the earliest evidence for this claim dates from 1043.⁷⁸⁹ The earliest survivals from this period are fragments of four ninth/tenth century stone crosses; a round tower remained standing until the eighteenth century.⁷⁹⁰ Following the Anglo-Norman invasion, Downpatrick's status as a pilgrimage site was enhanced c. 1185 when John De Courcy (d. c.1219) 'located' the bodies of Saints Patrick, Brigid and Colm Cille and re-interred them in the cathedral.⁷⁹¹ De Courcy built a new cathedral and priory, administered by Benedictine monks from England, which ensured its position as *ecclesia inter anglos* and a rival pilgrimage centre to Armagh as *ecclesia inter hibernos*.⁷⁹² The new buildings were positioned to avoid the round tower and presumably the other remains of the early ecclesiastical foundation, namely the crosses.(Fig.4.CS8.1). Downpatrick, unlike other towns of monastic origin, did not develop a marketplace to the east of the ecclesiastical enclosure, due to its location on the top of a drumlin (Fig.4.CS8.2) with limited access except by a steep road to the east.⁷⁹³ However, the market cross is believed to have stood at the bottom of Cathedral Hill directly to the east of the early monastic enclosure.

In 1538, the cathedral, the shrines and graves of the saints were destroyed by Lord Deputy Grey (d. 1541) who had been appointed by Henry VIII to assert his authority in Ireland as supreme head of the Church.⁷⁹⁴ It is unlikely that the stone crosses in the vicinity of the cathedral escaped unscathed but the market cross in the town, as discussed in Chapter 2, may have survived. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1542, the Bishop/Prior accepted Henry as the head of the Church and the properties of the monastery were seized

788. AU, (2) 93, 209, 235.

789. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 68–69.

790. Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick, 1*; Hamlin, *The Early Christianity of the North of Ireland*, 293–95.

791. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 105–6.

792. Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, 69, 105–6.

793. Raymond Gillespie, "Colonial Towns, 1500–1700: Carrickfergus, Downpatrick and Belfast," in *More Maps and Texts: Sources and the Irish Historic Towns Atlas* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2018), 188–92; Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick*, 1–3.

794. Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick*, 4.

by the crown.⁷⁹⁵ The cathedral status was transferred to Lisburn but the enthronements and installations of bishops and deans continued in the ruined cathedral in Downpatrick indicating a strong attachment to the site and its traditional association with St Patrick.⁷⁹⁶

Downpatrick retained a large Catholic population throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, so practices associated with the cross were tolerated.⁷⁹⁷ An account from 1617 described a Catholic funeral where the bier was ‘carried about the cross in the midst of the towne.’⁷⁹⁸ This was likely the market cross, as the practice of making a funeral circuit around a cross was part of the burial ritual in many towns.⁷⁹⁹ The procession was carried out in a ‘ceremonious and popish manner’, which would not have endeared the cross to the authorities but in Downpatrick these habits were hard to suppress as it was an ‘old’ town, like Armagh and Derry, i.e. not a plantation town.

The town was sacked in 1641 and 1646 and, when order was restored, a new market house was built in 1660 as an indicator of future prosperity.⁸⁰⁰ A map from 1720 shows the market house strategically positioned at the center of the town in the ‘market house quarter’ where four streets intersect (Fig.4.CS8.3). A small black circle stands in the center of the intersections which is not named but likely to be the market cross. The cathedral, which had been ruined since 1642, was restored between 1790 and 1818 (Fig.4.CS8.4) but the round tower, which stood to the west of the cathedral, was demolished in 1789 or 1790 indicating a less sentimental attitude to the past. Round towers are generally extremely structural stable due to their thick walls and interlocked masonry construction. The cross was reportedly removed from the centre of the street in 1729 and by 1744 it was reported to be in several pieces.⁸⁰¹ Walter Harris described that ‘near the courthouse in the street lie several pieces of an old stone cross, on the shaft of which is carved a Crucifix or image of Jesus; it is generally called the market cross.’⁸⁰² He was doubtful that its original location was in the town as he

795. Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick*, 4.

796. Edward Parkinson, “Enthronements and Installations in the Cathedral of Down whilst in Ruins,” *UJA*, 2nd ser., 4, no.4 (July 1898): 236–39.

797. Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick*, 12.

798. Brian Mac Cuarta, “A Catholic Funeral in Co. Down, 1617,” *Archiv. Hib60* (2006–2007): 324.

799. In Fethard, Co. Tipperary the procession went around the pump in the market place, which was the site of an earlier cross. James Mooney, “The Funeral Customs of Ireland,” *American Philosophical Society* 25, no.128 (Jul–Dec., 1888): 286.

800. Buchanan and Wilson, *Irish Historic Town Atlas, Downpatrick*, 12.

801. J. T. Cleland, *Annals of Downpatrick 1846*, PRONI, D1167/18/2.

802. Walter Harris and Charles Smith, *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Down*, (Dublin: Williamson, 1744), 32.

assumed that ‘it stood in one of the church yards, and was erected for superstitious purposes.’ The three surviving parts were described as ‘the pedestal is one solid cube of stone, the shaft is five feet high and the cross, i.e. the head, about four feet high.’⁸⁰³ An account from 1837 by Jonathan Binns reported a brisk trade in soil from St. Patrick’s grave, reputed to have miraculous powers.⁸⁰⁴ On his visit he took ‘a piece of a cross for my museum’ at the request of ‘a good woman who showed me the relics.’⁸⁰⁵ It may have been a loose stone from the building work or the demolished round tower rather than a genuine piece of a cross but it was substantial enough to merit inclusion in a museum.

Sometime before 1897, the antiquarians Francis Joseph Bigger (1863–1926) and William Fennell (1850–1923) became interested in the remains of the cross, which were by then in the possession of three different people in the town.⁸⁰⁶ Under Bigger and Fennell’s direction, the head and the shaft were successfully reunited. The mortice in the base of the cross had been hollowed out for use as a horse trough, which created structural challenges for its reintegration with the shaft. Bigger described how this cavity was filled up and then covered over completely by a newly cut stone base.⁸⁰⁷ The location for the re-erected cross appeared to be based on Harris’s vague reference to the cross having come originally from the church yard of the cathedral. The Dean and Chapter offered a prominent location to the east of the Cathedral although Bigger was certain that it had stood at the crossroads in the center of the town.⁸⁰⁸ In effect, the erection of the cross on the cathedral grounds transferred ownership to the Church of Ireland.

The cross remained in this location until December 2013 when, due to concerns regarding its condition, it was removed for conservation and eventual re-erection in 2015 in the new gallery in the County Museum. The new ‘Raising the Cross in Down’ exhibition in the museum features the re-erected cross as the centrepiece.⁸⁰⁹ The process of moving of the cross and building the new gallery was led by the museum director Mike King, who

803. Harris and Smith, *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Down*, 32.

804. Jonathan Binns, *The Miseries and Beauties of Ireland*, 2 vols, (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, 1837) 1, 143.

805. Binns, *The Miseries and Beauties of Ireland*, 1: 143.

806. F.J. Bigger and W. Fennell, “The High Cross of Downpatrick,” *UJA*, 2nd ser., 3, no.4 (Jul., 1897): 272.

807. Bigger and Fennell, “The High Cross of Downpatrick,” 273.

808. “Miscellanea, High Cross, Downpatrick,” *JRSAI*, 5th ser., 7, no.3 (Sept 30, 1897): 245.

809. Hayley Humphrey and Mike King, “It’s All in the Presentation,” *Archaeology Ireland* 28, no.110 (Winter 2014): 26–30.

documented the different stages of the project.⁸¹⁰ The Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral confirmed that ownership of the cross had transferred to the cathedral in 1897, by referring to the cross as being 'on loan' to the museum and that approval to move the cross was subject to the provision of a replica.⁸¹¹ Using the latest stone cutting technology, a laser scan of the cross was used to digitally carve the replica from a similar Mourne granite (Fig.4.CS8.5) which was then hand finished.⁸¹² King's documentation of the project included the *in-situ* condition reports required to obtain the relevant official Government approvals and the complex funding arrangements to provide a new physical space for the cross (Fig.4.CS8.6).⁸¹³

4.8.2. Structure.

There are three different versions of the Downpatrick cross, each with a separate physical structure. Bigger and Fennell's 1897 cross (Fig.4.CS7.7) no longer exists as its constituent parts are now incorporated into two other crosses. It consisted of four sections, and will be referred to as the 'original' cross. The shaft is a single piece of weathered granite measuring 1.44m in height and 0.385m x 0.290m in plan. The head is solid piece of stone measuring 0.92m across the arms with an imperforate ring, which may have been a factor in its survival. The top of the upper arm is missing, and it is also likely that a section of the lower part is also missing. The head and the shaft appear to belong together as the depth of the former is 0.27m and the latter is 0.29m. The new pyramidal shaped base was carved to overcome the problems of the too large mortice in the original base. The new base was supported by the fourth and lowest part, thought to be the original base but this is not certain as it may not have belonged to the same cross as the head and the shaft.

The second cross is the granite replica that was installed in April 2015 at the east end of the cathedral. When Cliveden Conservation began the process of dismantling the cross in December 2013, they found that the new base, made in 1897, was firmly joined to the possibly original stone base or 'trough', which was fixed to a concrete foundation.⁸¹⁴

810. Mike King, "Moving the Downpatrick High Cross," *Lecale Review* 10 (2014): 7–12; Mike King, "Sacred Granite –Preserving the Downpatrick High Cross," in *Cultures of Stone*, Gabriel Cooney et Al, eds. (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2020), 181–96.

811. Saving the Downpatrick Cross. <https://youtu.be/K3GSP0Va-PU> Accessed [24 August 2022].

812. King, "Moving the Downpatrick High Cross," 7–12; *ibid.*, "Sacred Granite," 187–88.

813. Mike King, "Down County Museum's Extension Project to House the Downpatrick High Cross," (Unpublished report supplied by Mike King); Graciela Ainsworth, Sculpture Conservation, "Condition Survey and Report on the Downpatrick High Cross," (unpublished report commissioned by Mike King, Down County Museum Curator)

.814 King, "Moving the Downpatrick High Cross," 10.

The two sections (including a time capsule left by Bigger) were left *in situ* to support the new replica. The granite replica matches the original cross and is now weathered so that, unless one was informed otherwise, it would be difficult to know that this was a copy of the original cross (Fig.4.CS7.8).

The third cross is the ‘museum cross’ that was re-erected in the new gallery. This cross included the head and shaft from the original cross, but required a new base as the existing one was left *in situ* to support the replica (Fig.4.CS8.9). In 1931, a hollowed out base of a cross, that was used as a water trough in a yard in English Street, was presented to the cathedral for use as a baptismal font (Fig.4.CS8.10).⁸¹⁵ King decided to use this baptismal font as a template for the new base, as its dimensions approximately matched those recorded by Harris in 1744.⁸¹⁶ The base/font in the cathedral had been cut horizontally so that only the upper half survived which had sunken vertical panels on the outside. The base/font was laser scanned and a new replica was cut based on the assumed original dimension before the horizontal cut (Fig.4.CS8.11). The new base closely resembles the cross base originally from Drumgooland, Co. Down (Fig.4.CS8.12), whose origin is uncertain. It was first recorded built into the gable of the school in Drumadonnell c. 1778 in order to ‘preserve it from utter demolition.’⁸¹⁷ King’s decision to use the cathedral baptismal font as the model for the base of the museum cross was based on the similarity between the cathedral font and the base of the Drumgooland cross (Fig.4.CS8.13), both of which Harbison dated to the late ninth or early tenth century.⁸¹⁸ When the cross was re-erected in the museum it was turned through 180 degrees so that the crucifixion scene, which previously faced east, now was correctly orientated to the west.⁸¹⁹

King also decided to mount a newly cut capstone on the head of the cross based on the evidence of a mortice on the top of the head of the cross (Fig.4.CS8.14). The new

815. Hamlin, *Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*, 295.

816. King, “Sacred Granite,” 189.

817. Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses and Round Towers of County Down, a Field Guide*, (Belfast: Down County Museum, 2014) 40, 42–43; F. J. Bigger, “The Ancient Cross of Drumgolan in Co. Down with some local notes,” *UJA*, 2nd ser., 14, nos2/3 (May–August 1908): 56; Thomas Fitzpatrick, “The Ancient Cross of Drumgoolan, Co. Down,” *UJA*, 2nd ser, 15, no.1 (Feb. 1909): 45–47. This cross and base is now in storage in Castlewella Forest Park and a granite replica stands in the center of the town of Castlewella, Co. Down.

818. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:67–68, 75.

819. The revised orientation in the museum is used in this case study. Peter Harbison used the orientation of the cross in front of the Cathedral in *The High Crosse of Ireland*. The arrangement of the cross in the museum is the opposite to Harbison.

capstone was based on ‘investigations which led to the identification of the house-shaped shrine capstone with a tenon from Tihilly, Co. Offaly.’ (Fig.4.CS8.15)⁸²⁰ The Tihilly capstone is a unique survivor which is *ex-situ* and available to be scanned. The new capstone was attached to the top of the head (Fig.4.CS8.16) using lime mortar and pinned into the existing mortice so it is easily reversed in the future if required.⁸²¹ The museum cross consists of four parts, the new capstone, the head and shaft of the original cross and the new base.

4.8.3. Historic images.

A photograph from c. 1897 shows William Fennelly standing beside the newly restore cross (Fig.4.CS8.17). When the cross was dismantled in late 2013/early 2014 the full impact of the 1897 work could be seen as the lowest part of the shaft had been cut away to create a tenon to insert into the new base (Fig.4.CS8.18). This intervention was not described by Bigger and Farrell in their account of the restoration of the cross.⁸²² It is possible that the top of the shaft was also trimmed to create a level platform for the head as the top panel on the west face of the shaft appears to lack an upper border, but it is difficult to read the damaged carvings (Fig.4.CS8.19). A slightly earlier photograph, c. 1895, shows the east face of the upside-down head of the cross leaning on the upper arm (Fig.4.CS8.20). The condition of the head is unchanged today but the sharp horizontal line on the base cuts awkwardly across the lower part of the circle of the head (Fig.4.CS8.21). The head of the cross is an unusual, truncated shape so it is possible that sometime before 1729 a section of the lower arm/shaft was cut off to create a flat base to facilitate reassembly.

4.8.4. Discussion.

This discussion is based on the museum cross and is summarised in the four record drawings (Fig.4.CS8.22– Fig.4.CS8.25). The decision process that led to the making of the large base and the new capstone has been discussed above. Irrespective of the validity of these decisions, the cross no longer resembles ‘the original’ version, raising question of conjectural restoration.⁸²³

820. King, “Sacred Granite,” 189.

821. Mike King in conversation with the author, February 2015.

822. Bigger and Fennell, “The High Cross of Downpatrick,” 272.

823. To avoid a conjectural restoration, any reconstructions need to be based on clear and sufficient evidence if they are to be meaningful and should avoid the recreation of something that never existed in that form in the first place.

<https://historicingland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/draft-reconstruction-of-heritage-assets-apr16-pdf/> Accessed January 30, 2021.

The head of the cross was fixed to the shaft by a slate dowel and mortar packing inserted into a circular hole on the east face of the head presumably dating from the 1897 re-erection (Fig.4.CS8.21). Crosses that have separate heads normally have an extended lower arm or shaft section, which sits onto the top of the shaft (Fig.4.CS8.26). The length of this lower arm varies but it is a design feature which provides balance for the four arms and allows the head and ring of the cross to sit centrally in the piece of stone.

The head is missing a substantial amount of its original carving as only the crucifixion scene on the west face survives (Fig.4.CS8.27) in poor condition.⁸²⁴ The roll mouldings have been removed from the arms and the ring, although some isolated sections survive on the inner section of the ring and the underside of the south side (Fig.4.CS8.28 & Fig.4.CS8.29). The arms of the west side feature the two thieves, but the details are unclear and difficult to identify due to extreme weathering. The east face has lost all detail of the carvings with only some vague indications of figures (Fig.4.CS8.30). The contrast between the survival of the carvings on the east face and the west is so extreme that it appears that the east face has suffered a degree of mechanical removal rather than being solely due to weathering. The ends of the two arms have a rounded blank appearance as the carvings have been completely removed as well as the roll mouldings (Fig.4.CS8.31 & Fig.4.CS8.32). When cleaned down, the trace of a square mortice was visible on the top of the upper arm which indicates that a further 200mm approx. is missing from the sides of the mortice which would have held the tenon of the capstone. (Fig.4.CS8.14)

The upper part of the shaft of the cross may have been cut back to create a flat joint to match the flat base of the head. This could have been part of the re-erection of the cross in 1897, or perhaps, in the late seventeenth century. The top of the shaft has been cut back to accommodate the slightly smaller dimensions of the head, which suggests that a section of the lower arm/shaft section is missing from the head. There is a large horizontal division between the truncated lowest panel on the shaft and the middle panel and another one between it and the top panel (Fig.4.CS8.33). It is difficult to be certain about the original number of panels on the west face as the carvings on the upper panel are very damaged. The iconographic panels on the west face are legible, while those on the east face have been heavily eroded (Fig.4.CS8.34). The south and north faces are also different: the interlace

824. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 67.

design on the north side survives while the carvings on the south side have been roughly removed.

The entire length of the roll moulding has been removed from the shaft with the exception of a small section on the middle of the north-west corner (Fig.4.CS8.22–Fig.4.CS8.25). The roll mouldings on the market cross were the focus of a prolonged and thorough programme of removal while it was, most likely, in an upright position. It is difficult to be certain when this removal took place, but if the cross was in the town, the process would have been noisy and public, requiring the use of ladders. Given the official disapproval of the ‘papist’ funeral rites of the seventeenth century, it seems unlikely that the removal was a post-Plantation practice.

The different survival pattern of the carvings on the north and west face to those on the south and east face is puzzling. The head and the shaft both display the same pattern of wear implying that they were joined together when the damage took place. The difference in survival of the faces could be explained if the two parts of the cross were lying on the ground with the east and north faces uppermost, resulting in the loss of virtually all surface carvings. It is also possible that the two parts of the cross were originally a single piece of stone, which lay on the ground and suffered the loss of the carvings on the north and east face and eventually broke into two sections which were later trimmed to fit back together. The condition of the granite surface is so damaged it is difficult to differentiate between mechanical damage as a result of rough treatment and extreme weathering, so that any attempt to separate out the different agents of destruction can only be hypothetical.

In this case study, the civic cross had a better survival rate than crosses that were close to the cathedral. It also shows the tenacious grip that the townspeople had on the fragments of the cross that were valued due to their connection to the early foundation. The outcome from well-intentioned antiquarian activities during the nineteenth century is also demonstrated as there can be little doubt that Bigger and Farrell saved the sections of the cross from further dispersal and loss. In their report of the re-erection of the cross, there is no mention of the loss of the lowest panel in order to make the new tenon. The reports of antiquarian activities in their journals are often incomplete and should be treated with a degree of caution. The complex, multidisciplinary and expensive nature of moving crosses indoors has been recorded by Mike King, who left a comprehensive account of the entire process, a useful template for future projects of this type. Modern technology was used to the full advantage to create the replica, while balanced with the need for hand finishing by a craftsman. The exhibition shows how the cross can be used to anchor and enhance a wider

approach to the topic of early Christian Ireland. The new capstone sits uneasily on top of the cross, but the choice of the base and capstone is clearly explained in the exhibition and fully reversable in the future.

The scattered remains of a possible four other crosses have been gathered in the cathedral, but the detail of their traumatic history remains largely unknown. A replica of the cross known as St Patrick's cross was made recently, demonstrating the power of these fragments particularly when associated with a revered saint.⁸²⁵ The base of the new replica of St Patrick's cross is plain which, in conservation terms, is a more acceptable solution to the carved base in the museum. This new replica was based on three surviving fragments of a cross, two that belong together and the third that could be from another cross (Fig.4.CS8.35). The stone cross is 4.7m high, in a prominent position outside the western entrance to the cathedral (Fig.4.CS8.36). The two replicas dominate the eastern and western elevations of the cathedral and provide an insight into how they would have marked and controlled these spaces. The museum cross is used to promote Downpatrick's central role in the life of St Patrick and the foundation of Christianity in Ireland. The effort expended on a cross that has lost most of its carved detail and its cap stone and base is in stark contrast with the cross in the care of the Irish state that, it could be argued, retain their full iconographical programmes and structures.

825. Mike King, "The Story of Saint Patrick's Cross," *Lecale Review* 18 (2020): 80–90.

4.9. Case Study 9. The north cross, Ahenny, Co. Tipperary. (CS9)

4.9.1. Background.

The two crosses at Ahenny are amongst the best known and most studied examples of the entire collection. They stand in a small, enclosed graveyard in a remote rural location in Co. Tipperary, which is accessed by crossing an open field (Fig.4.CS9.1). Ahenny was also known as Kilklispeen indicating a dedication to St Crispin although little is known of the early history of the site.⁸²⁶ The original function of the crosses as territorial boundary markers is evident from their location on the western edge of the medieval kingdom of Ossory.⁸²⁷ Françoise Henry classified the Ahenny crosses as part of the ‘Western Ossory’ group of crosses, a categorization that has generally been accepted.⁸²⁸ They belong to the earliest Group 1 in her chronology, which share common characteristics of form, location, ornamentation and iconography.⁸²⁹ The crosses in the Ossory group have an elongated upper arm, while the proportionately large ring is placed relatively low on the short shaft creating a distinct, slightly dumpy silhouette.⁸³⁰ The closest stylistic match to the Ahenny crosses is the west cross at Kilkieran and several other crosses within the wider group, incorporate common design features.⁸³¹ The decoration and iconography of the crosses are well documented but very little is known about the history of the site and as a result, their dating has been problematic. A mid-ninth century date is generally accepted but this is based on art historical evidence which can be subject to challenge.⁸³²

The two crosses at Ahenny were most likely made by the same craftsman, or group of craftsmen and are known as the north and the south cross due to their relative location in the graveyard. Each cross consists of a single piece of stone inserted into a large stone base. The figural iconography is confined to the four sides of the bases, while the shafts and heads are profusely covered with abstract carvings of exceptional design and execution. The

826. Roe, *High Crosses of Western Ossory*, 11; Richardson and Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*, 17; Nancy Edwards, “An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory,” *JRSAL* 113 (1985): 5–46.

827. Harbison, “A High Cross Base from the Rock of Cashel,” 1–20.

828. Henry, *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period*, 139–41. The group includes the crosses at Ahenny, Kilkieran, Killamery, Kilree. Tibberaghny, the bases at Lorrha, Sierkieran and Mona Incha, and the south cross at Clonmacnoise.

829. Henry, *Irish High Crosses*, 21–24; Roe, *High Crosses of Western Ossory*, 11–30.

830. Moss, *Medieval*, 147–48.

831. Moss, *Medieval*, 147–48.

832. Edwards, “An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory,” 30–32; Stevenson, “The Chronology and Relationship of some Irish and Scottish Crosses,” 91–93.

inspiration for the design of the crosses is found in metal working techniques, which is used to create a chronology for the Ossory crosses.⁸³³ Ahenny north and Kilkieran south are considered to be the earliest and of the highest quality (in terms of carvings), which then decreased with Ahenny south, Kilkieran west, Killamery and Kilree.⁸³⁴ Plaster casts of the Ahenny north cross and the Kilkieran west cross formed part of the display at the 1853 Great Industrial Exhibition in Dublin.⁸³⁵ Henry O'Neill devoted four of his thirty-six plates to Ahenny in his 1857 publication ensuring their place as among the '*most interesting*' crosses. O'Neill hinted that there had been another cross as a third base survives on the site.⁸³⁶ The four plates contain valuable information about the condition of the crosses in the middle of the nineteenth century which can be used as a benchmark today.

Westropp and Stokes published notes on several crosses in 1896–1901, which included Killamery and some notes on the 'curious legends still current among the peasantry' concerning four crosses in the district.⁸³⁷ This origin myth claimed that all the crosses 'were brought miraculously into the country' and all appeared overnight in the graveyard of Kilkieran only for four of them to be 'spirited away' to the other sites.⁸³⁸ Another story concerned seven bishops who were murdered and 'in the dead of night, one of these magical stone crosses had arisen or had been placed at the head of each of the graves but not by the hand of man.'⁸³⁹ A further embellishment tells of the 'mutilation' of the lower southern quadrant of the north cross which was removed by a local man for use as a scythe-stone.⁸⁴⁰ His house was burned down as a result of this sacrilegious action, thus serving as a warning to anyone contemplating further injury to the crosses. Another warning lay in the story of the missing third cross from Ahenny, which 'lies at the bottom of the river Suir' and the 'sacrilegious tourist having attempted to carry it off to America' was

833 Henry, *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period*, 139–141; Kelly, "The Heart of the Matter," 127–39; Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory," 32.

834 Quinlan, *Conservation Plan: Western Ossory High Crosses*, The sites that were included were Ahenny, Kilkieran, Killamery and Kilree.

835. *Official Catalogue of the Great Industrial Exhibition*, 24.

836. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 2.

837. Westropp and Stokes, "Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery," 541–578. The four crosses are Killamery and Kilkieran and the two at Kilklispeen (Ahenny).

838. Westropp and Stokes, "Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery," 576.

839. Westropp and Stokes, "Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery," 577.

840. Westropp and Stokes, "Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery," 577.

drowned when this ship was wrecked.⁸⁴¹ The crosses may have possessed curative powers for those who respected them, but equally could wreak havoc on those who interfered with them. These beliefs served to protect the crosses from harm and removal.

Henry Crawford published a paper in 1909 in which he described the Ahenny crosses as ‘probably the best specimens in the country of decoration by abstract designs’ and noted that the north cross was the finer of the two despite having ‘lost one quarter of the ring.’⁸⁴² He echoed O’Neill, claiming that they were ‘among the ten or twelve most interesting monuments of their kind.’⁸⁴³ He departed from the Stokes story by describing the missing roll moulding as being broken away to make scythe-stones but agreed that ‘opinion is very decided that those who broke then had no luck after.’⁸⁴⁴ The bases were ‘not the least remarkable parts of these crosses’ and he contrasted the north base which was ‘in good preservation’ with the south where the carvings were ‘nearly destroyed.’

Throughout the twentieth century the two Ahenny crosses continued to attract the attention of art historians and archaeologists. Arthur Kingsley Porter also documented the local folklore that claimed that the cone-shaped caps on the crosses represent miters and were used to mark the graves of the seven bishops shown on the base of the north cross.⁸⁴⁵ He dated the Ahenny crosses to the second quarter of the tenth century based on their similarity to the Cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice.⁸⁴⁶ Françoise Henry compared the Ahenny crosses to metal objects to establish her ‘rather vague’ chronology and the monochrome plates from her 1965 publication (Fig.4.CS9.2) showed the texture and design of the panels to full effect.⁸⁴⁷ In later works, Helen Roe, Nancy Edwards and Dorothy Kelly examined the Ahenny crosses as part of the Ossory group rather than as individual examples.

Concern for the condition of the Ahenny and other crosses in the group led to a conservation plan in 2011, which dealt with all the group known as the Western Ossory

841. Westropp and Stokes, “Notes on the High Crosses of Moone, Drumcliff, Termonfechin and Killamery,” 577.

842. Henry S. Crawford, “The Crosses of Kilkieeran and Ahenny,” *JRSAI* 39, no.3 (September 1909): 258.

843. Crawford, “The Crosses of Kilkieeran and Ahenny,” 260.

844. Crawford, “The Crosses of Kilkieeran and Ahenny,” 258.

845. Porter, *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland*, 22. The graves of the bishops are reputedly at several different sites with high crosses..

846. Porter, *The Crosses and Culture of Ireland*, 112.

847. Henry, *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period*, 139–144.

crosses.⁸⁴⁸ The plan covered the two Ahenny crosses as well as the Killamery cross, the four crosses at Kilkieran (the west, the north, the tall and the south crosses) and the cross at Kilree. It highlighted some of the geographical and administrative differences within the group as the Ahenny crosses are in Co. Tipperary, Munster and in the diocese of Cashel, while all the others are in Co. Kilkenny, Leinster and the dioceses of Ossory. The findings of the plan are discussed in Chapter 1 but to date there has been little progress on the recommendations to protect the crosses.

4.9.2. Structure.

The north cross consists of three separate pieces; the base, the main cross and the cap stone which are made from a coarse sandstone with a total height of 3.65m (Fig.4.CS9.3 – Fig.4.CS9.6). The base is made from a single piece of stone which is rectangular in plan measuring 0.8m x 0.62m and 0.67m in height. It consists of a large lower section, which tapers in slightly and is topped by a shallow upper step. The graceful shape of the base is echoed in the stepped-out butt of the shaft, which together create an elegant and distinctive profile. All four sides of the lower part of the base are carved with busy scenes containing many figures and beasts which have attracted much attention over the years.⁸⁴⁹ The figures on the south and north faces travel from right to left, clockwise around the base whereas the figures on the east and west faces turn towards the center of the panels. A heavy rope moulding on the corner of the base frames each scene. The smaller upper step has abstract interlace on the four faces but has no edge border. The base sits on a rectangle of stone pavement which the OPW laid in 1952 in a crazy paving style and is pointed in cement mortar.⁸⁵⁰ The cross base is not level and is tilted downwards towards the west and dips towards the south which results in the shaft leaning two degrees off the vertical towards the south.

The shaft and head of the cross are a single piece of stone, carved with great skill and verve as every surface is covered with abstract art. The shapes of the designs are emphasized and enclosed by a heavy rope moulding, which highlights the changes in the flat surface planes. The lower quadrant of the ring on the south side has been cleanly removed, giving the north cross its distinctive wounded profile. The narrow south and north

848. Quinlan, *Conservation Plan: Western Ossory High Crosses*.

849. For example: Elizabeth Hickey, "North Cross at Ahenny: A Suggested Interpretation," *JRSOI* 85, no.1 (1955): 118–121.

850.. Quinlan, *Conservation Plan: Western Ossory High Crosses*, 30.

faces originally had a double row of rope moulding on each corner but only the upper part survives on the north side. The design of the plain capstone, which is circular in plan and domed shaped, contrasts with the exuberant designs on the cross.

4.9.3. Historic Images.

O'Neill devoted two plates, 6 & 7, to the north cross at Ahenny in his *Cross of Ancient Ireland*. His description of the north cross showed his appreciation for the quality of the carvings as well as a sensitivity to its condition.

‘a very fine specimen of Celtic ornamental carving...unfortunately, being wantonly injured; one of the curves, and a great part of the bold moulding which ornamented the shaft, are gone. These injuries, without doubt, have been produced by the evil spirit of wanton destructiveness. The influence of many centuries’ exposure to the atmosphere is also plainly visible; still, what remains shows that this is the ruin of one of the most beautiful Crosses in Ireland.’⁸⁵¹

In Plate 6, O'Neill accurately showed the surviving section of roll molding on the south-east face, but in reality, the missing sections are more deeply removed than he has shown (Fig.4.CS9.7). His detail of the carving on the top step of the base is different to the actual one on the cross which undermines his otherwise accurate portrayal of the cross (Fig.4.CS9.8). It is possible that the removal of the corners continued after this illustration was made, but as seen in Case Studies 1–3 and 5, O'Neill was not always consistent with his portrayal of loss. In Plate 7, (Fig.4.CS9.9) the roll moulding on the north-west corner of the cross that frames the carving of the seven bishops on the base is more damaged today than is shown (Fig.4.CS9.10). The difference is confined to the two vulnerable upper corners which may have been broken after 1857. The proportions of his bishops are more realistic than in the more crowded and large-headed reality, but his interest primarily lay in the abstract art on the rest of the cross.

The east face of the north cross is shown in a c. 1880 photograph in the RSAI collection. At that time, the roll moulding on the upper edge of the ring was complete on the left side and damaged on the right side. (Fig.4.CS9.11) There is more of the roll moulding missing today indicating that the decay process on the upper rings is active and ongoing.

851. O'Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 2.

The details of the carvings are very clear in the black and white photographs of the crosses taken by Henry and Harbison. (Fig.4.CS9.12). The OPW used to treat the crosses with a fungicide which killed all organic growth.⁸⁵² Harbison described how his photographs for the *High Crosses of Ireland* were taken over a ten-year period and timed to following the treatments when the dead organic growth had died and been cleaned off. The crosses in Henry's 1965 publication are equally stripped of all organic material.

A photograph in Helen Roe's *High Cross of Western Ossory* suggests that the base may be deeper than what is visible today⁸⁵³ (Fig.4.CS9.12). There is no indication in the OPW files that that part of the base was buried but the pavement is aligned with the lower frame of the rope moulding. It is not clear if the subsidence pre-dated the stone pavement or if occurred afterwards.

4.9.4. Discussion.

The four drawings of the cross (Fig.4.CS9.3–Fig.4.CS9.6) from each corner summarise the visible damage discussed below. The base is heavily encrusted with organic growth of mosses, lichens and algae indicating a water-retaining environment which is not free draining (Fig.4.CS9.13). The thickest layer of moss is on the shaded north side of the base. The legibility of the carvings on the base is compromised by the organic growth but, in terms of losses, the base is relatively undamaged. Three of the four upper corners of the lower section of the base are missing. This is perhaps due to accidental blows as these are vulnerable corners which would be the first point of contact with the cross at ground level. The north-east corner has a further missing section of the moulding at the midpoint and a horizontal crack which runs around the corner (Fig.4.CS9.14). In summary, the base is largely undamaged but compromised by a damp location with little drainage, which encourages organic growth and frost damage.

The shaft of the cross has a heavy rope moulding on the corners of the wider east and west faces and a double vertical moulding on the narrower south and north faces. The larger moulding on the east and west faces has been removed leaving one surviving section on the upper section of the north-east corner which gives an indication of the original substantial framing of the carvings (Fig.4.CS9.8) On the two narrower faces, the smaller

852. Peter Harbison, interview by author, April 2019. This practice was discontinued due to health and environmental concerns. The herbicide was called Murasol.

853. Roe. *The High Crosses of Western Ossory*, 12.

inner roll moulding has been completely removed on the south face, but the left-hand section survives on the north face (Fig.4.CS9.15). The depth of the surviving part of the three-dimensional framing demonstrates the sculptural nature of the design of the cross. The carved spiral panels are set back deep into the body of the shaft which provided some degree of protection despite the removal of the moulding. On the wider east and west faces, the removal of the moulding has resulted in some damage to the edges of the carved panels. (Fig.4.CS9.16) Despite the loss of the roll moulding each panel on the shaft is legible and, in terms of interpretation, has not been compromised by the damage to the corners.

The missing quadrant of the ring has been cleanly removed with surgical precision. No trace of the missing quadrant survives except for a rectangular scar on the underside of the ring and the side of the shaft. (Fig.4.CS9.17) If the cross fell over, the 'armpit' is not a vulnerable part of the cross as the end of the arm would cushion the lower ring. If the cross fell forward or backward onto an object, the lower section of the ring might break but would not leave a clean scar. There is no indication that the cross ever fell. If the quadrant was removed when the cross was standing, then perhaps it was an accidental break that was then 'tidied up' by the removal of the stumps.

The remaining losses on the head and ring of the cross are the result of exposure to weather. The most obvious is the loss of the top and the face of the projecting bosses on the west and east face. The surviving carvings on the underside give some indication of the original three-dimensional nature of the rich ornamentation (Fig.4.CS9.18). The impact of weathering on the cross can be clearly seen in the contrast between the condition of the surviving lower ring and the upper two rings. On the east face of the head, the northern/right side has lost more of the outer rope moulding than the southern side (Fig.4.CS9.19). The flow of water down the east face has made a channel through the rope moulding on the upper side of the inner curve and is now beginning to break down the lower section. It is not clear why the patterns of loss on the upper ring are different on each face. On the west face, the upper ring has suffered a greater loss of the outer rope moulding on the southern/right side than on the north/left side (Fig.4.CS9.20). The lower ring has one small area of loss of the rope moulding at the mid-point of the quadrant and the curvilinear carvings are in good condition.

The ends of the arms have a double band of rope moulding which is losing detail on the top and bottom edges but survives well on the right and left sides (Fig.4.CS9.21). The top of the shaft has been repaired using a cement mortar to create a level platform for

the capstone (Fig.4.CS9.22). This repair was required as the top of the upper arm had weathered and lost some material indicating that it was exposed without a cap for an indeterminate period of time. The capstone has not been lifted to explore the nature of the mortice and tenon joint with the upper arm of the cross.⁸⁵⁴ The carved detail on the conical cap consists of a simple horizontal double line around the base of the stone which contrasts with the curving flowing lines of the cross head and shaft. Despite the differences in style, the cap stone fulfills an important practical role in protecting the upper arm from the weather and was in position when drawn by O'Neill sometime before 1857. It is possible that the cap stone was placed here as part of an early ad-hoc reassembly motivated by the decay of the upper arm.

The analysis of the drawings of the four sides shows that the damage to the north cross is divided into three zones; the upper section (head, ring, upper and side arms) has suffered from weathering, the middle section (shaft) has lost the majority of the rope moulding, and the base is largely undamaged but heavily encrusted in organic material (Fig.4.CS9.13). The deliberate removal of the roll moulding is limited to the shaft and does not continue above the intersection with the ring. The most plausible explanation is that the parts that was accessible from ground level have been removed while the ring remained out of reach. The removal is likely to have happened when the shaft was vertical as it is evenly distributed on all four sides. The difficulty with this explanation is that the moulding on the base remains intact but perhaps it was buried in the ground. Both the shaft and the base were accessible and there are no scenes of a biblical nature which would, perhaps, give an additional value due to proximity. The removal of a single lower quadrant of the ring is puzzling when the three others were untouched. The neatness and local nature of its execution indicates that if it was motivated by iconoclasm, the stubs of the ring were 'tidied up.' The story of using the stone as a sharpening tool is not credible as the removed portion would have been curved and awkward when there is no shortage of more suitable stones in the locality. |

The base and the cross share a distinctive design language where the heavily carved three-dimensional rectangular sections are emphasized and contained by the rope moulding. The junction between the cap stone and the top of the shaft is clumsy and appears to ignore

854. This is suggested by Nancy Edwards to establish the credentials of the cap stones. Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory," 7.

the skill and finesse of the designs on the cross underneath. The cap stone is the most common loss seen on the crosses and the Ahenny crosses could have followed this pattern.⁸⁵⁵ The authenticity of the curious domed capstones, in terms of being part of the original design, has been the subject of much discussion and most likely will never be definitively settled.⁸⁵⁶ The conical capstone of the north cross contrasts with the flat saucer shaped capstone on the south cross. According to Edwards, the capstones are original, as the lack of a horizontal perimeter moulding on the narrow faces of the upper arm implies that a cap stone protected the top of the cross.⁸⁵⁷ Kelly agreed that they are original and referenced a description of the capstones on the crosses at Kilkieran by Eugene O'Curry from 1839 and O'Neill from 1857.⁸⁵⁸

However, the evidence from Kilkieran is hardly conclusive as the parts of the cross were scattered: the shaft and base of the west cross were in one location, the 'upper part' was in a different location used as a grave marker and the cap or mitre was described as the 'pinnacle at top' which 'lies in the second little field below the church.'⁸⁵⁹ The various parts were reassembled although the head and the shaft are poorly fitted together and the presence of the tenon on the top of the head perhaps justified placing the 'mitre' on top. In 1839 the shaft of the plain south cross at Kilkieran was standing loosely in the ground, while the 'upper part' was two feet away on which the large mitre shaped cap stone sat 'loosely on its pivot.'⁸⁶⁰ The fit between the tenon and the cap stone appears to be less than ideal. In 1851 the only cross left standing in the graveyard at Kilkiernan was the plain east cross but by 1858 both the south and the west crosses were restored by a 'blind mechanic' under the supervision of the Rev. Matthew Brennan.⁸⁶¹ Kilkiernan and Ahenny are only 3km apart, so their histories are interlinked. O'Neill claimed that the caps of both the north and south cross at Ahenny 'were removed some years ago' but that 'a priest in the locality had the kindness

855. See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the types of typical losses associated with the crosses.

856. Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory," 160–61; Dorothy Kelly, "The Capstones at Kilkieran, Co. Kilkenny," *JRSAI* 115, (1991): 160–61; Richardson and Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*, 26.

857. Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory," 5–46.

858. Kelly, "The Capstones at Kilkieran," 160–61

859. Kelly, "The Capstones at Kilkieran," 160–61.

860 Kelly, "The Capstones at Kilkieran," 160.

861 William Carrigan, *The History and Antiquities of the Dioceses of Ossory*, 4 vols. (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers & Walker, 1905) 4:243–44

to search out both caps and cause their being restored to their proper place.’⁸⁶² This may have been the same Rev. Matthew Brennan mentioned above who restored the caps at Kilkieran. O’Curry’s Ordnance Survey letter of 1839 included an account of the Killamery cross, which may provide some insights into the activities around the cap stones. He claimed that people afflicted with headaches could be cured if ‘the mitre, which is loose, is taken off the cross and put three times on the patients head; at the same time certain prayers are recited.’⁸⁶³ However, the Killamery cross is the only one of the Western Ossory crosses to have a conventional ‘shrine like’ capstone and there is no evidence of a ‘mitre’ like capstone left at the site. What is known is that many of the crosses were in a dismembered state and then reconstructed in an ad-hoc manner which was not recorded in any formal way.⁸⁶⁴ Sections of the crosses were also reused as grave markers and moved around the sites as a part of healing rituals which were not recorded. The origins of the mitre caps may be associated with the graves of the seven bishops and may have had little to do with the crosses until their original cap stones had fallen. These theories will remain speculative in the absence of a coordinated examination of the capstones of the Ossory crosses.

862. O’Neill, *The Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, 2.

863. Carrigan, *The History and Antiquities of the dioceses of Ossory*, 4:313.

864. Carrigan, *The History and Antiquities of the dioceses of Ossory*, 4: 243.

4.10. Case study 10. The south cross, Ahenny, Co. Tipperary. (CS10)

4.10.1. Structure.

The south cross consists of three separate pieces; the base, the cross and the capstone (Fig.4.CS10.1). It is made from a coarse sandstone and stands at 3.35m in height, 0.30m smaller than the north cross. The design is similar to the north cross with an elongated upper arm, a relatively large ring in comparison to the length of the shaft and prominent rope moulding on all the edges, which encloses the abstract artwork. The base is a simple pyramid, without an upper step, and gently tapered inwards. The ring is noticeably thinner than the north cross and is complete, presenting an instantly recognizable profile. The capstone is shaped like an upturned shallow dish. The cross has a definite lean to the east and to a lesser degree to the south which appears to be active and ongoing. The two crosses are thought to be of a similar date and carved by the same person although the artwork on the south cross is considered to be of inferior quality to that on the north.⁸⁶⁵

4.10.2. Historic Images.

O'Neill's Plates 4 and 5 of the south cross were not as finely observed as those of the north cross (Fig.4.CS10.2 & 4.CS10.3). Unlike the north cross plates, the drawings of the patterns were simplified, the interlace straps were crudely shown with a wider thickness than the reality (Fig.4.CS10.4). The domed capstone shown in the plates is very different to what survives today which is almost flat. The two views are from the south-east and the south-west and the missing material and broken edges were accurately drawn. The inner roll moulding of the lower quadrant of the south ring is also more damaged today but, as observed above and in Case Study 1–3 and 5, the details were not always accurate. The carvings on the base of the south cross are weathered and difficult to read but O'Neill made little effort to show any detail on plate 4 (Fig.4.CS10.2) whereas plate 5 (Fig.4.CS10.3) has a little more detail with the dividing vertical band between the shadowy figures of animals.

4.10.3. Discussion.

The four drawings of the cross (Fig.4.CS10.5–Fig.4.CS10.8) from each corner summarise the visible damage discussed below. There are carved panels on the sides of the large base, each of which is divided in two by a vertical band which features a Latin cross. The panels contain figures and animals which are weathered and difficult to read. The carvings on the

⁸⁶⁵ Edwards, "An Early Group of Crosses from the Kingdom of Ossory," 32.

north side survive in better condition and are identified as hunting scenes.⁸⁶⁶ An image from c. 1965 shows the cross without the current crazy paving, which undoubtedly contributes to the heavy encrustation of organic material (Fig.4.CS10.9). It is not clear why the carvings on the base of the south cross have weathered so much more than those on the north cross as both appear to be made from the same stone and exposed to similar weather conditions.

The shaft of the south cross is less damaged than the north cross as the removal of the roll moulding is largely confined to the corners of the east face (Fig.4.CS10.10). The moulding on the south-west and north-west corners is undamaged, while that on the south-east and north-east corners is missing. There is some associated damage to the edges of the lowest carved panel on the east face, but the remaining panels are undamaged. The west face survives intact except for one small area of damage on the right side. The narrower south and north sides each have four bands of vertical roll moulding which are all of equal size on the north side while the central two are smaller on the south side (Fig.4.CS10.11). The panels between the mouldings are set deep into the shaft and protected from the weather by the ring above so the interlace art retains good definition.

The ring survives intact despite being narrower and more vulnerable than that of the larger north cross. However, the roll moulding on lower edges of the ring has been extensively damaged on the parts that can be reached by someone standing on the ground (Fig.4.CS10.12). Whilst the east face of the shaft is more damaged than the west face, this pattern is not repeated on the ring where both the east and west sides of the underside of the ring are equally damaged. The upper sections of the ring are also damaged but are rounded due to weathering rather than deliberate removal. A lantern slide in the RSAI collection from c. 1880 shows the roll moulding on the north side of the upper ring intact but this is not the case today (Fig.4.CS10.13).

A more detailed examination of the upper ring shows how rainwater flows down the side of the upper arm and is then directed into the channel formed by the outer roll moulding and the top of the ring. Over time, the side of the roll moulding weakens, and the flow of water gradually makes an opening which lead to the detachment of the stone (Fig.4.CS10.14). This process can also be seen on the roll moulding on the end of the arms where large holes have been made by water, which will eventually penetrate through to the outside resulting in the loss of the edge moulding (Fig.4.CS10.15).

⁸⁶⁶ Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:15.

The bosses on the west side are weathered due to their dome-like shape and are heavily encrusted with organic material on their wetter upper surface (Fig.4.CS10.16). The bosses on the on the east face are well preserved due to the protection of the large encircling frame (Fig.4.CS10.17). The the roll mouldings that encircle the center of the head and follow the lower edges of the arms areas are protected from weathering and the carved detail of the rope is well preserved (Fig.4.CS10.8) A missing section of the roll moulding on the west corner of the upper arm appears to be the result of a single blow (Fig.4.CS10.16).

The ends of the arms are heavily modelled with a thick roll moulding on the outer edges with a square frame in the center. The heavy white crust of organic material on the ends of the arms indicates the routes of water channels down the upper ring and onto the arms (Fig.4.CS10.17). The end of the north arm is particularly heavily encrusted due to the loss of the roll moulding on the upper edge, which results in a concentration of the flow of water. The upper arm has the benefit of the protection of the cap stone so that the horizontal roll moulding on the top of the arm survives in reasonable condition on the western side but is damaged on the eastern side. The carvings can be clearly seen in Harbison's images, which were taken after the organic material was treated. (Fig.4.CS10.18)

The capstone of the southern cross has been reset on the top of the cross in the recent past as an earlier RSAI slide shows it sitting at a more asymmetrical position (Fig.4.CS10.19). Helen Roe questioned if this is the original capstone for the cross due to its awkward position on top of the upper arm.⁸⁶⁷ This capstone is the smallest of the Ossory crosses and is shaped like an upturned saucer rather than the upturned plant pot shape of the Ahenny north cross, the west and south crosses at Kilkieran and the Killamery cross (Fig.4.CS10.20).⁸⁶⁸ It has rough edges and lacks the carved details of the others but it is possible that it may have been broken at some time in the past. Although it does not contribute to the overall appearance of the cross, it fulfils the role of protecting the upper arm from the full impact of weathering.

The two Ahenny crosses share a common history on this remote site although little is known of their past. It could be expected that their condition and survival rate would be the similar, but this is not the case. Their capstones are different in shape, although both are roughly circular in plan. The northern capstone appears to be complete with a finished

867. Roe, *High Crosses of Western Ossory*, 13.

868. The three crosses with large, upturned pot shaped caps are Ahenny north and Kilkieran west and south.

carved surface while the southern one is broken and rough. The Ossory crosses originally had a capstones but the issue of whether or not they were lost and replaced at a later date by the dome-shaped ones remains unanswered. Some resolution might be found in removing all the cap stones and examining the top surfaces of the upper arms for evidence of tenons and mortices.

The removal of the roll moulding appears to be a deliberate act which, in the main, attempted to avoid causing damage to the main body of carvings on the surface of the crosses. The two crosses have a different pattern of removal of the moulding. Both shafts have had the roll mouldings removed, but all four corners of the north cross have been damaged while only two of the corners of the south cross have been removed. The pattern of removal appears to be organized and progressive indicating that it was methodical, starting with the north cross and then moving onto the south cross but the practice ceased before the removal was completed. The surviving lower quadrant of the ring of the north cross is undamaged while both lower quadrants of the south cross have been damaged.

The impact of weathering is uniform on both crosses except for the bases where the survival of the carvings on the north cross remains relatively legible, while those on the south have lost definition. The pattern of the loss of the upper roll mouldings on the rings and the top of the arms can be seen on both crosses. The weathering of the upper surface and face of the bosses is also identical on both crosses except for those on the east face of the south cross which have been protected by the prominent enclosing roll mouldings on the ring. The individual crosses have been impacted by different conditions despite standing side by side, a short distance apart but this may not be their original location. The circumstances that led to the loss of part of the ring of one eludes explanation, but similar patterns of weathering and removal of roll mouldings are evident. The physical condition of the two crosses at Ahenny indicate that survival is individual and often inexplicable. They demonstrate the complexities of the impacts that the combination of stone type, weather, location, and people can have on similar artifacts with purportedly shared histories.

Chapter 5. The Lexicon of Losses.

5.1 Introduction.

The previous chapter contains the within-case analysis of the history, impacts, and losses associated with ten individual crosses. The term ‘lexicon of losses’ is used in this chapter to describe a matrix of key impacts that influenced the survival of the wider group of crosses. The data is analysed in a cross-case search for distinctive patterns of cultural appropriations, adaptations, and changes in meaning that are shared by more than one cross. This new information has been gained through an examination of their shared histories in Chapters 2 and 3 and the forensic examination of the physical fabric of the case studies in Chapter 4. The lexicon proposes that the cultural significance of individual crosses, cross fragments and replicas is best understood and appreciated in the context of the survival, damaged condition and dispersal of the entire group. It also suggests that crosses that are intact, that have suffered little damage, and are in their primary location are rare and undocumented.

The individual case studies demonstrate that mapping the physical losses as well as changes in value is not a straightforward task. For the outdoor crosses, material loss is ongoing and constant and although this ceases when they are brought indoors, other losses then take effect. Losses are not confined to the material aspect of the crosses but also extend to intangible values associated with them and their landscape setting. Intangible values are often difficult to identify and sometimes it takes a threat of some kind for them to manifest. This was the case at Tuam, where the strength of the community attachment became apparent when the proposal to move the cross was suggested. It is likely that there are patterns of loss outside this analysis but the frequency of occurrence of those within the case studies is an indication of their universality. Some physical anomalies on individual crosses could not be explained within the case studies but further research is needed to identify if they are part of a wider pattern.

In terms of their physical survival, all the crosses stand at some point on a scale that begins with their creation and erection and continues to the present time. They share inherent characteristics in that they were once, or still are, free standing stone sculptures, they fulfilled specific functions that related to their location in the ecclesiastical landscape and each one has a unique physical structure with its individual carvings that were likely painted. There are universal losses that affect the entire collection such as changes to the setting and landscape, structural changes over time and the impact of weathering, people and animals. These changes can operate at very different time scales for individual crosses,

but they are nonetheless universally shared in the absence of interventions such as relocation indoors. The losses that result from deliberate actions are unique to each cross, but they are motivated by shared intentions and concerns. The analysis indicates that these motives are iconoclasm, religious practices, antiquarian activities, change in or loss of function and unknown. Distinguishing between intentional and purely accidental damage is not always possible. Nonetheless, some clear patterns have been identified in the lexicon that should have a wider application across the entire collection, increasing awareness of the level of interference they have endured over the years and their vulnerabilities, thus providing a framework for further research in the future.

5.2. Tangible Losses: Cracks.

The term ‘crack’ is a general description of wide variety of complete or incomplete separations of fabric, of which the most serious is a structural crack that can threaten the stability of a monument. A number of different types were identified in the case studies, but it must be acknowledged that this category is unspecific and further investigation would be required for a detailed structural analysis of individual crosses. The structural stability of the crosses is discussed later in this chapter, but it largely depends on the condition of the ground on which they stand and the integrity of the joints between the different parts. The base of the tower cross in Kells has a large structural crack and the joint between it and the shaft is loose and open (Fig.4.CS2.15). The most important joint, in terms of structural stability, is between the base and the shaft of the cross, which needs to be secure with, ideally, both parts plumbs. This is a serious threat to the structural stability of the tower cross, which needs to be lifted up to facilitate the repair of the base and then replaced and made secure. In the context of identifying patterns of damage, this is an unusual occurrence, as the bases are generally very stable and strong.

The durability of sandstone can vary greatly depending on the type and size of mineral grains, the strength of the matrix binding them together and the orientation of the layers in the building stone. The surface of sandstone crosses can develop networks of cracks due to the delamination of the layers, as a result of exposure to weathering.⁸⁶⁹ Erosion can also cause the surface to gradually lose detail and become rounder, an action which is discussed later in the chapter. These cracks can be structural, such as those on the head of the Arboe cross in Co. Tyrone (Fig.5.1) which will eventually lead to the loss of the north arm. Cracks on the surface of the stone are not a structural threat but they can have serious

869. Sara Pavia and Jason Bolton, *Stone Monuments Decay Study 2000*, (Kilkenny: The Heritage Council, 2001), 24.

consequences for the retention of carved details. These non-structural cracks that have led to a loss of elements of the carvings are seen on the diagonal and horizontal cracks on the tower cross at Kells (Fig.4.CS2.23 – Fig.CS2.26). The difficulty in describing this type of decay is shown in the example of the end of the south arm of the cross on Muiredach at Monasterboice, which is discussed later in the chapter under the heading of ‘the impact of weather’(5.14). The cracks on the surface of the stone develop as a result of exposure, but as seen in the later discussion, the impacts are dependent on the location on a cross and the degree of exposure. It is difficult to predict the rate of loss without further research, accompanied by detailed mapping of the direction and extent of the cracks and the establishment of a base line for future monitoring. Obviously, these losses are halted if a cross is protected from weather.

A different type of crack is one where the process of separation is incomplete and is due to internal pressure. The crack can be stable and cease to expand, or it can be active and still opening. The latter type can sometimes have the potential to eventually threaten the structural integrity of the monument. The broken cross in Kells has two vertical cracks on the narrow sides of the shaft that are most likely due to the presence of internal iron dowels which have rusted and expanded open (Fig.4.CS3.25 & Fig.4.CS3.27). At present, these cracks are not obvious but should be recorded and monitored to assess if they are active.⁸⁷⁰ The presence of iron bars could be identified by x-rays, a technique commonly used to find reinforcement bars in concrete structures. This type of crack was identified as a structural threat at the Moone cross, which ultimately led to its disassembly and the removal of the iron dowels. The Moone cross was transferred into the guardianship of the state by Kildare County Council to enable the OPW to carry out the necessary repairs and relocate it to a nearby ruined church with a temporary roof overhead. At Kells, the tower and broken crosses are in the ownership of the Church of Ireland, and unless they are placed in the guardianship or ownership of the state, the necessary repairs and monitoring will remain the responsibility of the church authorities.

5.3. Tangible Losses: The Corner Roll Mouldings.

870. Samanta Robuschi et al, “A Closer Look at Corrosion of Steel Reinforcement Bars in Concrete using 3D neutron and X-ray Computed Tomography,” *Cement and Concrete Research* 144, (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cemconres.2021.106439> Accessed, August 9, 2023.

. Roll mouldings have been removed from a variety of locations on the case study crosses, including the corners of the shafts and the bases and the edges of the rings and arms. Although not a universal feature of the Irish high crosses, the previous lack of recognition of the ubiquity of this pattern is due to the absence of an overview of the physical condition of the wider group of crosses. This has been hindered by the weathering of both damaged and undamaged surfaces to the same colour, so disguising the damage, and the survival of a sufficient amount of the panels to enable a successful interpretation of the carvings. The practice of taking head on photographs of the face of crosses has also played a part in obscuring the damage. A degree of variation in the methodology of loss has been observed, which can be divided into two basic types.

- 1) the careful, disciplined loss of the corner roll mouldings without causing any damage to either the panel carvings or their borders. This type of loss suggests that the carvings on the crosses were respected and valued by those who removed the roll moulding.⁸⁷¹
- 2) The less organised, rough removal causing considerable damage to the carvings, but without an impact on their overall legibility.⁸⁷²

Aside from those included in the case study, a non-exhaustive list of Irish crosses that have suffered the loss of roll mouldings includes the north-east corner of the Arboe cross in Co. Tyrone, the Camus cross in Co. Derry, the south-east corner of the south cross in Castledermot, Co. Kildare, the west cross in Castlekeeran, Co. Meath, the north cross in Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly, the west cross in Kilkieran, Co. Kilkenny, the Killamery cross in Co. Kilkenny and the south-east face of the Tihilly Cross, Co. Offaly.⁸⁷³ Outside Ireland,

871. For examples of the careful loss of the roll moulding without damage to the carvings see; the tower cross in Kells (Fig.4.CS2.19 – Fig.4.CS2.22), the broken cross in Kells (Fig.4.CS3.16 – Fig.4.CS3.19), the Clones cross (Fig.4.CS4.11 – Fig.4.CS4.12), the Tuam cross (Fig.4.CS5.21 – Fig.4.CS5.22), the Armagh cross (Fig.4.CS7.18 – Fig.4.CS7.21), the Downpatrick cross (Fig.4.CS8.22 – Fig.4.CS8.25), Ahenny north cross (Fig.4.CS9.3 – Fig.4.CS9.6), Ahenny south cross (Fig.4.CS10.5 – Fig.4.CS10.8).

872. For examples where the panels were damaged by the loss of the roll moulding see; the east face of market cross in Kells (Fig.4.CS1.17 – Fig.4.CS1.20), the east and south faces of the tower cross in Kells (Fig.4.CS2.19 – Fig.4.CS2.22), the north face of the Armagh cross (Fig.4.CS7.18 – Fig.4.CS7.21), and the east face of the Ahenny south cross (Fig.4.CS10.5 – Fig.4.CS10.8). The inscription on the Kells market cross is the only example in the case studies of the total loss of an iconographical panel.

873. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2: the Arboe cross, Co. Tyrone, Figs 39–40; the Camus cross, Co. Derry, Figs. 83–86; the south-east corner of the south cross, Castledermot, Co. Kildare, Figs. 105 & 108; the west cross, Castlekeeran, Co. Meath, Fig. 114; the north cross, Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly, Figs. 147–49; the west cross, Kilkieran,

the pattern of roll moulding corner loss can also be seen on the south face of Maen Achwyfan in Flintshire, Wales (Fig.5.2). and possibly the lower section of the west face of the Ruthwell cross, Dumfries (Fig.5.3).

The pattern of losses on the case study crosses varies, but nonetheless provides some useful clues in establishing how and why it may have come about. All four corners of the shafts of the crosses at Tuam, Downpatrick, Clones, the market and tower crosses in Kells, the north cross in Ahenny and Armagh are affected, suggesting that the crosses were upright when the removal took place. The case study crosses that retain one or more undamaged corners include the north-west corner of the Glendalough cross, which is almost intact (Fig.4.CS6.7) and the north-west corner of the south cross at Ahenny, which is intact (Fig.4.CS10.6). The north-east corner of the broken cross in Kells (Fig.4.CS3.16) is intact while the south-east corner was removed before the cross was broken ((Fig.4.CS.18). Both of the Ahenny crosses suffered the most extreme damage within arm's reach of a person standing on the ground. The losses of the corners of the market and tower crosses in Kells and the crosses in Downpatrick, Tuam and Clones extends beyond this, suggesting that human access to these parts would only have been possible with the aid of a scaffold/ladder, or if the crosses were down.

5.3.1. Natural Damage due to Weathering and the Delicacy of Mouldings.

Corner mouldings were arguably the most vulnerable parts of the crosses, especially on those monuments where they were carved to some depth. At Ahenny, for example, the substantial corner mouldings stand approx. 2cms proud of the surface. One might argue that this damage could be the result of delamination of the sandstone, however this would impact on the entire block, in this case the heads and shafts, but that has not been the case. It would also be unusual for such even delamination to occur on both faces as is the case here. On most of the remaining crosses the same argument against delamination or weathering holds true. Typically, the mouldings only protrude by less than 1cm from the faces of the crosses, and any water/frost action on them would equally have damaged the adjacent iconographical carving, which has not been the case. The inner roll moulding on the left side of the north face of the Ahenny north cross (Fig.4.CS9.15) is damaged in the centre, while the upper and lower sections remain, indicating that water/ frost action has not caused the loss. The entire inner and outer moulding is missing from the right-hand side

Co. Kilkenny, Figs. 390–93; the Killamery cross, Co. Kilkenny, Fig. 404; the south-east corner of the Tihilly Cross, Co. Offaly, Figs 589–90.

indicating a deliberate removal rather than weathering. The rolled mouldings were likely designed to avoid sharp easily-damaged corners and allow rainwater to roll smoothly down the surface of the stone. The corners that have lost their mouldings are more exposed to frost damage than undamaged corners as water can be trapped in the broken surfaces.

5.3.2. Accidental Damage

As demonstrated in the historical context sections of several of the case studies, many of the crosses have had far from static lives. The corners of the stones are by far the most vulnerable to damage, especially if at ground level for any length of time. The bases of the crosses at Tuam, Clones, the market cross at Kells and possibly Glendalough were for a time located in the busiest parts of their respective towns/ villages. Inevitably this exposed them to damage from passing vehicles and the use of the monuments as the central focus of commercial and other activities on market and fair days. However, while this may explain some of the damage to the bases, it is more difficult to apply to the quite specific nature of the damage to the shafts and heads. For example, it is known that the market cross at Kells lay on the side of the street from c. 1691 until its re-erection by Dean Swift c. 1765.⁸⁷⁴ One might then expect differential damage/ weathering to the exposed faces and corners. This would entail the mouldings on the exposed face being more vulnerable than those on the face that lay flat on the ground, the mouldings of which would have been protected due to lack of accessibility. However, in the case of the market cross all four corners have been equally removed. This is also the case of the Ahenny north cross, which is located in a remote location, far from the bustle of a town. The carvings on the shaft and the head of the Downpatrick cross have been either heavily eroded or deliberately removed on the east face, which could imply that it was face down on the west side for a considerable time (Fig.4.CS8.22 – Fig.CS8.25). However, the roll mouldings have been completely removed from all four sides of the shaft indicating that it was a deliberate action.

5.3.3. Damage Inflicted by Secular Activities around the Cross

The survey of the functions of the crosses outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 revealed a diversity of uses beyond simply the devotional, particularly in the case of the urban crosses. Reference to the potential for damage to the Tuam cross due to bull baiting suggests that the shaft was being used to tether a bull while it was attacked, and ultimately killed, by dogs. Bull baiting was a popular activity in many towns across Ireland between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and this may not have been the only cross that provided

⁸⁷⁴ Thompson, *Statistical Survey of the County of Meath*, xi.

a convenient ‘post’ to which the bull could be tied.⁸⁷⁵ Prolonged use for this activity would have caused damage to the edges of the cross, as the rope chafed against them, however this would have formed a regular pattern at the same height (that of the bull’s neck) and over time, one would assume, have created a channel-shaped wear pattern at that level across iconographic panels to. The same argument applies to the use of ropes and chains to deliberately pull down monuments, where one might expect localised damage to the area of the cross where these were tied, but not the comprehensive nibbling along all sides that characterises this type of damage.

5.3.4. Devotional Activity

The loss of the mouldings is a feature shared between crosses in urban and rural settings, and those that at some point have been ‘down’ and those which have apparently remained standing in their original locations since their initial erection. This suggests that the pattern of removal is related to the value held by the crosses themselves, rather than to their wider environments and the different activities that took place around them.

In the exploration of the crosses during the Middle Ages contained in Chapter 2, the veneration of crosses as relics of saints was highlighted, and so too documented instances of the removal of parts of relics, reliquaries and soil associated with saints. A distinctive feature of moulding loss highlighted in the case studies is the apparent respect shown to adjacent iconographic panels in the removal of adjacent mouldings.

The theory that the Catholic practice of relic taking explains the loss of the roll mouldings must be considered in the context of the strength and continuity of the tradition in Ireland and the wide variety of the practices associated with relics. These practices often involved damaging sub-divisions and a disregard for the fabric of the monument. The nature of the removal of the corners walks a tight line between obscuring the meaning of the carvings on the cross and removing parts that were considered to be peripheral and irrelevant. The early images of the crosses showed figures kneeling in prayer in front of them signifying that they retained their religious significance to the Catholic population.

Against this theory is the lack of any explicit historical reference to relic removal from an Irish cross, and the absence of any recorded cross ‘relics’. So too the absence of this type of damage from crosses where a tradition of direct saintly association survives such as Muiredach’s (formerly St Buithe’s) cross. This is perhaps best explained by the fact that relic removal was most common during the later medieval period and into the

875. Paul Rouse, *Sport in Ireland: A History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015), 51, 85–89.

seventeenth century. A time when popular devotional activities are poorly documented. It may also indicate different and changing meanings and values attached to different monuments at different sites.

At Downpatrick, the cross was no longer standing in 1729 indicating that the loss of the entire roll moulding was completed by this time. When Varley drew the Armagh cross in 1808, the roll moulding had already been removed. The north-east roll moulding of the shaft of the Tuam cross had been removed before it was broken during the eighteenth century while the inscribed pillar was likely to have suffered this loss before 1654.⁸⁷⁶ The inscription on the shaft of the Kells market cross, dated 1688, was subsequently damaged by the rough style of loss of the edges, indicating that the practice was active during the eighteenth century.

The lack of surviving fragments of a roll moulding also suggests an early date and also that the removed stone was possibly ground down and imbibed as a curative potion.⁸⁷⁷ A wider study of this phenomenon could yield further information about the date and the extent of the practice.

At Clonmacnoise, the corner roll mouldings of the cross of the scriptures and the south cross are intact but the roll mouldings of the north cross have been neatly removed on the south and west faces, and roughly removed on the north face (Fig.5.4). Both Kells and Ahenny have more than one cross and also show a sequential removal of the mouldings.

5.4. Tangible Losses: Blade Marks

As noted in the case study, the upper surface of the market cross at Kells is marked with several blade cuts (Fig.4.CS1.21). Chapter 2 outlined some historical evidence for the scaping of stone from ancient or holy monuments and use of the dust for cures, or to bring good luck to a place where it was scattered, similar to the use of soil taken from a saint's grave. Relatively few Irish crosses preserve these marks. One face of the arm of the unfinished cross, also at Kells, displays them. These presumably date to the period during which the head was lying flat on the ground, with this face exposed.⁸⁷⁸ Similar marks are

876. See Chapter 4, Case Study 5. The market cross, Tuam.

877. Tait, *Death, Burial and Commemoration in Ireland*, 110.

878. "Proceedings." *JRSAI* 2, no. 3 (1892): 311–48.

also visible on the base of the now broken cross at Lorrha in Co. Tipperary and in Wales on the upper surface of the cross base at St Cynwyd's Church, Llangynwyd, Glamorgan.⁸⁷⁹

Against the argument for relic taking is the wide range of monument types that bear these markings. In an Irish context they range from Iron Age carved stones, to ogham stones, to church doorways, while in England they are particularly associated with churches, often adjacent to a door or window. Of course, there may have been very localised traditions associated with specific monuments or structures, or even individuals. For example, James O'Connor recorded oral traditions about childless women who scraped a specific stone in the churchyard at Kiltinan (Tipperary) to use in folk medicines.⁸⁸⁰

Using early medieval texts to support his argument, Conor Newman has suggested that these marks are part of a wider phenomenon associated with an enduring ritual of symbolic sword sharpening during the medieval period.⁸⁸¹ He suggested that the cross base was used to bestow Christian authority on the sword, which was then used in other ceremonies.⁸⁸² The only oral tradition recorded in relation to the marks on the Kells market cross was recorded by Cogan, who noted they were made by of cavalrymen sharpening their blades as they passed through the town.⁸⁸³ The cross base's prominent location in the centre of the town certainly makes this suggestion plausible, though it doesn't explain the similar damage to the arm of the unfinished cross head, then still buried among the grass of parish churchyard.

One other cause for these types of marks in Ireland is a comment by Lord Dunraven, who noted that similar marks on the door jambs of the Romanesque church at Freshford, Co. Kilkenny were made by the local butcher who used it to sharpen his knives. Given its location in the market place this is an equally plausible localised use for the market cross base, although not one that can be applied universally across all monuments that bear these markings.

5.5. Tangible Losses: The Shaving of the Surface of the Stone.

879. M. Redknap and J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales*, vol. 2. Glamorgan, Brecknockshire, Monmouthshire, Radnorshire and geographically contiguous areas of Herefordshire and Shropshire (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 357.

880. James O'Connor, *Sheela na Gig* (Fethard, Fethard Historical Society, 2001), 5–7.

881. Newman, "The Sword in the Stone, 425–36; Hall, "Lifeways in Stone," 190–92.

882. Newman, "The Sword in the Stone, 432–33.

883. Cogan, *The Diocese of Meath*, 205.

Considering their age, it is remarkable how the carved details of many of the crosses have survived. The Downpatrick cross has suffered extensive loss and the carvings on the south face of the shaft have been completely removed, while some traces remain on the eastern side (Fig.4.CS8.23 & Fig.CS8.24). The north-east face of the shaft of the Clones cross has been shaved back to a smooth surface but the collar on the top remains proud of the shaft surface and retains its carvings (Fig.4.CS4.11 – Fig.4.CS4.12 & Fig.4.CS4.14). The east face of the north cross at Clonmacnoise, described by Harbison as ‘undecorated as it may have been designed to stand against a wall’ could also be shaved back.⁸⁸⁴ Given the similarities in the rough removal of the edge rolls (Fig.5.4), it is likely that the flat east face of the Clonmacnoise north cross may have been originally carved but removed at a later date in a similar way as the north-east face of the Clones cross. The presence of a tenon on top of the shaft shows that a head was placed on top, and if had the expected structure of a free-standing cross, it was carved on all sides. Both the Clonmacnoise Pillar⁸⁸⁵ and a Clonmacnoise fragment⁸⁸⁶ in the museum are described by Harbison and Edwards as carved on three sides, which could imply that the fourth side was originally carved, but removed at a later date. Further research is needed in order to verify this theory.

Given that these crosses are known to have been re-erected in either the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, the most likely explanation for this is the re-use of these shafts as building material. By smoothing off one side the original function of the block would be obscured, especially if rendered over. It is difficult to say exactly when this occurred – cross shafts were incorporated in the foundations of St Ciaran’s church at Clonmacnoise and the west front of the cathedral at Ardfert, potentially as early as the ninth and twelfth centuries respectively.⁸⁸⁷ Against this argument, the collar of the upper part of the shaft of the Clones projects past the shaved surface of the shaft, which would have hindered its reuse as a smooth building stone (Fig.4.CS4.11 – Fig.4.CS4.12).

The other example of surface shaving in the case studies is the removal of a panel of carving to accommodate the 1688 inscription on the market cross at Kells. An interesting

884. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:; 2: Figs. 147–49.

885. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:57; 2: Figs. 165–67; Identified as Clonmacnoise III in Nancy Edwards, “A Group of Shafts and Related Sculpture from Clonmacnoise and its Environs,” in *Clonmacnoise Studies*, vol. 1. Heather King ed. (Dublin: Dúchas, the Heritage Service, 1998), 101–18.

886. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 57; 2: Figs. 168–70; Identified as Clonmacnoise II in Nancy Edwards, “A Group of Shafts and Related Sculpture from Clonmacnoise,” 101–18.

887. Manning, “Some Masonry Churches and the Round Tower at Clonmacnoise”, 66–67; The fragment at Ardfert is visible in the lowest course of masonry of the blind arcade immediately to the north of the Romanesque doorway.

insight into the way in which the cross was valued as a ‘Catholic’ monument worthy of re-erection, but not for its ornament. A similar treatment is evident on the cross at Dysert O’Dea for the addition of an inscription in 1685.

5.6. Tangible Losses: Stone Decay and the Impact of Exposure to Weather.

The retention of carved detail is dependent on the quality of the stone, the depth and shape of the carving, its location on the cross and exposure to the prevailing wind and rain. The evidence of stone decay in the five case study crosses that are outdoors and the Kells market cross which is underneath an open-sided cover is based on a visual inspection and an assessment of the historic images. The most obvious pattern, seen in a number of crosses (Fig.5.5) is the deterioration of the upper surface of the top of the rings, the arms and capstones leading to a loss of the upper sections of the ring. The progress of this type of decay can be seen in north-east view of the Arboe cross, Co. Tyrone, (Fig.5.1) although in this case, the capstone survived. All five case study crosses that remain outdoors exhibit this type of decay where the surface of the weathered roll moulding is rounder and softer than the rougher broken surface of one that has been deliberately removed. Both types of damage can be seen together on the Kells tower cross (Fig.4.CS2.28) but the roll moulding on the upper rings on both Ahenny crosses are weathered rather than deliberately removed. (Fig.5.6). The best-preserved carvings are found on the undersides of the rings and arms, such as the cross of Muiredach, which can be compared with other locations on the cross to assess the rate of loss (Fig.5.7). Despite the identification of general patterns of loss, the contrast between the conditions of the carvings on the cross of Muiredach, and those on the tall cross in Monasterboice, shows that patterns of loss are individual to each cross. The impact of the prevailing south-west winds and rain can be seen on the carvings on the gable ends of the capstone of the cross of Muiredach. The carvings on the south face are rounded with a loss of detail (Fig.5.8 – Fig.9). whereas those on the north face are in better condition (Fig.5.10 – Fig.11). The east face of the shingle roof of the capstone has suffered loss of detail and on the northern side, a crack has developed that could lead to the future loss of the finial (Fig.5.12). The crack is also seen on the west face of the roof but is less severe and the shingles are in better condition (Fig.5.13). The same patterns show on the ends of the arms where the south face has a series of vertical cracks (Fig.5.14) which are not as severe on the north face. (Fig.5.15). The different rates of decay on the same site can be seen on the carved panel on the west face of the capstone of the tall cross at Monasterboice which has lost almost all details (Fig.5.16). The upper surfaces of the projecting bosses on

the Ahenny crosses have lost carved details while the surface underneath is protected and retains the detail (Fig.4.CS9.18).

The decay process is intensified when a flow of water is channelled down a narrow path on the face of a cross. The carvings on the west face of the Kells broken cross are decaying at an accelerated rate due to the channel of water from the broken edge of the mortice above (Fig.5.17). This can also be seen on the Clones cross where water gathers on the upper surface of the shaft and flows down the south-east face (Fig.4.CS4.16). The east face of the Kells tower cross has a water channel down the center of the carvings (Fig.4.CS2.28). The rainwater on the top of the north arm of the Ahenny south cross finds a gap in the lowest point of the roll moulding and gradually opens up the gap. (Fig.4.CS10.14 – Fig.4.CS10.15). The mouldings in the east face of the Ahenny north cross are also breaking down under the impact of water channels (Fig.4.CS9.19). The moulding on end of the north arm of the south cross in Clonmacnoise had begun to break down whereas the end of the north arm was relatively intact (Fig.5.18 – Fig.5.19). This cross is now indoors so the process has halted. The panel depicting the raised Christ⁸⁸⁸ on the west face of the tall cross at Monasterboice is close to losing the hands of the two flanking figures who reach out to the central figure (Fig.5.20). The open joint between the bases and the shafts of the tower and broken crosses at Kells allows water to build up in the mortice, which then finds its way out through open cracks in the base. Over time the channels have widened, which may have contributed to the cracking of the base of the tower cross across the center.

The bases of the Kells and Ahenny crosses are sitting in wet conditions and have high levels of organic growth. This has a negative impact on the appearance of the stone, making it difficult to interpret the carvings. Organic growth can change the thermal and mechanical properties of the surface of the stone by retaining water and extending the wet/dry cycles as well as secreting mild acid compounds.⁸⁸⁹ The appearance of the Durrow cross was markedly different after it was brought indoors as the stone had dried out and as a consequence, the organic material had died off. The stone changed colour so that the naturally occurring veins which ran through it were more obvious due to the stronger contrast, indicating that the cross was originally painted.⁸⁹⁰

888. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:150.

889. Eric Doehne and Clifford Price. *Stone Conservation, An Overview of Current Research* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2nd ed. 2010), 21.

890. For the role of colour see Heather Pulliam, "Colour," *Studies in Iconography* 33 (2012): 3–14.

In Ireland, there is no surviving evidence of pigment on the crosses but it is generally accepted that they were originally painted.⁸⁹¹ The lack of original surface pigments on Irish crosses may be due to the practice of making replicas of the best surviving crosses during the nineteenth century, which involved the application of plaster moulds to even the most protected surfaces although the colour was likely gone by then. During the twentieth century the OPW carried out a regular programme of treating the crosses with biocides and cleaning them down afterwards. There may be some surviving traces on crosses that are less exposed and have not been subject to cleaning or mould-taking but further research is needed on the subject.⁸⁹² Several examples of colour survive on crosses in England and have been identified through the work of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*.⁸⁹³

The most obvious effects of weathering are visible to the eye, but the rate of decay is difficult to identify. More information is needed to assess the rate of loss of the detail of the carvings. This would require a long-term study to establish base line data as a point of reference, as subsequent data is compared against it to measure progress. This, of course, would require funding. If the crosses remain outdoors, change is ongoing and progressive. An acceptance of this fact is a first step in understanding their vulnerabilities and managing their future conservation. The correct identification of damage due to weathering is essential in order to avoid any designation which may be due to different causes.

5.7 Tangible Losses: Regular Recesses/Slots on the Face of the Crosses.

5.7.1. Recesses incorporated into the original design.

Although the crosses are now viewed very much as stone monuments, it is almost certain that the original surfaces were covered with paint and that in some cases, such as the two crosses at Ahenny, the intention was to make them appear as though made of metal. There is evidence in some Anglo-Saxon grave-slabs to suggest that recesses, often placed at the centre of a cross, were filled with another material, perhaps a semi-precious stone or metalwork insert.⁸⁹⁴ Although the addition of other materials to the early Irish crosses has

891. Moss. *Medieval*, 144.

892. Roger Stalley provided an overview of the current research into paint on crosses in *Early Irish Sculpture*, 40–41.

893. James Lang, “Techniques of Production of the Monuments,” in *York and Eastern Yorkshire, The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, vol. 3 (London: The British Academy, 1989).

894. Richard N. Bailey, “‘What Means these Stones?’ Some Aspects of pre-Norman Sculpture in Cheshire and Lancashire”, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 78 (1996), 21–46 at 31–46; Jane Hawkes, “Venerating the Cross around the year 800 in Anglo-Saxon England, The Jennifer O’Reilly Memorial Lecture 2018,”

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/history/JenniferOReillyMemorialLecture2018reduced.pdf>. Accessed 25 August 2022.

yet to be fully explored, it has been acknowledged that by the twelfth century, this was established practice.

Such additions to the original design are typically quite easy to recognise, as a slot or recess designed to receive the addition is typically surrounded by an area of stone that has not been carved. A good example of this is the upper part of the shaft of the market cross at Tuam. This has a central slot surrounded by an uncarved flat panel, suggesting that a wood or metal panel was intended to be slotted into this space (Fig.4.CS5.29 & Fig.4.CS5.31). In contrast, the shallow square recess in the center of the top panel of the north face of the Tuam cross is integrated into the carving of interlaced animals to create a centre of the cross (Fig.5.21). The head of this composite cross also has slots on the upper surfaces of the arms, a feature found on the crosses at Glendalough and at Roscrea, both also dated to the twelfth century. The twelfth-century cross at Dysert O'Dea has a slot on the shaft at chest level on the body of a bishop and two further slots are centrally located on the ends of each arm. Again the lack of stone carving around them indicates that they are part of the original design.⁸⁹⁵

The east and west faces of St. John's cross in Iona have a series of projecting bosses on the surface but the west face also features two recessed circles that are part of the original design (Fig.5.22). The larger of the two is situated in an important position at the center of the cross while the second one is on the same central axis on the shaft of the cross. These may have had an object inserted into the recess although there is no direct evidence that this is the case.⁸⁹⁶

5.7.2. Recessed Slots added at a Later Time.

Some slots or recesses are identifiable as later additions, as they are cut into earlier carved panels rather than into uncarved areas of stone described above. The north face of the head of the cross at Tuam has both types of recesses, but the lower ones disrupt the carving of the base ecclesiastical figure's staff, indicating that the recesses were not part of the original design (Fig.4.CS5.30 - Fig.4.CS5.31). The Armagh cross head and shaft has four circular recesses of various depths and sizes which are cut into the face of pre-existing carved panels (Fig.4.CS7.38). The original design is still visible underneath the shallowest recess on the head of the cross. The two square recesses on the west face of the Roscrea cross appear to be secondary due to their asymmetrical placement into the original carving, described by

895. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 2:Fig. 261, 262 and 264.

896. Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 86.

Harbison as animal interlace, now difficult to read (Fig.5.23). It is not easy to decide if the circular slot placed centrally on the heart of Christ on the west face of the Glendalough cross is primary or secondary. It is possible that this seemingly iconographically significant slot might have been added at a later time to hold a relic enclosed in a small circular metalwork reliquary. The shallow rectangular slot centrally located underneath the feet of the ecclesiastic on the south face of the cross may mark the location of the heads of the two figures on the base of the cross. The details of the two figures are difficult to establish as they are very worn but if they had a similar shape to the ecclesiastic above them, their heads would be on the shaft of the cross (Fig.4.CS6.5 – Fig.4.CS6.6).

St. John's cross in Iona is an example of an early intervention where the cross fell shortly after its erection and was reconstructed in eight pieces, which included the addition of a ring. The mortices through which the ring was threaded were cut, are an early intervention in this reimagined cross (Fig.5.24).⁸⁹⁷ The cross also has a circular and a vertically aligned rectangular slot in the side of the upper arm whose function is unknown.⁸⁹⁸ The grooves that were cut in the twentieth century as part of the reconstruction are discussed below.

5.8. Tangible Losses: Random Rectangular Cuts that Damage Adjacent Carving.

Three corners of the shaft of the Kells market cross have deep rectangular cuts that have been neatly finished (Fig.4.CS1.27 – Fig.4.CS1.28). Despite the orderly workmanship of the cuts, considerable damage has been caused to the adjacent carved panels, particularly on the east face. The lower section of the roll moulding has been removed from the south-east side, but this operation was executed without damaging the adjacent carved panels. The shapes of the areas that have been removed on the other three corners are irregular and random, but the edges are sharp and the exposed surfaces regular and vertical. It is possible that when the cross was re-erected either in 1688 or c. 1765, previously broken ragged surfaces were smartened up to improve the appearance of the cross. The two sides of the 1688 inscription could have been damaged at a later date as the edges are rough and contrast with the neater edge above on the north-west corner (Fig.4.CS1.25). Alternatively, the removal may have been caused by over-zealous devotional activities as there has been extensive removal of the roll moulding from the cross in other areas. The Glendalough cross has two rectangular recesses on the midpoint of the south-east corner and the base of

⁸⁹⁷ Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 86.

⁸⁹⁸ Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 73–82.

the north-east corner of the shaft that do not have any obvious function. In both locations they cut into the decorative pelleting on the edge of the south face of the cross (Fig.4.CS6.19 – Fig.4.CS6.20).

5.9. Tangible losses: Slots added to accommodate a secondary function.

A survey of the high crosses in Cornwall shows that cross shafts were frequently reused as gateposts, but the evidence in Ireland is not as common.⁸⁹⁹ An account of the restoration of the Camus cross from 1905 included a ‘before’ photograph which showed the metal lug of a gate set into the center of the carved panel tentatively identified by Harbison as the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (Fig.5.25).⁹⁰⁰ The photograph of the shaft, after restoration, showed that the shaft reunited with the base which survived in the graveyard. The recess for the gate lug was repaired with a mortar made by grinding part of the stone from the tenon, and is now weathered making the recess difficult to identify.⁹⁰¹ The recess for the Camus gate lug was relatively discreet when compared to the y-shaped cut made in a fragment of the Moone holed cross to hold the hinge of a gate (Fig.5.26). This process also involved shaving the carvings from the narrow sides of the fragment. The Armagh cross shaft has a number of small rectangular recesses that could indicate its use as a gate post but the historic images show a different use, discussed below.

The base of crosses often survived alone and the impervious nature of stone created a reservoir of water in the mortice. At Downpatrick, this characteristic trait was exploited by enlarging the mortice to create a drinking trough for animals, which was later adapted for use as the baptismal font in the cathedral. A circular recess was also cut into the side of the base, it is unclear what the purpose is, but possibly for drainage (Fig.4.CS8.10 – Fig.4.CS8.11). Shafts could also be used in this way as the likely surviving shaft of a cross, which is suggested to have come from Monaincha but now in the Roscrea Heritage Center, was hollowed out to create a feeding trough for animals (Fig.5.27). Remarkably, the carving survived on the three remaining faces of the trough.⁹⁰²

5.10. Tangible losses: Recesses/Slots added to Aid Reconstruction.

899 Ann Preston-Jones, Andrew Langdon and Elizabeth Okasha, *Ancient and High Crosses. of Cornwall*, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2012). The following crosses were used as gateposts; no.3, St. Blazey, Biscovey, no.22, St. Clement, no. 42, Gwinear 1, Connor Downs, no. 46, St. Kew 1, Job’s Cross, no. 66, Menheniot, Tencreek, no. 84, Quethiok, no. 93, St. Teath, no. 94, Tintagel 1.

900. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 31; 2: Figs. 83–86.

901. Maxwell Given, “The High Cross of Saint Comgall at Camus-Juxta-Bann, in the County of Derry,” *UJA* 11, no.4 (Oct., 1905): 145–52;

902. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:163; 2: Figs. 548–50.

The case studies of the Armagh and Downpatrick crosses show that they bear the marks of previous reconstructions, however, these recesses can be difficult to identify due to mortar filling that matches the colour of the stone. At Downpatrick, the circular recess cut into the east face of the head was unobtrusive, until identified by the stone conservators in advance of dismantling the cross (Fig.4.CS8.21). Similar marks can be seen on the Armagh cross which indicates the use of metal braces to hold parts together.⁹⁰³ An obvious example of the impact of reconstruction is seen on the head of the Killaloe cross which has four circular drill holes that housed bolts that attached it to a support (Fig.5.28) when moved to Bishops Mant's garden in 1821.⁹⁰⁴ As discussed in Chapter 3, this was a common appropriation of crosses. The top of arms of St. John's Cross in Iona has narrow slots that were cut in the twentieth century in order to clamp the parts together in the reconstruction (Fig.5.24).⁹⁰⁵

5.11. Tangible losses: Iconoclasm.

Acts that deliberately break or destroy objects due to their symbolic value to a particular community are described as 'iconoclastic'. An obvious example is the destruction of the faces of saints and holy figures on images and statues due to their perceived 'idolic' meaning. The face and hands of the ecclesiastic on the Glendalough cross were broken off (Fig.4.CS6.19) but it is difficult to know if the face of Christ was broken before it was worn smooth by rubbing or if it has simply been worn away (Fig.4.CS6.21). The face of Christ on the Dysert O'Dea was broken off and repaired probably when the cross was re-erected in the seventeenth century.⁹⁰⁶ The face of the ecclesiastic figure on the east face and that of Christ on of the Cashel cross have been removed. In the attack on the Cashel Cathedral in 1647, described in Chapter 2, the head, hands and feet of Christ were struck off the large crucifix inside the cathedral, so it is likely that the damage to the outdoor cross occurred at the same time.⁹⁰⁷

The types of damage described above are clearly 'iconoclastic' in nature but identification of an iconoclastic motive is illusive, as it can be the action of a small group that does not necessarily reflect broader attitudes. The most obvious example of this in the case studies is the 1813 destruction of the Armagh cross which is recorded due to its

903. Case study 8, The market cross, Armagh.

904. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1: 120; 2: Figs. 399–400.

905. Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 73–82.

906. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:83: 2: Figs. 261–65.

907. Murphy, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 389.

relatively late date, and appeared to be the action of a minority group.⁹⁰⁸ As discussed in Chapter 3, assigning an iconoclastic motive to a specific loss is challenging as there is relatively little contemporary historical evidence for the destruction of crosses. The fragmentary nature of many Irish crosses is blamed on individuals, notably (Oliver) Cromwell. Ireland's history of political instability combined with the construction of identity by different elements of society led to a selective filtering of memories that did not uphold the viewpoint of individual groups.⁹⁰⁹

At sites where crosses or fragments survive, there are several broad indicators that the motive for the losses was the result of iconoclasm. The first is the evidence of severe damage indicating that great force was used to break up a cross. This is often accompanied by the 'miraculous' survival of small loose fragments, indicating that they continued to be valued and protected after the act of destruction. Documentary evidence of an iconoclastic attack without any accompanying physical evidence can be misleading due to the reasons discussed above and in Chapter 3. Sites that had a strong association with the founding saint, particularly on the pattern day, such as Glendalough or St. Ailbe's cross at Emly, described in Chapter 3, were obvious targets for iconoclastic attacks.

An iconoclastic motive is likely at Tuam where Cromwellian soldiers were reported to have broken the top of the market cross as well as the other crosses whose fragments are now in the cathedral. At the pilgrimage sites at Inishmore, Co. Galway, Cromwellian soldiers were known to have been in the vicinity and the damage to the crosses is severe. The oral tradition corroborated the story and a large number of fragments of more than one cross survives (Fig.2.11). This is also the case at Lorrha, Co. Tipperary where the very damaged bases of two crosses and a broken shaft survive (Fig.5.29). The Glendalough cross suffered severe damage, which was likely due to iconoclastic motives and the case study confirmed this activity at the site.⁹¹⁰ Little is known of the breaking of the substantial cross at Dromiskin, Co. Louth but the severity of the damage to the surviving head, now mounted on a modern base and shaft, indicates an iconoclastic motive (Fig. 5.30). It is less clear if this was the cause of the missing quadrant of the ring of the north cross at Ahenny, which was explained by the need for a sharpening tool, but the real reason is likely to remain unknown. At Kells, the market cross was 'down' twice, and this may have caused the loss

908. See Chapter four, Case study 7. The market cross, Armagh.

909. Rachel Moss explores this theme in "Collective Memory and Municipal Identity in the Early Modern Irish town c. 1550–1750," in *e Passé dans la Ville*, Dany Sandron, ed. (Paris, Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2016), 165–82.

910. See Chapter four, Case study 6. The market cross, Glendalough.

of the capstone and the damage to the head. Apart from the broken head, which could have been caused by structural problems, there are no obvious signs of iconoclastic activity. The accounts of mass destruction of crosses at Iona by the Reforming Synod were interrogated by J. H. Stephenson who found no evidence that any of the crosses were destroyed due to iconoclastic motives.⁹¹¹

5.12 Structural Failure.

The crosses were designed by master craftsmen who understood the structural behaviour of free-standing objects, which require mass and weight to create stability. From a structural perspective, the design of the crosses is inherently stable, and, in many cases, they have endured for over 1200 years without exhibiting any sign of failure. This is a remarkable achievement, but at present, the number of crosses in this category is unknown. The structural stability of a cross is dependent on the firmness of the foundation, the arrangements of the parts, the quality of the joints connecting them and the weight and mass of the stone. The development of the form of the crosses and the influence of skeuomorphs has been widely studied in the context of their chronology together with other insular examples.⁹¹² The structural design and behaviour of the crosses has not been analysed due to the lack of an overview of the crosses, the poor maintenance of records and a scarcity of technical drawings at the same scale. The emergence of 3D modelling has facilitated an examination of the components of crosses, but there are a limited number of crosses that are available in this format.⁹¹³

The main cause of structural failure is the compression or collapse of the soil underneath the base, causing the cross to move out of vertical alignment. The soil underneath such a heavy object is normally well compacted and firm but constant burials in graveyards over hundreds of years can undermine the solidity of the ground. A cross might stabilise at a steep angle or continue to move out of position, leading to eventual structural failure. Early photographs of Clonmacnoise and Glendalough show the crosses leaning at an alarming angle but they remained structurally intact, proving that the design was inherently stable (Fig.5.31). This position would have put pressure on the joints between the parts which increased towards the top of the cross. It is not certain if the bases

911. J. H. Stephenson, "Iona and the 'Reforming Synod'," *The Scottish Historical Review* 25, no. 100 (1928): 396–98; Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 82.

912. Kelly, "Heart of the Matter," 105–45; Robert D. Stevick, "Shapes of Early Sculptured Crosses of Ireland," *Gesta* 38, no. 1 (1999): 3–21; Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*, 100–1, 128–29.

913. <https://sketchfab.com/discoveryprogramme/collections/high-crosses> Accessed 25 August 2022.

were designed to stand directly on top of the ground, as crosses that were straightened up had surprisingly little ballast as a counterweight to their height and relied on their own mass and weight for stability. The socket for the 3.35m high cross of St Kevin in Glendalough was a shallow 27cm, which is perhaps the reason why it leaned to the east before it was straightened up in 1989.⁹¹⁴ The cross at Cloonshanville, Co. Roscommon, that was straightened up in 1977 lacked a base and was 3.9m in height, of which just 30cm of the shaft was set into the ground.⁹¹⁵ The north cross at Ahenny is leaning towards the south-east and an excavation at the base is planned in order to provide structural support underneath it.⁹¹⁶ The number of crosses that have fallen over due to structural failure is not known, as there are no historical records of sudden collapse and the data on those that have been straightened up is limited.

The arrangement of the parts and the quality of the joints can determine the survival of a cross. The crosses consist of three main types; those made from two sections, three sections and four sections (Fig.5.32). The simplest examples, or type A, are made from two structural parts, which consist of a base and a cross made from a single piece of stone. This is the most basic structure and there are many stylistic variations in the size and shape of the base and of the cross. Examples of this are the Durrow cross, the Cross of the Scriptures, the Castledermot crosses, St. Kevin's Cross in Glendalough, the Kildalton cross on Isaly and St. Martin's cross on Iona. Crosses that are made from three pieces of stone, or type B, consist of a base, a combined shaft and a head and a separate capstone placed on top. Crosses with this structure include the cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice, the west and south crosses at Kilkieran, the Kilamery cross and the Kilree cross. This is the most common type in the case studies and includes the Ahenny crosses and the tower and market crosses in Kells, both of which have lost their capstones. The most complex structure consists of four sections or type C; a base, a shaft, a head and a capstone. These are the tallest of all the crosses and examples include the Arboe cross, the tall cross as Monasterboice, the Dysert O'Dea cross, the Drumcliff cross and the Moone cross.⁹¹⁷ These

914. Ann Lynch, "Excavations at the Base of St. Kevin's Cross, Glendalough, County Wicklow," *UJA* 74 (2017): 100–6.

915. David Sweetman, "Archaeological Excavation at the Cross of Cloonshanville, Co. Roscommon," *JGAHS* 38 (1981): 83–87.

916. Flora O'Mahony, Senior Architect, OPW. Interview with the author. 2020. This excavation will show the depth of the base underneath the ground and may give some indication if the cross is on the original location.

917. The last two are missing their capstones but have tenons indicating that they originally had capstones.

are perhaps the most surprising survivals due to the complexity of their structure, their overall height and the number of potentially weak joints.

The bases of crosses often survive *in situ* as they have a solid shape and mass and sit directly on the ground.⁹¹⁸ Cross type A with two parts, has a single mortice and tenon joint and, if left undisturbed, is structurally stable. If the base of a cross survives with the stump of a broken shaft, such as the two crosses at Lorrha, Co. Tipperary, it is possible that the break was due to iconoclastic activity (Fig.5.29). When pressure is applied to the shaft, it is likely to break at the weakest point which is the tenon rather than at the midsection of the shaft. If the mortice and tenon joint is tight, then the shaft would break. At Lorrha, the surviving section of the broken shafts were probably reinserted into the bases at a later date, but it is not known if the tenons are also broken. The most common losses are of the capstones and the heads of crosses which could be due to the failure of the joint if the cross moved out of vertical alignment or else as a result of deliberate loss. The least successful survival is seen in the capstone, irrespective of whether it is attached to the head of the cross via a tenon or a mortice. A surprising number of the heads of ringed crosses survive separated from their shaft, perhaps due to their easily identifiable shape and the presence of carvings as well as their unsuitability for uses as building stone. The plain Latin crosses without a ring, such as Kilbroney, Co. Down or those with a solid ring such as St. Kevin's cross in Glendalough should have good survival rates but it is difficult to know for certain without some indication of original numbers. The relationship between the type of stone available and the design of the cross and joints has been explored by Dorothy Kelly who suggested that the simple plain crosses with imperforate heads were produced when the quality of the local stone was poor and this may have also influenced their survival.⁹¹⁹

The methodology for connecting the sections together is a stone mortice and tenon joint but there are some variations of the arrangements of the parts and a number of the case study crosses demonstrate the failure of the joint. The base always has a mortice recess into which is inserted the corresponding tenon on the bottom of the shaft. This deep mortice is surrounded and supported by the considerable mass of the base which ensures the stability of the assembly, provided the ground remains stable and the cross upright. Tenons and mortices can vary in length and depth, but the effectiveness of this joint type appears to decline higher up in the cross as the exposure to the wind increases and the amount of

918. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:395, Appendix B: Bases.

919. Dorothy Kelly, "Irish High Crosses: Some Evidence from the Plainer Examples." *JRSAL* 116 (1986): 51–67.

material around the mortice decreases, making the sides of the joint vulnerable to breaking. An example of the failure of this joint can be seen on the west face of the South Cross at Castledermot, Co. Kildare, where the slender side of the mortice has broken exposing the tenon on the top of the shaft (Fig.5.33).

The introduction of collars around the mortice was an attempt to increase mass around the sides of the joint and provide additional stability. The Arboe has a collar on the head of the cross above the joint with the shaft whereas the collar is below the joint on the shaft at Clones (Fig.5.34). The capstone usually had the mortice on the underside and the tenon protrudes from the top of the head, but this is not universal. The tenon on the top of the tower cross at Kells is relatively large and the walls of the mortice of the capstone would have lacked mass and solidity.⁹²⁰ An example of the opposite arrangement can be seen in the failure of the deep joint on top of the Kells market cross, where the sides of the mortice were too thin to hold the tenon of the cap-stone securely.⁹²¹ The Tihilly capstone is another example where the tenon is on the underside of the cap-stone and the mortice is in the cross head (Fig. 4.CS8.15). The loss of the capstone and/or the head of a cross may be due to human interference but these joints are the weakest link in the structure.

Surviving cross fragments can demonstrate the location and nature of the mortice and tenon joints and perhaps provide some insights into the mechanism of their failure. The All the case study crosses, with the exception of the south cross in Ahenny, are structurally compromised to a greater or lesser extent, but there is no identifiable pattern to the losses other than it appears to be a normal part of their survival. The Tuam and Clones crosses are composites, so it is impossible to know the relationship of the parts in their original structures. The Armagh cross is also included in this category as the shaft is made up from two different crosses and the base is missing. The capstones are missing from the Kells market cross, the tower cross and the Downpatrick cross. The broken cross at Kells is missing the entire head and possibly the capstone, depending on whether it is type B or C. The Glendalough cross is missing a large amount of material but as discussed above, it is unlikely to be due to failure of a joint. Sufficient material has survived to enable a re-assembly of the parts and it is unlikely to have a separate capstone. The tower and broken crosses at Kells have lost the modern mortar which helped to stabilise the joint between the shaft and the base. The movement of the loose shaft may have accelerated the structural

920. See Chapter 4, Case Study 3. The broken cross, Kells.

921. See Chapter 4, Case Study 2. The tower cross, Kells.

failure of the base of the tower cross, which has fractured across the centre. The fit between these two crosses and their bases is not tight, which raises the question of the accuracy of the arrangements.

The relationship between the typology of the crosses and their subsequent structural failure needs further research to see if the design was adapted and changed over time due to structural concerns and has the potential to provide insights into their chronology. The structural behaviour of the crosses under pressure could be improved by using concrete replicas of similar mass and weight and testing them to destruction by gradually moving them out of vertical alignment. It would be understandable to claim that the simpler the design and the fewer joints, the better the outcome, but this is not the case. Local conditions, such as the intensity of burials and rituals, played a major but undocumented part in survival. The survival of all the parts of a cross may be an indicator that it is in its original position, but further research is needed in order to validate this claim. There have been no structural failures of crosses in the recent past as corrective works are usually undertaken if there are signals that it might collapse. A decline in interference from burials close to the bases of crosses may also be a factor. Structural failure can be deliberate or induced by iconoclasts but based on the surviving parts, it is often impossible to know the difference. Perhaps at some time in the future, technology will allow the investigation of the structural joints in the crosses without any physical intervention.

5.13. The Loss of Form and Coherence.

A non-exhaustive list of the ways that crosses can lose form and coherence includes; the loss of a single part of a cross, the restoration of a cross that is missing substantial parts, the addition of conjectural fabric in the restoration of a cross, the creation of a new cross from fragments of different crosses, incongruous arrangements of surviving fragments of crosses, attaching cross fragments to walls or completely entombing them, and displaying them in a way that prevents access to all sides or is casual and insecure. The case studies show that each cross, cross fragment and replica has an individual survival trajectory which can produce different outcomes even if they are on the same site. When crosses experience structural failure, the progress of the fragmentation process can vary from a single destructive event to a gradual dispersal over several hundred years leaving a few fragments at a site or the disappearance of all evidence. The sequence of events that leads to the separation of the parts of a cross is often impossible to trace but some insights can be gained from the case studies and other related sites, although there are many gaps in our understanding of the process of destruction and dispersal. It is difficult to make any

assumptions about the nature of the losses as there is such a wide range of fragment types, from small loose stones with an indication of carvings to more substantial and easily identifiable parts of a cross.

Foster examined the question of when carved stone fragments cease to be part of a monuments and become artefacts, finding that in Scotland they are technically portable, i.e. an artefact, when no longer earthfast or wallfast.⁹²² In Ireland, in order for a monument to have the protection of the *National Monuments Act* it must be registered as a recorded monument on the SMR which implies a certain degree of immovability.⁹²³ Generally, every effort is made to keep loose stones on their original site as the alternative involves the approval of the relevant Minister via the consent process and the involvement of the NMI as all archaeological objects are claimable by the State.⁹²⁴ The general approach, to retain stone on or close to their original location goes a long way towards addressing issues of centre-periphery, identity/place but, depending on the nature of the retention, there can be problems of meaning, fragmentation and displacement.⁹²⁵ There is little guidance around other concerns such as dampness, incongruous combinations, inappropriate locations and fixing with cement mortars.

The loss of a single part of a cross has the least impact on its form, as seen in the Kells tower and market crosses and the Downpatrick cross, before its relocation. The surviving heads of crosses at Mona Incha, Co. Tipperary and Monasterboice, Co. Louth are fixed on top of modern shafts (Fig.5.35). These are examples of restorations of a cross that has lost substantial parts but the form is still legible. The Glendalough cross was in five separate fragments before it was reassembled using new stone insertions. The restoration of the Downpatrick cross included the addition of conjectural fabric in the form of the new

922. For an overview for the situation in Scotland see Foster, “The Curatorial Consequences of Being Moved, Movable or Portable,” 15–28. Also see Chapter 1.

923. The legal status of the SMR was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1994/act/17/enacted/en/html> Accessed November 4, 2021; <https://www.archaeology.ie/archaeological-survey-ireland/legal-protection> Accessed November 4, 2021.

924. The legal definition of an “archaeological object” means any chattel whether in a manufactured or partly manufactured or an unmanufactured state which by reason of the archaeological interest attaching thereto or of its association with any Irish historical event or person has a value substantially greater than its intrinsic (including artistic) value, and the said expression includes ancient human, animal or plant remains; <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/11/section/2/enacted/en/html> Accessed, May 23, 2023.

925. These are the four key themes identified by Siân Jones in her work on the Hilton of Cadboll stone but they can be applied to most displaced or fragment carved stone. James et al, *A Fragmented Masterpiece*, 205–412.

base and capstone. The creation of new crosses from fragments of different crosses has already been discussed in Chapter 3. It requires a careful survey of the Dysert O' Dea cross and the Donaghmore cross in Co. Tyrone to detect that they are composite crosses. Whereas there is no debate about the composite nature of the crosses at Tuam, Clones, and Clogher in Co. Tyrone. The incongruous arrangements of surviving fragments of crosses is due to a straightforward desire to preserve loose fragments. It can produce awkward compositions such as at Duleek, Co. Meath and Taghmon, Co. Wexford crosses, where the heads and bases have survived but the shafts are lost (Fig.5.36). A collection of fragments, identified by Harbison as parts of three separate crosses, are randomly fixed to a rough stone platform at Emlagh, Co. Roscommon⁹²⁶ (Fig.5.37). An example of entombing carved stone fragments in walls can be seen at Gallen in Co. Offaly where a collection of early Christian slabs was built into the remains of the gable of a church. Despite the shortcomings of this type of protection, it has the benefit of retaining the fragments on site. (Fig.5.38) At Moone in Co. Kildare the fragments of the second 'holed' cross, previously encased in a concrete slab for safe keeping, are now mounted on pedestals like museum objects indicating their importance. (Fig.5.26) Crosses and cross fragments are frequently attached to walls with clips which prevents access to one side. The head of the Armagh cross is displayed in this way while the Tuam pillar is free standing but places against a wall.

There are many examples of fragments that remained loose and subsequently disappeared and are only known from a record drawing (Fig.5.39). Their dispersal or preservation does not follow a pattern which adds to the complexities of tracking their biographies particularly in the case of the rural crosses where there is a lack of information. An account by Dorothy Kelly shows the difficulties of monitoring unattached fragments. A cross head at Ogulla, Co. Roscommon was photographed by her in 1990, reported lost in 1993 but recovered by the National Museum in 1994 where it now remains in storage.⁹²⁷ In the absence of a suitable wall, the fragment of a head of a cross from Drumcullin, also in Co. Offaly is now in the local Catholic church in Rath, while a more complete cross from the same site was said to have been moved to Castlebernard Castle but its provenance is uncertain. The identification and collecting of fragments of crosses can take long periods of time, as in the example of the five cross fragments from Kilkieran now on display in

926. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1:86–87.

927. Dorothy Kelly, "Some Remains of High Crosses in the West of Ireland," *JRSAL* 123 (1993): 154; "Cross at Ogulla, County Roscommon," *JRSAL*, 124 (1994): 213–14.

Jerpoint Abbey visitor centre; two parts were recorded in 1851, a third piece was added in the 1950s, and two further parts were identified in 1983.⁹²⁸ New discoveries are continually coming to light as Heather King identified a cross base, the heads of two small crosses, two sections of surviving shafts, an early cross slab and several other later crosses following a tidy up of the graveyard at Nobber, Co. Meath.⁹²⁹ There are many more examples of discoveries of fragments of crosses such as at Drumcliff, Co. Sligo and Slane, Co. Meath indicating that the collection is expanding all the time.⁹³⁰ The importance of an up-to-date inventory is apparent, particularly with a live data base in the case of fragments that can be more easily moved than crosses and need to be tracked *ex situ*.

5.14. Intangible Losses: The Ritual Landscape and the Loss of Setting.

There are both tangible and intangible aspects to this loss as any changes can have an impact on the relationships between people, objects and places. The contemporary social and spiritual value of crosses is generated and maintained by a number of different attributes some of which depend on physical access, daily contact, the maintenance of identity through memory and story-telling, and a sense of ownership and custodianship. Many of these values are identified through ethnographic research but changes in these values can also be seen when the setting of the crosses is changed.

As discussed earlier, the practice of praying in front of crosses was an indication of the religious significance of the crosses to the Catholic population. Wakeman's images of Monasterboice show figures kneeling close to the base of both crosses, a practice that was disrupted by the installation of railings (Fig.5.40). The railings around the Clones cross protected it during busy market days but they continue to prevent access despite the pedestrianisation of the surroundings and a substantial modern stone plinth. At Tuam, the increase in traffic left the cross physically isolated in the center of a busy roundabout but, by remaining in sight of the townspeople, the sense of local ownership and identity was maintained. This connection has likely been reduced following its move to the cathedral, although no research on this aspect was undertaken. A benefit of the move could have been

928. Quinlan, *Ossory Crosses Conservation Plan* '36.

929. Heather A. King, "Nobber's Early Medieval Treasures Revealed," *Arch. Ire*, 19, no. 3 (2005): 21–24.

930. Heather A. King, "A Re-discovered late medieval cross at Slane." in *Ríocht na Midhe* 9, no. 1 (1994–1995): 84–91; Stella Durand, *Drumcliffe, The Church of Ireland Parish and its North Sligo Setting*. (Leitrim: Drumlin Publications, 2000).

an increase in access by the removal of the railings but they were re-instated despite the move to the tranquil setting of the cathedral (Fig.4.CS5.38).

One of the defining characteristics of the crosses, when they remain upright, is their ability to mark a position in space whether in a town, a field, or a relatively well-preserved monastic setting. In the past, this physical ability enabled them to mark routes across the countryside, identify the borders of territories, signal the entrances to the monastic enclosures, or stand outside specific churches as a reference point for liturgical time and space. The symbiotic relationship between the landscape setting and the function of a cross is difficult to understand when both have undergone irreversible change. In the case of a very small number of the crosses the loss may be limited to the disappearance of the paint on the surface, but most will have endured more substantial changes. They all share the loss of their landscape setting due to the impact of time, people, animals, weather and successive layers of occupation. The degree to which the landscape has changed can be appreciated at two of the best-preserved early medieval church sites in Europe, the island hermitages of Inishmurray, Co. Sligo and High Island, Co. Galway. Despite remaining largely uninhabited and inaccessible throughout the post medieval period, they have both suffered extensive change and the surviving cross-slabs are in secondary locations.⁹³¹ The visual impact of a cross is best appreciated when there is ‘breathing space’ around it and it can dominate the space in which it stands. Ahenny is an example of a setting where there is little competing visual clutter and the crosses appear to tower over the graveyard. The cross of Muiredach in Monasterboice survives in almost perfect condition but the landscape it was designed to mark and embellish is now a modern graveyard, crowded with nineteenth century ringed crosses which lessen its visual impact. (Fig.5.41).⁹³²

As discussed in Chapter 1, the settings of crosses is the subject of recent academic research with a focus on their relationships with other crosses as well as with churches, enclosures, open spaces and most recently with their interaction with the sun and seasonal changes. The cultural significance of crosses that were thought to survive in their primary location was been recognised and valued by the act of replacing them with replicas when they were moved indoors. In the past, the credentials or otherwise of these locations were

931. Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*; Georgina Scally, *High Island (Ardoileán), Co. Galway. Excavation of an Early Medieval Monastery* (Dublin: Stationary Office, 2014).

932. The base has been damaged by weathering and people. See Gowan, *Monasterboice*.

<https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/services/heritage/publications/monasterboiceconservationstudyfull.pdf>. 149–157; Accessed 25 August 2022; Stalley, *Early Irish Sculpture*. ”

established by excavations after the crosses were moved. The decision to provide a replica is linked to the value that is attached to the position of the cross within the overall context of the site. In Cashel, the excavation showed that the cross was not in its primary location but a replica marks the location due to the significance of the relationship between the entrance to the cathedral and the placement of the cross during its later medieval and early modern ‘life’.⁹³³ The case studies showed that there was a degree of confusion about the primacy or otherwise of the location of the Tuam cross, which was thought to have been originally located in close proximity to the cathedral and later moved to the market place to function as a market cross.⁹³⁴ The likelihood of the survival of the Tuam or Kells market cross either on or close to their primary location was not recognised until the aerial photography of Leo Swan identified the patterns of the street plans.⁹³⁵ The theory that the Tuam cross was originally located at the cathedral provided the justification for ‘returning’ and the location from which it was removed was not marked by a replica.

The fact that the ecclesiastical setting has undergone irreparable change places a responsibility on heritage managers to respect the possibility that the location of a cross may be significant in ways that are not fully understood. Any discussion of the risks associated with allowing a cross to remain *in situ* or proposals for relocation, covers, or replicas, needs to be based on informed evidence as well as in the context of the needs of the entire group of crosses. Further research is needed to determine the number of crosses in primary or secondary locations as temporary supports can facilitate access to the underside of crosses and valuable information can be obtained by targeted excavation and non-invasive techniques.⁹³⁶

5.15. Conclusion.

The lexicon is an attempt to identify shared patterns of loss across the wider group of crosses. In some cases, patterns are clearly identifiable, such as the joining together of surviving fragments to create composite crosses, the loss of the corner moulded roll, the weathering of the tops of the arms and rings and the loss of capstones. Other patterns suggest that further consideration is needed to deepen understanding of the biography of a

933. Lynch, "Excavations at the Base of St. Patrick's Cross," 9–18.

934. See Case Study 1, The market cross, Kells, Case Study 5, the market cross, Tuam, Case Study 7, the market cross, Armagh and Case Study 8, The Downpatrick cross.

935. Swan, "Monastic Porto-Towns in Early Medieval Ireland," 77–102.

936. For an example of limited access excavation see Colm Donnelly, Philip MacDonald, Eileen Murphy, and Nicholas Beer. "Excavations at Boho High Cross, Toneel North, County Fermanagh," *UJA* 62 (2003): 121–42.

monument. The lexicon is intended to emphasize the benefits of recognising the collective aspects of the nature of the losses that the crosses have experienced. It highlights the risks they share, such as physical deterioration and loss of social significance. Different conservation approaches can exacerbate, prevent or heighten different values. Despite the emphasis on the shared nature of the lexicon, the biographical approach to the crosses shows that the nature of loss and the subsequent impact of repairs, reassembly, duplication etc. is unique to each one and contributes to its cultural significance at a local and national level.

Chapter 6. Conclusion: the Future of the Irish high Crosses: Learning to Live with Loss.

6.1. Creating New Knowledge and Understanding.

The key question posed in Chapter 1 was what new knowledge and understanding of the cultural significance of Irish high crosses can be gained by examining their long lives after 1200 and how can this influence policies that will guide their future protection. Before discussing the future of the crosses, it is useful to summarise what new insights have been gained in the previous chapters.

The literature review highlighted how the dominance of art historical studies has diverted attention away from other aspects of the crosses' significance such as their social and cultural value. This, in turn, has shaped conservation approaches to their protection over the past fifty years. The impact of the fragmentation of the Government's heritage function was considered in conjunction with the lack of policy documents dedicated to the protection of carved stone. The situation in Ireland was compared with Scotland, where the influence of the NCCSS and ScARF has produced policy documents and research frameworks specifically for carved stone. Despite the data in the RMP and Harbison's Irish *corpus*, there is considerable difficulty in getting an overview of the vulnerability of the crosses. The lack of monument biographies in Ireland was noted, along with the absence of relevant research frameworks and debate about the future of the crosses.

The historical research identified, for a first time, the origins and endurance of the legal and penal legacy associated with the market crosses at the eastern entrance of the monastery. The influence of the conservative nature of the Irish Church on the survival of the crosses in the late middle-ages was explored, as well as the continuity of their function as important relics of the foundation saints. The influence of the secular functions of the market crosses was found to be a factor in their endurance when compared with crosses located beside churches. Another influence on their survival was the failure of the Reformation during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century in Ireland. The impact of the more constrained programme of Puritanical iconoclasm in Ireland during the Commonwealth period, when compared to Britain, had not previously been recognised. Nor had the influence of the continuity of Catholic access to the traditional burial places in the ancient places of worship. The crosses have long been considered a symbol of Irish nationalism, but this research shows that they were a part of a contested Irish heritage, valued by Catholics and Protestants alike, particularly during the nineteenth century. This

shared heritage was expressed in the common appropriation of the ringed cross for memorials. The role of the crosses as part of the maintenance of Irish Protestant Patrician identity can be seen in the erection of composite crosses, primarily in the North of Ireland, a pattern that had not been previously identified or discussed. The contribution of the antiquarian societies to the protection of the crosses was reviewed and occasionally found to be less than beneficial. The Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland also played a significant role in reinforcing the importance of the crosses as a number of them were among the first to be designated as national monuments. Despite their relatively small size, when compared other monuments, the crosses embody a significant amount of information about the belief systems of the early Church as well as the contested heritage and multiple identities of Irish people in the following centuries.

The case studies showed the high level of intervention that some of the crosses have endured and the dynamic nature of their cultural significance, which has sometimes produced dramatic physical changes. This aspect of the crosses has previously been overlooked, partly due to their art historical significance and, in our rapidly changing environment, they were considered to be unchanging and permanent markers in the landscape. The extent of the removal of the roll moulding on the corners and the suggestion that this is the result of devotional practice had not been previously identified. The case studies also showed the vulnerability of the outdoor crosses to the impact of weather. Although the social and spiritual values of the crosses are not the focus of this research, many of them such as the Durrow cross, continue to be associated with pattern days and the intangible rituals of faith that reach back to the early church.

The Glendalough and Armagh crosses are the only case study crosses that show definite signs of iconoclastic damage although it is difficult to be certain in other cases despite the evidence of oral traditions. The demise of the Armagh cross in 1813 showed that a section of society in Northern Ireland continued to find the crosses objectionable but it is not clear if this was due to puritanical iconoclasm or sectarian anti-nationalist sentiment. Whichever it was, powerful emotions were involved in the breaking of the cross. The Tuam case study showed that during the nineteenth century the art historical value of the crosses increased, while at the same time, their political and religious meaning reflected Ireland's struggle with identity and control. In the late twentieth century, the communities in Kells and Tuam were outraged by the proposed relocations of their crosses, which were

considered to be an intrinsic part of the identities of their respective towns.⁹³⁷ The better-known examples have a touristic and commercial value to the local population, as at Downpatrick, Roscrea, Glendalough and Clonmacnoise, where they are the centrepieces in visitor attractions. The relationship between the original crosses and the various replicas (images of reconstructed crosses, plaster casts of idealised crosses, plaster casts of actual crosses, stone replicas based on laser scans cut by machines, digital 3D reproductions) is understood to be a complex issue involving ideas of authenticity, materiality and setting. When the case studies are taken together, common patterns of damage were identified in the lexicon of losses which can be applied to the wider collection to assist in their analysis and provide a framework for addressing future approaches to audits of the crosses. In the past, this damage was frequently overlooked if it did not have an impact on the art historical value or, in the case of fragmentation and/or displacement, it contributed to a reduction in these values.

6.2. Changing the Values Associated with the Crosses.

Values are at the core of conservation management as, without them, societies have no reason to protect their heritage.⁹³⁸ In the previous chapters, the way that values can overlap, change over time, and sometimes be in competition or conflict with each other was examined. In terms of the *Burra Charter* process, the importance of values lies in the role in creating policies and setting objectives that ensure that conservation responses are sensitive to the cultural significance of a site.⁹³⁹

The motives that instigate a reassessment of the values of a heritage place influence the methodology used and the outcomes. Foster and Jones' study of the cultural significance of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab was inspired by the discovery of the long-lost lower section of the slab, which led to a reassessment of the relationship of the two parts of the monument with each other and their role in the production of memory, identity and place.⁹⁴⁰ The lower section of the slab remained *in situ* and was not re-united with the upper part in the museum in Edinburgh. Their research on the replica of the St. John's cross in Iona was prompted by its omission from the schedule of monuments for protection. This led to a general reassessment of the cultural significance of replicas and the eventual inclusion of

937. Foster and Jones, "Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-slab," 205–84; Foster, *My Life as a Replica*.

938. De la Torre and Mason, *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, 3.

939. *The Burra Charter*, 1–4

940. Foster and Jones, "Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross-slab," 205–84.

the St. John's replica in the schedule. These two examples demonstrate the different motivations that lead to the creation of new knowledge and understanding and the impact that can have on the value of a monument and its cultural significance.⁹⁴¹ As stated in Chapter 1, this research cannot be considered to be a comprehensive assessment of the cultural significance of the crosses, as the social and spiritual values associated with them have not been studied. This research reflects the author's concern about the lack of acknowledgement of the value of the long lives of the crosses, their vulnerability to climate change and the absence of policy regarding their future survival. As a result, the focus is on how these relatively vulnerable objects endured, what are the impacts of their survival and why it is important to understand their cultural significance today.

Irrespective of the motive, the assessment of values is not a straightforward task and several different authors have been put forward different methodologies with different criteria.⁹⁴² As discussed in Chapter 1, Foster's adaptation of Simon Thurley's 'heritage cycle' provides a framework for connecting changes in the value of a monument with securing its future through engagement and experience⁹⁴³ (Fig. 1.3). The main changes that have emerged from this research are in the evidential and historic categories of value, although some social and spiritual values have also emerged. This analysis suggests that an acknowledgement of the past bias towards their undeniable art historical value would allow other values, such as the importance of place and sensation, to be recognised. If this change is recognised, future revisions of existing conservation plans for sites with crosses or in the production of new ones, will provide a more balanced view of their significance.⁹⁴⁴ This process should include the spiritual and social values and an acknowledgement of their long lives.

The contradictory and unreliable evidence of historic images and records, documented in the case studies, has highlighted how nationalistic attitudes towards the establishment of the reputation of Irish art led to a romanticised and sometimes unrealistic depiction of the crosses. The crosses are not simply symbols of Irish nationalism as, in many cases, their survival was due to the actions of those that had very opposite views. The long

941. de la Torre et al, *Heritage Values in Site Management* ; Kate Clark, *Informed Conservation* (London: English Heritage, 2001), 12–21.

942. For an overview see; Randal Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, 5-30; Foster, "Ways of Valuing," in *Future Thinking*, 72–79.

943. Foster, *My Life as a Replica*; 170.

944. Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 1, 1–3; Kelly, "The High Crosses of Ireland: A Review Article," 67–78.

lives of the crosses reflect the complex and contradictory nature of Irish society, particularly during the nineteenth century. The value of the crosses as evidence of contested heritage has traditionally been associated with iconoclastic activities, particularly with the Cromwellian invasion of Ireland and its repercussion. The Armagh cross was evidence of the persistence of iconoclastic motives into the nineteenth century. The value of the crosses as symbols of nationalism was seen in the attempt to knock over the Tuam cross in 1921. A more subtle symbolism can be seen in Ulster, in the creation of new monuments from existing fragments when this pattern is interpreted as a public expression of Protestant control and dominance. The suggestion that the treatment of the crosses in state care in Northern Ireland is due to their identification with Irish Catholic nationalism overlooks the efforts that were made in the past to protect and display them in prominent locations. These crosses are created out of the remnants of earlier unrecorded iconoclastic activities and are also driven by the need to protect these valuable relics. The Tuam cross is also a new monument created as an expression of contested heritage the growing Catholic confidence had a direct role in its creation. In Clones, the cross is a link to the Patrician past, but also a symbol of economic recovery and political stability.

When the complex reasons for the superior survival rates for crosses in Ireland over and above those elsewhere in the British Isles are understood, the value of their location and setting comes to the fore. The contrasting survival rates of the crosses in Ireland and Great Britain is partly due to different responses to the Reformation and divergent timelines of religious reform, but further research is needed in order to unpick this argument. Rosemary Cramp describes how in Britain during ‘the massive rebuilding and reconstruction of churches in the later nineteenth century...sculptures came tumbling out of the walls into which they had been rebuilt in earlier periods.’⁹⁴⁵ In Ireland, there are only a few examples of this type of discovery indicating that many crosses have remained relatively intact, close to or on their primary location.⁹⁴⁶ Cramp put the Irish context in perspective describing how, in Britain, the lack of complete monuments or architectural schemes that survive *in situ*, i.e. in primary location, limits understanding of the intentions of those who made the crosses and their iconographical programmes.⁹⁴⁷ Crosses that are in their primary location have the

945. Rosemary Cramp, “New Directions in the Study of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture,” *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 84 (2010):1-25.

946. Fragments of crosses were found built into church walls at the Hill of Slane, Co. Meath, Drumcliff, Co. Sligo, but more information is needed to make a complete list.

947. Cramp, “New Directions in the Study of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture,” 10.

potential to reveal their intended spatial, political, and cultural functions but further research is needed, either through excavation or other methods, to exploit this potential.

Some areas of research, such as the chronology of the crosses and the development of their art and iconography, can be advanced irrespective of the authenticity or otherwise of the setting but research in other areas, such as phenomenology and their relationships with the wider landscape, requires a degree of certainty about the primacy of the location of a cross. There are few crosses in this category but, at present, they are not identified, nor has this value been reflected in new research. This aspect of the crosses has the potential to dramatically change their historic value not just in the academic world but also in the local community and could assist in prioritising where resources should be directed in the future. This importance has been acknowledged in the archaeological excavations conducted by King, Lynch, Manning and others.⁹⁴⁸ The works of Ó'Carragáin, Flower and Pulliam have placed a new focus on the importance of the setting on the crosses.⁹⁴⁹

The religious/spiritual value of the crosses is seen in the interpretation of the missing corners as evidence of devotional activities. This aspect of the crosses provides insights into the medieval mind, where the use of relics as curative potions was common before medical advances put an end to the practice. It reveals attitudes towards sacred objects that were less than reverential in today's terms and point to a possible monitory value of the cross as 'relic'. The payments associated with this type of religious devotion were a financial cornerstone of the Church and later secular 'keeper' and guides, but further research is needed in order to verify the extent of the practice.

The biographical approach to the crosses highlights their value as survivors which carry information about the past in their materiality. This aspect is closely related to an awareness of the vulnerability and the dynamic nature of change. This value helps to put

948. Heather King, "Excavations at the North Cross, Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare," in *Irish Art Historical Studies: In Honour of Peter Harbison*, Colum Hourihane ed. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 165–74; King, "Burials and High Crosses at Clonmacnoise," in *Death and Burial in Medieval Europe: papers of the Medieval Europe Brugge 1997 Conference*. Guy de Boe and Frans Verhaeghe, eds. (Zellik: Inst. Voor het arch. Patrimonium, 1997), 127–31; Ann Lynch, "Excavations at the Base of St. Patrick's Cross, Cashel," 9–18; Lynch, "Excavations at the Base of St Kevin's cross, Glendalough 100–106; Conleth Manning, "The Base of the North Cross at Clonmacnoise", 8–9; Manning, "The Churches of Monasterboice and the Layout of the Site." 125–55.

949. Ó'Carragáin, "The Ruthwell Cross and Irish High Crosses: Some Points of Comparison and Contrast," 118–23; Ó'Carragáin, "Visual Theology within a Liturgical Context: The Visual Programmes of the Irish High Crosses," 707–49; Flower, "Irish High Crosses" 87–97; Pulliam, "Between the Embodied Eye and Living World: Clonmacnoise's Cross of the Scriptures," 7–35; Pulliam, "Blood, Water and Stone: The Performative Cross," 262–78.

the entire group into perspective, as knowledge of the extent and number of fragments increases awareness and appreciation of the ones that have survived. An absence of this value in combination with entrenched art historical values leads to the view that later alterations and impacts have little importance. If the dynamic nature of change is ignored or denied, then conservation approaches and resource allocation become static and possibly irrelevant.

The social value of the crosses is impossible to ignore in the Tuam and Kells market cross case studies. In both instances, the local communities had a strong sense of ownership of the crosses, which were central to the town's identity as an ancient and holy place. Their stewardship of the crosses led to disagreements and a robust challenge to the authority of the experts. The Downpatrick cross was relocated and reconfigured without any opposition from the local community, but this may be due to its ownership by the Church. It was also a considerable distance from the centre of the town, was not its 'original' location and was replaced by an almost identical stone replica cross, which now fulfils the social role of the original cross. The value of replicas of crosses is a complex subject, as in Kells the replica was rejected as 'not authentic' in combination with a desire to retain free access to the original cross, i.e. not behind a visitor heritage center pay point. This was not an issue in Glendalough where the cross had been a tourist attraction in St Kevin's church for many years and had little connection to the local community. The value of a replica cross was not recognised in Tuam, which was also a rejection of the importance of the place at the eastern entrance to the sanctum. The value of replicas will be discussed below in reassessing authenticity.

The difficulties that arise in the absence of an overview of the crosses, particularly regarding rarity or representativity, highlight the benefits of the collective value of the crosses. Iconographical and developmental sequences have been successfully studied in the past but the lack of a comprehensive, current inventory limits other types of understanding. Some values cannot be evaluated without context, such as which are the most intact/least damaged or where are the best-preserved carvings. These values can only be appreciated in relation to the entire collection. The opposite is also the case in identifying the most at risk, such as the most at risk for loss of carvings or exposure to theft. The practical benefits of an up-to-date inventory and condition assessment are not just art historical but also evidential/scientific and will enable future resources to be prioritised for individual monuments in the context of the entire group.

The argument that all monuments are at risk from climate change is answered by the claim that the crosses are a manageable group with a maximum of three hundred crosses and cross fragments at approx. 150 locations.⁹⁵⁰ Much of the basic data needed to create an up to date *corpus* is already available in the SMR files, which were collated by the archaeologists in the National Monuments Service. A new *corpus* and a condition audit would require an inter-disciplinary team including art historians, geologists and other specialists. Harbison's *High Crosses of Ireland* made an important contribution in acknowledging the value of fragments as part of the overall group. His survey was limited in some respects due to his singular interest in the iconography of the crosses and a lack of state support when compared with the detailed provenance, critical assessment and bibliography contained in the *CASSS*. A first step in creating new knowledge would be to revisit Harbison's survey of the crosses and bring it up to date. However, a new inventory needs to be open ended in acknowledgement of the dynamic nature of the task as new monuments and information come to light. The difficulties associated with the two different administrative structures of Northern Ireland and Ireland are more easily overcome if the task is a finite piece of work, but the future maintenance of a data base would need inter-governmental agreement. In the present volatile political environment, it is also possible that there will be changes in the future regarding the administrative divisions on the island.

6.3 Understanding Risk: Securing for the Future.

In 2005, Ingval Maxwell summarised Scotland's medieval sculpture conservation problems with the straightforward plea that 'given the scale of what is at risk, the top priority needs to be ensuring that there is an accurate, modern record of each individual monument, and an objective assessment of its physical health.'⁹⁵¹ The Heritage Council had similar concerns when they published a study of stone decay in 2001, which had data on the degree of erosion and degradation on a number of stone monuments in Ireland.⁹⁵² Several crosses were included in the study and the findings were that the intensity of decay did not increase with age but was determined by the type and origin of the stone and the stress it had undergone over the years.⁹⁵³ The results indicated that the decay process was mild for the crosses

950. These numbers are an estimate as the inclusion of plain crosses or late medieval crosses would influence the numbers.

951. Ingval Maxwell, "Scotland's Early Medieval Sculpture in the 21st Century: A strategic overview of Conservation Problems, Maintenance and Replication Methods," in *Able minds and Practiced Hands*, 174.

952. Sara Pavia and Jason Bolton, *Stone Monuments Decay Study*. (Kilkenny: The Heritage Council, 2001).

953. Pavia and Bolton, *Stone Monuments Decay Study*, 24.

included in the survey but that one third of the total monuments surveyed showed significant loss of carved stone detail and all the sandstone monuments were considered to be vulnerable.⁹⁵⁴ Biological colonization was present on 97% of the monuments but the potential harm was offset by its protective role.⁹⁵⁵ While this might bring some comfort regarding the condition of the stone crosses, it is significant that there is no mention in the report of climate change or in the authors' publication on decay and conservation of building materials in Ireland.⁹⁵⁶ These publications highlight the difference that the intervening twenty-two years has made to conservation approaches. The current concerns are seen in ICOMOS's publication of 2019 which carries the following stark warning;

There will be cases where stabilizing, documentation, monitoring and acceptance of controlled decay of a heritage place may be the only valid conservation process: it will eventually be lost. The process of farewell, valediction and documentation will increasingly be part of heritage practice, with digital recording techniques and virtual reality used to record and interpret heritage stories and convey them to future generations as places are progressively lost.⁹⁵⁷

Understanding risk is not solely the creation of new knowledge, which in turn changes the values of a heritage place. The documentation process, no matter how expertly and thoroughly carried out, is not in itself sufficient to establish conservation policies and objectives. In his planning process methodology (Fig.6.1), Mason, writing in 2002, set out how the production of policies and objectives requires the integration of three different types of documentation; the physical condition assessment, the value/cultural significance assessment and the management context assessment.⁹⁵⁸ He suggested that the social, economic, geographical and administrative contexts of conservation projects are considered as seriously and as deeply as the technical aspects.⁹⁵⁹ It is in this third category, the management context, that the assessment of the impacts of conservation options on climate change are factored into the production of heritage risk assessment and policy. While it

954. The survey included the Blackrock cross, Co. Dublin, the two Castledermot crosses and the Moone cross in Co. Kildare, the market cross in Kells, Co. Meath and the crosses at Ferns in Co. Wexford.

955. Pavia and Bolton, *Stone Monuments Decay Study*, 35.

956. Sara Pavia and Jason Bolton, *Stone, Brick and Mortar: Historical uses, Decay and Conservation of Building Materials in Ireland* (Bray: Wordwell Ltd, 2000).

957. ICOMOS Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group. 2019. *The Future of Our Pasts: Engaging Cultural Heritage in Climate Action, July 1, 2019*. (Paris: ICOMOS, 2019), 17.

958. Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning," in *Assessing the Values in Cultural Heritage*, 5.

959. Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning," 5, 108.;

may be technically possible to protect many of the crosses, this may not be a sustainable choice for the future.

In considering the context in which future conservation decisions will be made, it is worth considering the type of solutions that have been developed in the recent past. New levels of sophistication were shown at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Jelling Stones in Denmark, where relatively large monuments were covered *in-situ*⁹⁶⁰ (Fig.6.2). The two, tenth-century stones are completely enclosed by elegant glass and steel covers which have internal environmental controls to maintain a constant temperature and relative humidity. The covers provide museum type conditions for the stones in their original setting so that they are fully protected from the effects of the environment as well as from damage by people. No other interventions are needed for the protection of the stones and it would be possible to remove the covers in the future. This solution has archaeological impacts for the installation of services and foundations and there is a social loss of access to the stones and a visual impact from the covers. Other impacts are economic and environmental due to the cost of the project and its future maintenance. This investment was justified as the stones are considered to be ‘foundation documents’ and therefore a high priority in the creation of Danish identity. While a similar type of solution could be applied to the Ahenny and Kells graveyard crosses, these types of responses require that the protection of the crosses is a high priority for the Government as was the case in Denmark. A large cross would require an equally large structure similar to that covering Sueno’s Stone in Forres, Scotland which is 6.5m high and in 1991 was enclosed in a glass structure which was new technology at the time, but lacks environmental controls.⁹⁶¹

The process of moving the crosses indoors, as in the case at Clonmacnoise in the early 1990s, was a relatively straightforward process when compared to what would be required today. For example, the crosses at Monasterboice are still outdoors and they are two of the finest crosses in Ireland. A conservation plan has already been completed for the site, which recommended that the crosses remain in the locality. Their current setting includes a round tower and two ruined churches, a car park and toilets, which are the property of Louth County Council, a busy graveyard with a house at the edge, and a public road through the centre of the site. If the Government did decide that they should be

960. <https://www.dezeen.com/2012/07/15/%EFA%BF%BC%EF%BF%BCcovering-of-the-runic-stones-in-jelling-by-nobel-arkitekter/> Accessed January 26, 2022.

961. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=c68353e5-45b6-4763-88c6-a57000dd88b3> Accessed August 24, 2023.

protected from weathering, the traditional solution would be to identify a suitable site for purchase close to the site and the M1 motorway, that would not have an adverse effect on the setting of the monument and the construction of a dedicated visitor centre. Many expert reports would be required to justify the choice as well as the cooperation of Meath and Louth County Councils and the backing of the local community. Obtaining planning permission is always a lengthy and expensive process and provision would have to be made for a new graveyard and parking facilities for visitors and local people. If stone replicas were required, then a suitable quarry would have to be identified and tested for a matching stone. The new building would be designed to provide adequate height and space around the crosses as well as an exhibition that could mimic the lighting conditions of the crosses throughout one day and also through a seasonal cycle. A pedestrian link would be required between the new building and the monastic site. The entire facility would need to be designed according to the principles of sustainable building practice, which would add another layer of performance to the project. Examples of a similar lengthy process can be seen at Stonehenge, where the new facility took decades to complete. While the OPW has the relevant experience to create and run visitor centres of this complexity, the visitor services unit is considered to be at capacity and the appetite to expand the service has diminished. This type of 'visitor centre' solution is driven by the need for strongly performing tourist destinations and it is difficult to have confidence in this market in the future. The level of current and future financial investment required for such a project as well as the environmental impact would have to be measured against the benefit of protecting the art historical value of the crosses. It is unlikely that any such 'grand projects' will be undertaken in the future, irrespective of the value of the monuments.

Of the five crosses in the case studies that remain outdoors, Clones is the only example where there is active discussion about moving the cross indoors. The prominently positioned derelict Lennard Arms Hotel is under consideration for reuse as a Heritage Centre for Clones and the project received planning permission in 2020. Monaghan County Council are the driving force behind the project, which is part of the urban regeneration of Clones and the protection of the cross is not their primary objective. The project will require close co-operation between the local community, Monaghan County Council as building owner and budget holder, the DHLGH as owners of the cross who will also issue the consent for the move and the OPW who undertake the physical relocation of the cross. The issue of a replica for the site in the Diamond has not yet been resolved as resources for that part of the project have not been assigned to any of the parties involved. These types of projects

have become increasingly complex and, in contrast with the past, high levels of support and leadership from all agencies and stakeholders are required to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion. The rate of change can be very slow, such as the loss of surface carvings at the cross of Muiredach, Co. Louth, which is scarcely discernible to a single generation but is none the less present.

Our approach to conservation, and indeed to life, is now dominated by three relatively new uncertainties, the alarming pace of climate change, an awareness of the fragility of our heritage in the face of political and cultural conflict and the speed of technological developments. The full implications of this reality have yet to emerge, and conservation policies and practice need to address these issues in order to remain relevant and effective. In the same way that it is difficult to justify the expense and effort of an inventory and a condition audit for the crosses without accepting their vulnerability, it is equally challenging to consider the future of the crosses without acknowledging that climate change is now unavoidable, and many monuments cannot be saved. Pat Cooke described our need to protect our heritage as ‘rooted in anxieties about loss of identity in historical and cultural terms, coupled with fears that the wholesale destruction of the historic dimension of the environment leads to a loss of aesthetic amenity, affecting our overall sense of the quality of life’.⁹⁶² These anxieties are now further increased by the prospect of living in a world where food, shelter and transport will become the main concerns of the human race rather than our historic environment. The lack of a sense of urgency regarding these crosses from government agencies is due to the absence of dedicated policies or a strategic overview of the group that prioritises those most at risk

6.4. New Thinking: Designating the Crosses High-risk and High-value Monuments?

In the absence of any explicit Government policy or decision, the current management regime is to allow the crosses that remain outdoors to decay naturally. This is the *de facto* management regime at site such as Monasterboice, the Kells graveyard and Ahenny. This is not based on any decision-making process but is rather the result of an absence of decision-making. In order to advance new thinking about the future of the crosses, a number of changes in official heritage policies are required. The first step is to acknowledge that the crosses are a high-risk and high-value category of monument. This is the key criteria

962. Pat Cooke, “The Containment of Heritage: Setting Limits to the Growth of Heritage in Ireland,” *Studies in Public Policy*; 11. The Policy Institute at Trinity College Dublin: 2003.

that needs to be established in order to access resources over and above other monuments.⁹⁶³ This identification has not been forthcoming due to a number of factors that have allowed the risk associated with the crosses to slip under the radar. The lack of a coordinated pressure group, composed of experts and local community members is a factor, along with the overwhelming number of monuments in the SMR. The identification of the vulnerability of free-standing stone sculptures requires a multidisciplinary team whereas the monuments in the SMR are identified, protected and managed solely by the archaeologists in the DHLGH. The protection of the crosses does not appear to be a priority for the OPW who operate independent district management structures without consideration for the overall health of any monument category.

Official policies and guidance documents are the principal means of obtaining resources for the production of a *corpus*, a condition audit, or the implementation of good practice and the promotion of active community stewardship. There is no mention of the crosses in the Government's 2019 policy document, *Built & Archaeological Heritage Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, which has a five-year term.⁹⁶⁴ The specific monuments that are singled out as vulnerable are the artefacts in the bogs and peat lands, urban archaeology in deep sequential layers and the wrecks around the coast.⁹⁶⁵ However, climate-change impacts that are relevant for the crosses are found throughout the report. Buildings and structures that are 'in a ruinous and dilapidated state' are identified as being 'particularly vulnerable to effects of climate change'⁹⁶⁶ while 'sensitivity will be determined by the nature of the heritage resource (type, material) and its current condition.'⁹⁶⁷ There are references to the increase in abrasion and dissolution rate due to the frequency of wind-driven rain and how the increase in the moisture content of soils will lead to weakened building foundations, subsidence and erosion as well as the increase in decay mechanisms due to prolonged periods of wetness associated with winter warmth which will influence salts and biological growth.⁹⁶⁸

963. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 14–16.

964. <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/3f4534-draft-climate-change-adaptation-sectoral-pl/#:~:text=Summary,heritage%20for%20years%20to%20come>. Accessed June 21, 2022.

965. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 14–16.

966. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 13.

967. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 20.

968. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 20.

The report established a number of short- and long-term goals, which are associated with objectives and prioritising actions that can also apply to the crosses. The lead in all these objectives was assigned to the DCHG but now reassigned to the DHLGH. Goal 1 is to ‘improve understanding of each heritage resource and its vulnerability to climate-change impacts’ with a corresponding Objective 1 to ‘establish a baseline for heritage resources from which change can be measured.’⁹⁶⁹ Action *c*, associated with this objective is to carry out a condition assessment of a sample of heritage sites /properties in public ownership and is assigned to OPW and the National Monuments Service (NMS) of the DHLGH.⁹⁷⁰ Objective 2 for Goal 1 is to conduct risk and vulnerability assessments for climate-change impacts on heritage with a related action *e* to assess the vulnerability of a number of heritage assets to the prioritised impacts of climate change (focusing on high-value/or high-risk sites).⁹⁷¹ This action is assigned to OPW, NMS and the Geographical Survey of Ireland (GSI) with the lead assigned to DCHG (now reassigned to the DHLGH).⁹⁷² Action *f* is to ‘increased community engagement in mapping heritage of value and recording sites at risk to raise awareness and have the added benefit of helping to avoid reputational damage for the heritage sector when preventative measures are not taken and sites are lost’.⁹⁷³ It proposed that a ‘beyond save’ list of sites should be agreed with communities, which would help to communicate the severity of the problems and create a shared responsibility for decisions.’⁹⁷⁴ This action is assigned to the Heritage Council, Community Groups and the Climate, Heritage and Environments of Reefs, Islands and Headlands Group (CHERISH). Goal 3 is to conserve Ireland’s heritage for future generations and objective 2 is to develop management and conservation approaches for changing environments.⁹⁷⁵ Action *e* associated with this goal is to identify and implement practical measures to protect heritage against extreme weather impacts and is assigned to the OPW, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), NMS and the Local Authorities (Las).⁹⁷⁶ Action *g* is to instigate research to investigate and make recommendations regarding the sustainability of preservation *in situ* as a long-term strategy for maintaining heritage resources and is assigned to NMS, the

969. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 54.

970. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 62.

971. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 54.

972. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 62.

973. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 54.

974. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 54.

975. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 57.

976. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 64.

research sector (RS), Peatland Conservation Council, NPWS, and OPW.⁹⁷⁷ Objective 3 is to find ways to capture value when loss is inevitable with Action *h* to survey and record high-risk assets (identified under Goal 1, d-f) and is assigned to OPW, LAs, and the Discovery Programme.⁹⁷⁸ Goal 4 is to communicate and transfer knowledge with the accompanying objective *g* to establish a system for harmonising the collection of baseline data on the impacts of climate change, adaptation responses (including costs) and possible sources of funding, assigned to CHERISH, OPW, RS, LAs, Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC), CARO, GSI, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and FI (Failte Ireland). On face value it would appear that the justification for designating the crosses as high-risk, high-value should be relatively straightforward as the DHLGH take the lead for the delivery of each task. However, there is a large number of agencies involved with each task, and competition for resources will be intense. This thesis clearly sets out the need to identify the Irish crosses as a high-value and high-risk heritage resource, as a key action in obtaining funding for an Irish *corpus* and a condition audit. It is still too early to determine the progress of the plans goals and objectives, but it will be reviewed in 2024 after a five year lifespan.

The other policy document for the sector is *Heritage Ireland 2030, A Framework for Heritage* or *HI2030*, which was published in February 2022 by the DHLGH.⁹⁷⁹ The Minister's foreword notes 'the value of things is sometimes not fully appreciated until they are lost' and the two key foci are climate change and biodiversity loss.⁹⁸⁰ The definition of heritage includes 'built, natural, cultural, linguistic, tangible and intangible being at the very centre of local and national discourses'.⁹⁸¹ The full page image chosen to illustrate 'Addressing the Climate Change Emergency' is, strangely, a photograph of the Durrow cross standing in the graveyard before it was moved indoors in 2005.⁹⁸² The 158 actions are high level and not directed at any agency other than the DHLGH. Climate change action no. 51 requests every local authority 'carry out climate change risk assessments to establish a base line of information from which the benefits and impacts of climate change actions

977. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 58.

978. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 64.

979. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/778b8-heritage-ireland-2030/> Accessed June 21, 2022.

980. *A Framework for Heritage*, 6

981. *A Framework for Heritage*, 6-7.

982. Due to concerns about its condition, the Durrow cross has been indoors since 2005.

can be measured and documented.’⁹⁸³ Action 33 is ‘to develop a national management plan for cultural heritage data sets’ while Action 71 is ‘to develop a coherent policy for the management of Ireland’s digital heritage data’.⁹⁸⁴ The *HI2030* plan sits within the framework of EU Risk Management in the area of Cultural Heritage, which includes a number of different Europe-wide initiatives⁹⁸⁵ including the digital recording of heritage⁹⁸⁶ and Connecting Early Medieval European Collections or CEMEC.⁹⁸⁷ The *HI2030* plan has seven years left but it is too early to know what impact it will have on the sector.

6.5. New Thinking: Climate Action.

The policies discussed above should influence how conservation practitioners think about their role in protecting heritage. In the introduction to *Heritage Futures*, the editors suggest that the conventional approach to conservation practice in managing and maintaining cultural heritage from the past is carried out without reflecting seriously and critically on the role that it plays in assembling and making futures.⁹⁸⁸ This claim is made despite the fact that the aim of conservation is ‘to preserve objects, places and practices *for future generations*.’⁹⁸⁹ Whether or not this statement is accepted by conservation professionals, the idea that there are future public benefits that will arise from changing the way we think about conservation practices today is advocated in ICOMOS’ 2019 publication *The Future of Our Pasts*.⁹⁹⁰ This report proposes the ‘high ambition’ of connecting cultural heritage conservation practices with the Paris Agreement,⁹⁹¹ including how to address climate change, mitigating greenhouse gases, enhancing adaptive capacity, and planning for loss

983. *A Framework for Heritage*, 65.

984. *A Framework for Heritage*, 63 and 67.

985. <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-heritage/cultural-heritage-in-eu-policies/risk-management-for-cultural-heritage> Accessed June 21, 2022.

986. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:283:0039:0045:EN:PDF> Accessed June 21, 2022.

987. <https://www.cemec-eu.net> Accessed June 21, 2022.

988. Rodney Harrison, Caitlin DeSilvey, Cornelius Holtord and Sharon Macdonald, “For ever, for Everyone,” in Rodney Harrison et. al. eds., *Heritage Futures, Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices*, (London: UCL Press: 2020), 4.

989. Rodney Harrison et. al. “For ever, for everyone,” 4.

990. ICOMOS, *The Future of Our Pasts*, 25

991. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change, adopted by 196 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015. The overarching goal is to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

and damage. The term ‘climate action’ is used in the report to describe the response of cultural heritage practices to climate change issues. ICOMOS supports global documents such as the *2015 Paris Agreement*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction* which recognises, at the highest level, the role of heritage to ‘create both a profound opportunity and a challenging responsibility for all those connected to heritage’.⁹⁹² These documents stress the urgency of climate change actions regarding heritage as it is a major component of a sense of place and identity and will be at the forefront of losses at a local and at a national level. Climate action aims to ‘invert traditional top-down Institutional capacity-building models and improve Climate Governance by placing communities at the heart of their own decision-making processes.’⁹⁹³ Ingrid Samuel suggested that the term ‘change’ might be more helpful than ‘loss’ in the context of the need to see transformation and uncertainty as an opportunity, rather than an obstacle.⁹⁹⁴ Climate action can be expressed at local level, where monitoring and recording of heritage at risk and the creation of heritage inventories and cultural mapping initiatives that serve as knowledge-gathering and citizen mobilization.⁹⁹⁵

The impact of climate change thinking on the conservation process is seen in the literature of loss, explored earlier in section 1.5.4, which contextualises the future vulnerability of cultural heritage with its related risks and opportunities.⁹⁹⁶ The concept of ‘anticipatory history’ is explored in Caitlin DeSilvey and Simon Naylor’s recent work which suggests that assumptions about conservation and constancy often obscure the dynamism that shaped past landscapes and their inhabitants. Significant change is part of the narrative as ‘history that calls attention to process rather than permanence may therefore help us to be more prepared for future change’.⁹⁹⁷ By examining the past, we can understand that change is ongoing, which then allow us to come to terms with what is ahead. The dynamic and progressive nature of change can be seen more easily in landscapes such as Bull Island in Dublin, which was created as a consequence of building the North Bull wall in 1824/5. The sand dunes accumulated behind the wall creating the familiar and extensive

992. ICOMOS, *The Future of Our Pasts*, 2.

993. ICOMOS, *The Future of Our Pasts*, 12.

994. Ingrid Samuel quoted in *Heritage Futures*, 479.

995. ICOMOS, *The Future of Our Pasts*, 12.

996. Cornelius Holtorf, “Cultural Heritage is Concerned with the Future; A Critical Epilogue,” in *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage*, Veysel Apaydin, ed. (London: UCL Press, 2020) 311.

997. Caitlin DeSilvey and Simon Naylor, eds., *Anticipatory History* (Devon: Uniformbooks, 2011), 10.

Dollymount Strand, now a UNESCO biosphere bird sanctuary since 1981. Rising sea levels have the potential to inundate the island, which could disappear again, two hundred years after it was created. Understanding the ephemeral nature of the island helps in coming to terms with the potential changes that may happen in the future. When we apply this thinking to the crosses, the value of their long lives becomes apparent and research and data on their survival can be used to predict future vulnerability and examine a range of possible solutions to protect them in the future.

ICOMOS's description of appropriate climate action for good conservation practice begins with a familiar recommendation.⁹⁹⁸ The literature of assemblages in Chapter 1 showed that the processes of identifying and documenting heritage is at the heart of modern conservation practice and, according to ICOMOS, this practice needs to be expanded and modified to 'focus on values that support climate action and improve support for communities as they prepare for losses and damage, making use of culturally appropriate documentation tools and searching traditional practices for wisdom and information about enhancing resilience.'⁹⁹⁹ The description of conservation and protection practices includes typical actions such as the importance of routine maintenance, implementing preventative maintenance plans, monitoring of change, and using existing heritage infrastructure rather than constructing new.¹⁰⁰⁰ The report includes a straightforward 'methodological toolkit' (Fig. 6.3) which moves through the initial recording and analysis process of climate action beginning with inventory, heritage values assessment and impact assessment. This information is used to create a vulnerability matrix and vulnerability indicators. The process then moves into a monitoring and planning phase that includes risk assessments, vulnerability assessments, climate vulnerability index and adaptation planning. These are conventional practices for heritage professionals, but they require funding and commitment to complete the process and they can then facilitate new thinking about the future.

When ICOMOS' recommendations are applied to the crosses, the compilation of an up-to-date *corpus* is a necessary first step towards the completion of a condition reports/audits for each cross, cross fragment and replica. An integrated biography of each monument should be included as the case studies demonstrate that an assessment of their significance is not complete otherwise. Ideally, this phase would include inputs from stone

998. *The Future of Our Pasts*, 16.

999. *The Future of Our Pasts*, 16.

1000. *The Future of Our Pasts*, 16–17.

conservators, geologists, petrologists, structural engineers, archaeologists, conservation architects, ethnogeographers, and other relevant experts. This work requires a level of resources that Government Departments can supply, either directly or through suitable agencies. If agreement with the Northern Ireland Executive was not forthcoming for this stage of the work, it could be limited to the Republic as policy creation, data management and the implementation of conservation strategies is the responsibility of the relevant Government Department. The initial inventory phase could be a relatively straightforward desktop project that would also include all known fragments and replicas of crosses. The heritage values assessment would require the formation of an expert group, with knowledge of the relevant areas including ethnographic research. This data could then be used in the fieldwork and impact assessments process, which feed into a vulnerability matrix. It is at this stage that difficult decisions may need to be made by local communities and heritage managers about vulnerability indicators, future monitoring, the stages of the process and the type and extent of recording.

The eventual outcome, in terms of direct actions, may be the same as the current ‘do nothing’ approach adopted by the Government. Although the crosses will continue to slowly deteriorate and decay, the difference is the benefit of the taking appropriate action to record and audit them and maintain the records into the future. This approach does not rule out direct conservation actions, if and when required, within a risk matrix for the entire collection. Conservation interventions would still be valid such as moving a cross to a more protected environment, replacing it with a replica, covering it *in situ*, stabilising a leaning cross, tightening up a loose joint or changing the path of a destructive watercourse. When sustainability and carbon footprint are factored into the different types of solutions described above, the objective of protecting the stone from decay may not be possible and other solution can come to the fore. Predicting the future behaviour of a monument is dependent on understanding the relationship between its history and condition but is also dependent on unknown future events.

6.6. New Thinking: Reconsidering Authenticity.

The objects and places that society believes to be worthy of conservation are based on what is considered to be an ‘authentic’ survivor from the past. The term ‘authenticity’ in a heritage setting can be applied in many different ways and has been questioned by Jones

and others.¹⁰⁰¹ The contradictory relationship between conservation practice and authenticity is described by Lowenthal as follows:

Preservation itself reveals that permanence is an illusion. The more we save, the more aware we become that such remains are continually altered and reinterpreted. We suspend their erosion only to transform them in other ways. And saviors of the past change it no less than iconoclasts bent on its destruction.¹⁰⁰²

This may seem like a rather extreme interpretation of the conservation process, but the concept of authenticity continues to produce an extensive literature and is central to both the theory and practice of heritage management.¹⁰⁰³

In previous chapters, the cultural context of the nationalist revival was shown to have interpreted the crosses as complete and pure objects from a past ‘golden age’ of artistic creativity. This led to a concentration on the ‘most interesting’ and little value attached to the more damaged or less complete examples. In recent times, authenticity has been redefined as the product of the relationships between people, places and things, bringing a new focus on what the broken, repaired, fragmented and copied objects can tell us about the past and the present.¹⁰⁰⁴ Holtorf describes this reinterpretation of authenticity as ‘pastness’ or age-value which is derived from ‘material clues indicating wear and tear, decay, and disintegration’.¹⁰⁰⁵ Holtorf considers authenticity to lie in both the material substance of the object and the constructed, i.e. in the projection of its social and cultural context. In the same way that assessing value and cultural significance has become more challenging for conservation professionals, so too have theories of the authenticity of an object become more complex, subtle and elusive.¹⁰⁰⁶ Smith’s work on the uses of heritage in the interdisciplinary field of heritage studies, explores how it is a process that actively and critically negotiates and facilitates social and cultural change within a community.¹⁰⁰⁷ As the

1001. Siân Jones, “Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves, Beyond the Deconstruction of Authenticity,” *Journal of Material Culture*, 15, no.2 (2010): 181–203; Holtorf, “On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality”.

1002. David Lowenthal. *The Past is Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 410.

1003. Siân Jones, “Experiencing Authenticity at Heritage Sites: Some Implications for Heritage Management and Conservation. *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites*, 11, 2, (2009): 133–47; Jones and Yarrow, *The Object of Conservation*, 5–8.

1004. Jones, “Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves”.

1005. Holtorf, “On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality,” 427.

1006. Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 156.

1007. Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 7.

needs and concerns of communities change in response to climate change, so too will their views of their identity and values and the meanings that underpin them.¹⁰⁰⁸ It is difficult to anticipate what the consequences of this future change will be for heritage practice and policy, but if we accept that the crosses are a vulnerable group of monuments, that decay is a natural and dynamic process and that we can't save everything, then the negotiations for the future protection of their cultural significance can begin in earnest.

For Holtorf, the authenticity of an object is defined by its 'being of the past', i.e. made in the past, rather than linked to any particular age.¹⁰⁰⁹ He describes the quality of pastness as requiring material clues such as wear and tear, corresponding with the expectations of the audience and having a meaningful and plausible narrative.¹⁰¹⁰ Foster's work on the replica of St. John's cross expanded the identification of authenticity around four themes; the social and material networks in which the replica was embedded, place and displacement; materiality and 'pastness'; and craft, creativity and biography.¹⁰¹¹ In the context of these themes, the replica of the Downpatrick cross has these qualities, as it is made with great skill and ingenuity from the same stone as the original, and it has now acquired the patina of age as it stands in the same location as its predecessor which is now in the museum. The expectations of visitors and the narrative of Downpatrick's Patrician past are supported by the nearby supposed site of St. Patrick's grave and a second stone replica, known as St Patrick's cross.¹⁰¹² Meanwhile, the 'authentic' cross stands in the museum having lost much of its quality of pastness due to its clean surfaces and brand new, un-weathered capstone and base. The Downpatrick case study showed the possibilities that advances in new technology can create, where replicas are made without contact-based moulds, but high levels of commitment and resources were required to complete the project. The replica cross is as close to an exact copy of the original as possible while ironically the appearance of the original cross, now in the museum, has been radically altered. At Roscrea, a similar transfer of 'authenticity' has happened as the outdoor stone replica standing on the possible primary location in the graveyard has begun to acquire patina, while the original cross is cleaned of all signs of aging and stands in a thoroughly modern setting. The 'real'

1008. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 7.

1009. Holtorf, "On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality," 432.

1010. Holtorf, "On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality," 432–35.

1011. Foster, *My Life as a Replica*, 156.

1012. <https://www.irishnews.com/lifestyle/faithmatters/2018/09/13/news/st-patrick-s-cross-returns-to-the-hill-of-down-1430415/> Accessed August 26, 2023.

crosses at Clonmacnoise and Cashel are displayed in artificially lit indoor exhibition spaces which bear no relationship to their earlier outdoor settings. The replicas stand in the ‘authentic’ locations and appear to be the ‘authentic’ crosses unless they are touched and tapped, which betrays their lack of ‘stone-like’ substance.

The examples above belong to the second phase of replica making in Ireland, which was associated with heritage projects involving the relocation of crosses from the 1970s onwards. The replicas replace the original crosses and sometimes they are exact copies of the original or, as in the case of St. John’s cross in Iona, they are restorations, more complete than the original. Irrespective of their relationship with the original, they acquire ‘authenticity’ as Jones and Foster claim, through their own individual biographies, their materiality and their visible age-value.¹⁰¹³ If these proxies for the real crosses are considered to be authentic elements of the historic landscape, how then do we value the earliest plaster replicas of crosses that were created during the nineteenth century of which multiple copies were distributed for educational and display among other plaster casts.¹⁰¹⁴ These replicas were painted to appear as close as possible to the originals and they played an important part of the dissemination of knowledge of the crosses from their first appearance in the Great Exhibition of 1853. Foster and Curtis have made the case, not just for the cultural importance of the casts due to their biographies, which include the craftsmanship in their production, their circulation and changing fortunes, but also how they challenge concepts of value and authenticity.¹⁰¹⁵ The exhibition of six plaster casts of crosses in the National Museum of Ireland, following their return from Japan, was an acknowledgement of the importance of the plaster casts. The inclusion of some of the rather battered original casts in the exhibition underlined the craftsmanship involved in their production. Their authenticity was unquestionable based on Holtorf’s criteria of showing wear and tear, corresponding with the expectations of the audience and having a meaningful and plausible narrative.

1013. Sally M. Foster and Siân Jones, “The Untold Heritage Value and Significance of Replicas,” *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites* 21, no.1 (2019): 1–24,

1014. Ragnall Ó Floinn, “Reproducing the Past: Making Replicas of Irish Antiquities,” in *A Carnival of Learning, Essays in Honour of George Cunningham and his 50 Conferences on Medieval Ireland in the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St. Joseph, Roscrea, 1987-2012*, Valerie Hall and Peter Harbison, eds. (Roscrea: Cistercian Press, 2012), 146–57.

1015. Sally Foster and Neil Curtis, “The Thing about Replicas: Why Historic Replicas Matter,” *European Journal of Archaeology*, 19, no.1 (2016): 122–148.

Technology has the potential to create copies of crosses in ways that were previously unimaginable and, if correctly applied, can provide new solutions to conservation challenges as well as enhancing presentation and interpretation.¹⁰¹⁶ The development of 3D laser scans of crosses has increased access to them, particularly to panels at high level. This technology is now widely available, and scans of the crosses are available on the 3D icons project and the Sketchfab platforms.¹⁰¹⁷ The quality of the 3D scans and access to them varies according to the way the data was collected and presented. The scans made by the Discovery Programme are of the highest quality and are freely accessible. (Fig.6.4) The potential for digital recording of carved stones in their landscape settings is discussed in *Future Thinking on Carved Stone in Scotland*, 3.3.2 Digital Recording.¹⁰¹⁸ As technology develops and changes, laser scans have the potential to provide new ways of analysis and recording but there are issues regarding long term maintenance and accessibility. New technology has the potential to create a vast body of uncoordinated data but, in order to be useful as a conservation tool in the future and to be part of a national inventory, the recording methodologies and quality need to be consistent and set up and maintained by experts in the field. The funding required to produce and maintain high-volume 3D data is unlikely to be obtained without high level Government commitment and investment. The Discovery Programme have the experience and expertise necessary to undertake this task and have a proven track record in the field (Fig.6.4). Additional resources would be needed for the organisation if this role was assigned to them, over and above their current responsibilities.¹⁰¹⁹

6.7 The Possible Futures of the Irish High Crosses.

Examining the long lives of the crosses and reassessing the values associated with their cultural significance is not an end in itself, but is instead about creating pathways in an uncertain future. Practitioners and heritage managers need to be confident when making

1016. Stuart Jeffrey, "Digital Heritage Objects, Authorship, Ownership and Engagement," in, *Authenticity and Cultural Heritage in the Age of 3D Digital Reproductions*, Paola Di Giuseppantonio Di Franco, Fabrizio Galeazzi and Valentina Vassallo eds. (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2018), 49–56.

1017. http://3dicons.ceti.gr/index.php/component/search_gmapfp/?Country=660:IRELAND&County=-All-&City=-All-&Order=Alpha&Word=Cross&Modid=90&Itemid=435 Accessed June 13, 2022.

<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/moone-high-cross-acee3a75fc1742d783a1a35432084a0f> Accessed June 13, 2022.

1018. <https://scarf.scot/thematic/future-thinking-on-carved-stones-in-scotland-2/3-creating-knowledge-and-understanding/3-3-recording/> Accessed June 14, 2022.

1019. For details of the Discovery Programme Mission see; <https://discoveryprogramme.ie/about/vision-mission/> Accessed September 12, 2023.

difficult decisions about what not to conserve as well as accepting uncertainty and a lack of control over outcomes, irrespective of their action or inaction.¹⁰²⁰ What is certain, is that when crosses remain outside, their carvings continue to lose definition and their role as historical records diminishes over time. This loss is balanced by the benefits of keeping them *in-situ* especially when the location is confirmed as significant. When crosses remain outdoors, resources can be directed towards making digital records to preserve the details of the carvings for the future. However, these decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. Ingrid Samuel suggests that to make these types of decisions with confidence requires ‘respect and understanding, and the support of the sector to accept change as inevitable.’¹⁰²¹

This thesis has argued that the crosses are high value monuments and, by expanding their previous heritage values, has shown that their potential cultural significance has yet to be fully realised. It has also made the case that the crosses are a specific category of monument that are vulnerable to climate change over and above other monuments. This thesis seeks to use the physical condition of the crosses to show that how the crosses were valued in the past has evolved and changed. Through this process of observing, recording and analysing the physical evidence, a narrative has emerged that had not previously been identified or understood. The way that the crosses were valued and conserved in the past exerts an influence on our attitudes and actions today, but this is an ongoing process as our own values shift under the impact of climate change.

Climate change science can tell us that adaptation and mitigation are necessary, but it cannot tell us as a society what adaptation options are the most beneficial. An acknowledgement of the Irish crosses relatively troubled but miraculous survival into the present and the need to create a base line of data against which climate actions can be measured will help to provide answers to the question of how best to proceed. The situation is not hopeless, and we can make plans to protect the things we value, while acknowledging that resources will be under intense pressure from climate change which may lead to a re-evaluation of priorities and a possible downgrading of cultural heritage.¹⁰²² Technology has provided the means by which the entire collection, in all its complexity and damaged condition, can be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations provided that we think differently about how authenticity is created and maintained.

1020. See Ingrid Samuels comments in “Discussion and Conclusions,” *Heritage Futures*, 479.

1021. “Discussion and Conclusions,” *Heritage Futures*, 479.

1022. *Sectoral Adaptation Plan*, 60.

Decisions about the future of the crosses need to be addressed but, as yet, the extent of the collection, the identification of the most vulnerable or the most complete is not known. The crosses are inherently associated with place and the case studies have shown that their survival is directly related to local events and people. The suggestion that the crosses be allowed to decay naturally needs to be acknowledged at a local level in the context of the corresponding benefits such as continued access. These types of solutions will have to sit within an overview of the entire corpus and an acceptance of limited resources and ideally accompanied by a governmental commitment to keep records and secure 3D data in the long-term. The creation and maintenance of a data base for all the high crosses would perhaps require a fraction of the budget needed, for example, to protect the two Monasterboice crosses. In the absence of an overview of the condition of the entire *corpus*, these decisions are made in a vacuum.

In Ireland, the continual relocation of the function of protection and policy for the built environment has demonstrated a certain ambivalence towards our heritage by successive Governments. Each successive move results in a reduction of professional and other resources as departments manipulate and retain as many roles as possible in advance of a transfer of functions. The administrative staff of a new department must build up experience of heritage management while the transferred professional staff are disconnected from previous colleagues under these arrangements. There is, at present, a level of confusion regarding responsibility for the maintenance and protection of monuments in the care of the State. The aim of this research will bring some clarity to these issues and to contribute to the conversation about the possible futures of the crosses.

Abbreviations

<i>AI</i>	<i>The Annals of Inisfallen (MS Rawlinson B503)</i> , ed. and trans. S. Mac Airt (Dublin, 1951)
<i>Arch Ire</i>	<i>Archaeology Ireland</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>British Archaeological Reports (Oxford, 1974–)</i>
<i>BL</i>	<i>British Library</i>
<i>BM</i>	<i>British Museum</i>
<i>Archiv. Hib.</i>	<i>Archivium Hibernicum: Irish Historical Records (Catholic Historical Society of Ireland, Maynooth, 1912–)</i>
<i>AU</i>	<i>Annála Uladh, Annals of Ulster; Otherwise Annála Senait, Annals of Senat: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs, 431–1131, 1155–1541</i> , eds W.M. Hennessy and B. McCarthy, 4 vols (Dublin, 1887–1901)
<i>CASSS</i>	<i>Corpus of Anglo Saxon Sculpture</i>
<i>CARO</i>	<i>Climate Action Regional Office</i>
<i>CEMEC</i>	<i>European Center for Disaster Medicine</i>
<i>DCHG</i>	<i>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht</i>
<i>DHLGH</i>	<i>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</i>
<i>EPA</i>	<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>
<i>GSI</i>	<i>Geographical Survey of Ireland</i>
<i>HI</i>	<i>History Ireland</i>
<i>IAR</i>	<i>Irish Arts Review (Belfast, 1984–87; Dublin, 1988–)</i>
<i>ICOMOS</i>	<i>The International Council on Monuments and Sites</i>
<i>IHS</i>	<i>Irish Historical Studies (Dublin, 1938–)</i>
<i>IHTA</i>	<i>Irish Historic Towns Atlas</i>
<i>IMC</i>	<i>Irish Manuscript Commission</i>
<i>JAPMDI</i>	<i>Journal of the Irish Memorials Association, formerly the Association for the Preservation of the Memorials of the Dead in Ireland (Dublin, 1888–1934)</i>

<i>JCHAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society (Cork, 1892–)</i>
<i>JCLAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Co. Louth Archaeological Society</i>
<i>JGAHS</i>	<i>Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society (Galway, 1900–)</i>
<i>JRSAI*</i> (*this journal has changed name several times; for simplicity, a single abbreviation is used)	<i>Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society (Kilkenny, 1849–1853), vols 1–2</i> <i>Proceedings and Transactions of the Kilkenny and South-east of Ireland Archaeological Society (Kilkenny, 1854–55), vol. 3</i> <i>Journal of the Kilkenny and South-east of Ireland Archaeological Society (Kilkenny, 1856–57), vol. 4; (Kilkenny, 1858–59), vol. 5; (Kilkenny, 1860–61), vol. 6; (Kilkenny, 1862–63), vol. 7; (Kilkenny, 1864–66), vol. 8; (Kilkenny, 1867), vol. 9</i> <i>Journal of the Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland (Dublin, 1868–69), vol. 10</i> <i>Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland (Dublin, 1870–1889), vols. 11–19</i> <i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland (Dublin, 1892–), vols. 20–[etc.]</i>
<i>JWCI</i>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes (London, 1940–)</i>
<i>KCR</i>	<i>Kilkenny Corporation Records</i>
<i>NCCSS</i>	<i>National Committee for Carved Stone in Scotland</i>
<i>NLI</i>	<i>National Library of Ireland</i>
<i>NMI</i>	<i>National Museum of Ireland</i>
<i>NMS</i>	<i>National Monuments Service</i>
<i>NPWS</i>	<i>National Parks and Wildlife Service</i>
<i>OPW</i>	<i>Office of Public Works</i>
<i>OSI</i>	<i>Ordnance Survey Office</i>

<i>PRIA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy (Dublin, 1836–)</i>
<i>PRONI</i>	<i>Public Record Office, Northern Ireland</i>
<i>RCAHMS</i>	<i>Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland</i>
<i>Reg. Clogher</i>	<i>‘The Register of Clogher’, ed. K.W. Nicholls, Clogher Record, 7:3 (1971–72), 361–431</i>
<i>RIA</i>	<i>Royal Irish Academy</i>
<i>Ríocht na Midhe</i>	<i>Ríocht na Midhe: Records of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society (Drogheda, [1955] –)</i>
<i>RMP</i>	<i>Record Of Monuments and Places</i>
<i>RSAI</i>	<i>Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
<i>SAJ</i>	<i>Scottish Archaeological Journal</i>
<i>ScARF</i>	<i>The Scottish Archaeological Research Framework</i>
<i>SMR</i>	<i>Sites and Monuments Record</i>
<i>S.P. Hen. VIII</i>	<i>State papers, Henry VIII, 11 vols (London, 1830–52)</i>
<i>Seanchas Ardmhacha</i>	<i>Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society ([Armagh], 1954–) (title appears as Seanchas Ard Mhacha from vol. v, no. 1 (1969))</i>
<i>Trans. RIA</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, 33 vols (Dublin, 1786–1907)</i>
<i>UCD</i>	<i>University College Dublin</i>
<i>UJA</i>	<i>Ulster Journal of Archaeology (Belfast, three series: 1853–62, 9 vols; 1895–1911, 17 vols; 1938–)</i>

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Chapter 1. Appendix 1. Crosses that have been moved into existing buildings, new buildings or under shelters.

Name.	Location before move	Ownership.	New location.	Use of a replica on original location.
Armagh market cross. Co. Armagh.	Originally in the market square. Broken in 1813 and fragments stored in the church yard of the cathedral.	In the ownership of the local authority until it was broken in 1813, then in the ownership of the Church of Ireland when moved to the yard of the cathedral.	In the north aisle of the cathedral.	A 'Celtic' style cross was erected in the town square to mark the location.
Carndonagh crosses, Co. Donegal.	On the side of the road adjacent to the Church of Ireland	National Monument in State Care. No. 271.	Under an open roofed structure since 1999. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.
Cashel, Co. Tipperary	In the graveyard, outside the cathedral entrance	National Monument in State Care 128. Transferred as part of the Church Temporalities Act.	Moved into the restored Vicars Choral in 1975. Moved by the OPW.	Concrete replica made by OPW.
Clonmacnoise crosses. Co. Offaly.	In the graveyard.	National Monuments in State Care. No. 81. Transferred as part of the Church Temporalities Act.	Moved into the new visitor center 1992-1993 by the OPW.	Resin replicas made by OPW.
Connor. Co. Antrim.	In the graveyard, used as a grave marker.	Church of Ireland.	In the cathedral.	No replica.
Downpatrick, Co. Down.	Primary location unknown. In front of the east end of the cathedral since 1897.	Church of Ireland	New wing built to the rear of the museum in 2015	Stone replica.
Drumadonnell/Drumgo oland, Co. Down.	Built into the wall of a school until it became derelict in the 1970s.	Historic Monument in the care of the Department for Communities., Northern Ireland.	In a secure store in Castlewellan Forest Park since the 1970s.	Stone replica in the town center of Castlewellan, Co. Down.
Durrow Cross, Co. Offaly.	In the graveyard of Durrow Abbey.	National Monument in State Care. No. 313.	In the newly restored Church since 2005. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.

Glendalough, Co. Wicklow.	Fragments found in the graveyard. Placed in St. Kevin's church for security.	National Monument in State Care. No. 134.	In the visitor center since 1987. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.
Kells Market Cross, Co. Meath.	In Cross Street in Kells.	Kells Town Council later Meath Co. Council	Under an open sided glass and steel structure since 2001. Moved by the OPW.	Replica made by OPW now in the Heritage Center
Kilfenora Crosses. Co. Clare.	In the graveyard of the cathedral and in the ruined chancel.	National Monument in State Care. No. 8. Transferred to the OPW as part of the Church Temporalities Act.	The ruin of the north transept was roofed over with a glass and steel structure in 2004. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.
Killaloe, Co. Clare.	Originally in Kilfenora, then in the garden of the Bishops palace in Killaloe, now in the cathedral in Killaloe.	Church of Ireland	In the cathedral. Relocated and repaired by the OPW.	No. replica.
Killnaboy, Co. Clare.	On a hillside. Beside the road.	Private owner.	In the visitor center in Corofin, Co. Clare. 1982.	Replica on the roadside.
Moone. Co. Kildare.	In the graveyard, set up in 1893.	Kildare Co. Council transferred to the National Monuments Service of the OPW to facilitate works.	In a ruined medieval church under a roof since 1995. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.
Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.	Beside the road in the town.	Church of Ireland	In the Black Mills since 2004. Moved by the OPW.	Stone replica made by OPW.
Tuam. Co. Galway.	In the market place since 1874	National Monument in State Care. No. 505.	In the cathedral since 1992. Moved by the OPW.	No replica.

Chapter 1. Appendix 2. The ‘Best’ of the Collection.

1. Henry O’Neill. *Illustrations of the most interesting of the Sculptured Crosses*, 1857, and *Fine Arts and Civilisation*, 1863.
2. Hilary Richardson and John Scarry. *An introduction to Irish High Crosses*. 1990. (described as an inventory)
3. Peter Harbison’s pocket guide, *High Crosses with Figure Sculpture explained*, first published in 1994 and reprinted in 2013.

Name of site and County	Description and Location	O’Neill. 1855	Hilary Richardson & John Scarry 1990	Peter Harbison 2013.	Condition notes and surviving parts
Addergoole Galway	Head only survives. Unfinished. Termon cross? Relocated to the outside of the wall of the graveyard from an adjacent field.			✓	Broken head.
Ahenny. Nat. Mon. 124 Tipperary	Two crosses, side by side. Church of Ireland graveyard. One without a section of the ring.	✓	✓	✓	South cross - All parts survive except some damage to shaft. North cross missing a quadrant of the ring.
Arboe Tyrone	Outside graveyard of medieval parish church.	✓	✓	✓	All parts survive except for one upper quadrant of the ring. Base original?
Ardane (St. Berriherth’s Kyle) Tipperary	Two crosses. Heads only survive. Disused graveyard and holy well.		✓	✓	Two heads of different crosses.
Armagh (Composite) Armagh	Market cross. Thrown down in the 17 th century. Re-erected in 1793. Down again in 1813. Re-erected inside the Church of Ireland Cathedral in 1916. Harbison says two crosses, shaft of one and head of another.		✓	✓	Shaft of one cross. Head of another cross.
Banagher Offaly	Shaft only survives. Removed by Thomas Cooke from the graveyard of around the middle of the 1800s. to Clonmacnoise in 1870 and to the museum in 1929. Described as a ‘market cross’ by Cooke.			✓	Shaft only survives.
Bealin Westmeath	In a field, not original site. Original site unknown. Thought to be from		✓	✓	Cross survives as head and shaft are one piece. Three quadrants of the ring missing..

	Clonmacnoise. Head and cross made from a single piece of stone. Three of the quadrants of the ring are missing. One arm very damaged.				Possible missing cap? Base may be later?
Boho Fermanagh	In the graveyard of the Catholic church. Shaft and base survive.		✓	✓	Shaft and base only survive.
Camus Derry	In a Church of Ireland graveyard. Knocked down in 1760 . Set up in the graveyard but re-used as a gate pier until 1905 when shaft and base were set up again. Shaft and base survive.			✓	Shaft and base only survive.
Carndonagh Donegal	Beside the Church of Ireland graveyard		✓	✓	Single piece of stone. Good condition.
Carrowmore Donegal	On the site of an early monastery identified by geophysical testing. One in the center of the complex, other at main entrance.			✓	Two crosses survive. One is plain with short arms, other simple carving. No rings on either.
Cashel. Cathedral Nat. Mon. 128 Tipperary	16 th or 17 th century relocation to a mound outside the cathedral. Graveyard setting		✓	✓	Base and cross survive. One arm and side support missing.
Castledermot Kildare	Church of Ireland Graveyard 2 crosses and a cross base		✓	✓	North cross complete. Base and ringed head and shaft all one piece. South cross. Good condition. Some minor damage. Base, shaft and head
Castlekeeran Meath	Church of Ireland Graveyard		✓		Three crosses survive, All single piece of stone on base. North cross and base, damage to top. South cross good condition, Cross and base. West cross missing arm and two quadrants of the ring. Straight cut rather strange. Plain crosses.
Clogher (2 no. Composites)	Cathedral graveyard of Church of Ireland Two composite crosses and a fragment, possible four crosses?		✓		Two bases in good condition. Head of north in good condition, concrete used to joint to shaft. good base.

Church of Ireland Cathedral Tyrone	No figurative work but interlace panels. Mostly plain.				South cross base and shaft good condition, head missing upper arm and part of ring. Fragment of another cross shaft?
Clonca Nat. Mon. 25. Donegal	One cross in a field west of the ruin of a church of Ireland (Nat. Mon. 25) Early Monastic setting. Associated with graveyard.		✓	✓	East cross is repaired with concrete to create a new head and join one arm to shaft. Mounted on modern base. Head and part of arm of second cross survive in the church.
Clones (Composite) Nat. Mon. 112. Monaghan	In the Diamond, transferred on its own to OPW. Known as the Market Cross		✓	✓	Head of one cross mounted on the shaft of another . Reasonable condition.
Clonlea Down	In a graveyard. Nothing known of history according to Ann Hamlin Possible Church of Ireland site			✓	Three crosses in the graveyard. One cross identified by Harbison as early and one base also. The rest are modern. Ann Hamlin says they are replicas of Kilbroney?
Clonmacnoise Church of Ireland Cathedral site Offaly	Graveyard of Church of Ireland Two crosses in good condition, Two shafts. Shaft fragments.	✓	✓	✓	Cross of the scriptures (good) cross and base North cross (shaft only) South cross (good) base, cross and cap West cross or Pillar (Shaft only) Shaft Fragment in center Shaft Fragment in National Museum
Colp Meath	Previously in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland, Colp. now in the porch of the church in Julianstown .			✓	Head of ringed cross, Top broken around mortice.
Connor. Cathedral Antrim	Previously in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland, now in the church beside the altar.			✓	Damaged shaft only survives.
Donaghmore (Composite) Down	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Head and shaft from different crosses. Base may be modern? Very thin edge.
Donaghmore (Composite) Tyrone	Thrown down in 1602 or 1641. 1774 re- erected. On the roadside opposite the		✓	✓	Head in poor condition due to weathering similar to Ardboe. Missing two upper quadrants of ring.

	Church of Ireland and in front of the graveyard				Shaft and base in fair condition.
Downpatrick, Cathedral Down	Market cross The market cross and fragments of possibly four others. Re-erected in front of the Church of Ireland cathedral in 1891.		✓	✓	Head and shaft only of market cross. Base of shaft cut to make a new tenon. The fragments of possible four crosses are all in the cathedral.
Dromiskin Nat. Mon. 92. Louth	Church of Ireland Graveyard		✓	✓	Head only survives. Missing upper part and base of head.
Drumcliff Nat. Mon. 119 Sligo	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓ (In Fine Arts and Civilization)	✓	✓	Complete cross except for missing capstone. Is tenon visible? Second cross shaft, two pieces in National Museum. Third cross identified by Harbison.
Drumcullen Offaly	Brought from Drumcullen the same site as the Kinnitty cross. Close to an old church, early monastic site and graveyard			✓	Part of head only survives. Now in the Church at Rath for safety.
Dublin, The National Museum.	Various fragments brough from a number of different locations usually graveyard settings.			✓	Cross heads, parts of shafts etc. Not all are on display. Many fragments in storage.
Duleek, Cathedral until 1111 Meath	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Small cross, missing capstone. Very high tenon. Head of a second cross mounted on a surviving base.
Durrow Offaly	In the graveyard of the disused Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Full cross survives, capstone part of main cross. Head of another cross in NMI
Dysert O'Dea Clare Church of Ireland ruined church Nat. Mon. 16	Repaired in 1683, when some of the corner stones of the church were used as a base for the re-erection of the high cross in the adjoining field to the east. Re-erected in 1871.		✓	✓	Full cross survives except for cap which is modern. . Base is broken and repaired using new stone. Some discrepancies around the junction of the head and the shaft. A thin section at the top of the shaft is missing? Two inscriptions obliterated part of carved surface.
Fahan Mura Donegal	Beside a roofless church in a graveyard. Board of First Fruits Church of Ireland across the road.		✓	✓	Actually a cross slab not a cross. Debate about its dating. Very similar to those on the Isle of Mann.

Fennor, Slane. Meath.	Cross head found in the graveyard at Fennor, Slane in 1990 now with the National Monuments Service.			✓	There are no crosses at this site, Cross slabs and grave slabs.
Gallen Priory Offaly	In a graveyard setting with a ruined church. Slabs set into wall.		✓		
Galloon Fermanagh	Early monastic site. Later medieval parish church with graveyard. Church in ruins in 1622 visitation book.		✓	✓	East cross – shaft and base West cross – Shaft and base Cross head 1 – Only central part survives. Cross head 2 – Only central part survives.
Glendalough Cathedral Nat. Mon. (134) Wicklow	Market Cross originally in the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Market cross - missing part of head Reefert cross – almost complete St. Kevin's cross - complete but plain.
Graiguenamanagh Kilkenny	Now in the Cistercian church converted into use as a Catholic parish church. North cross moved here in c. 1820 from Ballyogan and South cross moved from Aghakiletawn /Aghailte		✓	✓	North cross is one piece of stone, missing the bottom of the shaft and the base is mde up with some origiinal and some concrete. South cross – the head is in reasonable condition but has been broken from the shaft, now reassembled. The shaft seems to have been shaved on the back – for building stone?
Inishcealtra (Island site) Nat. Mon. 5 Clare	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland. Island site.			✓	West cross (no ring) - missing an arm East cross (no ring) arm broken but repaired. missing part of base. Head and base and broken shaft of ringed cross – shattered reminds reassembled. Base with broken shaft.
Inishkeel (Island Donegal)	Early Medieval pilgrimage site, in the graveyard of a medieval ruined church.		✓		Shaft only survives.

Kells Meath	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland. Kells Market Cross in the town	✓	✓	✓	West or broken cross – Base and shaft (broken and repaired) East or unfinished cross -Base, shaft and broken head. South cross or cross of Saints Patrick and Columba – missing its capstone, separate cross base Base and shaft of market cross survive with damage, Top of head and capstone missing.
Kilbroney Co. Down	In the graveyard		✓		Granite cross Fragment of a head used as a grave marker.
Kilfenora Co. Clare.	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland cathedral, the west cross is in a field outside the walls of the graveyard.	✓	✓	✓	Remains of seven crosses including the one removed to Kilaloe in 1821.
Kilgobbin Dublin	The cross is said to have been discovered buried in the graveyard in the last century and then re-erected in the present position. Standing below a ruined medieval church site with a graveyard. Church of Ireland.			✓	Cap stone missing, cross made of single piece of stone, missing half of the head. Base survives. No carvings but roll moulding on side (Harbison)
Kilkieran Nat. Mon. 79 Kilkenny	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	Tall cross – no ring, short arms, round base. Cap stone is missing but tenon visible. South cross – round cap stone like Ahenny. Base survives. wide flat moulding on sides, boss in crossing. West cross - round cap stone. Base. Five bosses. Damaged shaft, edge removed. Fourth cross fragments – shaft survives on the site while the head is in the visitors center at Jerpoint.

Killaloe, Cathedral. Church of Ireland Clare	Brought from the graveyard of Kilfenora in 1821. Used as a garden feature and then transferred to the interior of the Cathedral. Fragment of a different cross found in the walls of the cemetery in 1916			✓	This cross was brought from from Kilfenora in 1821 by Dr. Richard Mant. Originally outside but is now in the cathedral. Inperforate head with short arms. Interesting inscription in latin. 'Here you see a cross from the fields of Kilfenora, not fully aware of the situation of decay it was in. This now has the favour of a home in Killaloe, erected with care in the old church by R.M.S.T.P serving Bishop of the diocese.
Killamery Nat. Mon. 73. Kilkenny	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	Intact cross. Stepped base, shaft with ring and capstone. Large central boss
Killary Not clear if Church of Ireland Meath	Ussher (1622) describes the church and chancel as ruinous (Erlington 1847-64, xcv). According to Dopping's and the Royal Visitations (1682-5; 1697) the church of St. Ivairii (Iobhar of Begerin ? -) was in ruins since 1641, although it was fenced (Ellison 1973, 6).		✓	✓	Cross shaft and base. Separate cross base with an arm ? fragment stuck into it. Two fragments now in the museum found by John Bradley in 1986. Fragment 1 Broken vertically for re-use as a window frame. Fragment 2 – Also broken vertically.
Inishmore,Aran, Galway Killeany, Nat. Mon. 43.	The shaft of a cross, discovered by John O'Donovan in 1843 and erected by him in a field. Fragment built into the wall of the church called Teaglach Éinne. Another fragment was excavated by Conleth Manning in 1984. All broken.			✓	Cross shaft broken and a base. Three separate parts of a shaft set into the wall at Temple Enda. Cross head from Teaglach Einne.
Killinaboy Clare	Tau cross at the side of the road, now in the Heritage Center in Corofin.		✓	✓	Intact cross now in the Heritage Center in Corofin.
Killesher Church of Ireland Fermanagh	Fragment found in graveyard of Parish Church now ruined.			✓	Fragment of head of ringless cross
Kilnaruane Cork	In a field, early monastic site.			✓	Cross shaft ?

Kilree Nat Mon. 74 Kilkenny	In the field outside the graveyard. Church, tower and cross transferred to OPW by Church of Ireland.		✓	✓	Ringed cross and shaft all one piece, cap missing but tenon visible, stepped base.
Castlebernard (Kinnitty) Offaly	Moved from the graveyard of the church of Ireland at Kinnitty to grounds of Castlebernard Very damaged. Garden Ornament		✓	✓	Cross base with shaft and central part of head.
Lisnaskea (Composite) Fermanagh	Set up in the potato market, origin unknown		✓	✓	The only original part is a section of the shaft. The rest is modern.
Lorrha Tipperary	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	North-west cross, large stepped base with stump of shaft. South-east cross, much damaged base with stump of shaft.
Monaincha Nat. Mon. 125. Island site Tipperary	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Base, modern shaft with broken head and shaft mounted on top.
Monasterboice Nat. Mon. 94 Louth	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	The cross of Muiredach. Three pieces; base and shaft, head all one piece and separate cap stone Tall cross, Four pieces; base, shaft, head and capstone. Head and part of shaft mounted on modern shaft. Broken shaft. Broken section of a head in museum. Shaft fragment in museum.
Moone Kildare	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	Cross base, shaft and head, cap stone missing. Holed cross- parts of shaft, part of arm and top. It had no capstone Two cross bases in the adjoining field.

Newtown or Kildreenagh Carlow	In a field.			✓	Cross head
Oldcourt Wicklow	Base only. According to Ó hÉalidhe (1988, 98) the base of the high cross at Oldcourt was found in 1780 'buried in a bank on the west side of the road from Bray to Oldcourt'			✓	
Old Kilcullen. Nat. Mon 69. Kildare	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	East cross – Base with shaft, top broken West cross - Base with shaft, top broken.
Roscrea. Nat. Mon. 126 Tipperary	Outside the graveyard of the Church of Ireland Cathedral, now in the visitor center. Separate shaft used as a feeding trough now in center.		✓	✓	Base, shaft and head. Part of missing shaft replaced with new stone section. Shaft of cross.
St. Mullins Nat. Mon. 3. Carlow	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Base and part of shaft with head, missing an arm.
Seir Kieran Offaly	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland		✓	✓	Cross base. Small cross, imperforate, top is broken, Tenon at bottom of shaft.
Temple Breacan, Inishmore Nat. Mon. 43 Galway	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland, transferred to OPW following disestablishment.		✓	✓	North cross, in fragments but stump survives in situ. Fragments identified in 1847 and again in 1973 South cross – in fragments, cemented on a platform. West cross – Partial remains of a shaft and a number of fragments of the head.
Termonfeckin Louth	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	Cross consists of base, shaft and head (one piece) and capstone. Has been repaired and set up post 1850 (drawing of base without a cross)
Tibberaghney or Tybroughney Kilkenny	Shaft only, in an old graveyard/church site		✓	✓	Part of a cross shaft. Top has been smoothened possibly to make a grave marker.

Tihilly Offaly	In a field, early monastic site, ruined church.		✓	✓	Base, shaft and head (one piece but broken and now reattached)
Tory Island Nat. Mon 24. Donegal	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland			✓	Tau cross single piece of stone beside the pier. Fragments of the tower cross. Broken shaft set into base.
Tuam (Composite) Catherdal. C. of I Galway.	All crosses and fragments now in the Church of Ireland Cathedral. Previously in fragments in the Church of Ireland graveyard, then erected as the market cross.	✓	✓	✓	Market cross - base and shaft of one cross with the head of another mounted on top. Shaft of a third cross in a modern base. Broken head of a fourth cross on a table.
Tynan Armagh	Brought from Glenarb graveyard in 1844 Three crosses used as landscape features. One erected in the village. Section of a ring built into wall of Church of Ireland Terrace cross moved from the Tynan graveyard in 1844, The well and island crosses moved from Glenarb, Co. Tyrone, reportedly in 1844			✓	Island cross, partial shaft and ringed head all one piece mounted on modern base? Terrace cross – upper part of shaft and two lower segments of ring are modern. Well cross – not certain. Village cross – composite head of one cross mounted on the shaft of another. Base may be from a third cross.
Ullard Nat. Mon. 76 Kilkenny	In the graveyard of the Church of Ireland	✓	✓	✓	Three fragments have been erected at the end of a handball alley attached to the church. Base, shaft and head

Chapter 1. Appendix 3.

Peter Harbison list of crosses from *The High Crosses of Ireland, An Iconographical and Photographic Survey* with reference number, locations and number of crosses or cross fragments at the location. (percentages rounded up to nearest whole figure)

1. Church site.

In a graveyard, roadside or a field close to a ruined or roofed church. **185** or 79%

2. No church.

In a field or at a roadside with no evidence of a church. **21** or 9%

3. Market cross.

In a market place or originally in a market place before relocation. **4** or 2%

4. Original location unknown.

In a museum or in location that is not original. **15** or 6%

5. Missing.

Based on a drawing or other evidence of a cross whereabouts unknown. **6** or 2%

6. Wayside.

Included in the inventory due to carvings or size, located on a roadside/pilgrimage route. **4** or 2%

Number of locations.	Harbison's reference number	Name of site	County	Crosses and cross fragments	Type of site
1	1	Abbeyshrule	Longford	1	Church site
2	2	Adamstown	Wexford	1	Church Site
3	3	Addergoole	Galway	1	Church site
4	4	Aghanaglack	Fermanagh	1	No church
5	5	Aghowle	Wicklow	1	Church site
6	6-7	Ahenny	Tipperary	2	Church site
7	8	Arboe	Tyrone	1	Church site
8	9-10	Ardane (St. Berr's Kyle)	Tipperary	2	Church site
9	11-12-13	Armagh (Composite)	Armagh	3	Church site (2) Market cross (1)

	14	Ballinatray Lower	Wexford	1	No church
10	15-16	Ballymore Eustace	Offaly	2	Church site
11	17	Ballynaguilkee	Waterford	1	Missing
12	18	Ballynilard	Tipperary	1	No church
13	19	Balsitric	Meath	1	Church site
14	20	Banagher	Offaly	1	Church site
15	21	Bangor	Down	1	Original location unknown
16	22	Bealin	Westmeath	1	Original location unknown
17	23 -24	Blessington	Wicklow	2	Church site
18	25	Boho	Fermanagh	1	Church site
19	26	Broughanlea	Antrim	1	Church site
20	27-28	Caledon (Composite)	Tyrone	2	Church site
21	29	Camus	Derry	1	Church site
22	30	Carndonagh	Donegal	1	Church site
23	31-32	Carrowmore	Donegal	2	No church
24	33	Carrownaff	Donegal	1	Church site
25	34	Cashel	Tipperary	1	Church site
26	35	Castlebernard (Kinnity)	Offaly	1	Original location unknown
27	36-37	Castledermot	Kildare	2	Church site
28	38-40	Castlekeeran	Meath	3	Church site
29	41-45	Clogher (2 no. Composites)	Tyrone	5	Church site
30	46-47	Clonca	Donegal	2	Church site
31	48-49	Clones (Composite)	Monaghan	2	Original location unknown (Market cross)
32	50-51	Clonfad	Westmeath	2	Church site
33	52-53	Clonlea	Down	2	Church site
34	54-59	Clonmacnoise	Offaly	6	Church site
35	60-61	Clonmore	Carlow	2	Church site
36	62	Clontallagh	Donegal	1	Church site
37	63	Cloonshanville	Roscommon	1	No church

38	64	Colp	Meath	1	Church site
39	65	Cong	Mayo	1	Missing
40	66	Connor	Antrim	1	Church site
41	67	Delgany	Wicklow	1	Church site
42	68-69	Donaghmore (Composite)	Down	2	Church site
43	70/71	Donaghmore (Composite)	Tyrone	2	Church site
44	72-76	Downpatrick	Down	5	Church site (4) Market cross
45	77	Dromiskin	Louth	1	Church site
46	78-	Dromore	Down	1	Church site
47	79-82	Drumcliff	Sligo	4	Church site
48	83	Druncolumb	Sligo	1	Church site
48	84	Drumcullin	Offaly	1	Church site
50	85	Drumgooland	Down	1	Church site
51	86	Dulane	Meath	1	Missing
52	87-88	Duleek	Meath	2	Church site
53	89-90	Durrow	Offaly	2	Church site
54	91	Dysert O'Dea	Clare	1	Church site
55	92-93	Eglish	Armagh	2	Church site
56	94-97	Emlagh	Roscommon	4	No church
57	98	Emly	Tipperary	1	Church site
58	99	Errigal Keerogue	Tyrone	1	Church site
59	100	Fahan	Donegal	1	Church site
60	101-104	Ferns	Wexford	4	Church site
61	105	Finglas	Dublin	1	Original site unknown
62	106	Fore	Westmeath	1	Church site
63	107-110	Galloon	Fermanagh	4	Church site (3) Missing (1)
64	111	Garryhundon	Carlow	1	Church site
65	112	Girley	Meath	1	Missing
66	113-115	Glendalough	Wicklow	3	Church site (2)

					Original location unknown (1) (Market cross)
67	116-117	Graiguenamanagh	Kilkenny	2	Church site
68	118-121	Inishcealtra	Clare	4	Church site
69	122	Inishkeel	Donegal	1	Church site
70	123	Inishkeen	Fermanagh	1	No church
71	124	Inishmacsaint	Fermanagh	1	Church site
72	125-129	Kells	Meath	5	Church site (4) Market cross (1)
73	130	Kilbroney	Down	1	Church site
74	131	Kilcashel	Donegal	1	Church site
75	132	Kilcoo	Fermanagh	1	Church site
76	133-138	Kilfenora	Clare	6	Church site (5) Missing (1)
77	139	Kilgobbin	Dublin	1	Church site
78	140-143	Kilkieran	Kilkenny	4	Church site
79	144-145	Killaloe	Clare	2	Church site (Kilfenora)
80	146	Killamery	Kilkenny	1	Church site
81	147-148	Killary	Meath	2	Church site
82	149-150	Killeany, Inishmore	Galway	2	Church site
83	151	Killegar	Wicklow	1	Church site
84	152	Killesher	Fermanagh	1	Church site
85	153	Killinaboy	Clare	1	Wayside cross
86	154	Killiney	Kerry	1	Church site
87	155	Killoan	Tyrone	1	No church
88	156	Kill of the Grange	Dublin	1	Church site
89	157	Kilmainham	Dublin	1	Church site
90	158	Kilmalkedar	Kerry	1	Church site
91	159	Kilmokea	Wexford	1	Church site
92	160	Kilnaruane	Cork	1	No church
93	161	Kilquiggin	Wicklow	1	Original location unknown

94	162	Kilree	Kilkenny	1	Church site
95	163	Kilteel	Kildare	1	Church site
96	164	Knock	Meath	1	Church site
97	165	Leggettsrath	Kilkenny	1	No church
98	166	Lismore	Waterford	1	Church site
99	167	Lisnaskea	Fermanagh	1	Origin location unknown (Market Cross)
100	168-169	Lorrha	Tipperary	2	Church site
101	170	Lorum	Carlow	1	No church
102	171	Magharees	Kerry	1	Church site
103	172-173	Monaincha	Tipperary	2	Church site
104	174-180	Monasterboice	Louth	7	Church site
105	181-182	Moone	Kildare	2	Church site
106	183	Mullaboy	Derry	1	Original location unknown
107	184	Newtown	Carlow	1	No church
108	185	Noughaval	Clare	1	Church site
109	186	Nurney	Carlow	1	Church site
110	187	Oldcourt	Wicklow	1	Original location unknown
111	188-189	Old Kilcullen	Kildare	2	Church site
112	190	Old Leighlin	Carlow	1	Church site
113	191	Orchard	Carlow	1	No church
114	192	Ray	Donegal	1	Church site
115	193	Reenconnell	Kerry	1	Wayside cross
116	194-195	Roscrea	Tipperary	2	Church site (1) Origin location unknown (1)
117	196-197	St. Macdara's Island	Galway	2	Church site
118	198	St. Mullins	Carlow	1	Church site
119	199-200	Seir Kieran	Offaly	2	Church site
120	201	Selloo	Monaghan	1	Original location unknown
121	202	Skeaghavannoe	Clare	1	Wayside cross
122	203-204	Sleaty	Laois	2	Church site

123	205	Taghmon	Wexford	1	Church site
124	206-208	Temple Breacan, Inishmore	Galway	3	Church site
125	209	Termonfeckin	Louth	1	Church site
126	210	Tihilly	Offaly	1	Church site
127	211	Tonaknock	Kerry	1	Wayside cross
128	212-214	Tory Island	Donegal	3	Church site (2) No church (1)
129	215	Toureen Peakaun	Tipperary	1	Church site
130	216-219	Tuam (Composite)	Galway	4	Church site (3) Market Cross (1)
131	220	Tullaghan	Leitrim	1	No church
132	221	Tullaghore	Antrim	1	Church site
133	222	Tullogh	Carlow	1	Church site
134	223	Tully	Dublin	1	Church site
135	224	Tybroughney	Kilkenny	1	Church site
136	225-230	Tynan Abbey and Tynan Village	Armagh	6	Church site
137	231	Ullard	Kilkenny	1	Church site
138	232	Waterstown	Carlow	1	No church
139	233	Unknown	-	1	Original location unknown
140	234	Unknown	-	1	Original location unknown

Chapter 1. Appendix 4: The Evidence of Market Crosses in the *Irish Historic Towns Atlases*.

Name of Town/City IHTA number. Type of town.	Evidence for a Market Cross	Key dates for erection/removal/destruction	19th & 20th century dates for re-erection/ survival	Notes.
1. Kildare. Monastic Foundation	No evidence for a market cross. Market square with market house erected in 1757			Typical arrangement of monastic town, circular church enclosure with marketplace to east
2. Carrickfergus. Anglo-Norman settlement around the castle and port.	c. 1560 map shows a market cross standing in the center of a market place. No surviving fragments.	c. 1596 map without the cross. A reference for destruction of the cross in the mid-16 th century. (Rutherford 1960)		Two images survive of the cross. 1. c. 1560 BL, Augustus I, ii, 402. 2. 1565. Richard Lythe, TCD, MS 1209.
3. Bandon. 17th c. Plantation town	No evidence for a market cross			A 1613 map shows an ideal planned town with a prominent market cross in a central location. Not built.
4. Kells. Monastic Foundation	Surviving market Cross	Mention of 'great crosses' in Down Survey of 1655. Re-erected from fallen 1688 Crown Grant in 1669	1893 new stepped plinth	Located at the end of market street which is to the East of the inner monastic enclosure and on the edge of the outer enclosure. Most likely was in its original location until moved in 1996 and relocated in front of the Court House.
5. Mullingar. Anglo-Norman settlement.	1612 'the cross on the s. side of the street' <i>Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Jas I, 233</i> . No surviving fragments.			Possible location of a cross shown in 1691 map by Michael Richards.
6. Athlone. Anglo-Norman settlement	No evidence for a cross but there are stocks in 1661, location unknown. (Murtagh 1986, 240) Stocks at the Tholsel 1830. (O'Brien 1973, 192)			The image in the 1750 plan shows a 'Market H' with a large cross on the top. This structure bears a resemblance to the Scottish market crosses which are mounted on top of a small building like structure. Later maps show Tholsel in this location.
7. Maynooth. developed in the 18th around an earlier the castle.	No evidence of market cross			
Name of Town/City HTA number.	Evidence for a Market Cross	Key dates for erection/removal/destruction	19th & 20th century dates for re-erection/ survival	Notes.

8. Downpatrick. Monastic Foundation	Market cross survived in fragments and re-assembled.	1729 cross 'removed from the street' Cleland, fragments in English Street near courthouse in 1744.	1879 Fragments recovered from private ownership and re-assembled in front of the east end of the cathedral.	There is a 'scolds chair' at the market house in 1730 (Parkinson, 1927, 146.) The market house was built in 1660 (Pilson's memoirs, 76), with 'arched ground floor entrances' c. 1880, demolished in 1882. No evidence for an original location for a market cross but the English Street and the market house are to the east of the church. Map from c. 1720 shows a round object in the center of the junction of English and Irish Street. (BL, Addit, MS 9750, ff 71b-72.) it could be a pump. The map from 1729 shows a similar round object in the same location. (BL, Addit, MS 21, 131, f, 90).
9. Bray	Market cross mentioned by Wright in 1822 at the junction of Killarney Road and Vevay road at the top of the Main Street.	Market House built in the same location as the Market Cross in 1790, Market house is demolished in c. 1841. replaced with a courthouse.		
10. Kilkenny. Anglo-Norman town.	Market Cross erected in 1335 (Prim 1853, 219)	Upper section removed in 1770-71 in an effort to removed shelter. Remainder removed in 1773 (Prim 1853)		There are three images of the cross. A map from 1655 (F. Place) shows a cross mounted on steps. Rocque shows a simple square on his plan of 1758. An Illustration from 1760 shows an elaborate cross in the English style with a central column.
11, 19 & 26 Dublin. Viking foundation	1. High Market cross at Christchurch/High Street 2. Butter Cross at Bishop Street. 3. St. Kevin's Cross, Bride Street.	New cross erected in 1326 (Christchurch Deeds) High cross defaced and broken, to be repaired 1628 (Ancient Records iii, 214-15) Cross recorded in Christchurch rolls in 1634, 1644. Butter Cross 1328 (Ancient Records i, 157) Old stone cross called butter cross 1603. Ancient Records i, 193)		Illustrated in Speeds map of 1601. Image of cross in Crawford's account in December 1911 JRSAl
Name of Town/City HTA number.	Evidence for a Market Cross	Key dates for erection/removal/destruction	19th & 20th century dates for re-erection/ survival	Notes.
12 & 17 Belfast. Early modern plantation town	No evidence of a market cross			

13. Fethard. Anglo-Norman town.	Market cross mentioned in town records in 1712, 1721, 1831.		Removed and replaced with a pump in 1837	Map of 1703 shows a simple square stepped base.
14. Trim	No evidence of a market cross			
15. Derry/ Londonderry Early modern plantation town	No evidence of a market cross			
16. Dundalk Anglo-Norman town.	Market cross at junction of Church Street and Clanbrassil Street.	No evidence of the removal of the cross but not shown in map date 1655 by Simon Garstin which is detailed and precise. Possibly rebuilt before 1675 when it is shown again. Not shown in a map of 1680 by Richardson.		Two images of the cross, both in the same location. 1. 1594 map by Duke shows a cross on top of a stepped platform which appears to have a small door in the base. badly drawn, sides are uneven. 2. 1675 map shows a simple cross on a stepped base.
18. Armagh. Monastic Foundation	Market cross reference to the 'cross of door of close' 1166 (AU 1 ii 153)	Evidence from 1602, 1618, 1760, 1776, 1804. Thrown down in latter part of the 17th c. Re-erected in 1763 Wantonly destroyed on July 2nd 1813 (Information sign in the cathedral)	Fragments of two parts of a shaft and a broken cross head with a ring moved to Armagh Cathedral in 1916. (Information sign in the cathedral)	Illustrated in Bartlett 1602 in a derelict town. Rocque 1760 'market cross'
20. Tuam Monastic Foundation	Market cross, original location unknown	1653 Cromwellian soldiers pulled down the high cross and the statues of the four evangelists at St. Mary's Cathedral (T. B. Costello, p 23.)	The town commissioners eventually, in 1874, negotiated the reassembly of the market cross in Market Square. Removed to St. Mary's Cathedral in 1992	The separate parts of two crosses were re-assembled in Dublin in 1853 as part of the Great Exhibition. The cross base was found under some rubbish around 1827 (O'Neill). Other fragments were found in the cathedral grounds around 1830.
Name of Town/City HTA number.	Evidence for a Market Cross	Key dates for erection/removal/destruction	19th & 20th century dates for re-erection/ survival	Notes.
21. Limerick. Viking foundation.	Market cross, location unknown, possibly same as base of a cross in the precinct of St. Mary's Cathedral.	13th c. reference to a 'white stone cross' (Black Book 40) cross c. 1590 (Hardiman; Westrop 1916, p.25)		The market house is built in 1673, possibly replaces the cross.
22. Longford Gaelic stronghold	Market cross, location unknown, possibly in Church Street, beside the Market House.	1641, reference to a cross in the Depositions. (Depositions, 235v)		

23. Carlingford Anglo-Norman town.	No evidence of a market cross			
24. Sligo Gaelic stronghold	Market cross erected c. 1570.	Called 'old market cross' in 1739 (Henry 367)		Marked on the First Edition OS map of 1837. Replaced by the Lady Erin Memorial in 1899 (1798 Memorial)
25. Ennis Gaelic stronghold	Market cross 1680, 1700, Stones to be removed, reused in building of quay 1711. (CBE 56, 75, 91)			
27. Youghal Anglo-Norman town.	Market cross, located at North Main Street in Market Place, site unknown.	1625 Cross to be 'covered at the town charge'		1633 (<i>Pacata Hibernia</i>) The cross is shown standing on top of a base with four steps. The cross is short and has a very thin shaft. The head of the cross had equal sized arms and head. it is stylized and as depicted does not appear to be stone cross but possibly metal on a stone base.
28. Galway	Market Cross at Main Guard Street.	Shown on a succession of maps from 1583, 1608, 1610, 1625. Not shown on a map of the mid 17th c. by Edward Jones. BL.		Good visual documentation for this cross. Shown on four maps, in the same location and similar style of simple cross raised up on a number of steps.

Chapter 1, Appendix 5. Crosses transferred to the OPW as part of the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1880. Irish Church Temporalities Commission, *Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the period 1869-80.*

Schedule Number.	Parish.	.Irish Church Temporalities Commission, text in appendix 10.	Notes.
1	Cranfield, Co. Armagh	Ruins of a Church, Black Oak Cross, &c.	There is a famous holy well associated with this site. Descriptions from 1683 onwards. The cross is described as a termon cross marking the extent of the bishop's lands.
5	Inishcultra (Inishcealtra) Co. Clare.	Ruins of Seven Churches and Round Tower &c.	Harbison records four crosses, all damaged.
6.	Killaloe Cathedral, Co. Clare.	Ruins of St. Flannan's Church	The transfer is for the small Romanesque church but there is a cross associated with the Cathedral from Kilfenora.
7.	Kilfenora, Co. Clare.	Ruins of Chancel of Cathedral and Stone Crosses adjoining.	The cross in the field was excluded as not in ecclesiastical ownership.
16.	Dysert O'Dea. Co. Clare.	Ruins of Church, Round tower, Carved Cross	Not in the graveyard, in a field close by but considered to be church property.
22.	Clear Island, Co. Cork.	Ruins of St. Kieran's Church, Stone with inscribed Cross, &c.	A short distance from the church at the side of the road, a cross inscribed pillar. Not in Harbison.
23.	RaymunderdoneyCo. Donegal. (Ray)	Ruins of Church and prostrate Cross	Now reconstructed and mounted on the wall of the church
24.	Tullaghobegly, Tory Island, Co. Donegal.	Round Tower, Abbey, Two Crosses &c.	This is probably the Tau cross and fragments of another. The Tau cross is not beside the church.
25.	Clonca, Co. Donegal.	Ruins of Church, Stone Pillar, and Cross.	The pillar is presumably now a cross with a reconstructed head. The cross is a fragment.

26.	Dromore Cathedral, Co. Down	Ancient Irish Cross	Only fragments of the cross were transferred. The cross was restored and re-erected in 1887, seven years after the vesting. The OPW had a part in the reconstruction. Located in part of the graveyard but at a higher level to be flush with the street/bridge.
32.	Clondalkin, Co. Dublin	Round Tower, Granite Cross, and remains of early Monastery.	There are two crosses in the graveyard, large and small. They are not in Harbison. Plain. Listed by Crawford. Large in state care, small is not.
40.	Inishmacsaint, Co. Fermanagh.	Stone Cross	
43.	Inish-mór, Co. Galway	Ruins of Church – Tempál Brean and Cross	
47.	Kilconnell, Co. Galway	Ruins of Church, Abbey, Well, Cross, &c.	First mention of a well in the vesting document. Franciscan Friary, Catholics repaired the church in 1604, tradition says the Friars expelled in 1691 (Harbison) Not sure how it ended up as a parish church. No remains of a cross now. Not in any record except this. The well is beside the friary but there is a second well nearby. There is a seventeenth-century O'Donnellan cross standing in the village of Kilconnell. And a second similar cross in the Friary.
65.	Kilmalkedar, Co. Kerry	Ruins of Church and Friary	There is a plain cross on site, mentioned by Harbison. Gwynn & Hadcock have no record of a friary other than an early monastic site.
67.	Maharees islands, Illaunmill, Co. Kerry	Cashel, Oratories, 7e. Ruins of Churches, Monastery, Cells, and cross	Cross inscribed slab about 100 yds from stone wall.

69.	Kilcullen (Old Kilcullen), Co. Kildare.	Ruins of Abbey, Church, Round Tower and Cross	There are two shafts on this site but one is very worn. The reference is probably to the one that has visible carvings.
73.	Killamery, Co. Kilkenny.	Killamery Stone Cross	This cross is named and transferred on its own
74.	Kilree, Co. Kilkenny.	Ruins of Church, Round Tower and Cross.	
76.	Ullard, Co. Kilkenny.	Ruins of Church	Three crosses are shown in O'Neill, only one survives. High Cross assembled from three fragments, not clear if this was done by the OPW or earlier.
77.	Kilkeeran, Co. Kilkenny.	Kilkeeran Stone Cross	This cross is named and transferred on its own
79.	Clonmacnoise, King's County (Offaly)	Ruins of Churches, Two Round Towers, Crosses, &c.	
92.	Dromiskin. Co. Louth	Ruins of Round Tower &c.	Cross head re-erected on a modern shaft as a memorial in 1916.
94.	Monasterboice, Co. Louth	Monasterboice church, Round Tower and Three Crosses	Specific mention of three crosses.
107.	Dulane, Co. Meath.	Ruins of Chapel in graveyard, and Ancient Crosses in Kiem Churchyard.	A cross base survives in the graveyard. Photograph of a broken arm by E. Rynne.
109.	Skreen, Co. Meath.	Ruins of Church and Two Stone Crosses.	Only one cross identified on the RMP map. 16 th or 17 th century. Second cross not identified.
112.	Clones, Co. Monaghan.	Ruins of Old Cross in Diamond of Clones.	Transferred on its own, in public space in front of the church but considered to be church property.

116.	Sleaty, Queen's County. (Laois)	Ruins of Church and Two Crosses	Two crosses in the graveyard.
119.	Drumcliff, Co. Sligo.	Ruins of Church, Monastic Buildings, Round Tower, Two crosses.	
124.	Newtown Lennan, Ahenny, Co. Tipperary	Kilelispeen, Two Stone Crosses	Only crosses in the vesting, no other structures.
125.	Corbally (Mona-incha). Co. Tipperary		
126.	Roscrea , Co. Tipperary	Round Tower and Church of St. Cronan	
128.	St. Patrick's Rock (Cashel), Co. Tipperary	The Ruins of Ancient Cathedral Church on 'The Rock Of Cashel' with the land adjacent thereto.	Re-erected in front of the cathedral on a mound in the 16 th or 17 th century.
129.	Errigal Keerogue, Co. Tyrone.	Ruins of Church, Round Tower and Cross.	
130.	Donaghmore, Co. Tyrone.	Donaghmore Stone Cross.	This cross is named and transferred on its own
133.	Ferns, Co. Wexford.	Ruins of Augustinian Monastery, Two Churches and Cross	Cross is most likely associated with the cathedral which is where the cross fragments were located.
134.	Derrallossary (Glendalough) Lugduff, Carmaderry, Derrybawn, Brockagh. Co. Wicklow.	The Ruins of the Seven Churches, with the Round Tower, Stone Crosses, and other Ecclesiastical Buildings or Structures.	
137.	Aghowle, Co. Wicklow.	Ruins of Old Parish Church and Cross	