

Edited by Meg Boulton & Michael D.J. Bintley

# INSULAR ICONOGRAPHIES

Essays in Honour of Jane Hawkes



## INSULAR ICONOGRAPHIES

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# INSULAR ICONOGRAPHIES

ESSAYS IN HONOUR  
OF JANE HAWKES



Edited by Meg Boulton and Michael D. J. Bintley

THE BOYDELL PRESS

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Cover image: Blessed panel on the Rothbury Cross base, c. early ninth century, Great North Museum, Tyne and Wear. Photograph Heidi Stoner, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. Great North Museum: Hancock.

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# FOREWORD

PROFESSOR JANE HAWKES:  
FROM STUDENT TO COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND

RICHARD BAILEY

It was in the mid-1980s. The normally calm and immaculate University Registrar arrived for our meeting, dishevelled and abstracted. ‘I’ve just been academically mugged by one of your research students in a session with postgraduates’, he said. ‘She was in the right of course – but I have to say that is an impressive and determined person!’

The postgraduate, of course, was Jane. She had arrived in Newcastle in the late 1970s with none of the qualifications needed for university entry. Displaying all that determination and academic acuity that was later to impress the Registrar, within a year she had acquired the relevant certificates at a local college and promptly enrolled in the most demanding course our Faculty then offered – English Language and Literature. Three years later she emerged with a first-class degree – something which in those far-off days we awarded only with grudging reluctance.

To my delight, she then agreed to undertake a PhD study on aspects of Anglo-Saxon sculptural iconography. I knew this to be a field ripe for exploration. Apart from the crosses at Bewcastle and Ruthwell, earlier scholars had largely ignored the subject – thus a glance through Gertrude Schiller’s multi-volume *Iconography of Christian Art* (which was one of our major reference books in the 1960s and 1970s) reveals hardly a single image of pre-Norman English sculpture, despite the fact that many of her arguments would have been immeasurably strengthened by their inclusion. It was as if the entire corpus did not exist.

This was, however, a subject which demanded a range of skills and an understanding of varying disciplines: visual awareness, an engagement with both Old English and Latin, familiarity with liturgical and patristic sources. With determination – that word again! – Jane set about acquiring these tools, and the resulting doctoral study was a magisterial achievement. Since then, of course, she has established herself as a major figure in

the field, publishing insights into early medieval iconography of which my generation had been totally unaware: of how the figural art of the Sandbach crosses closed gaps in the seeming discontinuities in European art between the late antique world and the art of the Ottonian empire; of how the Wirksworth Annunciation scene hinted at the presence in England of a model type known briefly in Eastern art in the sixth century (with all that this implies about Mercian cultural roots); of how traditional pictorial organisations and images were manipulated to express new meanings on carvings at Rothbury and Repton; of how imperial triumphal columns fed through a medieval filter to sculptures at Masham and Dewsbury; of how foregrounding and overlapping of planes could translate two-dimensional models into three-dimensional icons; of a Columban element in Insular Marian iconography ... *and* bravely probing the theoretical grounds on which insular sculptural studies had been based for over a century.

Much of this work has benefited from the partnerships Jane has developed across Britain and Europe. Whilst in her first substantive post at the University of Cork, she helped develop joint funding programmes with European institutions; both in Ireland and in York, she has actively encouraged cross-departmental postgraduate study. She has become a crucial member of the small group involved in the production of the British Academy's Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, as well as organising a series of exhibitions and publications which have drawn upon her international contacts.

As every university departmental head will recognise, a colleague's impressive research activity is not always accompanied by a commitment to teaching. Jane has never ignored that academic obligation. As a postgraduate at Newcastle – at a time when such arrangements were somewhat unusual – she was asked to take small tutorial and seminar groups beginning their Old English language courses. Their response to her teaching was one of huge enthusiasm as she stretched the most able, cajoled the obstreperous – and spent hours in encouraging those who were finding the subject difficult. Decades later that same ability to stimulate and excite students is manifest in the large number of postgraduates she has gathered around her at York; this book, with its contributions from those young scholars, makes clear her contribution to the next generation as well as showing the great affection in which she is held. As someone who owes much to her friendship and intellectual stimulation, I join with the contributors in expressing my admiration for all that she has achieved.

*Emeritus Professor Richard N. Bailey*  
*University of Newcastle on Tyne*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our heartfelt thanks are due to the contributors, without whose hard work and dedication this volume would not have been possible. Sincere thanks are also due to Caroline Palmer and the team at Boydell & Brewer for their work in overseeing and producing the volume. The History of Art Department and the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of York were generous in their support for the symposium that generated this volume in its initial form, both in terms of financial aid and in providing space for the event. Thanks are due to the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture; the Hohe Domkirche, Trier Domschatz; Trinity College, Dublin; the British Library; the V&A; the Chapter of Durham Cathedral; the Masters and Fellows of Trinity Hall, Cambridge; the National Museum of Ireland; Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; the Masters and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge; the Historisches Museum Basel; the Musée de Cluny; the British Museum; the Manx Museum; the Portable Antiquities Scheme; the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne; the Great North Museum; Steve Sherlock, Tees Archaeology; and Robin Daniels, Rosemary Cramp, Andrew Parkin, Irene Sieberger and Aly Slack for their assistance in sourcing and providing images for the volume, which has been made possible by a grant from the Scouloudi Foundation in association with the Institute of Historical Research, without which we would not have been able to realise the project. Special thanks are due to Richard Bailey for his time, the introduction to this volume and his continued support of this endeavour; to Celia Chazelle and Diarmuid Scully, who were endlessly supportive of the project; and to the anonymous reader, whose generous feedback and insight were invaluable. It has been a real pleasure working on a volume in honour of Jane. As ever, any errors that remain are our own.



# ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AntJ</i>	<i>Antiquaries Journal</i>
<i>ASE</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
<i>ASSAH</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History</i>
<i>BAR</i>	British Archaeological Reports
<i>CASSS</i>	Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture
<i>CCSL</i>	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
<i>MedArch</i>	<i>Medieval Archaeology</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1841–55)

# INTRODUCTION

MEG BOULTON AND MICHAEL D. J. BINTLEY

This volume has its origins in a symposium honouring Professor Jane Hawkes' contribution to early medieval studies, acknowledging her research and celebrating the scholarly legacy she has created through her teaching practice and her pedagogical relationships with (and mentoring of) emerging and early-career scholars, several of whom went on to contribute to this volume in its published form. This is, in some ways, an unconventional tribute. Jane, however, is a fairly unconventional figure (wonderfully so), and we are sure she will forgive the liberties taken by the emerging and early-career scholars who are brought together here to mark her engagement with the field and celebrate her achievements.

Jane's career and academic output have been particularly noteworthy and wide-ranging, addressing Old English literature, archaeology, iconography, stone sculpture, exegesis, the institutional, cultural, and material identities of Rome and stone, cultural transfer between East and West, eschatology, the role of imagery in the medieval period and subsequent medievalisms, and materiality and modes of viewing, as well as the iconography-based art history for which she is perhaps best known. She has devoted her scholarly career to the study of Anglo-Saxon stone, exploring its iconographies, symbolic significances and scholarly contexts in depth and detail, shedding light on the obscure and understudied sculpted stone monuments of early medieval England for members of the academy and public alike. This lithic corpus, initially addressed through antiquarian studies and archaeological approaches, remains somewhat under-represented in art-historical scholarship even today, but the fact that it is studied in these terms at all owes much to Jane, who was one of the first scholars to address these monuments and sculpted fragments from an interdisciplinary, art-historical, and predominantly iconographical standpoint. This art-historical emphasis changed the way these objects were viewed and understood by students, peers, and scholars – and her work revolutionised the study of Anglo-Saxon stone. Indeed, from her doctoral thesis on 'The Non-Crucifixion Iconography of the Pre-Viking Sculpture of the North of England', funded by the British Academy and

awarded by Newcastle University in 1989, to her more recent publications on the relationships between icons and Anglo-Saxon sculpture – such as her 2013 piece ‘Stones of the North: Sculpture in Northumbria in the “Age of Bede”’ – her research has remained at the very forefront of Anglo-Saxon Studies.<sup>1</sup>

As a teacher, Jane is both dedicated and inspiring, more than happy to take her postgraduates out of the classroom and into the field, where she is endlessly enthusiastic about seeking out and studying Anglo-Saxon sculpture and its Continental exemplars *in situ*. Her postgraduate modules – ‘Scrolls and Serpents’, ‘Impacts of the Late Antique’ and ‘Churches and High Crosses’ – taught at the University of York (where she was appointed as lecturer in the History of Art Department in 2000, following posts in Cork, Edinburgh, and Newcastle) are comprehensive and immersive. These modules are often the first encounter students have with the art, texts, and culture of the medieval period, and have inspired in many a love for Anglo-Saxon material culture – indeed, a significant number of them have gone on to pursue doctoral study largely because of Jane’s teaching. The significance of her work as a scholar and as a teacher is reflected in a wide range of publications, papers, and other scholarly contributions, such as her work on the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, whose pioneering volumes have done much to highlight the range and significance of the carved stones of this period.

The collection of interdisciplinary papers in this volume represents a selection of work by new voices from various areas of Medieval Studies, all of whom have been directly influenced by Jane’s extraordinary contribution to scholarship and the academy. Their range of methodological approaches and subjects not only highlights her own wide-ranging and commanding approach to discussing the artwork, texts, and material outputs of the medieval period, but also demonstrates that scholarly interest in the Early Medieval has become increasingly multidisciplinary – an approach practised and fostered by her work.

Following this precedent, and Jane’s approach to Anglo-Saxon material culture, the volume brings together new research on a range of medieval textual and visual material, underpinned by an emphasis on the role and significance of visual culture and the material object. The contributors address significant objects and texts from the period through a variety of methodologies that encompass several disciplinary backgrounds and time periods, largely focusing on the Insular world as it intersects with the wider global context of the early Middle Ages. As such, the essays here function as a celebration of Jane’s work, focusing on the period and topics she has spent her career studying, discussing, and teaching.

<sup>1</sup> Jane Hawkes, ‘Stones of the North: Sculpture in Northumbria in the “Age of Bede”’, *Northumberland: Medieval Art and Architecture, BAA Conference: Newcastle upon Tyne 2010*, ed. Jeremy Ashbee and Julian Luxford (Leeds, 2013), pp. 34–53.

In approaching the contributors, we asked them to address an aspect of material or textual production of their choosing while reflecting on Jane's own research. The diversity of the submissions speaks to the affection and respect in which she is held by her mentees and students, as well as by her peers and colleagues, many of whom have also supported and encouraged the production of this volume.<sup>2</sup>

Carolyn Twomey opens the volume in Anglo-Saxon England, discussing the iconography and material culture of baptism in relation to the stone font at Wilne, which survives from the pre-Conquest period. Her discussion concentrates on a reused cross shaft in the church of St Chad in Wilne that was inverted and transformed into a font, demonstrating the symbolic coherency of this act, and showing how it can be understood in the context of both the sculpted crosses discussed by Hawkes, and a new interpretation of Anglo-Saxon stone fonts. Colleen Thomas also addresses stone crosses, discussing them as products of the broader European Christian tradition stemming from late antiquity and earlier periods. She discusses the inhabited vine scroll that adorns these monuments throughout Ireland and Britain, focusing on the Tower Cross at Kells, and arguing that it should be understood not only as inhabited vine scroll, but also as a Tree of Life rooted in the cross of Christ. Elizabeth Alexander's essay focuses on the Newent Cross, one of relatively few Anglo-Saxon stone crosses to feature figures from the Old Testament, addressing the manner in which the Abraham and Isaac scene contributes to the salvific message of the cross and its role in Christ's crucifixion.

Michael Bintley's essay is similarly interested in stone and salvation, but takes the Old English *Andreas* as its subject, reflecting Hawkes' interest in the relationship between texts and objects, and discussing the didactic role of two stone objects in the poem; first, a walking and talking stone sculpture from the walls of Solomon's temple that obeys the commands of Christ, and second, a marble pillar that releases a cataclysmic baptismal flood at the poem's climax. Following the textual evangelising of *Andreas*, Tom Pickles discusses the expression of this process in the landscape. He takes the conversion-era cemetery at Street House, Loftus, as a case study, and demonstrates the way archaeology, onomastics, and spatial theory can enhance our understanding of the complex processes that mediated the conversion to Christianity. Philippa Turner's essay discusses the conversion-era saints Cuthbert and Oswald, considering the treatment of their relics post-mortem, with a focus on the movement of Cuthbert's relics from coffin to shrine. Turner explores the relationship between the

<sup>2</sup> Sadly, it has proved impossible for several of Jane's current and former students to contribute to this volume, who would in other circumstances have wished to do so. That being so, they would nevertheless like to join us in honouring and celebrating her. They include: Nick G. Baker, Amanda Doviak, Megan Henvey, Luisa Izzi, Beth Kaneko, Christine Maddern, Elizabeth McCormick, Kellie Meyer, Madeline Saltzman, Irene Sieberger, Magdalena Skoblar and Lyndsey Smith.

relics of these saints and the status of Durham Cathedral Priory, to whose 'sacred patrimony' they offered a significant contribution following their translation in 1104.

Harry Stirrup takes his lead from iconographical types, namely serpentine creatures and the common iconographic motif of biting jaws, addressing the appearance of a hell mouth in the twelfth-century Laud Bible, where it appears in an uncommon Old Testament context. Stirrup focuses on the illustrations accompanying Numbers, in which Dathan and Abiron are consumed by a hell mouth, raising questions about the origins of the hell mouth (considered by Hawkes in an earlier context), and calling attention to the decisions made by twelfth-century artists in relation to their visual sources.

Heidi Stoner returns us to the examination of stone sculpture, discussing the categorisation of stone monuments and the shared iconographies of 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Viking' sculpture, considering the various coexistent sculptural styles that may have contributed to the viewing experiences and scholarly understandings of these objects. Stoner argues that representations of localised identity articulated through these monuments should be understood in the context of wider Insular sculptural traditions, questioning the familiar categories and taxonomies employed by those examining these sculpted objects. Mags Mannion considers decorative motifs and cultural understandings in the context of glass beads, discussing their perceived apotropaic properties, and the potential symbolic significances of particular combinations of colours and styles. She explores other possibilities of meaning and influence including cross-cultural contact and, like Stoner, enquires into the inheritance and reimagining of older visual traditions. Maintaining the focus on patterns and motifs, Melissa Herman's essay examines the role of faces and masks in early Anglo-Saxon metalwork. Like Mannion, she is interested in the hidden potential of these images, and like Mannion and Stoner, she identifies artistic continuities in the decorative schemes that emphasise their lasting symbolic potency. Michael Brennan addresses puzzles and patterns of a different sort, namely those presented by Alcuin's 'mathematical tutorial in logic, enumeration and measurements', his *Propositiones ad acuendos juvenes*, and questions whether the approaches to logic and puzzles espoused in this text are also visible in Alcuin's approach to contemporary religious and socio-political issues. Finally, Meg Boulton addresses the eschatological iconography of the Rothbury Cross shaft, considering the construction of sacred place and space in Anglo-Saxon art. Discussing the iconographic and conceptual complexities of these sculpted fragments (as also recognised by Hawkes), Boulton asks wider questions concerning whether, when reviewed in the light of our modern understandings of the medieval, the study of such objects and images should be more fully integrated into the discipline of art history, as Jane has continually argued in her own research.

While all the contributors to this volume owe an academic debt to

Jane and were happy to express their gratitude to her, other factors also had a bearing on this volume's appearance. Jane recently celebrated both personal and professional milestones, turning sixty in 2015 and being awarded her professorship from the History of Art department at the University of York in 2016. This thus seemed a fitting moment to mark her many contributions to the field of Anglo-Saxon studies, and to celebrate her myriad intellectual and pedagogical achievements, giving rise to the symposium from which this volume emerged. For a scholar who has been so focused on the importance of teaching, and who has consistently and generously prioritised the encouragement of new voices in the field, there seemed no more appropriate way to honour her than a volume of essays written by her students and mentees, all of whom have benefited from her kindness, insight, and brilliance. In compiling these essays, we aim to honour her achievements thus far, while looking forward to her continuing research and contributions to the field, and sincerely thanking her for all she has done to promote the study of Anglo-Saxon stone and the raising of these new voices.



# RECUTTING THE CROSS: THE ANGLO-SAXON BAPTISMAL FONT AT WILNE

CAROLYN TWOMEY

The baptismal font from St Chad's Church in Wilne (Derbyshire) is a rare surviving piece of the material history of baptism in early medieval England (Pl. I). The large bowl (61 cm height, 67 cm diameter) bears upside-down foliate interlace with beasts, griffins, and birds entangled within a sequence of roundels. A fire in the early twentieth century damaged the interior of the church and another register of figural ornament on the font, the feet of six human figures. Now standing in the west end of the nave, this vividly carved font originated as a standing cross in the early ninth-century ecclesiastical landscape of Mercia. While the recycling of material culture – and stone spoliation in particular – during the early Middle Ages is well known, the recutting of stone cross shafts for baptismal fonts has only been suggested for a discrete group of fonts dated to the Anglo-Saxon period.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, I explore what the stone font at Wilne and the study of material things can tell us about baptism in early England. Baptism inside the hollowed shaft of a Christian cross incorporated the earlier meanings of the monument into the performance of this essential ritual of rebirth. Through an investigation of the Wilne font's iconography,

<sup>1</sup> John Blair, 'The Prehistory of English Fonts', *Intersections: The Archaeology and History of Christianity in England, 400–1200: Papers in Honour of Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle*, ed. Martin Henig and Nigel Ramsay, BAR British Series 505 (Oxford, 2010), pp. 149–77; Paul S. Barnwell, *The Place of Baptism in Anglo-Saxon and Norman Churches*, Deerhurst Lecture 2013 (Deerhurst, 2014); Sarah Foot, '“By Water in the Spirit”: The Administration of Baptism in Early Anglo-Saxon England', *Pastoral Care before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, 1992), pp. 171–92, at 182–3.



form, and strategic reuse, I show how contemporary understandings of stone, *romanitas*, and the cross were all present at the baptismal moment through the material of the font. The stone cross that marked the mission of the Church in the early medieval landscape was brought inside the physical church building through its new use as a liturgical object. Repurposed as a font, the Wilne cross became an interior monument to baptismal victory in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The study of baptismal fonts offers a material perspective on baptism in early medieval lived religion that is often absent from textual sources. Most narrative accounts of historical baptisms in works such as the *Historia ecclesiastica* of the Venerable Bede (c. 672–735) consist of brief references to the baptisms of elite figures, which stand in for the conversion of whole regions and peoples.<sup>3</sup> Early medieval authors and compilers such as Alcuin (c. 735–804) and Wulfstan (d. 1023) emphasise baptismal ideals but have less to tell us about baptismal practice. Four surviving baptismal instructions from the Anglo-Saxon period originate from a common core of liturgical practices modelled after Carolingian and Roman elements, but differ from one another both in their organisation and in the context of the manuscripts that contain them.<sup>4</sup> Interdisciplinary inquiry incorporating art-historical, archaeological, and landscape evidence opens new doors to historians interested in religious practice and their subjects' relationships with the material world. Human actors created places and things, imbuing them with meaning and agency; in turn, these physical environments and objects took on the active qualities of historical actors in themselves, to form and reform their relationships to other things, human beings, and the divine, sometimes over several generations of use and reuse.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The contributions that Jane Hawkes has made to the interdisciplinary study of early medieval monuments in the Christian landscape anchor my investigation of the Wilne font. I am particularly grateful to her for sharing her detailed iconographic analysis of the Wilne sculpture from the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture volume prior to its publication, on which the following pages will rely. See Jane Hawkes and Philip C. Sidebottom, *Derbyshire and Staffordshire*, CASSS 8 (Oxford, 2018), pp. 234–38.

<sup>3</sup> Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969). See Carolyn Twomey, 'Kings as Catechumens: Royal Conversion Narratives and Easter in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*', *The Haskins Society Journal*, 25 (2014), 1–18.

<sup>4</sup> For detailed examination of the liturgical books containing baptismal rites from later Anglo-Saxon England, see Sarah Larratt Keefer, 'Manuals', *The Liturgical Books of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Richard W. Pfaff, Old English Newsletter, Subsidia 23 (Kalamazoo, MI, 1995), pp. 101–2; M. Bradford Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2002), ch. 7; David Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England: Four Studies* (Woodbridge, 1992), chs. 3 and 4; Richard W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 72–75, 88–91, and 94–6; Joseph H. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca, NY, 1998), pp. 57–60; see also Helen Foxhall Forbes, *Heaven and Earth in Anglo-Saxon England: Theology and Society in an Age of Faith*, Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Burlington, VT, 2013), pp. 103–8, and table 2.1.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford and New York, NY, 1998); Ian Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and*

The baptismal font at Wilne is one such material object with a complex history of reuse. It is one of a small group of baptismal fonts that has been dated to before the Conquest on various iconographic, formal, and archaeological grounds. Stone fonts generally appeared in large numbers in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries alongside the proliferation of stone churches during the period of the Great Rebuilding and, as argued by Paul Barnwell and Frances Altvater, the increasingly codified nature of the sacraments.<sup>6</sup> Within this small corpus of fonts dated from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, there were a number of plain stone tubs and bowls that would have existed alongside wooden prototypes, and which pre-dated the later ornamented Romanesque forms in stone and lead.<sup>7</sup> The inscriptions on the fonts at Potterne (Wiltshire) and Bingley (W. Yorks), the entwined spirals, vines, and beasts at Wilne (Derbyshire), Deerhurst (Gloucestershire), and Melbury Bubb (Dorset), and the skeuomorphic characteristics of the Tintagel (Cornwall) and Little Billing (Northants) fonts compose the bulk of the early group identified by John Blair.<sup>8</sup> This grouping is complicated by the fact that the reuse of stone during the early medieval period was considerable, and fonts were likely originally carved for other purposes before being recut. Francis Bond's pioneering survey of fonts included several he believed were adapted from Roman

*Things* (Malden, MA, 2012); see also Bill Sillar, 'The Social Agency of Things? Animism and Materiality in the Andes', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 19.3 (2009), 367–77; and the survey of the field in Andrew Jones and Nicole Boivin, 'The Malice of Inanimate Objects: Material Agency', *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, ed. Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (Oxford, 2010), pp. 333–51.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Gem, 'The English Parish Church in the 11th and Early 12th Centuries: A Great Rebuilding', *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950–1200*, ed. John Blair (Oxford, 1988), pp. 21–30; Barnwell, *Place of Baptism*; Frances Altvater, 'In Fonte Renatus: The Iconography and Context of Twelfth-Century Baptismal Fonts in England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Boston University, 2003); Carolyn Twomey, 'Living Water, Living Stone: The History and Material Culture of Baptism in Early Medieval England, c. 600–c. 1200' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Boston College, 2017); see also Paul S. Barnwell, 'The Laity, the Clergy and the Divine Presence: The Use of Space in Smaller Churches of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 157 (2004), 41–60; and Frances Altvater, *Sacramental Theology and the Decoration of Baptismal Fonts: Incarnation, Initiation, Institution* (Cambridge, 2017). For the development of the sacrament of baptism into the central Middle Ages, see John D. C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West, a Study in the Disintegration of the Primitive Rite of Initiation* (Chicago, IL, 2004); and Marcia L. Colish, *Faith, Fiction, and Force in Medieval Baptismal Debates* (Washington, DC, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Blair, 'The Prehistory of English Fonts'; Barnwell, *Place of Baptism*, p. 14; Frances Altvater also sees a strong break between late pre-Conquest/Anglo-Saxon fonts 'related to but distinct from' the Anglo-Norman twelfth-century baptismal fonts; Altvater, *In Fonte Renatus*, pp. 19, 22.

<sup>8</sup> Blair, 'The Prehistory of English Fonts'; Paul Barnwell adds Wells (Somerset), West Hanney (Berkshire), Poltimore (Devon), Bromyard (Herefordshire), and Buscot (Berkshire), all of which he identifies as early skeuomorphs, the latter being two small bowls similar to that at Tintagel (Cornwall). Barnwell, *Place of Baptism*, p. 2.

and Anglo-Saxon stones,<sup>9</sup> with other scholars such as David Stocker and Blair later refining and adding to the category.<sup>10</sup>

Rather than suggest a definitive solution to the recutting question as a whole, or try to reclassify 'Anglo-Saxon' versus 'Norman' font groups, here I approach the Wilne font on its own terms as a unique stone monument. Each font had its own circumstances of creation and potential reworking, including different stone sources, patrons, models, and masons. The long post-medieval histories of fonts also provide new challenges to reading these stones because of modern-day weathering, iconoclasm, *ex situ* movement, and continued liturgical use. By understanding each font as a distinct piece of material culture that participated in a long tradition of stone working across the divide of 1066, we are free to focus on individual contexts and material histories. The fragmented iconographic programme at Wilne, as well as its strong similarities in size and ornament with contemporary circular monuments, suggest that this font was recut at a later date alongside a burgeoning trend in stone building, rather than commissioned originally as a font.<sup>11</sup> Limiting my exploration to the Wilne font, I consider its fashioning from a standing cross and how its later repurposing brought ideas of Christian community and Roman identity into both the church building and the moment of baptism.

We will begin by exploring the complex and damaged iconography of the Wilne font before focusing on the significance of its form, stone, and reuse. Although a fire in 1917 destroyed a portion of the font, a late nineteenth-century rubbing and drawing preserve the original decorative programme, which, along with a 3D model of the existing font, allows us to analyse the iconography in detail (Figs. 1.1 and 1.2).<sup>12</sup> The upper register of the current font consists of various animals entwined with interlace in six broad roundels, now upside-down to the modern viewer. Some of the

<sup>9</sup> Francis Bond, *Fonts and Font Covers*, Church Art in England 2 (London, 1908), pp. 95–106.

<sup>10</sup> Blair, 'The Prehistory of English Fonts'; Francis Drake listed Dolton and Melbury Bubb as recut from cross shafts, with Wilne, Penmon, Deerhurst, and Wroxeter (Shropshire) reused from other material. See C. S. Drake, *The Romanesque Fonts of Northern Europe and Scandinavia* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 32–3. Catherine Karkov includes only Little Billing, Deerhurst, Potterne, Wells, and Melbury Bubb: see Catherine E. Karkov, *The Art of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 85. David Stocker lists Bassingham (Lincolnshire), Bingley, Deerhurst, Dolton (Devon), Melbury Bubb, and Wilne as recut from standing crosses, with many more recut from Roman material. David Stocker, 'Fons et Origo: The Symbolic Death, Burial and Resurrection of English Font Stones', *Church Archaeology*, 1 (1997), 17–25, at 25, lists 2–4. See also Edmund Tyrrell Green, *Baptismal Fonts: Classified and Illustrated* (London, 1928), pp. 21–4; Altvater, 'In Fonte Renatus', pp. 22–3.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Bryant has made a similar suggestion concerning the lower portion of the Deerhurst font; see Richard Byrant, *Making Much of What Remains: Reconstructing Deerhurst's Anglo-Saxon Paint and Sculpture*, Deerhurst Lecture 2014 (Deerhurst, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> For an open-access PhotoScan model of the Wilne font, see Carolyn Twomey, '3D Model of Wilne Baptismal Font', Harvard Dataverse, V1.1, 2018, <<https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/9SG69Q>> [accessed 16 March 2019]. An interactive digital model is also available to view online via Sketchfab.com at <<http://bit.ly/2E4Oz64>> [accessed 16 March 2019].



creatures are marked with ribbed lines, indicating feathers in some cases, and their necks, limbs, and tongues twist within the space of the roundels, the spandrels of which also display foliate patterns. Each roundel bears a different contorted animal, except for two similar (but not identical) scenes which feature a central tree flanked by two birds with ovoid eyes. Their slender beaks grasp the curled fronds of the tree (Pl. I). Other than these birds, and one griffin-like beast with a prominent wing and beak, Jane Hawkes has described the creatures as beasts and quadrupeds, some with defined collars, whose limbs are entwined with interlace.<sup>13</sup>

The lower register of the font, now lost, depicted the feet of six human figures and some of the hems of their robes within arcaded panels aligned with the animal ornament (Fig. 1.1). Five of the pairs of feet point in one direction, while one figure appears to have been marked for distinction by the positioning of its feet in the opposite direction and the presence of the end of a staff beside the feet.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the location of this figure in relationship to the other register of ornament also suggests a special status. On the original cross shaft this figure stood above a panel with a long-necked creature twisting forward to bite its own leg. On either side of this beast are the two similar scenes of mirrored birds and tree, flanking the central animal panel and framing the figure with staff and distinctively positioned feet above. Based on her stylistic analysis of the scenes, Hawkes has suggested that the Wilne sculpture dates from the early ninth century, with parallels seen in the contemporary animal art sculpture of Mercia and the West Midlands, the ivory Gandersheim Casket, and the foliate motifs and roundels found in the Vespasian Psalter and the Vale of York cup.<sup>15</sup>

Other than the Wilne font itself, there is some evidence for the existence of an early church on the site of the present thirteenth-century church.

FIG. 1.1 LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ANTIQUARIAN RUBBING OF THE FONT AT ST CHAD'S CHURCH, WILNE (DERBYSHIRE), WHICH PRESERVES THE ORIGINAL UPPER REGISTER OF FIGURAL ORNAMENT. FROM G. F. BROWNE, 'ON A SUPPOSED INSCRIPTION UPON THE FONT AT WILNE', *DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNAL*, 7 (1885), 185–94, AT 186, PL. XIII.1.

<sup>13</sup> Hawkes and Sidebottom, CASSS 8, pp. 234–36; G. F. Browne, 'On a Supposed Inscription upon the Font at Wilne', *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, 7 (1885), 185–94.

<sup>14</sup> Panel *i* of the analysis in Hawkes and Sidebottom, CASSS 8, fig. 46.

<sup>15</sup> Vale of York, British Museum 2009, 8023.1, and London, BL Cotton MS Vespasian A. I, fol. 30b. Specifically the sculpture at St Alkmund's, Derby (1 and 2), Sandbach, Cheshire (1), Gloucester, Crothorne (Worcestershire), and Acton Beauchamp (Herefordshire). The latter is particularly diagnostic for the collar feature on some of the Wilne beasts. For a more detailed discussion of the iconographic parallels of the Wilne font, see Hawkes and Sidebottom, CASSS 8, pp. 236–38.