

R463

The University of Wisconsin Library
Manuscript Theses

Unpublished theses submitted for the Master's and Doctor's degrees and deposited in The University of Wisconsin Library are open for inspection, but are to be used only with due regard to the rights of the authors. Bibliographical references may be noted, but passages may be copied only with the permission of the authors, and proper credit must be given in subsequent written or published work. Extensive copying or publication of the thesis in whole or in part requires also the consent of the Dean of the Graduate School of The University of Wisconsin.

This thesis by Angela Lynn Kinstler
has been used by the following persons, whose signatures attest their acceptance of the above restrictions.

A Library which borrows this thesis for use by its patrons is expected to secure the signature of each user:

NAME AND ADDRESS

DATE

IRISH ORNAMENT:
THE BOOK OF DURROW AND THE HIGH CROSSES OF AHENNY

by

ANGELA LYNN KINSTLER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
(Art History)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
1993

AWO

ARR4010

K5567

A544

To my Mom and Dad
for their unfailing love and support.

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>Chapter 1</u> The High Crosses of Ahenny.....	4
<u>Chapter 2</u> The Book of Durrrow.....	9
<u>Chapter 3</u> Ornament.....	14
Red Dots	
Spiral Decoration	
<i>C-Spirals</i>	
<i>S-Spirals</i>	
<i>Circular Disks</i>	
<i>Concave Spherical Triangles</i>	
<i>Leaf Motifs</i>	
Geometric Decoration	
<i>Chequered Patterns</i>	
<i>Swastika Patterns</i>	
<i>Lozenge Patterns</i>	
Interlace Patterns	
<i>Interlace Knots</i>	
<i>Circular Interlace</i>	
<i>Interlace Borders</i>	
<i>Interlace Panels</i>	
<i>Rectangular Interlace</i>	
Zoomorphic Decoration	
Figurative Decoration	
<i>The Four Evangelist Symbols</i>	
Additional Ornament	
<i>Pleated Band Ornament</i>	
<i>Ornamental Bosses</i>	
<i>Cable Moldings</i>	
<u>Conclusion</u>	48
<u>Bibliography</u>	51
<u>List of Plates</u>	53

Introduction

The free standing crosses which were and still are so much a part of monastic sites in Ireland are among the most beautiful and striking pieces of sculpture to survive from the early Middle Ages. Remnants of well over 200 survive but represent possibly less than half of what once existed. At Ahenny in county Tipperary stand a pair of high crosses, dating to the ninth-century, which are among the earliest and most famous of the Irish crosses. They stand in a remote hillside graveyard and belong to a group in western Ossory which display strong regional characteristics. The crosses have conspicuous rings at the junction of the arms. The main shaft rises well above the ring, an unusual feature. The sculptural relief found on both is very pronounced with deep recesses, strongly projecting bosses, and cable mouldings. All surfaces are covered with elaborate decoration.

This paper will compare the decorative motifs on the ninth-century sculptural high crosses at Ahenny with the seventh-century illuminated manuscript, the Book of Durrow. Durrow is the oldest of the fully decorated Hiberno-Saxon manuscripts. Its elaborately decorated pages are the first examples of a truly Irish ornament. The decorative motifs

in the Book of Durrow are frequently compared to those of metalwork of the same period. The book illuminator worked in the same tradition as the metalworker, the result of a close connection between the scriptorium and the metalwork industry. In the early Middle Ages art and handicraft went hand in hand and therefore it is natural to compare the work of the illuminator with that of the goldsmith.

As with manuscripts the high crosses are frequently compared to jewelry or metalwork. Like structural rivets the placement of the bosses on the crosses may owe something to metal prototypes. The choice of decorative motifs can also be compared with metalwork. The carving of the crosses has long been compared to the chip-carving of jewelry of the same period. The variations in the technique of the cutting may have been taken from metal work as a device for producing strong effects of light and shade.¹ Malcolm Seaborne has suggested that the elaborate decoration of these crosses may have been in imitation of wooden crosses but sculptors may have also nailed decorative sheets of bronze onto the crosses.

Though many comparisons have been made with metalwork, no one has compared manuscript with the high crosses. The likeliest comparison is between the Book of Durrow and the High Crosses at Ahenny. The major focus of the paper will

focus of the paper will be the comparison of decoration which will be divided into four major areas: geometric patterns, spiral patterns, interlace, and figurative elements. Within these four main areas comparisons will be made between specific motifs in the manuscript and on the crosses along with references to comparisons which have already been made with metalwork of the same period.

These comparisons will show that although the high crosses and illuminated manuscript differ in date by up to 200 years, the decorative motifs remained similar and in many instances exactly the same. These comparisons will also show that although the two monuments were created of very different materials, the choice of decorative motifs was altered only slightly.

Notes

1. Seaborne, Malcolm. Celtic Crosses of Britain and Ireland. (Great Britain : Shire Publications Ltd., 1976.) p. 46.

Chapter I

The High Crosses at Ahenny

The majority of the Irish high crosses date to the early medieval period, from the eighth to the tenth centuries. Because not many carvings on the Continent have survived from this period the Irish crosses are of tremendous importance. The earliest of the free standing ringed crosses in Ireland are usually considered to be those at Ahenny (Pls. 2-5), which some authorities date as early as 700; others date them as late as the ninth-century. It is often suggested that the prototypes of the North and South crosses at Ahenny, which are eleven and twelve feet high respectively, may have been tall wooden crosses.¹ On the base of the North cross, it may be noted, there is a carving of a figure holding a processional cross presumably of wood. The crosses at Ahenny stand at the beginning of a considerable development in sculptured high crosses which can be traced through the ninth and tenth centuries. Because such crosses survived the Norse invasions, their influence no doubt continued into the eleventh and twelfth centuries.²

The function of the High Crosses has long been debated. The great crosses were probably raised to mark stations for prayer and preaching or as guardians against evil and paganism which confronted the early Church. It is not hard to believe that the tall stone crosses gave comfort and security to communities still haunted by many of the beliefs and fears of their ancient past.³ High crosses were also used to commemorate places associated with miracles and some poems seem to indicate they were the protectors of the church or monastery.⁴ The crosses do not seem to have had a funerary character; this differs from the pillars and slabs of the sixth and seventh centuries which were generally standing at the head of a grave. They also differ from English crosses, many of which, were erected to mark a burial.⁵ According to Françoise Henry, crosses erected from the eighth to twelfth centuries appear to have been carved as a decoration for the precincts of monasteries and in the case of figured crosses as sermons in stone which could be the subject of a commentary or the theme of a meditation.⁶

The carvings on the high crosses at Ahenny are in fairly good condition.⁷ The worst damage can be found on the bases, especially that of the South cross. Along with most high crosses, those at Ahenny are carved in finely

grained sandstone, which is fairly common all over Ireland. It was easily available in the hills above the lower course of the Suir, which is close to Ahenny, and especially in the hills of the Slievenamon which may explain to some extent the great development of cross carving in that region. To make the transfer easier, the block was cut roughly to its final shape in the quarry, the panels being left in fairly high relief to allow a certain amount of freedom to the sculptor, as seen on the unfinished East Cross at Kells. The stone was probably then taken to the site, where the carvings would be done in some type of temporary shelter before the cross was erected in its final position. Many of the crosses are made of stones of very uneven quality, resulting in varied weathering. In some cases the carvings are nearly as sharp as when they were created. In others the sandstone has nearly 'melted' away under the action of rain and wind. Some crosses were also badly disfigured by moss and lichens which partly filled the hollows of the carvings.

It is very likely that as with most medieval carvings the high crosses at Ahenny were painted. Either they were completely covered with bright colors, giving a general effect like that of a manuscript illumination, or a coat of a dark color was painted on the background of each panel to

make figures and ornament stand out more clearly. The fact that some of the crosses use stones of different colors would seem to indicate that the actual surface of the stone was not meant to be seen.⁸

The typical high cross is constructed of three separate pieces of stone. The first is a massive rectangular block that serves as the base and has sloping sides with a recess or step near the top. The second block is an enormous piece of sandstone weighing several tons, which comprises the shaft and ringed cross head. It fits, by means of a tenon, into a slot in the base. The third piece of the cross is a stone cap, which on the North cross is a beehive shape and on the South cross an odd-shaped piece, neither of which seem to belong to the crosses. The ring is the most distinctive feature of the Irish crosses but it has been the subject of much debate.⁹ This stone circle which connects the arms of the cross is usually open, but in some cases it has been left as a solid wheel. It is not always present but occurs often enough to be considered a characteristic feature of the Irish crosses.¹⁰ Its origin has been attributed either to carpentry work or to a development of the cross inscribed in a circular frame. Such a cross is found on fourth and fifth century ivories and tombs.¹¹ The ring was designed as a wreath, a

symbol of triumph, to underline the fact that Christ's suffering on the cross was a victory over death. Nevertheless, some scholars are convinced that the rings on high crosses were introduced only as a technical feature for support.¹²

Notes

1. Seaborne, Malcolm. Celtic Crosses of Britain and Ireland. (Great Britain : Shire Publications Ltd., 1976.) p. 46.
2. Arnold, Bruce. A Concise History of Irish Art. (London : Thames & Hudson, 1969.) p. 47.
3. Finlay, Ian. Celtic Art. (London : Faber & Faber Ltd., 1973.) p. 133.
4. Henry, Françoise. Irish High Crosses. (Dublin : Three Candles Ltd., 1964.) p. 19.
5. Henry, p. 17.
6. Irish High Crosses, p. 19.
7. Henry, pp. 15-17. The material in the paragraph is largely drawn from this reference.
8. Henry, p. 17.
9. Stalley, Roger. Irish High Crosses. (Dublin : Eason & Son Ltd., 1991) unpaginated.
10. Henry, p. 15.
11. Stalley, unpaginated.
12. Stalley, unpaginated.

Chapter II

The Book of Durrow

The high crosses of Ahenny show many of the same decorative features as the Book of Durrow (Pls. 13-27), which is one of the earliest and finest of the insular illuminated manuscripts. Seventeen pages are illuminated, four with symbols of the evangelists, seven ornamental or carpet pages, and six initial pages. Its origin is unknown but for most of the Middle Ages it was kept in the monastery of Durrow, founded by St. Columba in 553 in County Offaly in central Ireland. From an entry in the Martyrology of Donegal and from a mention in Conall Mac Geoghegan's translation of the Annals of Clonmacnois, it is known that in the seventeenth century after the dissolution of the monastery the Book was kept near Durrow by a man who used it to cure sick cattle by dipping it in water which the cows were given to drink.¹ In 1661 Henry Jones, Vice Chancellor of Trinity College, came into possession of the book and gave it to the college library where it is still one of the chief treasures.

The Book of Durrow, along with those of Lindisfarne and Kells, has been considered a landmark in the continuous

evolution of Irish painting.² Durrow is of a style developed in Columban monasteries which were in especially close contact with Saxon art through their missions in England. There are strong Saxon influences, which can also be seen in the ornament on the Larndonagh cross, the Tara brooch, and the Ardagh chalice.³ The date of the manuscript may not be as easy to establish as has been assumed. The presence on one page of Saxon ornament similar to objects buried in Sutton Hoo around 655 does not prove a great deal. Objects like the Moylough belt, for example, show that Saxon elements were long lived in Irish metalwork and the same may well be true of illumination.⁴

Durrow marks a crucial point in the development of the so-called Hiberno-Saxon style exhibiting the four essential elements: geometric pattern, spiral motifs, interlace, and zoomorphic interlace. According to Bruce Arnold, the Book of Durrow is highly accomplished in its craftsmanship and technique but its artistic conception is comparatively simple and experimental in both color and design.⁵ The ornamental pages are similar in scale to other Irish illuminated manuscripts but there is none of the highly intricate designs which characterize later manuscripts such as the Book of Kells.⁶ Nevertheless, the decoration in the

Book of Durrow is made more striking by the fact that few colors are used: a beautiful deep green, acetate of copper, a bright yellow (orpiment), a glowing lead red, and used more sparingly, a color which has faded to pale brown. All of these colors stand out sharply on a deep tone of black-brown or sometimes on the ivory color of the vellum.⁷

Another feature that makes the ornament in the Book of Durrow especially vibrant is the use of suede-surfaced insular vellum different from that in use on the Continent and remarkably receptive to colors or ink. This remarkable painting surface is the result of the method of processing animal skins and not, as used to be thought, to the use of calf rather than sheepskin, both of which were used in this same manuscript.⁸

Notes

1. Henry, Françoise. Irish Art in the Early Christian Period. (London : Meuthen & Co. Ltd., 1965.) p. 166.
2. Henry, p. 173.
3. Arnold, Bruce. A Concise History of Irish Art. (London : Thames & Hudson, 1969.)p. 26.
4. Henry, p. 173.
5. p. 26.
6. Arnold, p. 47.

7. Henry, p. 168.
8. Megaw, Rugh and Vincent. Celtic Art from its Beginnings to the Book of Kells. (New York : Thames & Hudson, 1989.) p. 252.

	<u>Durrow</u>	<u>North Cross</u>	<u>South Cross</u>
Red Dots	X		
<u>Spiral Ornament</u>			
C-Spirals	X		X
S-Spirals	X	X	X
Circular Disks	X		
Concave Triangles	X	X	X
Leaf Motifs	X	X	X
<u>Geometric Ornament</u>			
Chequer-Patterns	X	X	
Swastika Patterns	X	X	
Lozenges	X		
<u>Interlace Patterns</u>			
Interlace Knots	X		X
Circular Interlace	X		
Interlace Borders	X	X	X
Interlace Panels	X	X	X
Rectangular Interlace	X		
<u>Zoomorphic Decoration</u>	X	X	X
<u>Figurative Decoration</u>	X	X	X
<u>Additional Decoration</u>			
Pleated Band	X		X
Ornamental Bosses		X	X
Cable Moldings		X	X

Pl. 1. Ornament Comparison Chart

Chapter III

Ornament

Ornament was an essential part of Irish art and culture. For centuries pure ornament was carefully spread over objects for the sake of its protective values and hidden symbolism.¹ Although the exact meanings, if there were such meanings, of most of the patterns used by Irish artists can no longer be determined, it is known that spirals, interlace, and geometric patterns, were not mere 'ornaments'. It is probable that in Hiberno-Saxon art the newly found Christian symbolism in combination with pagan traditions resulted in even more subtle and elaborate underlying meanings for ornament which for the most part are lost to us.²

The comparison of ornament on the high crosses at Ahenny with the ornament in the Book of Durrow begins with the earliest distinctly Irish decorative motif, red dots. The three major classes, spirals, geometric patterns, and interlace all developed concurrently, therefore no special order is dictated. A comparison of spiral ornament will come first, followed by geometric patterns and then

interlace, (both ribbon and animal). The final section will compare the figurative elements of both monuments.

Red Dots

In the earliest examples of Irish illumination the most distinctive decorative motif was red dots. The use of dots is Coptic in origin and is found on paintings in the monasteries of the Egyptian desert. It then passed into Byzantine art and occurs in Byzantine manuscripts of the sixth century.³ Nevertheless the Irish use of red dots, coming from Coptic Egypt, was unique in the Latin west and is considered a truly Irish ornament. Dots are not found on the crosses of Ahenny, most obviously because of the technical limitations imposed by the media of stone. There are no carvings that provide a dot-like surface. However, red dots are an essential part of the decoration in the Book of Durrow. Red dots soften the contrast between a large initial and the vellum or form a scintillating background for opening lines of text. They are used to give a field of color without making the effect too solid, as seen in the use of dots to fill in the body of the figure of the calf, the evangelist symbol for Luke (f.124r) (Pl.23).⁴ Dotted lines are also used on the

faces of symbols for Mark(f.191v) and Matthew(f.21v). Groups of three dots are clustered together to fill large open spaces between initials, on pages such as ff.22r and 86r. Lines of red dots are also used as horizontal extensions of the dotted areas surrounding the initials on f.126r and vertically as a device for linking together the three lower text panels on f.193r. Double rows of dots form a link between the initial and the lines of ordinary script on ff.23r and 86r. Red dots are also used as a border around the center panels and around the entire page on f.125v. Nowhere in Durrow are lines of red dots used for creating patterns such as those in Lindisfarne, a generation or two later, where interlace and dot patterns are drawn between lines of ornamental script. Dot ornaments in Durrow are usually compared to those on metalwork, such as the bronze vessels found on St.Ninians Island which are ornamented with engraved lines accompanied on both sides by lines of dots.⁵

Spiral Decoration

Ornament formed of spiral curves is one of the most striking and graceful motifs and was used frequently for both manuscripts and crosses. It was probably derived from

classical scroll work originally but evolved into bolder and more flowing spirals in the Celtic period.⁶ Spiral ornament is the only decorative motif used in Hiberno-Saxon art that can be proved to have descended from the Celtic pagan art of the preceding period. Its popularity is consistent during the 200 years that separate the Book of Durrow from the High Crosses of Ahenny. The popularity of spiral decoration does not decline until after the tenth century.

The elementary form from which the designs are built is a curved line with both ends spirally coiled, either in the same direction, which creates a C-spiral, or in opposite directions, which creates an S-spiral. The connecting line or band widens out more or less between the coils as a triangle with curved sides and sometimes has in the center an oval figure from which comes the name trumpet.⁷ According to John Romilly Allen;

"These patterns are designed by covering the space decorated with circles at convenient and fairly equal distances to form a net, connecting them by tangents direct or transverse, and continuing these tangents as spirals inside the circles."⁸

Because the circles do not need to be of equal size an irregular space can be covered as easily as one of regular shape. A favorite method of enriching spiral ornament in

sculpture is to raise the centers of some or all of the coils in the shape of rounded bosses. In rare cases centers are sunk in the form of cups as on the west side of the South cross at Ahenny.⁹ Spiral decoration can be found throughout the Book of Durrow; in fact, in no other manuscript does spiral ornament manifest itself so emphatically as in the Book of Durrow.¹⁰ Alone it fills the main field of an ornamental carpet page, and comparatively large spirals are seen as terminals of rather small initials. In the Lindisfarne Gospels spirals are used mainly as ornament around initials, and on the carpet pages they are secondary to interlace. In the Book of Kells spirals are used in the subordinate function of filling frames.

C-Spirals

One of the most prominent spiral motifs is the C-spiral. It plays an integral part in many designs in both the Book of Durrow and on the crosses at Ahenny. Along the bottom arcs of the west side of the South cross is a running pattern of C-spirals (Pls. 3 and 6, fig. A). It is an effective design of C-curves interlocked together in a single row with plain voided expansions; larger spaces than usual are left unfilled. A second pattern on the north

side of the South cross consists of eight spirals in alternating C-curves. As for the Book of Durrow, C-spirals are found on the carpet page f.3v and throughout the manuscript on pages with initials such as f.193r.

S-Spirals

S-spirals also play an important part in the decorative schemes on both the crosses at Ahenny and in the Book of Durrow. On the east side of the North cross just above the base is a panel which is filled by three simple interlocked S-spirals (Pl.6, fig.C). Also on the North cross, on the face of the ring is a border consisting of closely coiled interlocking S-spirals (Pl.6, fig.B). Another spiral motif on the North cross, north side, is a long panel of a typical trumpet pattern formed of S-curves (Pl.7, fig.B). For this arrangement two spirals lie side by side from end to end and have their expanded parts on the opposite sides of the latter thus filling the intervals between the coils. S-Spirals are also found in the Book of Durrow but they are not used so frequently as C-spirals. They perform the secondary task of decorating the ends of lines such as on f.23r. The design begins with a S-spiral which tapers in size to a series of small S-like shapes all in a row.

Combinations of S and C-spirals are found in the decoration of the crosses. A combination of five connected coils is seen on the south side of the South cross. The panel is filled with two horizontal S-curves on top and bottom and a C-curve that begins in the center and joins with the lower S-curve. A similar panel can be found on the South side of the North cross on which the S-spirals are placed vertically (Pl.7, fig.A). Another combination on the north and south sides of the South cross is a panel with C-spirals in pairs which are turned back to back with two single spirals below.

Combinations of spiral motifs are also found in the Book of Durrow. Motifs of spiral roundels fill the carpet page on f.3v. The center of the panel is occupied by two large roundels; inside each of these large spirals branches out two more spirals; and each of these in turn contains three more spirals. Above the large center pair are two more spirals which also contain three spirals. Below the large center pair are two roundels composed of five spirals radiating around a center. Very similar combinations, with zoomorphic elements are found on both the North and South crosses at Ahenny (Pl.11, fig.A).

There are three spiral forms found in Durrow that survive from Celtic ornament but are not carried into later

manuscripts. The first is the occurrence of open spiral hooks in place of spiral disks; for example, on f.86r as the lower terminal of a spiral composition on both sides of the left stem of the initial. Another archaic spiral motif is the rolling up into a spiral of a colored band. This is most conspicuous in the two large spirals in the top right of f.193r, a single instance is seen on the top left, another in the large lower spiral terminal. The third motif is that of the "persistent spiral", a spiral that has no central motif but rolls right into the center, such as the outer spiral on the top of f.23r and on the top left of f.126r the spiral above the "q".¹¹

The spiral ornament on the carpet page of Durrow, f.3r, is often compared to metalwork. Ornament very similar to the spirals in Durrow is found on the bronze bowl with scallop ornament from Jaaten, Shetland, in the museum at Bergen. The diameter of the spirals on the bowl corresponds to those on the carpet page in the Book of Durrow, which like the bowl, is entirely covered with spinning disks and trumpet lobes.¹²

Circular Disks

An essential component of spiral motifs in the Book of Durrow is the number of small uncolored circular disks

which are integrated into the designs. Seen on f.3r some of these disks contain concave triangles, either in plain black or in black with a white circle in the center. These tiny uncolored "lenses" and triangles are also found within the spirals. However, they are not found in the spiral designs on the Crosses, perhaps because the scroll work is so tightly coiled there is no need for these filling elements, or perhaps because the limitations of the stone would have made such small ornaments impossible.

Concave Spherical Triangles

Concave Spherical Triangles occur as filling elements as a rule only in spiral compositions.¹³ They probably originated when large uninterrupted spaces between the parts of an ornament had to be avoided. It is unusual that in Durrow such triangles occur not only on the carpet page f.3r but also in the band-interlacing, for example on f.21v in the frame and on f.191v in the horizontal panels of the frame.¹⁴ Such triangles occur in all those manuscripts which have spiral fillings and spiral terminals. As in the spiral ornament of Durrow(f.3r), these concave triangles also play an integral part in the spiral decoration on the crosses of Ahenny as part of the trumpet motif seen on the west side of the North cross(Pl.5) and the west side of the

South cross(Pl.3). Less common than these triangles which are always uncolored is their complementary form, the circle with an inscribed black concave triangle.

Leaf Motifs

Another integral component of spiral patterns is the leaf shaped motifs which are found on both the crosses at Ahenny and in the Book of Durrow. Spiral motifs are believed to have been derived from foliage scrolls and these few leaves would seem to confirm it.¹⁵ The leaflets are found in the joints of the trumpets creating a beautiful separating element between two trumpets. They are also found on carpet and initial pages throughout later manuscripts, such as Lindisfarne and Kells. These leaf patterns can be found on the east and west sides of the South cross(Pls.2,3), the west face of the North cross, and the north and east sides of the North cross(Pl.4). In the Book of Durrow they are a beautiful complement to the spiral motifs on f.3r and in the initials.

Geometric Decoration

Geometric decoration, or designs based on combinations of straight lines or frets, are frequently used in Hiberno-Saxon art. Both the crosses at Ahenny and the Book of Durrow have many variations of geometric ornament. Of the three major types of ornament geometric is used least on the Ahenny crosses, unlike those at Killamery and Kilrea, which are similar in date and location, but have a much greater emphasis on angular patterns. Like spiral patterns, geometric decoration tended to disappear on later Irish crosses due to the increasing popularity of animal interlace and figurative designs. Nevertheless geometric decoration or fretwork is one of the most common motifs in the decorative art of the early Christian period in Ireland. According to Henry S. Crawford, a fret is defined as:

"a continuous line or band lying straight between certain points at which it is sharply bent in such a manner that no part crosses another"¹⁶

In the majority of fret patterns the lines are placed diagonally in the panel. In this position they contrast with the boundary lines and produce a richer effect. The practice of using lines drawn in more than two directions is very characteristic of the Hiberno-Saxon use of fret

patterns.¹⁷ Vertical, horizontal and diagonal bars are used together in many cases, such as on the decorative panel on the west side of the North cross. Fret patterns on the whole occupy a prominent place and take a number of intricate forms in Irish monuments.

Fret patterns are found in two forms, the key pattern and the step pattern. Key pattern is a term used to describe a rectilinear ornament which bears a certain resemblance to the perforations in a key, allowing it to pass through a lock.¹⁸ The best known key pattern is the Greek key. It is composed of what may appropriately be called straight line spirals or straight bars bent into a series of right angles in the same direction. After the Irish were introduced to it, they appear to have quickly developed it in many ways, such as placing it diagonally, expanding it to fill broad panels, and altering the position and number of bends.¹⁹ The opposite of a key is a step pattern which is formed when a line is bent alternately at right angles in opposite directions. Simple step patterns are found on f.125v in the rectangular panels and on f.85v in the center medallion. The lines are often arranged symmetrically around a center so as to make cruciform and swastika designs. Different parts of the design are also often shaded black and white to create

chequer-work. Those designs in which the band is bent twice in one direction and twice in another can be seen as intermediate forms of key and step patterns.²⁰

The geometric decoration in the Book of Durrow and on the crosses of Ahenny has long been compared to that of jewelry of the same period. It is widely accepted that geometric decoration was derived from the techniques of inlaid work, such as millefiori glass and cloisonne. This can be supported by the fact that when these patterns are depicted in manuscripts they are always enclosed in panels of simple geometric forms, such as squares or circles exactly as they were enframed on jewelry.

Chequer-patterns

One of the simplest and most widely used geometric decorative motifs is the chequer-pattern. Among the best examples of this design are the squares that fill the cloak of the symbol of St. Matthew (f.21v). The figure is decorated with small squares which are enriched with numerous diagonal crosses and flower-like designs all reminiscent of millefiori techniques. Many of these forms, such as the squares containing pairs of crossed lines with black dots at their intersection and the squares containing

black rectangles on the outer borders of St. Matthews garment, are not found elsewhere.²¹

Variations on the chequer-pattern can also be found on both crosses and manuscript. The border of the page with the four evangelist symbols (f.2r) is filled with a chequer-pattern turned at an angle with additional lines to create an interlocking effect. This square pattern is also found within the center rectangles on f.125v. The upper two rectangles on the sides are composed of similar interlocked rectangles. The bottom two rectangles are composed of a diagonal key pattern of squares with both whole and broken lines and some areas of black and white forming larger patterns within the whole. These patterns of rectangles with interlocking lines can be compared with a motif on the east side of the North cross (Pl.8, fig.A) which is a simplified form of a square key pattern perhaps belonging more to the step pattern than the key.²² It is a block of nine rectangles, within larger rectangles, each is divided into four sections, resulting in a center that is composed of four squares surrounded by a border of four L-shaped areas. Immediately above it on the shaft is a carved zoomorphic spiral design. The stiff rectangular lines of this fret were probably intended to emphasize by contrast the flowing curves of the spiral.²³

Also similar to the key pattern panels on f.125v, specifically the two with diagonal patterns, is a panel on the west side of the North cross (Pl.8, fig.C). It is another instance of a diagonal key pattern with vertical bars meeting bars running at angles resulting in diamond shaped openings. The sculptor has avoided the rather monotonous appearance to which panels of fretwork are liable by removing the center and substituting an interlaced knot. This plan of placing a design within another is uncommon except in the case of bosses which often bear a pattern distinct from the decoration covering the face of the cross.²⁴

A pattern which is found in both Durrow and on the North cross at Ahenny is a step pattern in which the steps are placed diagonally in the panel (Pl.8, fig.B). There are three repetitions placed side by side on the lower shaft of the west side of the North cross. It introduces a new element, that of opposed chevrons with straight lines between.²⁵ This pattern can also be seen duplicated exactly in the Book of Durrow on f.125v, in the rectangular panels on the top and bottom right, and in the three smaller medallions within the central medallion on f.192v.

Swastika Patterns

Another common step pattern is the swastika, which can be found in many variations on both the crosses and in the Book of Durrow. On the south side of the South cross the swastika is placed diagonally and the ends of the arms are curled inward toward the center (Pl.9, fig A). This variation on the standard swastika is sometimes called a Chinese swastika.²⁶ Swastikas of another variation, which look like four interlocked T-shapes, are found on the small square central panels on the cross on f.lv. Similar to these inner squares are the three motifs connected to each of the large yellow squares at the ends of the arms of the cross.

A pattern similar to the swastika is found on the North cross at Ahenny. It is a simple key pattern which fills a segment of the ring (Pl.9, fig.B). The space is divided into square compartments in each of which is a pair of diagonal L-shaped keys springing from opposite angles and connected to remaining angles by extra bars.

Lozenge Patterns

The lozenge pattern which is found in the Book of Durrow is not found on the crosses at Ahenny, and there are no carvings similar to lozenge patterns on the crosses. The

Book of Durrow, a pattern of brightly multi-colored lozenges is used in the body Marks symbol (the lion), on both the page with the four evangelist symbols (f.2r), and the evangelist page for Mark, (f.191v). It has often been compared to the chessboard and lozenge patterns on the enameled animals on the Sutton Hoo purse.²⁷

Interlace Patterns

Interlace is beautifully displayed on both the crosses of Ahenny and the Book of Durrow. It is a key element in the ornament of insular illumination and high crosses. Interlace has a long history in western art and can be traced back to Chaldea where it was first used as a stylized representation of running water.²⁸ Fifth and sixth century Coptic manuscripts and textiles display a system of interlace that bears a striking resemblance to the earliest types found in insular manuscripts.²⁹ Once introduced, these types became a major feature of Celtic manuscripts and metalwork and nearly every carpet page is surrounded by a border of some kind of interlace. Interlaced patterns came into use at a somewhat later date than spirals and although they were used side by side for a considerable

time, spirals are not often found after the tenth century. Ribbon and animal interlace became even more popular, especially animal interlace, one of the most prominent decorative motifs in manuscripts. In Hiberno-Saxon art designs formed of interlaced bands are more frequently used and exhibit a greater variety than any others. The interlace patterns consist of bands crossing each other alternately over and under and present two principal classes; plaits and knots. Plaited designs do not present any great variety though they may have different numbers of strands and can be adapted to fit irregular shaped panels. Most simple plait work is used in borders; however, from this basic design is formed an endless variety of knot-work by simply dividing some of the bands where they cross and joining up the different pairs.

Both the Book of Durrow and the Ahenny crosses use many variations of interlace. Patterns of single ribbons or doubled narrow bands play across the surfaces or are knotted tightly to fill a border. Durrow has interlace that is unique and individual while later manuscripts make use of only a few standardized types. The Donegal carvings, which are dated to the same period, are the monuments which come closest to the Book of Durrow for this element of decoration.³⁰ It can be seen on the crosses of

Ahenny that the popularity of interlace had not diminished by the ninth century. Approximately seventy percent of the decoration on the crosses is interlace.

Interlace Knots

Durrow offers many examples of very tightly knotted interlacing of broad bands creating unique borders, such as that of the evangelist symbol page for St. John (f.84v), which consists of a wide band of tightly interlaced knots. This type of band, created with great precision, gives the ornamentation of Durrow its unique character. On many Durrow pages the knots are tied so tightly that hardly any background remains visible. Where they fill a rectangular panel or corner their curves are deformed to angular bends such as those around the border of the evangelist symbol for St. Luke (f.124v). Durrow and the Ahenny crosses exhibit the two basic forms of knots; the simple knot, and the pointed knot. The simple knot, which has rounded bends, can be seen on the bottom and top borders of the carpet page f.125v in a double row. On the side of this border is a series of knots crowded to fill the space completely. Simple knots are also found on the high crosses along the front of the upper ring on the east side of the South cross (Pl.2). Pointed knots, which have

angular bends, are also used throughout the Book of Durrow and on the high crosses. Double rows of pointed knots are used on the side borders on the cruciform page (f.1v) where the center area between the arms of the cross is filled with combinations of interlaced pointed knots. They are also found on the arms of the cross on f.2r. Pointed knots can also be found on the upper shaft of the South cross on the west (Pl.3) and south sides as part of an interlacing pattern filling the face and side panel of the cross.

Circular Interlace

Circular interlacing, which is composed of circles created by interlacing and knots, is among the most intricate and beautiful of motifs. Many types can be found in the Book of Durrow but there is no circular interlacing on the crosses of Ahenny. This lack is undoubtedly due to the intricacy of this motif, which would have been very difficult to recreate on stone. Sometimes also called roundels, the most popular circular knot interlacing patterns in Durrow are probably those found on the carpet page, f.85v, often identified as the medallion page. One of only three ornamental pages that are drawn with a compass (along with ff.21v and 191v), this carpet page is

decorated with fourteen interlaced medallions (or roundels).³¹ Within each of the fourteen medallions are four tightly entwined knots which send out angular bands combining with those knots within other circles. A pattern very similar to this is found on the cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice which is dated to the early tenth century; almost a century after the crosses at Ahenny were carved. Techniques for carving had probably improved enough by then to make more intricate designs possible. Or it may have been that the popularity of the motif proved irresistible to carvers.

Interlaced Borders

Interlaced borders are derived from bands of simple plait-work. Durrow exhibits a variety of continuous and intermittent interlaced borders. Continuous interlacing fills the arms of the cross on f.2v. It is also used to connect the center panel with the outer borders on the carpet page f.125v. Found on f.9r is an unusual type of continuous interlacing which looks like a chain of rings. It was common in Coptic manuscripts but does not occur in any other manuscripts or on the high crosses.³² Intermittent band interlacing that is, interlacing which

is broken into sections can be found on the high crosses. The "figure of eight" border, a frequently used design composed of linked knots, is found on the underside of the ring of the South cross and the faces of the rings of both crosses (Pl.10, fig.C).³³ It is a four-strand plait, every third crossing of which in the middle line is cut and the ends joined so as to leave a gap at right angles the length of the border.³⁴ This same border is also placed horizontally just above the base on the west side of the North cross. In the Book of Durrow, a form of intermittent band interlacing around the borders of ff.8r and 85v is not divided into sections but is composed of plain interlace connecting with portions of dotted interlace creating an intermittent effect. The border of the canon table on f.10r is also a variation of intermittent band interlacing. It is composed of a singular dotted band that actually forms two simple knots and then sections off the border and forms two more knots continuing around the border using a single band to create an interlacing effect. Continuous and intermittent bands of interlace can also be seen throughout the manuscript on initials such as those on f.86.

Panels of Interlace

The North and South crosses at Ahenny and the Book of Durrow have many areas of plait-interlace which is used to fill panels. A single ribbon interlace of regular plait-work without any breaks fills a small panel on the north side of the South cross and also forms a wide band along the east side of the North cross (Pl.4) just above the base. Single ribbon interlace also covers the east face of the North cross (Pl.10, fig.A). Interlace similar to this is found in Durrow on the side panels of f.1v. Doubled ribbon plait-work is carried over the entire cross head of the South cross and a large panel below the lowest boss on the east side (Pl.10, fig A). This is a good example of plaited ornament of the open variety, which creates open areas throughout the pattern. It also illustrates the way in which plait can be modified to suit a narrowing panel and how twists are used in places where there is little space.³⁵ In Durrow a unique variation of interlace fills the main panel on f.125r. The panel is composed of eight square groups each with angular interlace in the center and loops at the corners. Durrow contains few areas of simple plait-work. The interlace is more crowded and knotted than that of the Ahenny crosses. Perhaps this reflects a trend in interlace or perhaps the tightly knotted designs in

Durrow were just replaced with loosened simpler designs on the crosses because of the difficulty of carving such a motif on stone.

Rectangular Interlace

A further type of interlace is rectangular interlace, which is created when the interlaced bands are bent at angles. On f.248r of the Book of Durrow is a carpet page filled with a pattern of rectangular interlacing which develops out of a diagonal net of squares twelve by twelve units. It is an unusual angular interlacing consisting of yellow bands with uncolored edging. The black background is almost invisible to the eye because the spaces take the shape of seven rows of diagonal crosses.³⁶ There is nothing comparable on the Ahenny crosses.

Animal forms are used in Hiberno-Saxon art three different ways, decoratively, pictorially, and symbolically. Decoratively animal forms are most often used in interlace and are Germanic in origin. Pictorially, hunting scenes, battle scenes, men driving chariots, and many more are characteristic of later crosses. Lastly, animal forms are used as Symbols of the Four Evangelists, in forms which are highly conventionalized. In a

comparison of Durrow with the Ahenny crosses it is the decorative use of animals as zoomorphic interlace that is of greatest importance followed by the pictorial and symbolic use of figurative decoration.

Zoomorphic Interlace

Any type of motif can be rendered zoomorphic by modifying the terminal portions so as to represent the heads, feet, and tails of animals.³⁷ In early Hiberno-Saxon monuments this is frequently done to spirals and interlacements; however, fret patterns are not treated in this manner. The true zoomorphic type consists entirely of the bodies, limbs and other parts of men and animals and is more suited to interlace than to spirals and other patterns.³⁸ The high crosses of Ahenny and the Book of Durrow both incorporate zoomorphic motifs into their decorative schemes.

On f.192v in the Book of Durrow are completely new decorative elements. Around a central motif filled with interlace are six panels with three different types of animal interlace. The outer panels at the top and bottom of the page show wave-like animals interwoven. The elongated jaws and legs form another plait-work winding

around the animals; their bodies are broad bands with eyes, ears, and feet with fan shaped toes. On the panels below and above the central motif are different animals, oval in shape, each biting its own hind legs. These animals with elongated front legs are linked together by eight symmetrically intercoupled rings. On the narrow side panels there are more naturalistic quadrupeds.³⁹ Their heads are similar to the others, and their bodies are arranged in a procession biting each other, each one's hind leg being wound around his own neck. Germanic animals also are characterized by elongating legs or jaws into long or thin tails, but the bodies and heads do not have the naturalistic appearance seen in the Durrow animals. Therefore, according to Gunther Haseloff, the Durrow animals were derived from Mediterranean models with a certain influence from Germanic Style II.⁴⁰ In other manuscripts such as Lindisfarne there are animals of a very different type, usually accompanied by birds. Intermediate forms do not show that the Lindisfarne animals are derived from Durrow, but on the contrary show them developing separately.⁴¹

The high crosses at Ahenny also exhibit forms of animal interlace. On the west face of the South cross the major part of the decoration is double band interlacing of

pairs of dragonesque heads with gaping scrolled jaws and large pear-shaped eyes. The two lowest creatures seem to have long lappets springing from the backs of their heads.⁴² Animal motifs are also present in the spiral ornament on the crosses at Ahenny. On the lower face of the west side of the North cross (Pl.5) just above the boss we see two triple spirals which have in each of their centers three gaping beaked ducks heads. Duck heads are also found in the four outer spirals in the panels of decoration on the east side of the North cross (Pl.11, fig.A) and the east and west side shafts of the South cross (Pl.11, figs.A,B). These motifs have been compared to the designs on the Buckle of the Moylough Belt which is contemporary with the crosses.⁴³ According to Crawford, this example belongs to the class of unsymmetrical designs in which the elements of the pattern follow each other in the same direction. The expanded portions of the curves are triangular shaped and connected around the margin. In the center four spirals meet and unite in pairs.⁴⁴

Unique to the high crosses and found on the west side of the North cross is a square motif of four men placed symmetrically with regard to the center and interlaced in a bold and effective manner (Pl.11, fig.C). This design is superior to most of its kind and has the panel well filled

without any great distortion of the figures and distinctly showing the correct number of limbs.⁴⁵ The idea of four human figures thus interlaced is an early and favorite one and is seen at Kells, Tihilly, Clonmacnois, and Old Kilcullen.⁴⁶

Figurative Scenes

Along with the decorative use of animals, figures are also used in Hiberno-Saxon decoration. Both the high crosses at Ahenny and the Book of Durrow incorporate figurative elements into their decorative schemes. The high crosses at Ahenny display various figure scenes with processions of men and animals (Pl.11, figs.A-C) on the bases similar to those on some of the Pictish slabs which date to the seventh century and were ultimately derived from classical sources. The scenes are confined to the base of each cross, a position favoured for non-biblical subjects on some of the later high crosses in Ireland.⁴⁷ The scenes are strictly narrative and represent Biblical stories such as Daniel in the Lions Den and Adam in Paradise Naming the Animals (Pl.12 fig.C). However, not all can be clearly identified.

Four Evangelist Symbols

Unlike the high crosses at Ahenny the figurative decoration in the Book of Durrow consists only of the four evangelist symbols. There are no narrative compositions. Yet, some of the finest pages in the manuscript are those of the four evangelist symbols. Although it is believed that the crosses were also painted it is only possible to conjecture what the colors of their figures may have been like by studying the surviving manuscripts. The only page in the Book of Durrow which depicts more than one figure is the cruciform page (f.2v), on which four symbols are depicted each in one of the compartments made by the arms of the cross. The symbols and the cross make a good prefatory page to a Gospel book. As on the Ahenny crosses, the remarkably unrealistic animals and men are reduced to flat two-dimensional designs. Because of a long tradition of symbolic two-dimensional decoration, when early Irish artists began to draw figurative scenes they instinctly saw them as abstract symbols.⁴⁸ Works later than the High Crosses at Ahenny begin to use figures more realistically. There is a gradual trend away from the stylized figures of truly Irish art to a more classical realism, which can be seen on the later crosses at Kells, Clonmacnoise, and Monasterboice.

Additional Ornament

Pleated Band Ornament

Pleated band ornament, which can be found both in Durrow and on the crosses, is made up of horizontal strips which cross a narrow panel in close succession changing direction constantly from left to right, right to left, without ever touching the borders. The turns may be either round or angular. It is surprising this simple and effective filling ornament has not been used more frequently in book illumination. Even in those manuscripts where it occurs, it plays only a modest role.⁴⁹ A pleated band bent at right angles is seen in Durrow on f.11r in the right stem of the N. Pleated bands with rounded bends (which is their normal form) are found on in the L on f.11r and in the I and L on f.22r. A version of this rounded motif is also found on the high crosses at Ahenny, it is a double zig-zag or meander pattern from the underside of the ring of the South cross (Pl.9, fig.C). This pleated band motif is considered to be a version of a Greek fret simplified and placed diagonally.⁵⁰

Ornamental Bosses

Unique to the high crosses are the ornamental bosses, five on each face. They are a result of the influence of metalwork on sculpture and continue to be seen in later crosses but are less dominant. This can be seen on Muiredach's cross at Monasterboice, where the bosses are present but greatly reduced in size and not fully decorated. The bosses on the Ahenny crosses are very large and decorated. On the east side of the North cross, the center boss is the largest; it is hemispherical in shape and covered by an elegant spiral design delicately adapted to the globular surface. On the west side, the bosses are covered with interlacing and cruciform ornament. On the east side of the South cross, the bosses are covered with a ring of thread fine interlace surrounding a tiny jewel-like center in the center boss. These ornamental bosses can be compared to the medallions in the Book of Durrow on f.85v, in which the center of the page is a medallion filled with a cross and fret patterns surrounded by interlace. The center medallion on f.192v also features a cross. Both are reminiscent of the cross on the center boss of the west side of the North cross. These medallions have also been compared to enamel buttons, which look like

miniature bosses, found on the Tara brooch and the Ardagh chalice.⁵¹

Cable Moldings

Also unique to the crosses are the cable moldings which make the crosses at Ahenny so distinctive. There is nothing comparable to this ornament in the Book of Durrow. This carved feature was also borrowed from metalwork. On metal crosses the twists of wire were designed to mask the juncture of the metal plates.⁵²

Notes

1. Henry, Françoise. Irish Art in the Early Christian Period. (London : Meuthuen & Co. Ltd., 1965.) p.205.
2. Henry, p. 205.
3. Henry, p. 64.
4. From this point on when referring to folios in the Book of Durrow only the folio number will be given to avoid confusion(plates are labeled with folio numbers).
5. Luce, A.A. and Peter Meyer eds. The Book of Durrow in Two Volumes. (Olten, Lausanne and Freiburg : URS Graf-Verlag, 1960.) p. 158.
6. Crawford, Henry S. Irish Carved Ornament from Monuments of the Christian Period. (Dublin : Mercier Press, 1980.) p. 12.
7. Crawford, p. 12.
8. Allen, John Romily. Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times. (London : Meuthuen & Co., 1904) p. 285.

9. p. 285.
10. Luce, p. 108. The material in this paragraph is largely drawn from this reference.
11. Luce, p. 108.
12. Luce, p. 108-109.
13. Luce, p. 155.
14. Luce, p. 155.
15. Henry, p. 205.
16. p. 34.
17. Crawford, p. 34.
18. Allen, p. 229.
19. Crawford, p. 34.
20. Crawford, p. 34.
21. Luce, p. 157.
22. Crawford, p. 36.
23. Crawford, p. 36.
24. Crawford, p. 36.
25. Crawford, p. 37.
26. Crawford, p. 44.
27. Henderson, George. From Durrow to Kells, the Insular Gospel Books 650-800. (London : Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1987.) p. 52.
28. Henry, p. 205.
29. Mitchell, Frank G. Treasures of Early Irish Art. (New York : Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1977) p. 59.
30. Henry, p. 169.
31. Luce, p. 157.
32. Luce, p. 157.
33. Crawford, p. 30.
34. Crawford, p. 30.
35. Crawford, p. 30.
36. Luce, p. 140.
37. Crawford, p. 46.

38. Crawford, p. 46.
39. Luce, p. 136.
40. Ryan Michael. Ireland and Insular Art AD 500-1200.
(Dublin : Royal Irish Academy, 1987.) p. 46.
41. Henry, p. 174.
42. Roe, Helen M. High Crosses of Western Ossory.
(Longford : Turner's Printing Co. Ltd., 1976.) p. 28..
43. Roe, p. 28.
44. Crawford, p. 12.
45. Crawford, p. 50.
46. Crawford, p. 50.
47. Seaborne, Malcolm. Celtic Crosss of Britain and
Ireland. (Great Britain : Shire Publications Ltd.,
1976.) p. 46.
48. Henry, p. 205-206.
49. Luce, p. 115.
50. Crawford, p. 38.
51. Henderson, p. 32.
52. Finlay, Ian. Celtic Art. (London : Faber & Faber Ltd.,
1973.) p. 132.

Conclusion

From these comparisons of the decorative motifs on the High Crosses of Ahenny and in the Book of Durrow three conclusions can be drawn. First, it can be seen that although the high crosses and the manuscript are separated by as much as two hundred years, their decorative vocabularies vary only slightly and they share many motifs that are exactly the same. They both use spiral patterns in a remarkably similar way, filling panels with spirals within spirals, though the crosses take it one step further by adding animal motifs. Durrow and the Ahenny crosses are probably most similar in their use of geometric patterns. Both the crosses and manuscript use very similar chequer-patterns and swastika patterns. Their geometric patterns are in some cases exactly the same, perhaps because they were easily produced in both media. The High Crosses and the Book of Durrow also have many similar interlace patterns, including knots, borders, and zoomorphic interlace. The crosses, perhaps because they are later in date, incorporate a greater variety including interlaced human figures. Both monuments incorporate human figures, however, they differ in that the High Crosses use multiple

figures to create narrative scenes of Biblical stories while the Book of Durrow only uses figures as stylized symbols for the evangelists. It is in the figurative work that one can begin to see changes taking place. The earliest Irish figurative motifs were single figured symbols such as the evangelists in Durrow. Due to influences, most likely from Anglo-Saxon England, the use of narrative art becomes more realistic first by incorporating more than one figure to tell a story and then by making those figures more and more 'readable' in appearance as seen on the crosses of the early tenth century.

The second conclusion which can be drawn is that although the High Crosses at Ahenny and the Book of Durrow were created of very different materials it did not greatly affect the choice of decorative motifs. The only motifs which are not shared by both monuments are: 'red' dots, lozenges, rectangular interlace, ornamental bosses, and cable mouldings see(Pl.1). The comparisons show that decorative motifs were passed from the earlier manuscripts and even earlier metalwork to stone with almost no changes in the visual result. When the crosses were painted they must have appeared like manuscripts in stone; one thinks particularly of the cruciform page in Durrow. Only the

most intricate or the most minute of manuscript motifs, such as circular interlace and 'red' dots could not easily be replicated in stone and therefore understandably do not appear.

Because both manuscripts and high crosses of this period are frequently compared to jewelry, there has been very little attention given to comparing the decoration of manuscripts with that of high crosses. Through a comparison of the High Crosses at Ahenny with the Book of Durrow, it can be concluded that the same decorative motifs were shared by high crosses, manuscripts, and metalwork. The basic forms of Hiberno-Saxon decoration; spirals, geometric patterns, and interlace, dominated both the Book of Durrow and the High Crosses at Ahenny with little variation, and this continued well into the eleventh and twelfth centuries when the narrative element became all-dominant.

Bibliography

- Allen, John Romilly. Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times. London : Methuen & Co., 1904.
- Arnold, Bruce. A Concise History of Irish Art. London : Thames & Hudson, 1969.
- Crawford, Henry S. Irish Carved Ornament From Monuments of the Christian Period. Dublin : The Mercier Press, 1980.
- Finlay, Ian. Celtic Art. London : Faber & Faber Ltd, 1973.
- Henderson, Beorge. From Durrow to Kells, The Insular Gospel Books 650-800. London : Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1987.
- Henry, Françoise. Irish Art in the Early Christian Period. London : Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1965.
Irish High Crosses. Dublin : Three Candles Ltd., 1964.
- Luce, A.A., and Peter Meyer, eds. The Book of Durrow in Two Volumes. Britan : URS Graf-Verlag, 1960.
- Megaw, Ruth & Vincent. Celtic Art From Its Beginnings to the Book of Kells. New York : Thames & Hudson, 1989.
- Mitchell, Frank G. Treasures of Early Irish Art. New York : Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1977.

Roe, Helen M. High Crosses of Western Ossory. Longford :
Turner's Printing Co. Ltd., 1976.

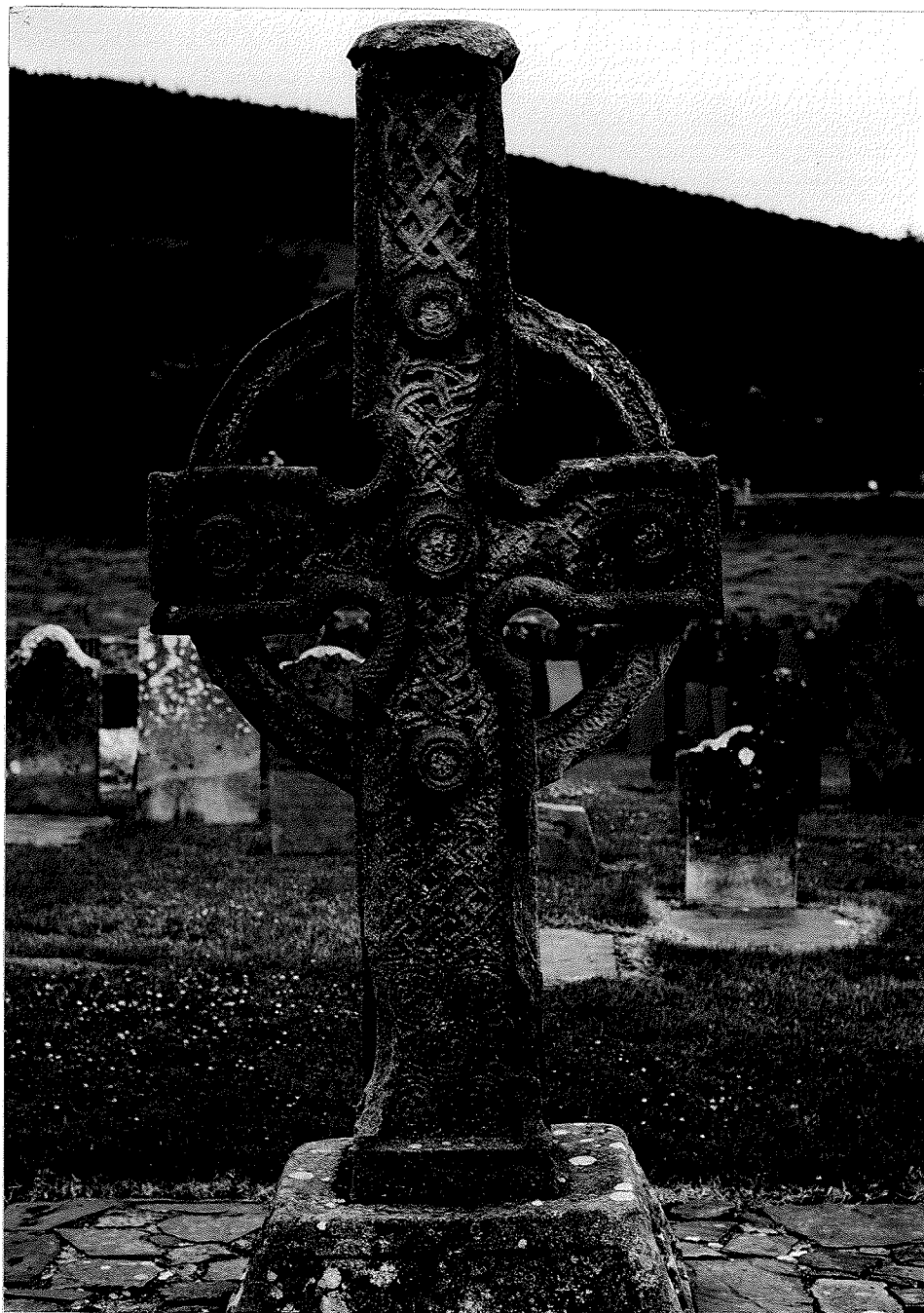
Ryan, Michael. ed. Ireland and Insular Art AD 500-1200.
Dublin : Royal Irish Academy, 1987.

Seaborne, Malcolm. Celtic Crosses of Britain and Ireland.
Great Britian : Shire Publications Ltd., 1989.

Stalley, Roger. Irish High Crosses, Dublin : Eason & Son
Ltd., 1991

Plates

1. Ornament Comparison Chart.
2. South Cross at Ahenny, East Side.
3. South Cross at Ahenny, West Side.
4. North Cross at Ahenny, East Side.
5. North Cross at Ahenny, West Side.
6. Spiral Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.
7. Spiral Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.
8. Geometric Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.
9. Geometric Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.
10. Ribbon Interlace, High Crosses at Ahenny.
11. Zoomorphic Decoration, High Crosses at Ahenny.
12. Figurative Decoration, High Crosses at Ahenny.
13. The Book of Durrow, f.1v.
14. The Book of Durrow, f.2r.
15. The Book of Durrow, f.3v.
16. The Book of Durrow, f.8r.
17. The Book of Durrow, f.9r.
18. The Book of Durrow, f.21v.
19. The Book of Durrow, f.22r.
20. The Book of Durrow, f.84v.
21. The Book of Durrow, f.85v.
22. The Book of Durrow, f.86r.
23. The Book of Durrow, f.124r.
24. The Book of Durrow, f.125r.
25. The Book of Durrow, f.191v.
26. The Book of Durrow, f.192v.
27. The Book of Durrow, f.248r.



Pl. 2. South Cross at Ahenny, East Side.



Pl. 3. South Cross at Ahenny, West Side.



Pl. 4. North Cross at Ahenny, East Side.



Pl. 5. North Cross at Ahenny, West Side.



fig. A.

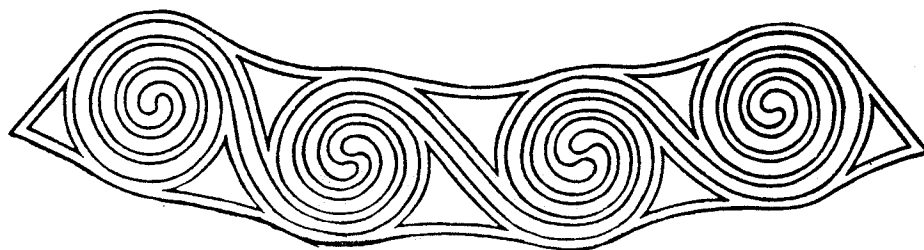


fig. B.

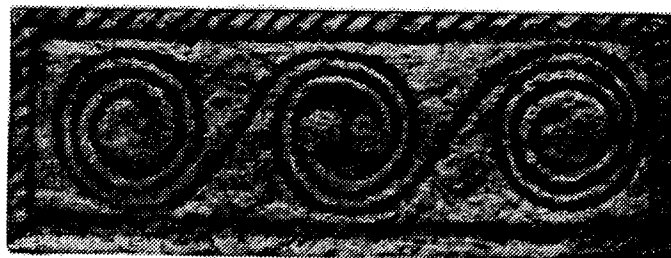


fig. C.

Pl. 6. Spiral Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.

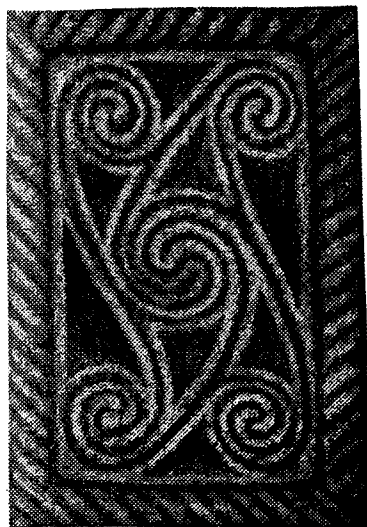


fig. A.



fig. B.

Pl. 7. Spiral Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.

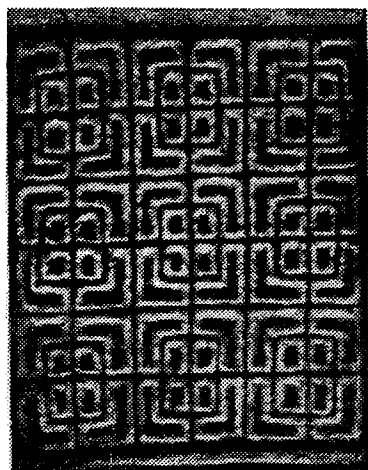


fig. A.



fig. B.

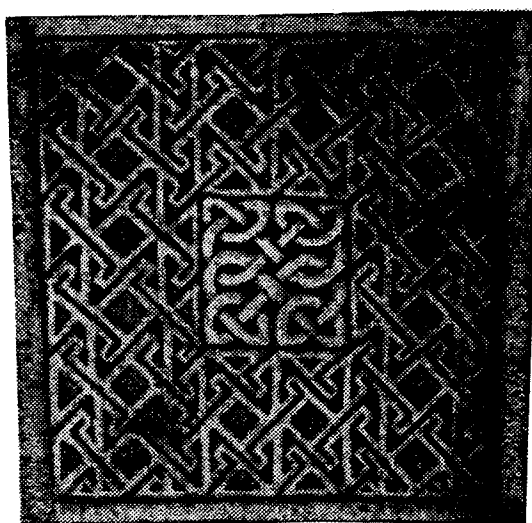


fig. C.

Pl. 8. Geometric Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.

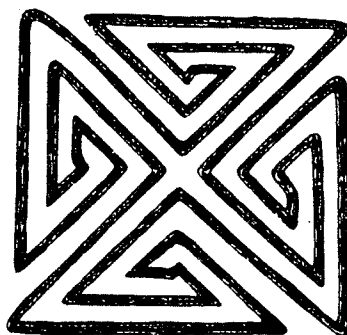


fig. A.



Fig. B.

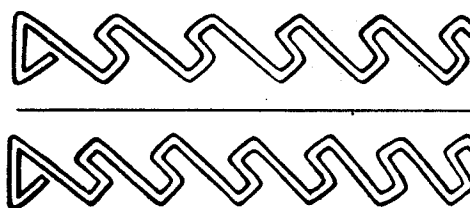


Fig. C.

Pl. 9. Geometric Ornament, High Crosses at Ahenny.



fig. A.



fig. B.

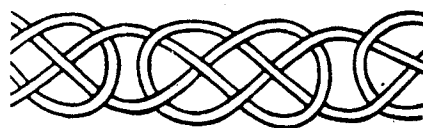


fig. C.

Pl. 10. Ribbon Interlace, High Crosses at Ahenny.



fig. A.



fig. B.

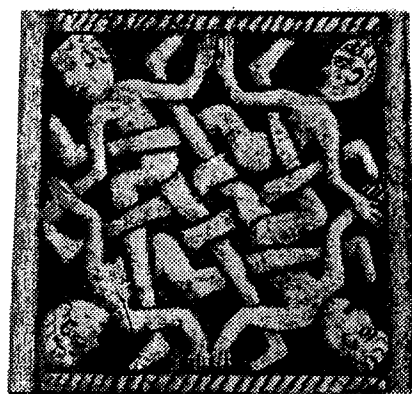


fig. C.

Pl. 11. Zoomorphic Decoration, High Crosses at Ahenny.



fig. A.

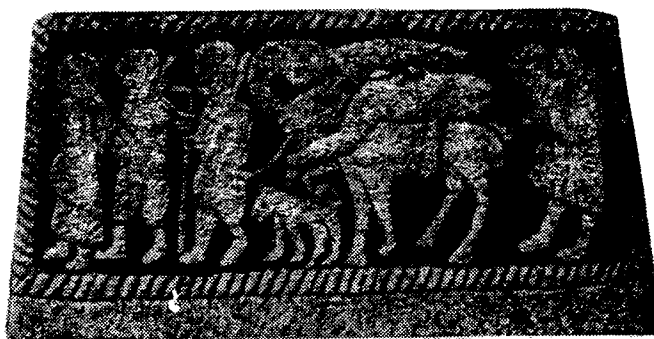
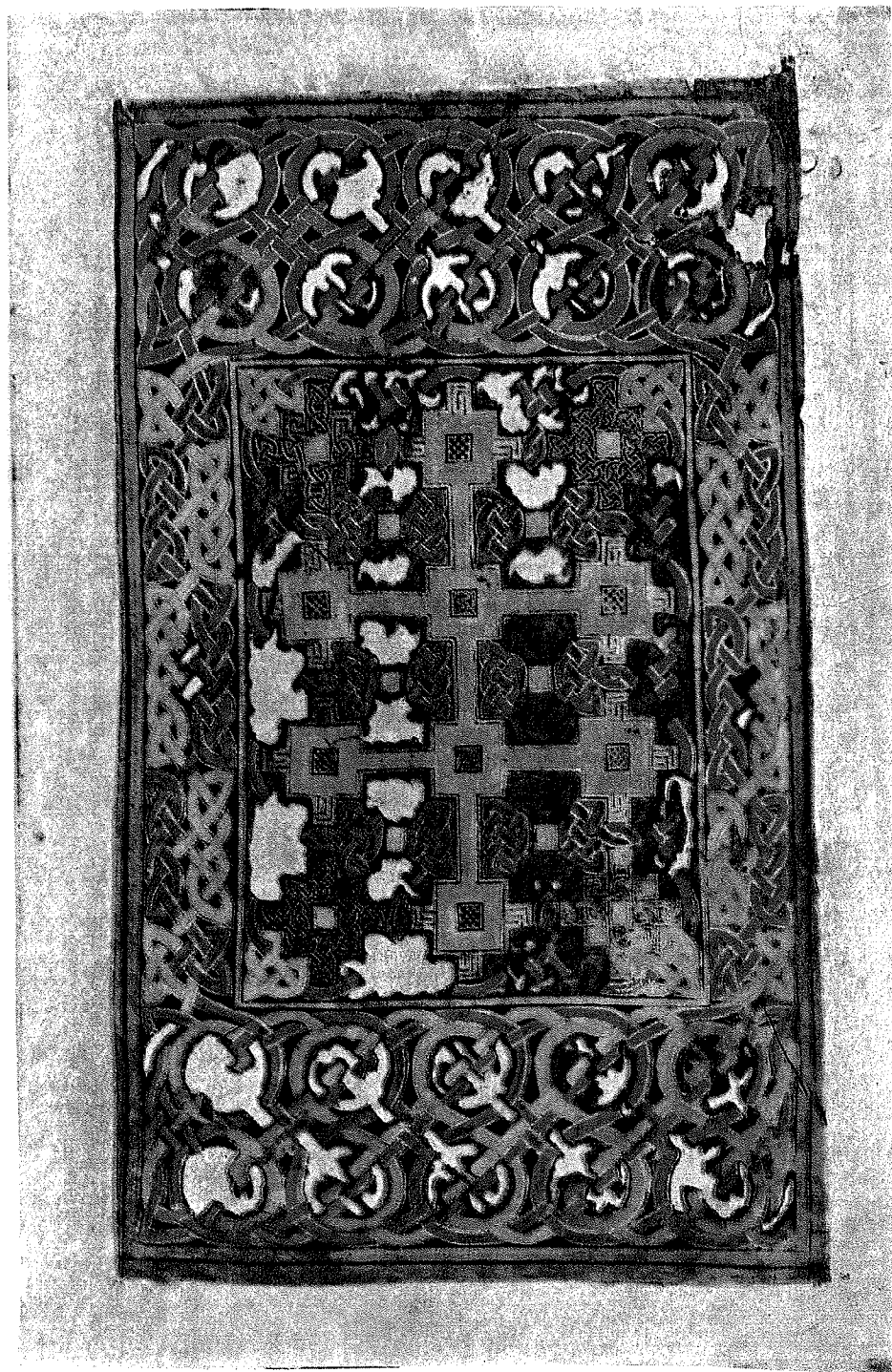


fig. B.

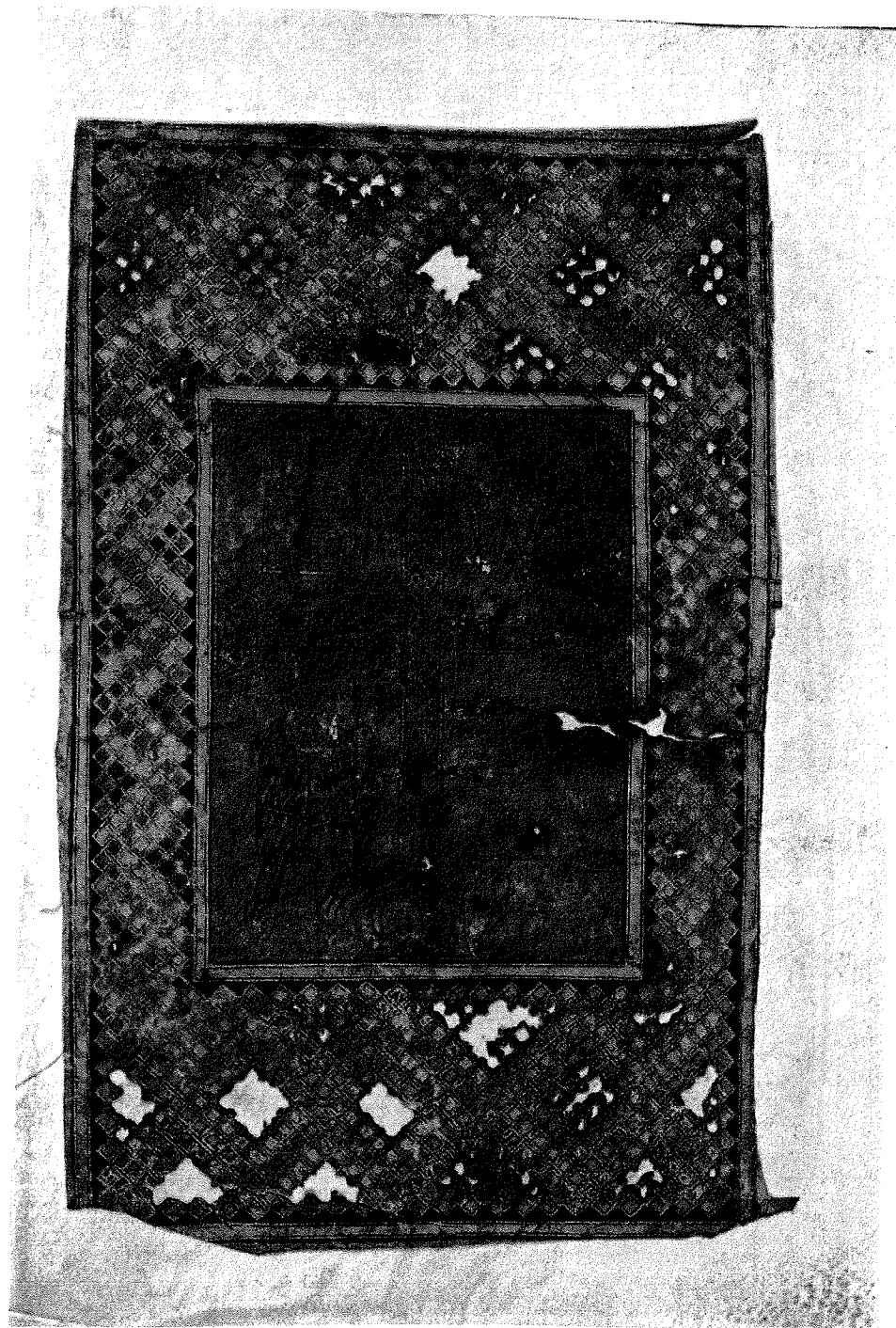


fig. C.

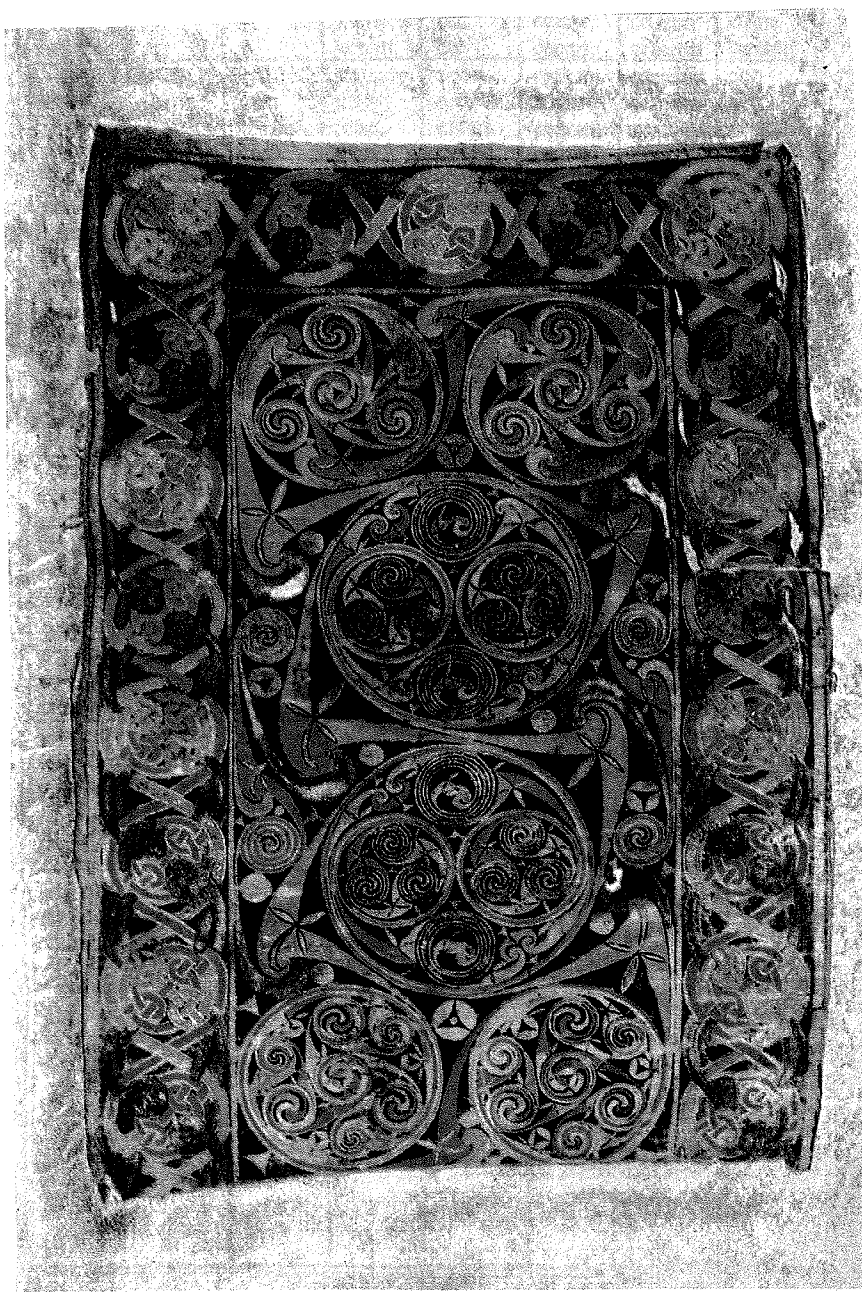
Pl. 12. Figurative Decoration, High Crosses at Ahenny.



Pl. 13. The Book of Durrow, f.1v.



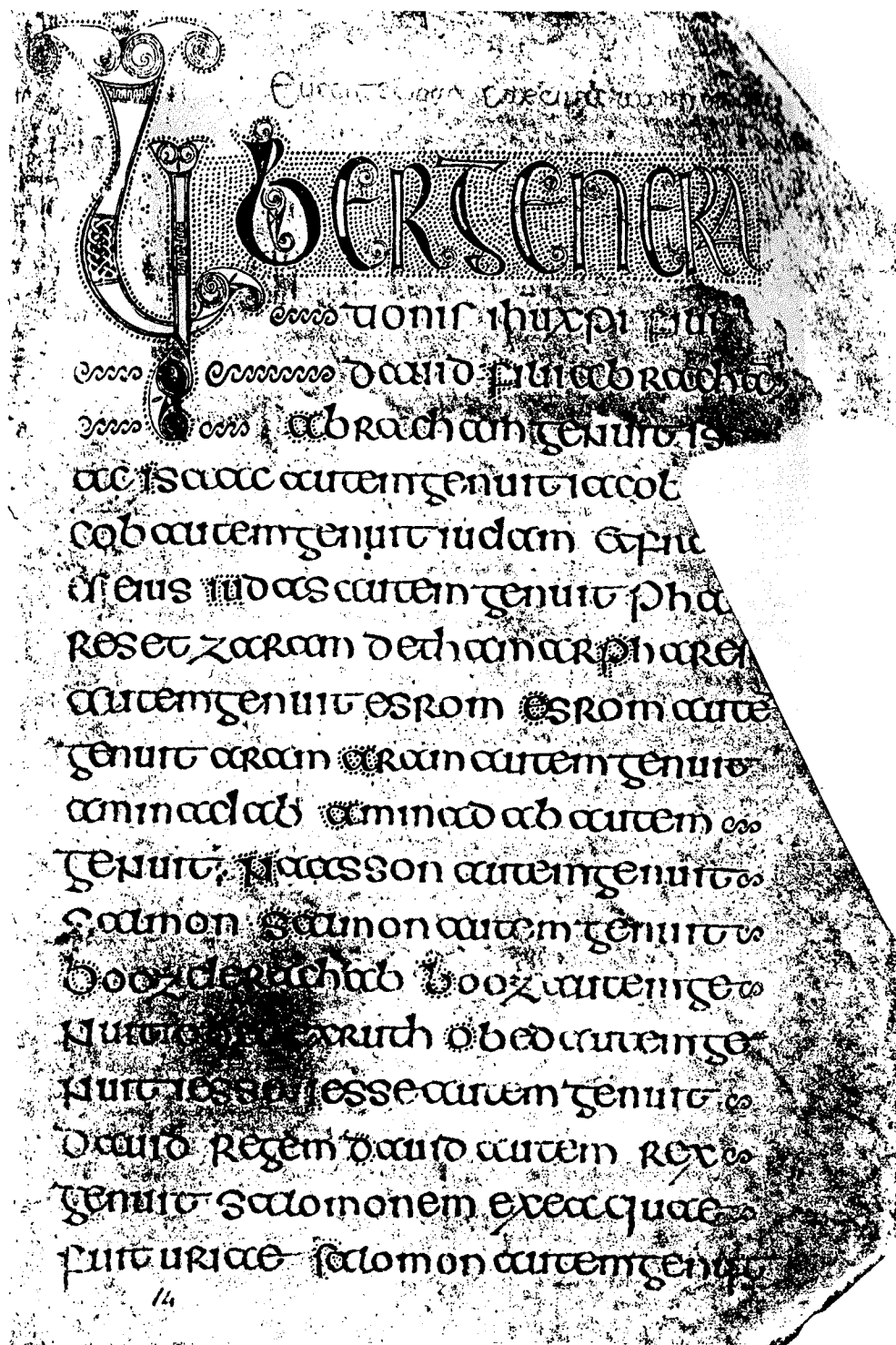
Pl. 14. The Book of Durrow, f.2r.



Pl. 15. The Book of Durrow, f.3v.



Pl. 18. The Book of Durrow, f.21v.



Pl. 19. The Book of Durrow, f.22r.

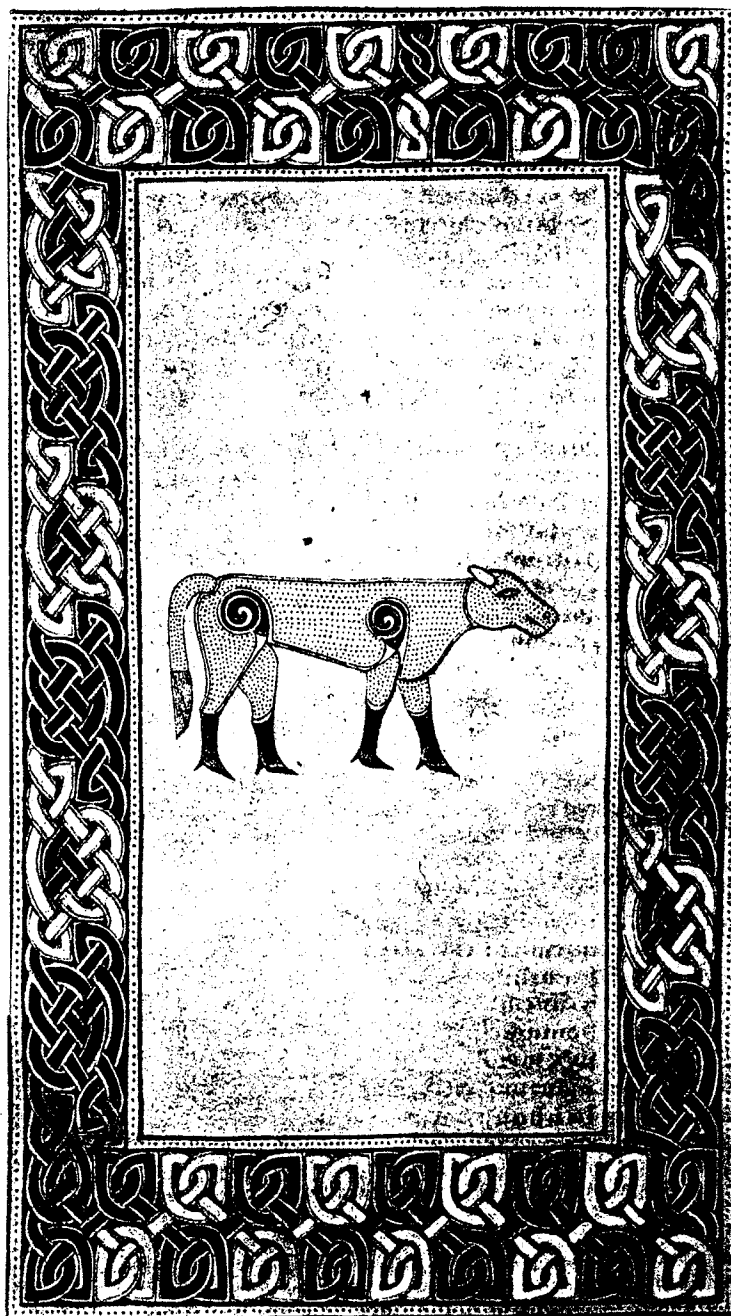


Pl. 20. The Book of Durrow, f.84v.

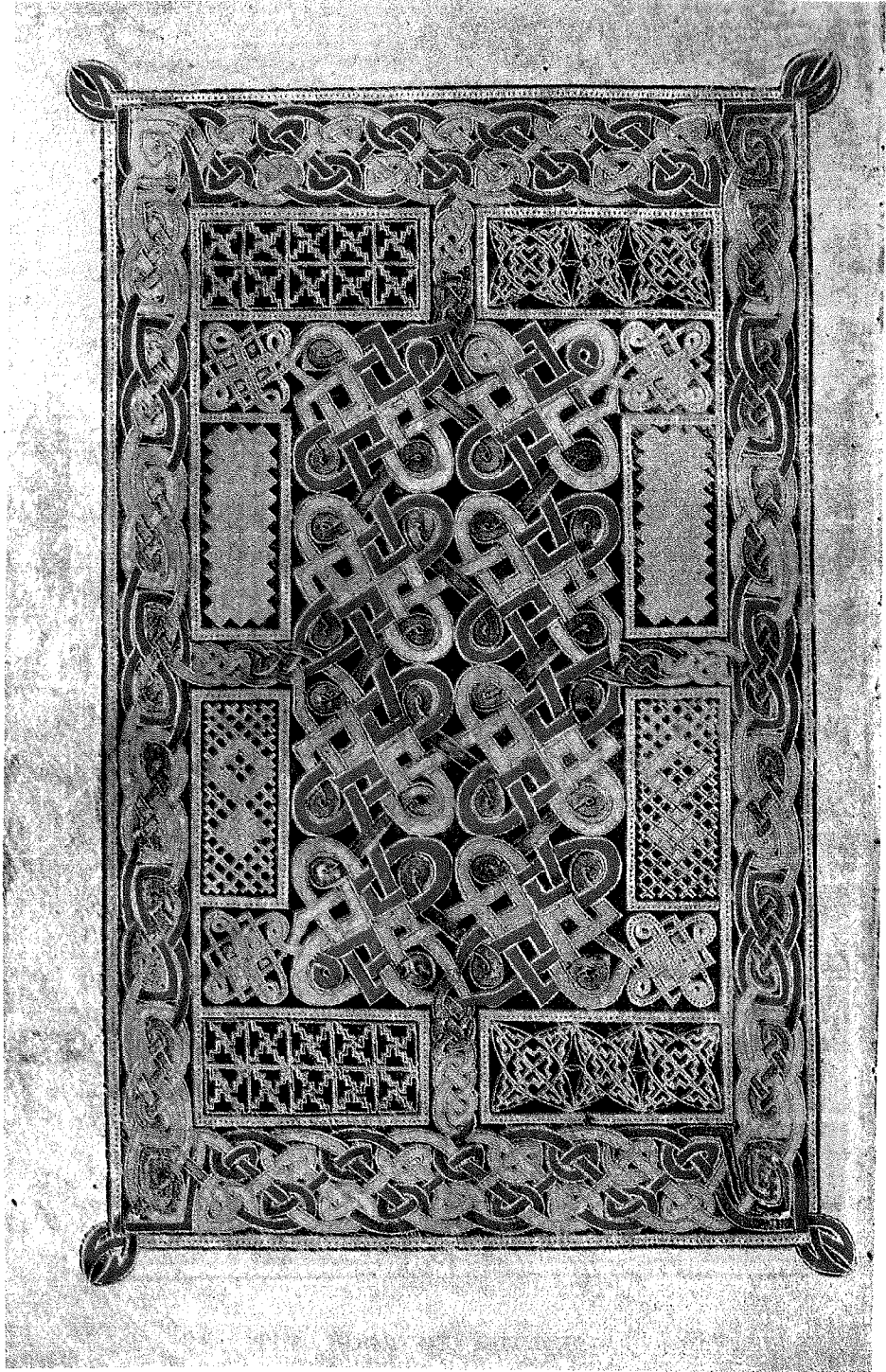


Pl. 21. The Book of Durrow, f.85v.

Insuper et dicitur
 secundum quod dicitur
MORUM
 EVANGELIUM
 QUOD
 FUIT Sicut
 Ripum in esca
 pnopeca. Cae mita au
 Telum meum ante faciem
 tuam qui pnae pna ab ita
VOX clamantis in desen
 to pnae uiam dñi rec
 tas facite semitas eius
FUIT iohannis in desento
 habetans & pnae dicitans
 habet inum pnae tence
 in nemi sionem peccatorum
 & egrediebatur in adiuu omnes neg
 ludece regio & hrenusolum itae uni
 uensi & habet ab am in ab illo in on
 clare flumine confitentes peccata sua
QUERAT iohannis uetris prus am
 78



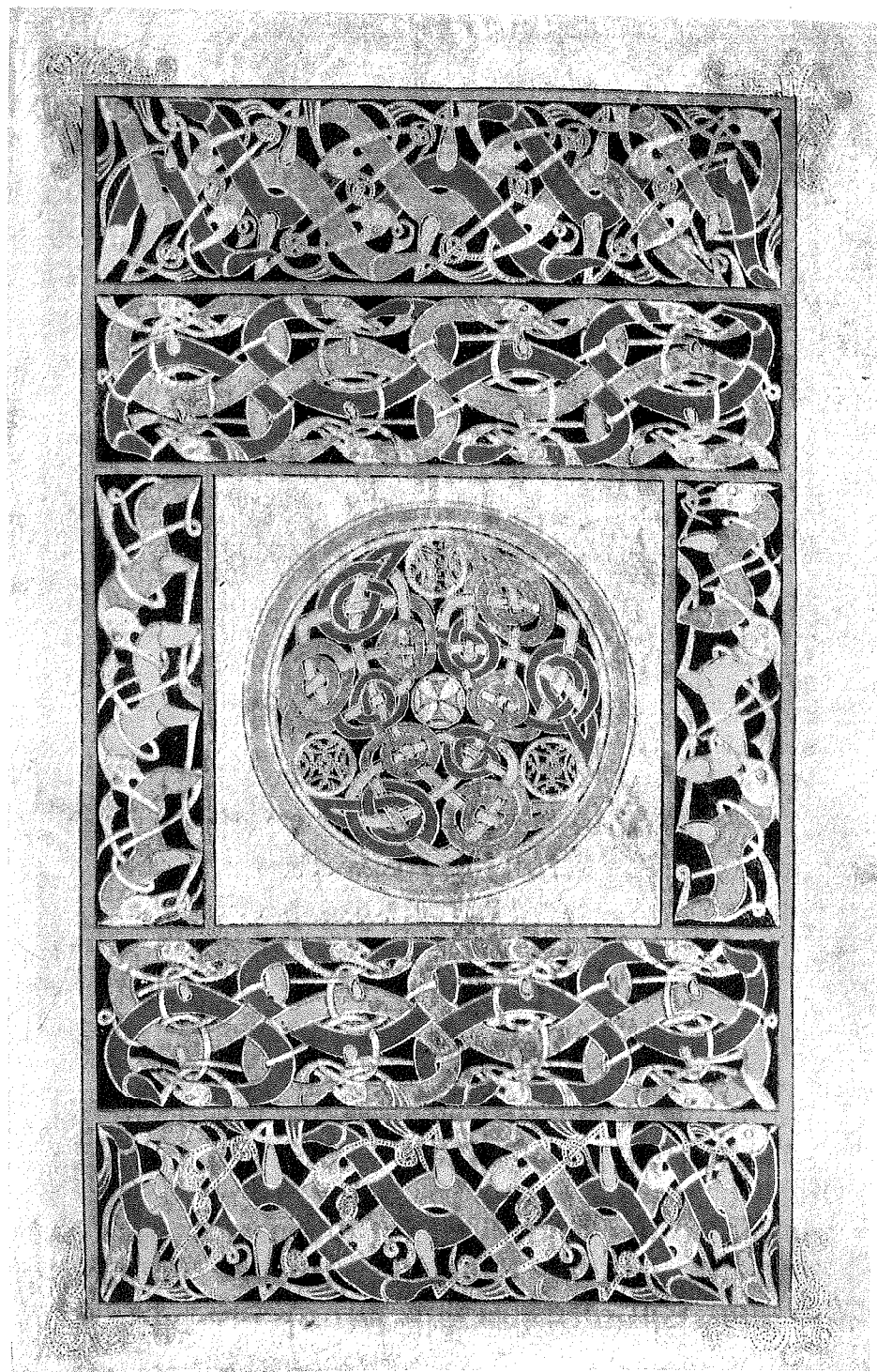
Pl. 23. The Book of Durrow, f.124r.



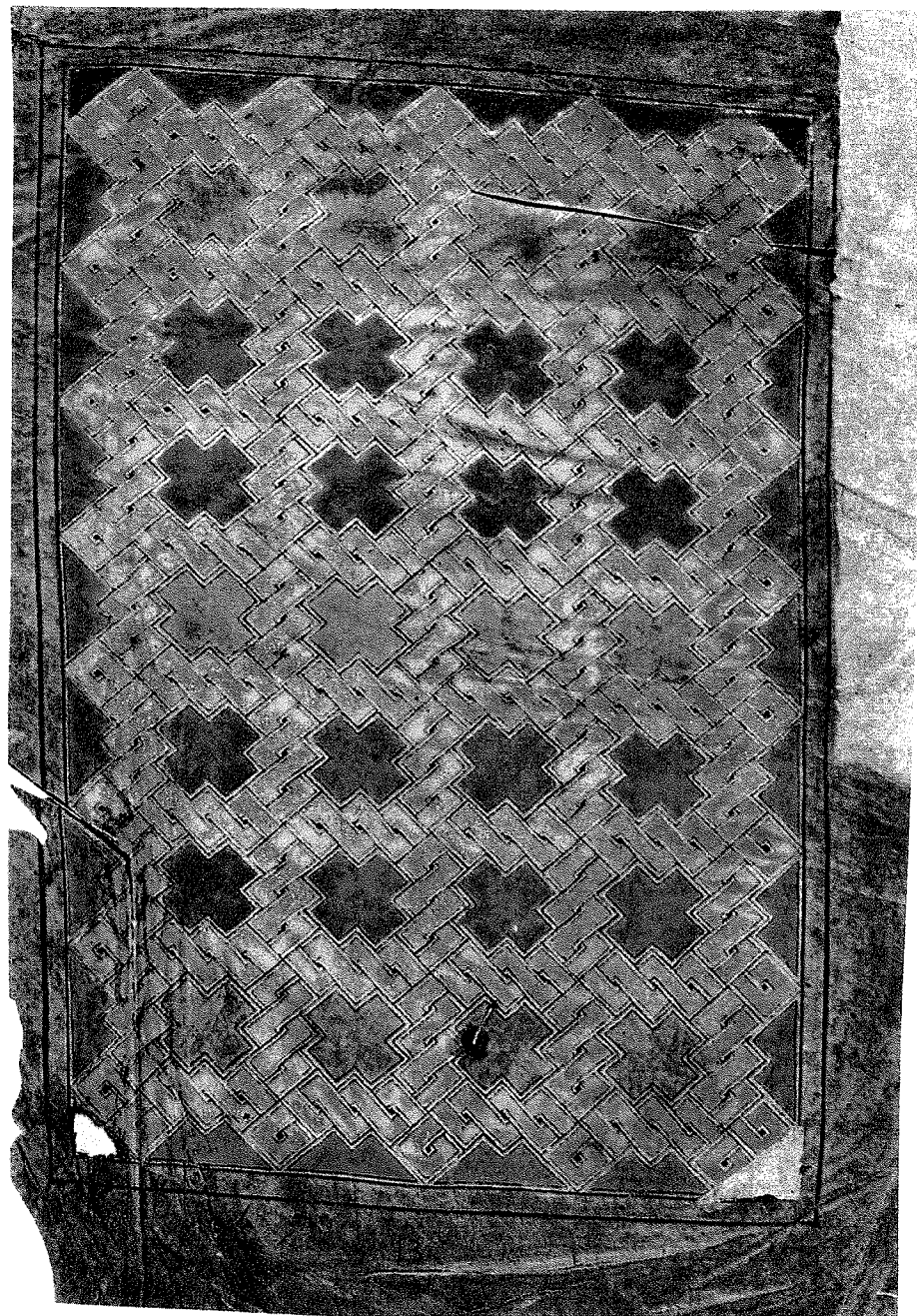
Pl. 24. The Book of Durrow, f.125r.



Pl. 25. The Book of Durrow, f.191v.

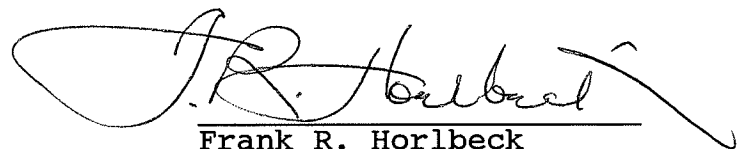


Pl. 26. The Book of Durrow, f.192v.



Pl. 27. The Book of Durrow, f.248r.

Approved

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "F. R. Horlbeck". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Frank R. Horlbeck
Professor
May 11, 1993