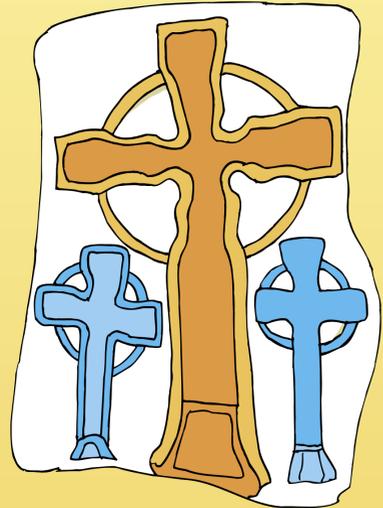


Gallen Gailinne



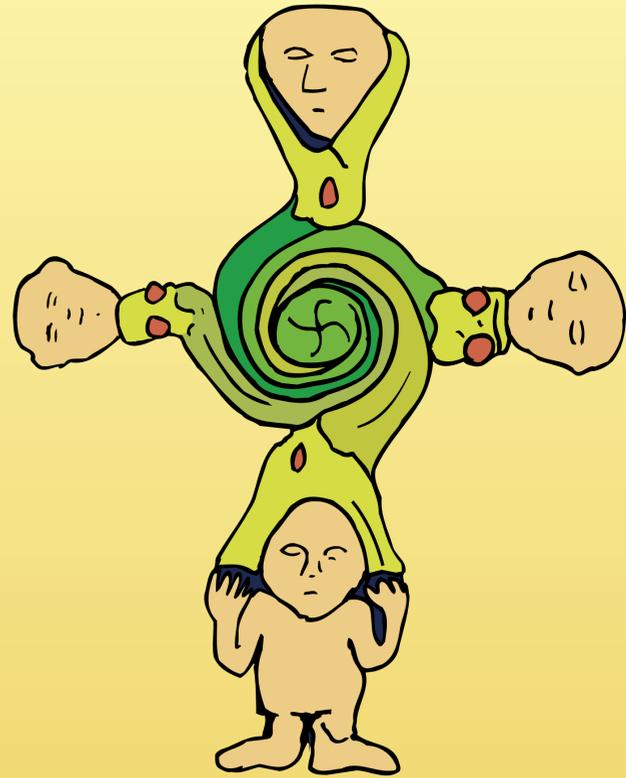
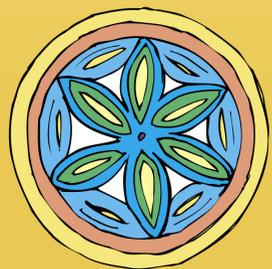
Three Crosses

Excavations carried out in 1934-35 on a low mound in front of Gallen priory uncovered the wall footings of a church, a cemetery to the south and west and over 200 cross-inscribed slabs were recovered from beneath the soil. One of these slabs consisted of three incised ringed-crosses which probably represents the crucifixion with the two thieves, one on either side. These slabs probably date from between the ninth and eleventh centuries.

Marigold cross

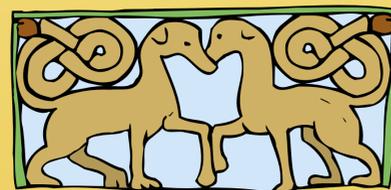
Below is an example of an incised marigold style cross consisting of intersecting arcs which make up a six-petal marigold contained within an incised circle. The marigold was an important symbol in the early Christian period and may owe its origins to a Greek myth which recounts how Clytie, the daughter of a king of Babylon, was forsaken in love by the sun-god Apollo because he loved her sister Leucothea. Clyties jealousy caused her

sisters death, but Apollo still rejected her love and she slowly wasted away and turned into the flower that always faces the sun. The marigold always faces the sun like the sunflower and may have come to symbolise the Christians who always follow the sun which represents God. The marigold therefore represents the Christians who are followers of God who in turn is represented by the sun.



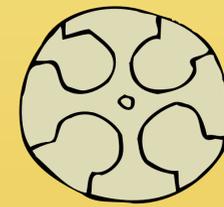
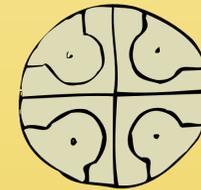
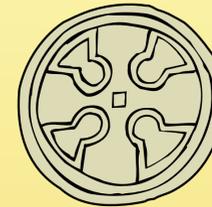
Free-standing pillar with interlacing cross

Tall sandstone slab standing in the centre of the excavated church with small tenon projecting from top of pillar with hole drilled through the tenon. The face of the slab contains an interlaced equal-armed cross, with trumpet-patterns within the arms of the cross underneath which are two four legged animals facing each other with interlaced tails. Below this scene there is a panel of diagonal fretwork.



Ringed cross with biting serpents (left)

Interesting ringed-cross carved in relief with central whorl out of which spring four serpents heads in the direction of the four cardinal points biting a human head at each terminal. Below the ring of the cross there is a small full length figure with hands held upwards battling with an open mouthed serpent. This imagery may represent the battle between good and evil with good represented by the four human heads and evil represented by the serpents. The four figures possibly represent the four evangelists and may also symbolise how the word of God can overcome evil. The upright figure is in the orans position. This is a gesture of prayer in the early Christian period.



Ringed crosses with bell shaped hollows

An interesting collection of incised thistle crosses were uncovered from the excavation a sample of which are illustrated on the panel. These crosses have also been described as ringed crosses with bell-shaped hollows. The majority of these slabs acted as gravemarkers of the monks of Gallen although the more complex slabs may have acted as scripture slabs which illustrated scenes from the bible.

A monastery was founded in Mac Coghlan's kingdom of Delbhna by St Canoc in the fifth century, which became a focus of settlement for monks from Wales. In 832 Gailinne of the Britons was burned with all its dwelling-place and oratory by the King of Munster. An Augustinian priory dedicated to St Mary was established in the twelfth century and was closed down after the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century. The present remains of the priory can still be seen in the centre of Gallen graveyard.

Up on high ground overlooking the graveyard are the excavated remains of a church built around 1200, a bullaun stone and many fine examples of Early Christian cross-inscribed graveslabs dating from the 8th-11th centuries. An unusual slab stands in the centre of the church with a hole in its top and decorated with interlace, fretwork and a stag. In 1519 James Mac Coghlan, prior of Gallen was killed by the shot of a ball at the castle of Cluain Damhna (Clonony). In 1612 the site with church, cemetery, five cottages and 70 acres were granted to Gerald Moore.

Bhunaigh Naomh Canoc mainistir i Ríocht Mac Coghlan, Delbhna, sa chúigiú haois, mainistir a bhí ina fócas áitriú tíre do mhánaigh ón Bhreatain Bheag. In 832, dhóigh Rí na Mumhan "Gailinne of the Britons" lena chuid áit chónaithe agus aireagal. Bunaíodh príóireacht Agaistíneach coisricthe do Naomh Muire sa dara haois déag agus dúnadh é i ndiaidh scaipeadh na mainistir sa séú haois déag. Is féidir iarsmaí an phríóireachta a fheiceáil go fóill i lár reilig Ghailinne.

Thuas ar thalamh ard os cionn na reilige tá iarsmaí tochairthe de shéipéail a tógadh thart ar 1200, cloch bullán agus an-chuid samplaí maithe de leac uaighe le crois Chríostaí tosaigh inscríobhtha iontu, óna 8ú-11ú aois. Seasann leac suimiúil i lár an tséipéil le poll ina bharr agus maisithe le snáitheanna crosach, crinngheas agus fia. I 1519 maraíodh Séamas Mac Coghlan, príóir Ghailinne le urchar liathróide ag caisleán Chluain Damhna. I 1612 tugadh an suíomh do Ghearáid Ó Moore le séipéal, reilig, srl, cúig theachín agus seachtó acra.

Early Christian Monastic Sites of Offaly

