



## Trusty's Hill and the 'Picts of Galloway'

### Teacher's Pack

This teacher's pack contains information and activities to compliment the teaching of Curriculum for Excellence in the following areas at Level 2

***This Pack Includes:***

- ***Information on 'What is Archaeology'***
- ***Information about 'Trusty's Hill'***
- ***Information about 'The Dark Ages in Dumfries and Galloway'***
- ***1 suggested activity for teaching 'What is Archaeology?'***
- ***3 suggested activities suggested for understanding Trusty's Hill***
- ***3 suggested activities for understanding 'The Dark Ages in Dumfries and Galloway'***



## ***Classroom Information:***

### ***What Is Archaeology?***

Key Questions:

- Do you know what archaeology is?
- Do you know what an archaeologist does?

**Archaeology** (literally meaning ‘the science of the past’) is the study of past people based on the things they left behind. We look for where they lived, and even better we look for their **rubbish** and other bits and bobs they may have buried. From these things we can start to tell a **story** about the people: who they were, what they did, how they shaped their landscape around them and how they lived with each other.

Archaeologists, then, are like **detectives**. We look for **clues** and piece together a story from these. These clues are often small: like tiny lumps and bumps in the ground, little pieces of stone or pottery, or even things that are invisible to the eye like pollen from ancient plants that you need a microscope to see. But sometimes the clues are big: like stone circles such as at Stonehenge, hillforts with their deep ditches and large banks, or even ruined buildings like castles. Large and small, all these clues add to what the archaeologist knows and the story they can tell.

But the archaeologist needs to know some things before they can start. They need to know where to look! The first step is to look for a place to investigate. Sometimes archaeologists and historians in the past already found these places for us, and may even have started the detective work. At other times, we need to look at old maps, read old historical books, and look at photographs taken from airplanes or even satellites. Once we’ve found the place to look they call this the **site**. The site is where all of the clues will be for the story we want to tell.

Once we have the site, we then need to know more about its shape and size, and maybe even have a look under the ground without digging. To do this, the archaeologist will **survey** the site. This may include taking very accurate measurements of all the lumps and bumps on the ground, also known as the **topography**. This will usually tell us how the site was shaped and will give us the first clues about how people built their homes or worked in the landscape.

Sometimes, we may also want to peek beneath the ground without digging. Impossible? No. We use a scientific technique called **geophysics**. If you’ve ever seen **Time Team** on TV, you may have seen ‘Geofizz’ used by people holding instruments and walking up and down the fields in straight lines. These instruments send signals into the ground that bounce back or sense changes when they hit buried **features** like walls, ditches or pits. The instruments mark where these are, and when put into a computer the archaeologist can make a map of some of the buried features. But ‘Geofizz’ doesn’t always work, and sometimes only gives you a few more clues. It also doesn’t show you very small things.

The next step then is to get muddy! Once we’ve found the site, surveyed it and found some hints about where important clues might be, it’s time to dig into the ground and find them. This is called an **excavation**. The archaeologist will dig measured holes called **trenches**. As they dig down in the trenches, they look for the features like stone walls or different coloured dirt that may show where a pit or a post-hole is. And all around these you might find bits of old rubbish, called **artefacts**, like pottery. The deeper the archaeologist digs, the farther back in time they go. That’s because older things are buried deeper than newer things. It’s like a layer cake. When you bake it, the first layer is older than the jam above it or the cake layer above that...and the icing is the youngest of all. This is the same with the ground and with features and artefacts. We call this layer cake effect **stratigraphy**. It’s very important to archaeologists, because it tells them if something is older than something else and allows us to tell the whole story of the site and its people from beginning to end. As we excavate our site, we

are always mapping the things we find and the depths they are found, taking photographs and making notes. This allows us to show exactly where things were and the **relationships** they had with other things.

Once we've excavated our site, we take all of things we found, our maps and pictures back to the **laboratory**. It's in the lab where everything is pieced together and the story comes together, just like a picture puzzle. The archaeologists take their time to understand how everything fits together. Once they have their story, they then share it with others. They may write it in a report, or an article or even a book about the story. But if nobody knows the story, then the archaeologist is done!

## Information for Teachers:

### The Dark Ages in Dumfries and Galloway

#### Key Questions:

- Who were the Picts? The Britons? The Anglo-Saxons? The Scots?
- When were the Dark Ages? Why are they called 'Dark'?

The **Dark Ages** (called the Early Historic period by scholars) was a period that started about 1,500 years ago and ended about 1000 years ago (400 AD – 1100 AD). Why was it called the Dark Ages? It's not because it was darker than it was today. It's because it was a period at the beginning of writing down the histories of Scotland's people by the people themselves, but very little of what they wrote survives so the period is 'dark' to us. This is in large part because of Viking raids on monasteries in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries AD where they destroyed many of the early texts that were stored in these places.

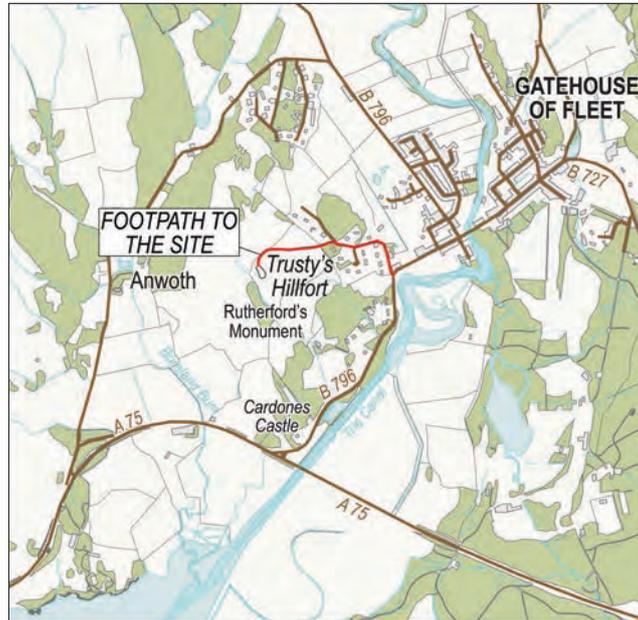
In the south-west, the area was home to the **Britons** early in the Dark Ages (about 400 AD to 700AD). These were the native people of the area. They had settlements on hills, sometimes defended by big ramparts like a castle, called hillforts, but also had many smaller farming settlements lower on the hills and in the valleys. They spoke form of old Welsh called '**Brittonic**' and many were **Christian** after the Romans had brought the religion to Britain just a few centuries earlier. Dumfries and Galloway may have been part of a large British kingdom called **Rheged** (pronounced 'reg,' as in Reggae, and 'ed') that stretched from north Wales to Ayrshire. We know of one of the Kings of Rheged, called Urien, who fought many battles against the Anglo-Saxons in eastern Britain. Trusty's Hill belongs to this period, and so do other important hillforts like **the Mote of Mark**, near Dalbeattie.

Over time, many newcomers moved into the south-west. These included the **Angles** (one half of the **Anglo-Saxons**), who were originally groups of people from modern day Denmark and Belgium. The Angles had a kingdom in Eastern Britain called **Northumbria** which extended from York to Edinburgh in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. When King Urien of Rheged eventually died, much of his kingdom, including Dumfries and Galloway, passed to the Northumbrians and they very quickly placed their own lords in charge of the area. More importantly, they took over many of the holy Christian monasteries that the Britons had set up. These included very important places to Scottish Christianity like **Whithorn, Hoddum, Kirkmadrine** and **Ruthwell**. The Northumbrian Christians loved to create beautiful works of art for their churches, and large crosses that sat outside in the landscape. The best example of this is the **Ruthwell Cross**, a gigantic stone cross that once stood outside but is now in a church. The cross shows scenes from the Bible, but also has a poem etched into it in an old form of Anglo-Saxon writing called 'Runes'. The poem is called 'The Dream of the Rood' (Rood is an old word for Christ's Crucifix) and it's the story of Christ's cross told as if the Cross were a person holding up Jesus.

The Northumbrian Angles held the south-west for several centuries, but by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD a new threat emerged. The **Vikings**. These were a group of people, mostly young men, who came from the same place as the Angles had a few hundred years before. They sailed in very fast ships to Britain in order to attack and rob the places were the Northumbrians kept their precious objects of gold and silver...mostly held in the monasteries. The Vikings weren't interested in the beautiful works of art of the Britons or Angles or the ancient books, and many of these were destroyed. Eventually, though, the Vikings too settled down and created their own artwork. They married the Britons and Angles who lived in the area and all three formed a unique culture. By the end of the Dark Ages, in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, yet another group of people came to Dumfries and Galloway. These were the **Scots**. There was no such thing as Scotland yet, and the original Scots were actually from Ireland and spoke Gaelic. They settled mostly in the west, and the names of places in Galloway show this...like Port Patrick. In fact, Galloway itself means the 'Land of the Gaels', after the Irish settlers who made the area their home. The Scots who settled in Galloway were decendants of the original Scottish emigrants who settled in north-east Scotland in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. But despite the rest of Scotland coming together with the unification of Scottish, Pictish and British kingdoms in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, Galloway remained an independent kingdom until the 12<sup>th</sup> century when the 'Lords of Galloway' ruled.

## Information for Teachers:

### Trusty's Hill



Map showing the location of Trusty's Hill

#### Key Questions:

- Where is Trusty's Hill?
- Trusty's Hill is an archaeological site: what kind of site is it?
- When do we think the people lived on Trusty's Hill?
- When was the Iron Age?
- When were the Dark Ages (Early Historic period)?
- What's the most interesting feature on Trusty's Hill?

**Trusty's Hill** sits in the **Boreland Hills** between Gatehouse of Fleet and the Rutherford Monument. From the top of the hill you can see Gatehouse, the Rutherford Monument, the top of Cardones Castle and the Fleet as it runs to Ardwall Bay and the Solway Firth. The archaeological site on the hill is defined as a **hillfort**: a hilltop settlement that was circled and defended by one or several deep ditches and high banks. These can still be seen enclosing the site. Hillforts generally date from the **Iron Age** (from approximately 700 BC to 400 AD in Scotland; called the Iron Age because of the discovery of iron metal working and its use throughout the period), but were also used for a time in the **Early Historic** period also known as the '**Dark Ages**'. The Dark Ages in Scotland was a period when the first historical documents were being written down in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, mostly by monks from early Christian monasteries, and extending to the coming of the Normans in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. The Dark Ages weren't always so 'dark'. The name relates to the fact that we have very few historical sources from this period to work with compared to the more 'illuminated' medieval period.

Trusty's Hill is unique amongst the hillforts of Galloway in that it contains a Pictish inscribed stone. The **Picts** were a Dark Age northern people who lived from Fife to the northern tip of Scotland and in to the Orkneys. They are most known for having etched **symbols** on stones, similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs as they drew pictures they took from a common system of symbols. These symbols may have translated as the names of people or groups. But we really have no idea what these symbols meant. The nearest Pictish symbols to Trusty's Hill are either found in Edinburgh (about 100 miles away) or as far away as a

hillfort called Dunadd in Argyll (about 200 miles away). In fact, most of the symbol stones are found in north-east Scotland, hundreds of miles away. So why are the symbols here then?

One answer may come from recently discovered lines etched along the seam on the stone. This looks to be **Ogham** writing, a form of writing developed by Dark Age Irish monks as a 'shorthand' for Latin. Ogham looks like a bunch of different sized lines coming off of natural seam in a stone or an etched central line. Believe it or not, each line or series of lines corresponds to Latin letters, which means these strange etchings can be translated. Ogham often occurs on memorial stones from across Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The writing normally translates as someone's name. It may be that the monks who 'signed' these stones did so as witnesses to important events. Unfortunately, while we think we've now found this writing at Trusty's Hill, the lichen and top-soil on the stone meant that a recent laser scan was not good enough to capture a translatable image.

The inscription and symbols on the stone at the entrance to the hillfort suggests that Trusty's Hill was occupied in the Dark Ages, though it may have had people living there for much longer. In the early Dark Ages, south-west Scotland was inhabited by people perceived to be **Britons** (who spoke something similar to old Welsh); not Picts or **Scots** (an ethnic group who actually emigrated from Ireland into western Scotland in the later Dark Ages). So, the presence of the symbol stone is even more mysterious and may represent crucial evidence for the early cross-cultural exchanges that started forming the single Scottish identity that came about in the later Middle Ages. Trusty's Hill may represent the beginnings of Scotland as we know it today!

Trusty's Hill and its stone have been known about since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many people over the next two centuries debated on what the stone represented and why it was there. Most people saw it as a fake, though recent scholarship has largely dismissed this. In 1960, an archaeologist called Charles Thomas, helped by Boy Scouts from Dumfries, excavated trenches on Trusty's Hill. For two weeks, and with very little money, Thomas and the Scouts dug in all weather. The results were a report in the Transactions of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarians Society (attached). The report gave us some very interesting clues to the story of Trusty's Hill.

Most importantly, the rampart banks enclosing the top of the hill were found to be '**vitrified**' (meaning they'd been super-heated and the stones had begun to crack and melt). This suggested to Thomas that the fort had been burnt at some point, and he felt that the northern Picts had actually attacked the fort. The stone at the entry was almost like graffiti proclaiming that the Picts had been there and taken the hill by force.

But despite all the hard work done on the hill in 1960, Thomas left us with more questions than answers. The work that we will be carrying out this year hopes to answer some of these (see project design attached). The questions include:

- What is the translation of the Ogham inscription on the Pictish stone
- Can we date the vitrified stone from the rampart using modern scientific techniques
- Can we find any other evidence that helps to date the occupation of the fort?
- Can the fort tell us anything about how the Britons, Picts and Scots related to each other in the Dark Ages?

## Suggested Activities for your Classes

### Activity 1: 'The Rubbish Game' (pre-site visit)

- Have the children find something in their bags, or pockets or something in the room that may say something about them. Don't let them show the other children. Put everything on a table and ask others to 'interpret' the class from the things that are 'left behind'. How close do you get to the real class? How hard is it to do?
- Strategically place things that are important to the everyday running of the class around the room. Have the children 'map' the room showing where the things are. Can you tell what the things relate to from this? Can you build a story of the class?
- Cut out pictures from various old magazines or newspapers of different dates. 'Bury' these at various levels in a cardboard box filled with crumpled paper. Excavate the box. Can the children guess what's older? Can they piece together a story?
  - If there's a sandbox handy, use this instead and bury things of various ages
- Where possible, use the highlighted keywords from 'What is Archaeology' to describe what the children are doing.
- Have the children write an 'archaeological report' that tells the story of the class from the clues that they found. Have them read these out loud to see how different everyone's story is, and also where there are common threads.

### Activity 2: 'Investigating the Archaeology of Trusty's Hill' (pre-site visit)

- The children will be researching Trusty's Hill, the Pictish symbol stone and the Dark Age people of Britain
  - After telling the class all about Trusty's Hill from the information provided above, divide the class into groups and assign each with a research task
  - One task will be to investigate who the Picts, Scots, Britons and Anglo-Saxons were
    - Using a blank map of Britain, have the group draw circles around where we think each group lived in the early Dark Ages (Britons in the west from Cornwall to Glasgow, Scots in northern Ireland and western Scotland north of the Clyde, Picts in eastern Scotland from the Firth of Forth to Orkney, Anglo Saxons in the east from Edinburgh to Kent)
    - Have the group draw a picture in each part of the map of what they could have looked like
    - Have the group prepare a brief description of each group to be read out loud to the class
  - One task will be to look at the Pictish Symbol stone
    - Hand the group the worksheet showing the Pictish Symbol stone
    - On a blank piece of paper, ask them to re-draw the Pictish symbols
    - Can they figure out what the little head with the horns is?
    - Can they see where they Ogham is?
    - Can they see where the more recent graffiti is?
    - Once they've drawn and analysed the symbol stone, have them prepare a brief report to the class on what the stone is and what they think it means.
  - One task will be to look at the site plans of Trusty's Hill
    - On a blank sheet of paper have the group re-draw the map of the fort
      - It would help if they had a ruler and had a basic idea of scale
    - Can they tell where the banks are? Where the ditches are?
    - Where were the buildings?
    - How many buildings could you fit (the answer from the scale suggests not very many...maybe just one or two roundhouses)
    - Have them draw a 3D reconstruction of what the hillfort looked like when people lived there
- When the groups have finished their work, schedule a session for 'reporting' their discoveries

to each other. This can take the form of a collaborative site report that incorporated 'specialist' elements. It will then be up to either the class as a whole, or the teacher, to synthesise the information together to tell 'the story' of Trusty's Hill, its people and its destruction.

### **Activity 3: 'How new archaeological information is discovered' (site visit)**

- This activity involved a field trip to the site of the hillfort on Trusty's Hill during the excavations from the 20<sup>th</sup> May to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June.
- One of the site's directors, Dr Chris Bowles, will be on-hand for a guided walk around the site and to answer any questions
- If the opportunity arises, there may be scope for the children to participate in aspects of the fieldwork
- All children should be prepared to take notes about what they see. They should seek to answer the following questions:
  - What techniques do archaeologists use to recover and interpret evidence?
  - What new evidence did their own fieldwork/note taking discover?

### **Activity 4: 'How has your understanding of archaeology at Trusty's Hill changed?' (post-site visit)**

- Review the main points from report that was produced for Activity 2
- Using the experience of the site visit, ask how the children feel their discoveries have changed? Stayed the same?
- Has the overall story of Trusty's Hill changed in their minds?
- The key final question to ask is: How does understanding of archaeological sites change over the course of research?

### **Other Exciting Options to include in your work on Archaeology and Trusty's Hill:**

- Make your own Pictish symbols (art)
  - Using the list of common Pictish symbols, have the children pick symbols that represent them and create their own Pictish signatures
- The Hall of Warrior's: Dark Age Epic poetry (Beowulf, The Dream of the Rood, Y Goddodin) (creative writing)
  - A common source in Dark Age history is the epic poetry created to be recited out loud in front of a raucous feast of noble lords. These poems were often written by poets hired by kings and lords to 'show off' their deeds and claims. Christian poets used this tradition to creatively tell the story of Christ and the saints. Read the extracts of some of the Dark Age epic poetry to the class
  - Based on these poems and concepts, have the children write poems of the 'warrior's' in your hall (classroom), have a raucous feast (maybe over lunch) and recite these to each other
- Construct a hill fort like Trusty's Hill (science, social studies, history)
  - Use paper mache, lollypop sticks, clay or anything else to build a 3D model of a hillfort

## Appendix 1: Key Words List and Definitions

- **Archaeology** – the science of studying past people through the things they left behind
- **Rubbish** – archaeology often looks for past people’s rubbish because it’s often the only things that survive
- **Story** – archaeologists try to construct a story from the rubbish people left behind
- **Detectives** – archaeologists are like detectives of the past
- **Clues** – there are a number of different clues that archaeologists look for both above and below ground as evidence of past people’s activities
- **Site** – the basic unit of an archaeological study is the site: the place where we hope to discover all of our evidence
- **Survey** – often the first field work that is done is a thorough survey of the site to help the archaeologist find the best places for finding buried evidence
- **Topography** – this is the 3 dimensional measurement of the site
- **Geophysics** – a scientific technique used to read electrical or magnetic signals from the ground and help look below the ground without actually digging
- **Time Team** – the popular archaeology series on Channel 4
- **Features** – these are the built (like walls) or dug (like pits, ditches or post-holes) elements of the site. Mapping these helps us to untangle the layout of the site. Excavating them will hopefully reveal even smaller clues like artefacts
- **Excavation** – the act of digging the site
- **Trenches** – the measured holes that help us look below the ground
- **Artefacts** – the pieces of rubbish or other items that people left behind
- **Stratigraphy** – the layer cake effect of how the ground develops over time. As layers of ground develop over each other, the ones underneath are older. Any evidence in the layers can therefore be dated relative to each other.
- **Relationships** – archaeologists are always looking to understand how features and artefacts relate to one another in the ground to help tell the story of how they were constructed or buried. All of the relationships together are the biggest clue and give us the best evidence from which to tell our story
- **Laboratory** – all of the maps, artefacts, and samples are taken to the lab where specialists can get further information from them and provide more clues to the story
- **Dark Ages** – also called the Early Historic period in Scotland: this is the period from the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD to the 11<sup>th</sup> century
- **Britons** – these are the native people who also existed in the Iron Age. They spoke a form of old Welsh, lived on hills and in valleys and built round houses
- **Brittonic** – the actual name for the old Welsh that the Britons spoke
- **Christian** – the Dark Ages was marked by the spread of Christianity across Britain, though many people remained pagan throughout and into the Middle Ages

- **Rheged** – the Brittonic kingdom that stretched from modern day Lancashire to Ayreshire and possibly as far east as the Pennines. It's capital may have been Carlisle. It's best known king was the 7<sup>th</sup> century king Urien, who fought the Angles and almost conquered Northumbria.
- **Mote of Mark** – another well-known Dark Age hillfort in Rockcliffe, near Kippford
- **Whithorn** – site of one of the most important Dark Age monasteries in Scotland. This was founded by St Ninian in the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century, one of the first Scottish saints
- **Hoddum** – site of an Anglian monastery of the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century near Lockerbie
- **Kirkmadrine** – site of an early Dark Age church or monastery (the exact site has never been discovered), famous for a number of early Christian carved stones including one with the names of priests who may have come from Gaul (modern France)
- **Ruthwell Cross** – an Anglian 'high cross', a very tall cross that once stood outside for the purpose of preaching and showing Christian ownership of an area. The cross, now in Ruthwell Church, is very finely carved with scenes from the Bible and an excerpt from the Anglo-Saxon poem 'The Dream of the Rood' written in Anglo-Saxon runes
- **Vikings** – the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century groups of raiders from Scandinavia who tormented settlements across much of the British coastline
- **Scots** – The Scots were an ethnic group originally from the north of Ireland. They emigrated to western Britain in two waves: first in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries to form the first Scottish kingdom of Dal Riada; and second in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries to settle in Galloway
- **Trusty's Hill** – the hillfort site in the Boreland Hills with a Pictish symbol at its entrance. The subject of a current project to investigate its history
- **Boreland Hills** – the low rolling hills between the Fleet and the Boreland Burn
- **Hillfort** – a hilltop settlement of the Iron Age and Dark Ages that was enclosed by defenses of banks and ditches
- **Iron Age** – a prehistoric period from approximately 700 BC to 400 AD in Scotland, defined by the first uses of Iron to create tools
- **Picts** – a group of Dark Age Britons who lived from the Firth of Forth to the Orkneys. They are known for setting up a number of unique symbols stones and elaborate memorials across north-east Scotland
- **Pictish symbols** – a collection of hieroglyphic like animal and geometric symbols that the Picts used on stones. They chose a combination of these symbols perhaps to communicate someone's name or the name of a group like a tribe or chiefdom.
- **Ogham** – A form of Irish script that combine series of lines of different lengths to equal Latin letters
- **Vitrified** – stone that has been melted and cracked through super-heating

## Appendix 2: Further Information

### Helpful Links:

<http://www.gallowaypicts.com>

<http://www.scottisharchaeology.org.uk/?q=node/17>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/archaeology/>

### Further Reading:

**'Discover Dark-Age Galloway'** by the Galloway Picts Project, this leaflet is available in local museums

**'Excavations at Trusty's Hill, Anwoth, Kirkcudbrightshire, 1960'** by Charles Thomas in the Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, Volume 38, p58-70

**Picts, Gaels and Scots** by Sally Foster (published by Historic Scotland)

**Angels, Fools and Tyrants: Britons and the Angles** by Chris Lowe (published by Historic Scotland)

**Saints and Sea Kings** by Ewan Campbell (published by Historic Scotland)

### Extracts of Dark Age Epic Poetry

From **The Battle of Gwen Ystrad** by the bard Taliesin (attributed to late 6th century AD)

Catraeth's men set out at daybreak  
Round a battle-winning lord, cattle-raider.  
Urien, he, renowned chieftain,  
Constrains rulers and cuts them down,  
eager for war, true leader of Christendom.  
Prydain's men, they came in war-bands:  
Gwen Ystrad your base, battle-honer.  
Neither field nor forest shielded,  
Land's protector, your foe when he came.  
Like waves roaring harsh over land  
I saw savage men in war-bands.  
And after morning's fray, torn flesh.  
I saw hordes of invaders dead;  
Joyous, wrathful, the shout one heard.  
Defending Gwen Ystrad one saw  
A thin rampart and lone weary men.  
At the ford I saw men stained with blood  
Down arms before a grey-haired lord.  
They wish peace, for they found the way barred,  
Hands crossed, on the strand, cheeks pallid.  
Their lords marvel at Idon's lavish wine;

Waves wash the tails of their horses.  
I saw pillaging men disheartened,  
And blood spattered on garments,  
And quick groupings, ranks closed, for battle.  
Battle's cloak, he'd no mind to flee,  
Rheged's lord, I marvel, when challenged.  
I saw splendid men around Urien  
When he fought his foes at Llech Wen.  
Routing foes in fury delights him.  
Carry, warriors, shields at the ready;  
Battle's the lot of those who serve Urien.

**From The War-Band's Return** by the bard Taliesin (attributed to late 6th century AD)

Throughout one year  
One steady outflow;  
Wine, Bragget, mead,  
Valour's reward.  
A host of singers,  
A throng around spits,  
Torques round their heads,  
Their places honoured.  
Each went on campaign  
Eager for combat,  
His steed beneath him,  
Making for Manaw  
And greater gain,  
Profit in plenty,  
Eight score, the same colour,  
Of calves and cattle,  
Milch cows and oxen,  
And each of them comely.

Go, fellow, to the door,  
see what's causing commotion.  
Is it earth shaking?  
Is it sea rushing in?  
The chant grows louder  
From marching men:  
Be there foe on hill,  
Urien will shake him;  
Be there foe on hill,  
Urien will strike him;  
Be there foe on mountain,  
Urien conquers him;  
Be there foe on hillside,  
Urien shatters him;

Be there foe in ditch,  
Urien smites him.

**From The Battle of Argoed Llwyfain** by the bard Taliesin (attributed to late 6th century AD)

There was a great battle, Saturday morning,  
From the time the sun rose till it set.  
Fflamddwyn came on, in four war-bands.  
Goddau and Rheged were mustering,  
Summoned men, from Argoed to Arfynydd:  
They were not given one day's delay.  
Fflamddwyn shouted, big at boasting:  
'Have my hostages come? Are they ready?'  
Answered Owain, bane of the east:  
'They've not come, are not here, are not ready,  
And a cub of Coel's line must be pressed  
Hard before he'd render one hostage.'  
Shouted Urien, Lord of Yrechwydd:  
'If a meeting for peace talk's to come,  
Let our shield-wall rise on the mountain,  
And let our faces lift over the rim,  
And let our spears, men, be raised high,  
and let us make for Fflamddwyn amidst his war-bands,  
And let us slay him and his comrades.'  
Before Argoed Llwyfain  
There was many a dead man.  
Crows grew crimsoned from warriors  
And the war-band charged with its chieftain:  
For a year I'll shape song to their triumph.

**From the Fall of Rheged** (attributed to 9th or 10th century AD)

Peaceful breeze on the slope;  
A marvel may well be praised:  
Urien's like will come no more.

Many a lively hound and vigorous hawk  
Were fed on its floor  
Before this place was in ruins.

This hearth, with its blanket of grey,  
More common, once, on its floor  
Mead, and drunken men pleading.

This hearth, nettles hide it:

While its defender was living  
It saw many a suppliant.

This hearth, green sward conceals it,  
When Owain and Elphin lived,  
Its cauldron seethed with prizes.

This hearth, grey moss hides it,  
More common once, for its meat  
A fierce fearless swordstroke.

This hearth, a layer of briers conceals it,  
Blazing trees were its due.  
Rheged had the habit of giving.

This hearth, thorns hide it,  
More common once for its warriors  
The friendly favour of Owain.

This hearth, reeds conceal it,  
More common once were gleaming  
tapers and true companions

This hearth, dock leaves hide it,  
More common once on its floor  
Mead and drunken men pleading

This hearth, a hog roots it,  
More common once men making  
merry and mirth over mead horns

This hearth, a hen pecks it,  
Hardship could do no harm  
While Owain and Elphin lived.

This pillar here and that one there,  
More common once around them  
War-band's revels and path to reward.

**From Beowulf** (attributed to 8th century AD)

**Beowulf and his Geat warriors fight Grendel, the Nightstalker in Hrothgar's great mead hall.**

Came then striding in the night  
the walker of darkness.  
In that gabled hall  
the warriors slept,

those who guarded the hall. . .  
all but one.

It was well known among men  
that, if God willed it not,  
no one could drag  
that demon to the shadows.  
But Beowulf watched  
in anger, waiting  
the battle's outcome.

Came then from the moor  
under the misty hills  
Grendel stalking under  
the weight of God's anger.  
That wicked ravager  
planned to ensnare  
many of the race of men  
in the high hall.

He strode under the clouds,  
seeking eagerly, till he came to  
the wine-hall, the treasure-hall  
of men decorated in gold.  
Nor was it the first time he  
had sought Hrothgar's home.  
But never in his life before  
--or since--  
did he find worse luck!

Came then to the building  
that creature bereft of joys.  
When he touched it with his hands  
the door gave way at once  
though its bands were forged  
in fire. Intending evil,  
enraged, he swung the door wide,  
stood at the building's mouth.  
Quickly the foe moved  
across the well-made floor,  
in an angry mood--a horrible light,  
like fire, in his eyes.  
He saw the many warriors in the building,  
that band of kinsmen asleep  
together, and his spirit laughed:  
that monster expected  
to rip life from the body of each  
one before morning came.

He expected a plentiful meal.  
(It was his fate  
that he eat no more  
of the race of men  
after that night. . .)

The mighty one, Beowulf, watched,  
waiting to see how that wicked one  
would go about starting.  
Nor did the wretch delay,  
but set about seizing  
a sleeping warrior unawares  
and bit into his bone locks,  
drinking the streams of blood,  
then swallowing huge morsels  
of flesh. Quickly he ate that man,  
even to his hands and feet.

Forward Grendel came,  
stepping nearer. Then  
he reached for Beowulf.

Beowulf grasped his arm  
and sat up. The criminal  
knew he had not met  
in this middle-earth  
another with such a grip.  
Grendel's spirit was afraid  
and his heart eager  
to get away, to flee  
to his hiding place, flee  
to the devils he kept  
for company. Never had he met  
a man such as this.

The din rose louder, the Danes stood  
in dreadful terror--everyone  
heard lamentation, a terrifying  
song, through the wall:  
Grendel, Hell's friend,  
God's enemy, sang in defeat,  
bewailing his wound.  
That man, mightiest  
of warriors alive, held fast.  
He would not  
for any reason  
allow his murderous visitor

to escape alive,  
to keep the days of his life.

Beowulf's warriors brandished  
many a sword, inheritances  
from the ancient days,  
trying to protect their chief,  
but that did no good: they  
could not have known, those  
brave warriors as they fought,  
striking from all sides, seeking  
to take Grendel's soul, that  
no battle sword could harm him--  
he had enchantment against  
the edges of weapons.

The end of Grendel's life was  
miserable, and he would travel  
far into the hands of fiends.  
Grendel, the foe of God, who had  
long troubled the spirits of men  
with his crimes, found that  
his body could not stand against  
the hand grip of that warrior.

Each was hateful to the other  
alive. The horrible monster endured  
a wound: the bone-locks  
of his shoulder gave way,  
and his sinews sprang out.  
The glory of battle went to  
Beowulf, and Grendel,  
mortally wounded,  
sought his sad home  
under the fen slope.  
He knew surely that  
his life had reached its end,  
the number of his days gone.

**From The Dream of the Rood as read on the Ruthwell Cross**

God almighty stripped himself,  
when he wished to climb the cross  
bold before all men.  
to bow I dared not,  
but had to stand firm

I held high the great King,

heaven's Lord. I dared not bend.  
Men mocked us both together.  
I was slick with blood  
sprung from the man's side.

Christ was on the cross.  
But then quick ones came from afar,  
nobles, all together. I beheld it all.  
I was hard hit with grief; I bowed to warriors' hands.

Wounded with spears,  
they laid him, limb-weary.  
At his body's head they stood.  
There they looked to heaven's Lord

# Pictish Symbols

Combine in two's or three's to create a 'signature'

The symbols and animals are arranged in a grid as follows:

- Row 1 (left to right):** Goose, Bull, Eagle, Fish (salmon), Wolf, Horse, Bear, Serpent (snake), Beast (? or dolphin).
- Row 2 (left to right):** Disc and rectangle (sun disc), Crescent and V-rod (arrow), Arrow, Sun disc, Triple Oval (bronze armet), Arch (bronze collar), Notched rectangle (shield or book cover) and Z-rod (chariot) cross bar, Double disc and Z-rod (swathe of cloth), S-shaped figure, Triple disc and Triple disc and cross bar (cauldron).
- Row 3 (left to right):** Comb and mirror, Flower (bronze strip), S-shaped figure, Triple disc and cross bar (cauldron).

Below the grid, there are several rows of symbols and animals that have been combined into 'signatures':

- Row 4:** A vertical sword, a notched rectangle with a Z-rod, a sun disc with a comb and mirror, a hammer, a pair of scissors, and a J-shaped symbol.
- Row 5:** A crescent and V-rod, an arch, a triple oval, a swathe of cloth, a notched rectangle with a Z-rod, a double disc with a Z-rod, a rectangle with a Z-rod, and a vertical zig-zag.
- Row 6:** A sun disc, a triple oval, a disc with a spiral, a triple disc, a notched rectangle with a Z-rod, a sun disc with a crescent, a crescent with a fish, and a crescent with a fish.