

I A I N W D F O R D E

C H E P T O U R F O W R E

## The Holy Cross

Circa 650 AD the Pict stone carvings, that had until that time been so distinctive, began to be influenced by Christian Scots and Northumbrian styles. This was to be expected, because of the increasing interconnection of the nations. Columba had gained permission from Brud, king of the northern Picts to evangelise in his lands, and later, at about the time of this story, a king of the Picts had a Northumbrian father. This did not result in a diminution of skill in the carving nor did it result in the warrior-like nature of the Picts being reduced. This was demonstrated in AD 685 at the significant battle of Nechtansmere where the Northumbrians were defeated by the Picts, thus forming a clear boundary at the Firth of Forth.

*Quod Iain Forde*

## The Halie Ruid

Barbar wes geyan cantie. The loch wes lik a meirour. The huls roun an about wes reflekkit in ilk parteiklaritie on the face o the wattir. The gryte powls at uphauddit the crannog cuid be sein santin doun inti the gowden peitie deips. As he hingit out owre the pailin he'l cuid sei hiz ain faiss gantin uplins at him. He gied hissell a waff an the eimage waffit bak. Barbar hed a quik glisk owre hiz shouther ti mak siccar hiz faither wesna waachin. Hiz faither wes a verra releigious man at hauddit ti the auld beleiff at the eftir warl wes doun ablo the wattir. Ti him the reflekkin meirour wes the mairch atwein this warl an the neist an passin throu wes a sairious maitter ti be traitit wi ceremonie. Waffin at yer ain eimage wesna cannie.

Ti amaise the godes he poukit a tait o theik frae the eisins abune hiz heid an drappit the straes intil the wattir wi a whuspert Pecht

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orisioun. The straes tuik a wie bittie tym ti flait down intil the loch, an whan thai strak the face o't Barbar sein thai hed furmed a corss. The laddie thocht naethin o'd. The lad wes in a rale guid bon an wes gaun ti enjose ilka saicont o this lown an sunnie day, leirin frae hiz faither the craift at thair failmie hed follaed fur generautiouns. Thai wes Pecht maissons an kervit the stanes at merkit the importand meiths at thair fowk erekkit ti eveit sturt an stryfe atwein neipours. Bot thai nivver kent whitlik thai wuid be makkin neist; picturs o huntin, battailies, keings ir weirriours, as weill as the saicret Pecht merkins, at the maissons kent frae langsyne. Than ti schaw thair skeill, the wes the tweistin, lowpin stane decorements at gaed in an out atwein the eimages, roun the rimms an whussil owre the lave o'd. Thusgates the stanes telt the warl whitlik a bauld naitioun wes the Pecht lede.

The Pechts wes mibbies a derf fowk, feirt o nane an feirt bi aw, bot kervin stanes in lown wedder wes mair lichtsum ti'm nir dargin awaw in renn, win ir freist. Sae on sicna braw day Barbar hed a spang in hiz staup. Ye'l unnerstaun at the stanes thai kervit wes pit intil poseitioun afoir thai wes decored, sae the maissons aye hed ti traivel a fair bittie, bot on this occasioun the wark wes nerr-haun an the twasum wes sune chappin awaw, Thai wes uised ti fowk cummin ti vissie the wark, bot this day thai gat nae saucht ti dae thair yokin. The Cheif o thair clan wes ane auld frein o Barbar's faither an he kythit erest wi a whein wichts wi'm as fittit hiz hade. Eftir greittin thaim weill the cheif telt thaim at the Keing o the Norlins Pechts wes expekkit ti cum an gie thaim a rair the verra mornin. Barbar's faither kent the Keing asweill, sae he jaloused at he wes juist on hiz gate ti a hunt ir hawkin fur sport in the aurrie. Bot he wesna.

Whan the Keing wun by he hed hiz uiswal weirmen an sairvents, bot along wi thaim wes the Quene o the Norlin Pechts wi hir menyie o leddies It med a braw sicht on sicna bonie mornin. Also wi the Quene wes ane o the Kildie Brithers. The Quene wes kent ti be a Chreistiane. The preist cam forrit an skansed the kervins rinnin hiz fingirs owre the rimm o the eimages. The Pecht maissons wes a bittie affrontit ti hae this stryngge buddie, cled in hodden gray an wi hiz shavit powe glentin

in the sunn luikin at thair wark in sicna creiticall mainner. Bot ye didna speik afoir the Keing hed spak sae thai hauddit thair wheist. “Wul he dae?” says the Keing ti the Kildie.

“Aye. He’l dae,” sayed the Brither. The Keing o the Pechts nou explened. “This is Brither Adomnan frae Colum’s insch. He hes priggit at ma guidwyfe ti tak a ying Pecht maisson tae thon eyl fur ti leir whitwey ti kerve ruids. Thusgates whan shae wissis ti up-pit a nyow kirk ir merk a halie plece we wul hae the richt kinna corss. A ken weill at, lik masell, ye haud ti wir auld Pecht godes. The laddie winna be forrsit ti chynge, bot in course he mote weill leir anent the Christiane releigioun.”

“Dinna fash,” sayed Barbar straucht out. “A wul be blyth ti leir onie nyow skeill, bot A winna tyne ma faimlie feth.” The Kildie luikit at Barbar a bit shairp-lik. He wesna uised ti laddies at reponed afoir thai wes speired at. The Pechts didna notish tho. Thai wes uised ti bauld laddies at kent thair ain mynd. In fak the Quene luikit weill leised on Barbar.

“He’l dae verra weill,” shae sayed.

Wi a gaird o the Keing’s sojers the Kildie an Barbar set awaw owre the muntanes ti the laun o the Gallik fowk. At the mairch, the sojers gaed hamewith, itherwyss the Scots fowk mote bene fleggit an thoct the wes sum kinna tribbil ahaun. Oniegates, the cottars wes that leised on sei-in Adomnan, fur thai wes aw Christianes an socht hiz blissin, at thai maistlie gat a convoy ti the neist clachan. This wes a kintra divyded bi sie lochs sae mukkil bits o the jurnay wes bi boit oniegates. Barbar fair enjosed ilka mament o the vaige, fur he wes pang-fu o virr an hed the crousenes o youthheid. Whan thai wun ti Colum’s Eyl he sune sein at the wes a mukkil differ atwein the Kildies’ wark an thon o the Pechts. The Hailie Brithers kervit thair ruids flett on the grun, than tirmed it owre ti kerve the ither syde. Bot aften the stane hed an awte an ane o the airms o the corss brak aff whan thai wes cowpin it. Thai didna wyte thair prattik. Thai thoct it wes the wull o Gode an juist stertit owre agane. As A telt ye, the Pechts erekkit the stane erest, than kerved it, an furby thai wuid fit the desing ti the stane, no the ither wey about.

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The wes ither conters. Barbar uised Pecht paittrens an eimages bot the Kildies didna allou thon. The picturs hed ti be o angells ir sancts an the laddie kent nocht o sicna fremm buddies. Hiz ither warl wes ablo the mirk wattir o lochs an stanks, no in the lift abune the westernes o Palestyne. Sae the Pecht idaias wes aye etlin ti wun forrit in hiz hauns an hert.

As Barbar darged awaw wi the Brithers he cam ti sei at he'l cuid dae mukkil mair wirk nir thai duin, kiz thai wes aye slopin aff ti pray. Whan thai retoured Barbar's chesell hed aft taen a wie bit stravaig inti curlie-wurlies an pirlicucles o a Pecht kinkeind. The Kildies bot cloured thaim aff an stertit owre wi thair ain decorements. Sune he wes seik o dae-in bot a ruid on ae syde an Jesus on the ither, parteikularlie whan the ruid brak as thai ettilt ti heize it up. The auld Pecht sinakil o a circuil at stuid fur the saisons roun cam inti hiz ei. Whan thai begoud ti blok out the neist ruid, Barbar tuik the cauk an drauchtit sicna reing on the stane in a mainner at jyned the airms o the corss thegither. The Brithers waached fur a wie, than ane daunnert aff ti fess Adomnan.

"Whitlik ar ye dae-in nou?" he speired. Barbar telt him.

"Gin ye kerve a rouall atwein the airms lik A hae schawn, the stane wul be mair strang. Furby it wul luik lik a broch abune the heid o Jesus." He didna awn at it menit a curn ither things ti the Pechts. Adomnan skartit hiz powe, than he knelit doun an prayed. Aw the ither Brithers boued thair hochs whyle Barbar stuid an wyted.

"A hae spak ti Colum an he says gie it a shottie," annunced Adomnan, rasin til hiz feit. Thusgates the erest Celtik corrs wes kervit on the Eyl o Colum. Eftir thon, the brithers let chappin aff Barbar's paittrens an stertit ti copie thaim instead.

In sicna mainner wes the skulptur o the Scots melled wi thon o the Pechts. Bot the twa naitiouns wes sune ti be knittit thegither in anither wey. Barbar biggit a bit boit sae at he cuid gang owre ti ither inschis at liggit roun an about Colum's Eyl, sae at he cuid veisit the guid fowk at bad thare, kiz the Kildies wes owre thrang wi thair hailie prattiks ti be yibbil ti sing an daunss ir dae onie o the things at ying fowk enjose. It wesna lang or he waled a bonie lass an the bonie

lass, waled him. Barbar leirit the Gallik tung nae baither an the twasum sauled about in hiz boitie, an blethert anent the fuither, as happie as twa laveroks i the lift. Ae day thai wes surprised bi a skelp o win an baith the twa o'm hed ti laun on Colum's Eyl. Barbar wes leised on gie-in ane innins ti the Kildies o hiz lass, bot thai wesna verra walcummin. The neist day, eftir the lass wes sauf hame, Adomnan gied Barbar a rair whyle he wes dae-in hiz yokin on a ruid.

"A'm telt at ye ar winchin a Scots lassikie," begoud the hailie man, wiouten onie let. Barbar telt him o thair planns ti be mairried.

"Ye'l canna byde heir onie langer gif thur is whitlik ye propone. We canna hae bairns an siclik rinnin aw owre wir sanctuar. Ye hae leirit the craift ye cam ti leir. Now ye'l can gang hamelins wi wir blissin as mairriet man an wyfe." An thai gaed, bot Barbar tuik hiz ain boitie an in a whylie sauled up Loch Ness, eftir a hantil aventurs, ti hiz hame in the laun o the Norlin Pechts.

The wes a fair bit o a walcum fur the twasum. Bot whan it wes owre the ying maission an hiz faither gat yokit inti kervin the ertest o the nyow styall o ruid. Ye'l can jalouse at it cam ti be mair Pecht-lik nir thur at Barbar kervit on Colum's Eyl bot it wes clairlie a ruid wi the rouall ontilt an a pictur o Jesus on the frunt. Sune the Quene wun roun ti hae a keik. Shae wes maist freinlie ti the ying maission an speired eftir hiz guidwyfe, fur shae a hard at he hed mairriet on a Christiane lass an gied thaim hir blissin. The Quene telt Barbar at shae wissed him ti gang ti Portmahomak an leir the Kildies thare-about the lessons he hed leirit. That wes whan the argil-bargils stertit. The Brithers wes no verra wullin ti tak a tellin frae ane onbelever an wuidna dae oniething richt. Sae Barbar hed ti kerve a mukkil ruid aw hissell ti schaw thaim whitwey ti dae it. Thai clyped ti the Quene an sune ilkane wes intertrykin in the desing. The Quene wissed ti gar hir Brithers inti skeillie maissons sae at thai cuid erek haillie ruids skailed aw owre the keingryke decored wi stores frae the Bybil. Bot aw thai socht ti dae wes fecht wi thair ain taes. Shae priggit at the Keing o the Norlin Pechts ti cum by an pit a stap tilt.

Whan the Keing wun by he wesna in a verra guid bon. He wesna

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uised ti fowk argillin wi him. Maistlie he sattilt cangils wi hiz swuird, sae whan the Brithers stertit ti debait ilk eirieorum he wes fit ti brust wi raptur. Barbar sein the puir Quene wes geyan tribbilt. Shae keppt hiz ei, lik shae wes priggin fur halp. Barbar thocht o ane idaia an whuspert til hiz faither. The auld maisson wes weill kent ti the Keing as a leill Pecht o the auld skuil an traistit ti gie soun avysins. Whan he spak, the Keing leistent.

“The wey forrit is ti stell the gibbil-gabbil an gang ti wirk. Gif the Halie Brithers hae the blissin o thair Gode, thai maun prevele.” He didna eik on the conter, at gif the Pecht maissons wes mair poustie it wuidna luik guid fur the Freirs. The Quene nid-noddit ti hir guid-man an the Keing gied ordours at baith pairties wes ti dae a corss fur him ti vizzie at the enn o the saison. The puir Brithers wes in ane awfie fankil. Ivverrie ruid thai stertit brak ir spleit ae wey ir ither. Barbar feillit sairie fur’m an socht ti gie thaim a heize bi blokkin out shaps at wuid stey in the ae pece. Bot the’r nae substitut fur expairience an the Brithers wes hae-in a sair struissil wi thair nyow craift.

Whyle Barbar wes halpin the Brithers hiz faither wes breingin on wi a mukkil stane at he hed fand a bittie along the rodd. Frae ae enn til ither he hed kivvert it wi kervins o hiz favourit subjek, weir an weirriours. Barbar wes mismayed whan he sein it bot he sayed nocht, no wissin ti criticeise hiz faither. He hedna baithert wi the airms o the corss, nivvermynd the rouall. Sae the ying man swallaed hiz commends an kerved a Saviour on the bak as best he cuid.

Sune the tid wun roun fur the Keing an Quene ti veisit. Wi a guid bittie halp the Freirs hed manished ti pit thegither a ruid wi the rouall i the centir at didna faw apairt whan ye luikit at it. The decorements wes a whein roch bot whan the Quene sein it shae wes settified wi’d. Bot whan the Keing speired ti sei the Pecht’s ruid he wes telt at it wes owre mukkil ti shift an at he wuid hae ti gang along the rodd. Whan he wun ti the spat whaur the enorm stane stuid up frae the grun lik a michtie aik he wes seilent fur a wie. Barbar sein the Keing wes haein a wie bit greit til hissell, than he gied Barbar’s faither a clapp on hiz riggin.

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“Ye ar a leil Pecht, Sueno, an this stane wul staun lang ti mynd fowk o’d.” Than he tirmed awaw sae at nane wuid sei the Keing o the Norlin Pechts wes murnin the enn o ane auld sang. Eftir this tyme, the laun o the Pechts wes belaiggert wi Celtic ruids, tho A’m blythe ti awn at the auld eimages tuik a guid whylie ti wede awaw.

### N A P I E R ’ S N O T T

The Pechts hed a kinch. The Drewits, at wes thair releigious an pheilosophicall ledars, beveled in verball menes ti pas on infur-mautioun. The Chreistiane Scots hed Kildie preists at wrate doun thair histore, fur thair releigioun wes steidit on buik leir. (Afoir the Drewits the auld fowk fordellit up thair knowlege in stane, bi arreingin henges an licht chaumers, furby makkin racords on bulders wi caup an reing merks.) Housomdevir the Preists an Brithers wes yibbil ti tel a store anent the Pechts an Scots at favourit the letter. In the keing leits thai descreived Pecht keings as Scots ti gie a heize ti thair ain ryal failmies. Bot gif ye gang baklins ti the Ulster Annalls ye git a mair fair pictur o the gradwal chynge frae ae strind til ither. Tho A rek at ae politie owrecam the ither bi siclik menes, in course the wes the uiswal bluid skailed, furby. The tyme at Gallik tuik owre frae the Pecht speik as the main langage lestit aroun thrie hunner an fyftie eir, frae aroun Constantin Saicont, eirs 900-943, ti the tid of the Weir o Benevolence an Rubbert the First, eirs 1306-29. Eftir thon the Scots langage wes the heid langage, cryed Inglis in the aire days. Regairdin the styall o kervin, it growit thegither sae at Pecht, Scots an Northummerlaun styalls wes aw melled thegither in the samen mainner at the fowk wes k’nit inti the ae naitioun.

*Quod Napier*