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Article:
Rye, Eleanor (2019) A New Runic Inscription from Sockburn Hall, County Durham: E 19 Sockburn. Futhark: International Journal of Runic Studies. pp. 89-110. ISSN: 1892-0950

https://doi.org/10.33063/diva-385701

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A New Runic Inscription from Sockburn Hall, County Durham: E 19 Sockburn

Eleanor Rye (University of York)

Abstract
In May 2014, a previously unknown runic inscription was recognised by a team of academics and doctoral students visiting Sockburn Hall, County Durham. Sockburn was an important ecclesiastical centre as early as the eighth century, and an outstanding collection of stone sculpture of Viking Age and later medieval date is witness to the continued importance of the site in later centuries. The fragmentary inscription is in Viking Age Scandinavian runes and is interpreted here as part of a memorial inscription in Viking Age Norse. The inscription has marked similarities with inscriptions from the Isle of Man, including the use of the word **krus** 'cross' and parallels between the rune forms of the inscription and those of inscriptions from the Isle of Man. The occurrence of the Goidelic personal name *Máel Muire* in the memorial inscription is further evidence for links with the Irish Sea region. This is an important discovery, demonstrating the existence of a Norse-speaking community with links to the Irish Sea region at or near Sockburn in the tenth or early eleventh century.

Keywords: Scandinavian runes, runestone, Sockburn (County Durham), find report, Viking Age, **krus** (ON *kross*), (parallels with) Isle of Man

Place and circumstances of discovery

The inscription discussed here was found by a team of academics and doctoral students visiting Sockburn Hall in May 2014. The team consisted of Nik Gunn, Jane Harrison, Heather O'Donoghue, Jo Shortt Butler, Pragya Vohra and the author, participants in the "Languages, Myths and Finds" Collaborative Skills Development Programme funded by the Arts

Rye, Eleanor. "A New Runic Inscription from Sockburn Hall, County Durham: E 19 Sockburn." *Futhark: International Journal of Runic Studies* 8 (2017, publ. 2019): 89–110.
DOI: 10.33063/diva-385701

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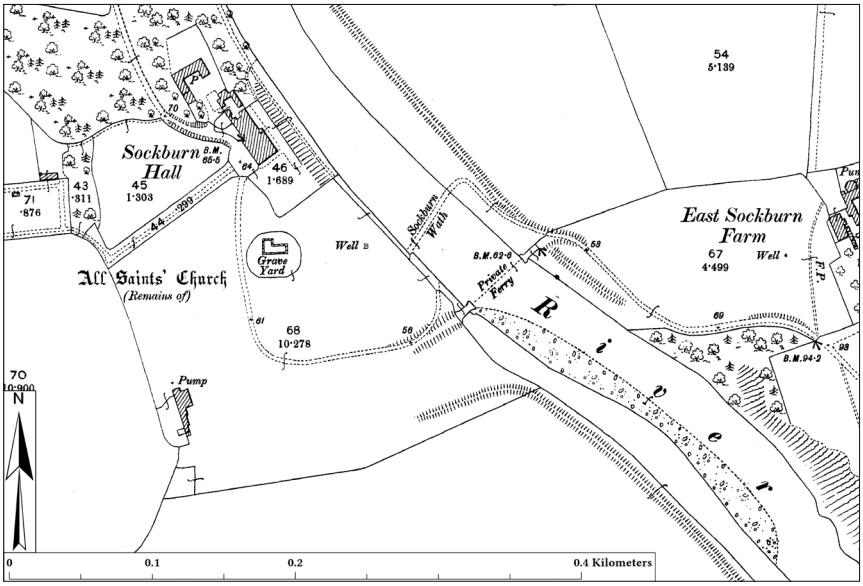

Fig. 1. Sockburn Hall and All Saints' Church. Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series, 1st Revision (1898), obtained through the EDINA Historic Digimap Service, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk>. © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited (2018). All rights reserved.

and Humanities Research Council of the United Kingdom. The inscription is, alongside E 8 Skelton-in-Cleveland, only the second securely identified inscription in Scandinavian runes from north-east England.[1] By the time of our visit, the inscribed stone fragment had been placed in Conyers Chapel (National Grid Reference: NZ 34980 07113), the restored chapel on the north side of the otherwise ruinous church of All Saints that houses an important collection of medieval stone sculpture (fig. 1).[2] It was apparent from traces of damp soil and the dampness of the stone that the fragment had been unearthed not long before our visit, and it was suggested that the stone might have been unearthed during one of the weekends in

[1] A lost stone built into a (now rebuilt) church wall at Thornaby-on-Tees, North Riding of Yorkshire, was identified as bearing a runic inscription in the mid-nineteenth century by George Stephens, but whether this was ever a runic inscription (Scandinavian or otherwise) is unclear (Page 1971, 168; 2001, 96; Barnes and Page 2006, 24).

[2] The coordinates in the Scandinavian Runic Text Database (*Samnordisk runtextdatabas*) refer unfortunately to a ruin that is not All Saints/Conyers Chapel. Went and Jecock (2007, figs 20–23) give plans of Sockburn's archaeological features.

which volunteers carried out gardening and other maintenance work at Sockburn Hall, perhaps in November 2013 (see http://sockburn.blogspot.co.uk/ [accessed 22 Nov. 2015] for details of this and other "Working Weekends"). A representative of Sockburn Hall suggested that the fragment might have been discovered in the western side of the grounds of Conyers Chapel at the base of a lime tree that was being removed. The placement of the fragment in Conyers Chapel indicates that the fragment was recognised as significant by the finder, although it was apparently not recognised as bearing a runic inscription. The lack of recognition of the inscription as runic is most likely evidence in favour of the inscription being a genuine Viking Age runic inscription rather than a modern forgery. The runic fragment may have a similar provenance to the sculpture from Sockburn, much of which was probably incorporated into the church fabric before the church's deliberate ruination in 1838, with some pieces also built into a churchyard wall (Knowles 1896–1905, 104 and 110–13; Cramp 2010, 14; Surtees 1823, 249, n. 30; Went and Jecock 2007, 14 f.).[3] The inscription is unfortunately now missing, having been stolen from Conyers Chapel in late 2015 or early 2016, but was inspected by participants in the Nottingham Rune Rede (7 March 2015) and others before its disappearance.

Like other Scandinavian runic inscriptions on stone from northern England (E 1 Bridekirk, E 3 Carlisle, E 6 Dearham, E 8 Skelton-in-Cleveland and (*)E 11 Conishead[4]) and many of those from the Isle of Man (see Page 1978–81, esp. 189–93), the inscription is associated with an ecclesiastical site. Sockburn is likely to be the place known as *æt Soccabyrig*, the location of the consecration of Bishop Hygebald of Lindisfarne in 780, and the [*monasterium*] *quod dicitur Sochasburg* ('monastery that is called *Sochasburg*') that was the site of the archiepiscopal consecration of Eanbald of York in 796 (Arnold 1882–85, 2: 58; Hodges 1894, 69 f.; Knowles 1896–1905, 99; Cubbin 1996, 16 and 18; Irvine 2004, 41–43).[5] Sockburn is

[3] See also the brief description of a bear's head found in fallen masonry during repairs to the chancel arch in 2005 at http://www.keystothepast.info/article/10339/Site-Details?PRN=D8987 (reference D8987; accessed 15 Jan. 2018).

[4] The Conishead Priory inscription was recently rediscovered in English Heritage stores at Helmsley (http://furnesshiddenheritage.blogspot.co.uk/2017/02/snapshot-series-conishead-runes.html, accessed 12 Jan. 2018). I would like to thank Alex Sutherland for informing me about the blog entry.

[5] The identification of *æt Soccabyrig* and *Sochasburg* with the church at Sockburn has been questioned (Cambridge 1984, 69; Stocker 2000, 203, n. 12); however, the forms *æt Soccabyrig* and *Sochasburg* are entirely consistent with early forms of the place-name *Sockburn* (Watts 2007, 199 f.).

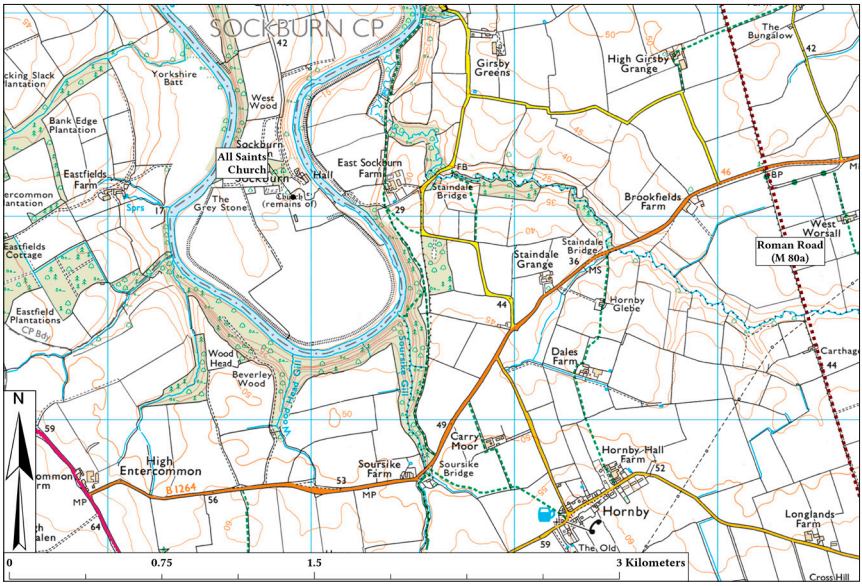

Fig. 2. Sockburn and its surroundings. Ordnance Survey 1:25000 Scale Colour Raster [TIFF geospatial data], tile: nz30, updated December 2017, Ordnance Survey (GB), using: EDINA Digimap Ordnance Survey Service, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk>. © Crown Copyright and Database Right (2018) OS (Digimap Licence).

close to a Roman road connecting York with Durham via Stamford Bridge and Thirsk which crossed the Tees in nearby Dinsdale (Margary 1973, 432 [M 80a]; fig. 2). The section of the road running through Dinsdale and Girsby now survives only in short stretches, but fourteenth-century accounts refer to a bridge at Ponteesbridge as a viable crossing for people travelling between Durham and York (Harvey 2005, 125). It is possible that the proximity of Sockburn to this route was a factor in its use for eighth-century consecrations (Cramp 2010, 8).[6] A ford known as the "Sockburn Wath" (NZ 35078 07153), still apparently in use for driving stock across the river, would connect Sockburn with this route (Went and Jecock 2007, 36 and 40; fig. 1). A record in Leland's *Itinerary* (c. 1535–43) of a *trajectus over Tese to Sokbourne* ('crossing over (the) Tees to Sockburn') three miles (4.8 km) from Smeaton Bridge must refer either to this crossing or to

[6] Cambridge (1989, 380–86) suggests a series of estates along this route might have served the Community of St Cuthbert as waystations, but does not consider Sockburn one of these.

another nearby that would link Sockburn to this and other routes leading south (Toulmin Smith 1906–10, 1: 68).

There is, however, no known physical evidence for a church at Sockburn before the tenth century. Architectural features of the nave of the ruined church of All Saints suggest that parts of the building are of pre-Conquest origin (Hodges 1894, 69–71; Knowles 1896–1905, 104). However, features diagnostic of a seventh- or eighth-century date, as suggested by Taylor and Taylor by comparison with the seventh- or eighth-century church at Escomb, are lacking (Taylor and Taylor 1965–78, 555 f.; Went and Jecock 2007, 9 f.; Cramp 2010, 11 f.). The foundations of a chancel within the present church (excavated by Knowles c. 1900) are datable to the later tenth or eleventh century by the use of tenth-century cross shafts, one dated to c. 950–75 by Cramp (Knowles 1896–1905, 104 f. and 110–13; Cramp 1984, 1: 138 f., nos. 7–8; Went and Jecock 2007, 10). The important assemblage of stone sculpture housed in Conyer's Chapel, including several pieces with Anglo-Scandinavian forms and motifs, similarly dates from the late ninth or tenth century and later. Further information and references to earlier scholarship concerning the twenty-three surviving pieces of stone sculpture from Sockburn datable to the period from the late ninth/early tenth century to the late eleventh century can be found in the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture* (Cramp 1984, 1: 135–44, 154); the *Corpus* also gives details of a further two or three pieces recorded around the turn of the twentieth century that cannot now be identified (ibid., 156).

Description

The fragment is c. 22 cm by c. 16 cm by c. 9 cm with the inscription found in two lines on one of the c. 22 cm by c. 16 cm faces (fig. 3). Being a fragment, the original orientation of the piece and its text is unknown, and it is possible the text should be envisaged as running vertically up or down a cross shaft (see below). Dr Charles Bendall, geologist, examined the fragment in August 2014 and what follows is based on his report on the fragment (Charles Bendall, personal communication, Sept. 2014). The fragment is a fine to medium grained quartzitic sandstone of type quartz arenite, which is atypical of local building stone; the stone may have come from the Pennine Middle Coal measure, but the precise source of the stone could not be identified with certainty without further testing. The brown colour of the fragment when examined and photographed is due to surface staining, but the original lighter brown colour could be seen where the stone has been scratched more recently; however, staining

Fig. 3. E 19 Sockburn. Photo © Jane Harrison.

on the broken faces indicates that the breakage is not recent. Bendall suspected that the thickness of the fragment reflects the formation of the stone in natural slabs.

Line A of the inscription is within framing lines. Line B has no visible upper framing line, but is bounded by the edge of the stone. Parts of the inscription have been lost where the stone has been broken off at each end; there is additional damage to one of the c. 22 cm by c. 9 cm faces, which extends onto the face bearing the inscription. The runes are between 4 and 5 cm high and, damage aside, are well preserved; two vertical dots separate words (and in one instance, personal name elements). The surviving runes, in two lines of which line A is most likely to be read before line B (as discussed below), read:

B. ... (i) ᚱ : ᛘ ᚬ ᛚ : ᛘ ᚢ ...
... **(i) r : m o l : m u** ...
10 15

A. ... ᛁ ᛁ ᛏ (i) : ᚴ ᚱ ᚢ ᛁ : * ...
... **i s t (i) : k r u s** : * ...
5

Fortunately, damage to the face of the inscription affecting line A does not impede identification of the surviving runes. Only the upper two-thirds of the first character of the line (r. 1) remain, but it can be identified as ᛁ with confidence as there is no sign of a branch. Indications of a dot on the second rune of the line (r. 2) suggest ᚿ; ᚾ is perhaps a formal possibility, but is unlikely in the context of the interpretation offered below. The leftward sloping branch of ᛚ permits identification of the third rune of the line (r. 3). The reading of r. 4 as ᛁ is more conjectural as less of the rune survives, but context again makes this reading likely. The section of the four characters (rr. 5–8) following the first set of separation points on the lower line is straightforward as this section of the inscription is less damaged and ᚴᚱᚢᚿ (the latter's dot fairly pronounced) can be read. A final vertical can be seen after the second set of separation points in the lower line, but damage to this part of the inscription prevents identification of the character. In line B there are seven identifiable runes: ᛁ and ᚱ, followed by separation points, a further three runes ᛘ, ᚼ and ᛚ, a second set of separation points and another two runes ᛘ and ᚢ. Damage to the beginning of line B is found to the left of the vertical of r. 10, meaning that r. 10 could perhaps possibly be ᛚ, but this is unlikely in the context of the interpretation given below. It is also possible that the bottom of a vertical can be seen before the first rune identified in this line, but this may instead be part of the breakage at the beginning of the inscription. It has been suggested that the fourth rune (r. 13) could be the Anglo-Saxon rune ᚫ (i.e. **æ**), but the extension of the vertical above the two downward-sloping branches and the lack of other rune forms with specifically Anglo-Saxon characteristics in the inscription mean ᚼ is to be preferred.

The surviving text is short and there are consequently limitations to how far the characters used can be assigned to a particular date or tradition. However, there are indications that the rune forms used have less in common with most of the Scandinavian inscriptions from England than with those from the Isle of Man, the majority of which are dated to c. 930–c. 1020 on art historical grounds (although runological and linguistic features are less easy to reconcile with the earlier part of this date range; Olsen 1954, 153; Page 1983; Barnes 2013). Three of the runes used in the Sockburn text occur in significant variant forms in inscriptions from the British Isles, ᚼ, ᚿ, and ᛚ.[7] Disregarding the distinction between ᛁ

[7] There is apparently no evidence for any form other than ᛘ being used for **m** in the British Isles (Olsen, 1954; Cubbon 1966; Barnes 1994; Barnes, Hagland and Page 1997, 6 f.; Barnes and Page, 2006; Barnes 2010; Daubney 2010; Barnes 2016). (The form ᛚ used in SC 11 can be inferred to stand for /s/.)

and ᚿ, these forms are used in nearly all the inscriptions from the Isle of Man where the relevant runes occur. The exceptions are two texts that have other features unusual in the Manx corpus, MM 130 Kirk Michael III in which long-branch forms of **s** (ᛋ) and **t** (ᛏ) are used, and MM 142 Maughold IV in which **ǫ** is ᚼ and **t** is ᛏ (Olsen 1954, 205–08 and 215–17). (The verb choices *setja* 'to place, to set' and *rista* 'to carve' in MM 142 also differ from usage in the rest of the Manx corpus and show similarities with East Scandinavian usage [Page 1983, 137].) Sockburn's forms also agree in all respects with the rune forms used in E 15 Penrith, a futhark inscription on a brooch of late-ninth- or early-tenth-century type with an Irish Sea distribution (Richardson 1996, 35 f.).

Sockburn's rune forms are not so closely paralleled elsewhere in England. With the exception of E 16 Lincoln II, which has short-twig forms of **s** and **t**, inscriptions from southern England (E 2 London St Paul's, E 12 Winchester and E 13 St Albans I) and eastern England (E 4 Lincoln I and E 18 Saltfleetby) use long-branch forms of **s** and **t** where the runes occur (Daubney 2010; Hines 2017, 119 f.). The form ᚾ for **ǫ**/**o** is usual in the southern group (suspected rather than certain in E 12 Winchester), but it is ᛨ in the eastern group's E 4 Lincoln I, and ᚼ in E 8 Skelton and E 18 Saltfleetby (Daubney 2010). To an extent, the differences between Sockburn and the southern and eastern groups' forms may reflect different traditions, the southern group and E 4 Lincoln I and E 18 Saltfleetby resembling Danish practices (cf. Barnes and Page 2006, 52 f. and 58 f.). Although geographically intermediate between the Irish Sea and Sockburn, rune forms in the remaining inscriptions from Cumbria (i.e. other than E 15 Penrith) do not closely resemble those of the Sockburn inscription, which is likely to reflect the later (twelfth- and thirteenth-century) dates of these Cumbrian inscriptions (cf. Barnes and Page 2006, 59 f.). Short-twig **s** is almost universal in inscriptions from Cumbria (E 1 Bridekirk, E 3 Carlisle, E 11 Conishead), only E 9 Pennington using long-branch **s**. However, forms of **t** and **ǫ**/**o** show more variation. Long-branch forms of **t** are widespread, with both long-branch and short-twig forms used in E 3 Carlisle I and E 11 Conishead and only E 17 Carlisle II exclusively using the short-twig form (Barnes 2010); ᚾ is found for **ǫ**/**o** in E 1 Bridekirk, but ᚼ is used in E 3 Carlisle I and E 11 Conishead.

To summarise, although only three of the runes used in the Sockburn inscription occur with distinctive variants elsewhere in Britain, the combination of rune forms indicates that the inscription is runologically closest to tenth- and early-eleventh-century inscriptions from the Isle of Man and the earliest of the inscriptions from Cumbria (E 15 Penrith), areas where

runological and linguistic evidence is consistent with predominantly West Scandinavian influence. The Sockburn inscription may be of similar date and its carver of similar background, but there are too few diagnostic rune forms used in the text for any degree of certainty.

Interpretation

The inscription is readily interpretable as a memorial formula of the form *NN reisti kross þenna eft(ir) MM* ('NN raised this stone in memory of MM') commemorating someone bearing the Goidelic name *Máel Muire* (reconstructed runes are within angle brackets):

B. **… ⟨eft⟩ir : mol : mu…**
10 15

A. **… ⟨rɑ⟩ist(i) : krus : ∗ …**
5

In the discussion that follows, line A is discussed before line B, giving sections of a memorial formula *reisti kross … eftir Máel Muire* ('raised … cross in memory of Máel Muire'). Thus interpreted, the inscription now lacks the name of the patron and probably the demonstrative *þenna* (and whatever else, if anything, accompanied the basic formula). The reasons for thinking that this is the order in which the lines are to be read are discussed at the end of this section.

In line A, runes 5–8 **krus** are straightforwardly interpreted as the Goidelic loanword into Old Norse (ON), *kross* (< Goidelic *cros* 'cross'; *OED* s.v. "cross", n.). Inscriptions from the British Isles containing memorial formulae are mapped in figures 4 and 5; where inscriptions are labelled "*?kross*" or "*?steinn*", there is either insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the inscription was a memorial formula (SH 6 Eshaness II) or considerable reconstruction of either *kross* or *steinn* is required (SH 4 Papil and MM 102, 106 and 140). MM 141 Onchan contains a sequence **krus** that does not seem to be part of a memorial inscription and is thus not mapped (Kermode 1907 [1994], plates lxi f.; Olsen 1954, 199). As can be seen, in the British Isles the word used to refer to the monument in memorial formulae was ON *steinn* (the more usual mainland Scandinavian term), except on the Isle of Man and elsewhere around the Irish Sea, where ON *kross* was used (Page 1978–81, 196 f.). ON *kross* has not been securely identified in any Viking Age runic memorial formulae from Scandinavia. The Scandinavian Runic Text Database (*Samnordisk runtextdatabas*) includes three

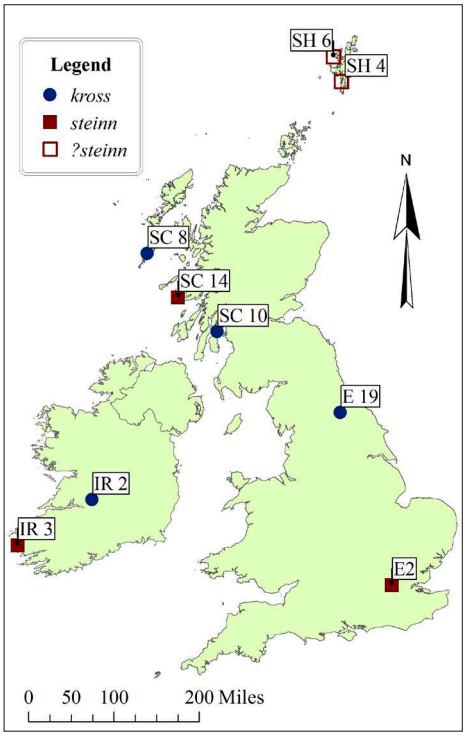

Fig. 4. ON *kross* and ON *steinn* in memorial inscriptions from the British Isles (excluding the Isle of Man). Based on Barnes and Page (2006); outlines of Great Britain, Ireland and the Isle of Man were extracted from GADM version 1.0 in March 2009 (<https://gadm.org>).

Viking Age inscriptions containing **krus** in mainland Scandinavia. However, the supposed occurrence of **krus** in a memorial formula in N 417, an eleventh-century inscription from Svanøy, Sogn og Fjordane, is a hypothetical reconstruction based on now unreadable runes. In the two remaining occurrences of **krus** (one actually **kus**), the word is not used in formulae but occurs as a single word at the end of the inscription (Sö 227 and Sö 340).

The first four surviving characters of line A can plausibly be interpreted as the final characters of ON *reisti* 'raised, erected' (< ON *reisa* 'to raise, erect'). The verb *reisa* is known from thirteen inscriptions from the Isle of Man (MM 101, 112, 113, 118, 126, 128, 130, 131, 132, 135, 136, 139 and 141), SH 4 Papil, IR 2 Killaloe and, in a passive construction, SC 8 Kilbar. Although the inscriptions MM 113 Andreas IV and MM 128 Andreas III are damaged in the relevant sections, early-twentieth-century readings

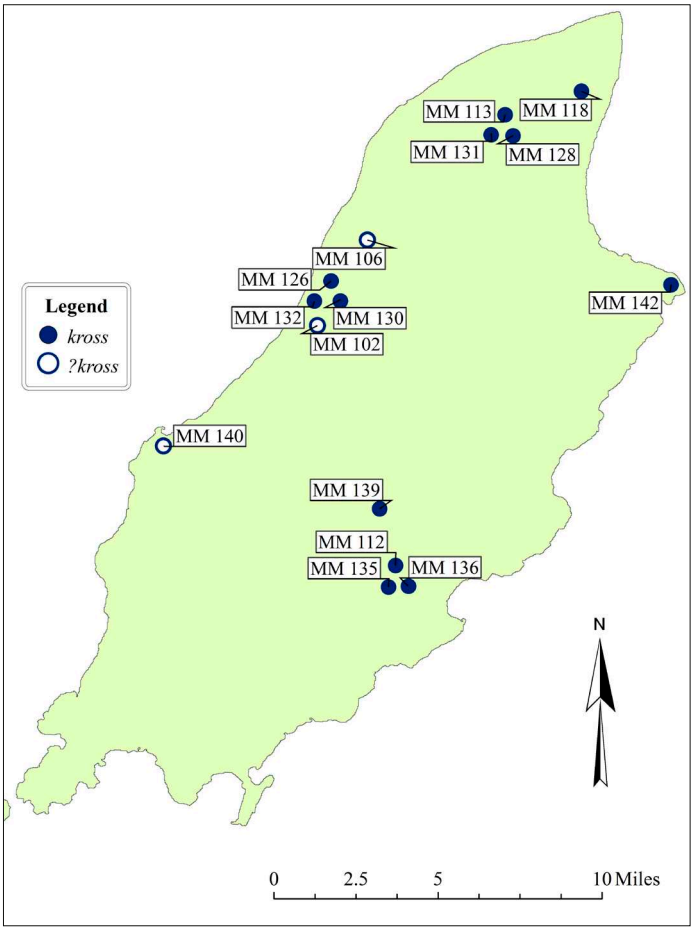

Fig. 5. ON *kross* in memorial inscriptions from the Isle of Man. Based on Olsen (1954) and Page (1983); the Isle of Man outline was extracted from GADM version 1.0 in March 2009 (<https://gadm.org>).

of the former (e.g. Kermode 1907 [1994], plate iv and 165) and a cast of the latter made before damage was sustained (Michael Barnes, personal communication, Sept. 2016) mean the identifications of **aisti** in MM 113 and **rais(t)i** in MM 128 are secure. Both monophthongal and diphthongal spellings of the word occur amongst the Manx inscriptions (**raisti** in MM 101, 112, 113, 118, 128, 130, 131 and 141; **risti** in MM 126, 132, 135, 136 and 139), so either is possible in the Sockburn inscription (cf. Barnes 2013, 70). It is unlikely that this is instead the weak verb ON *rista* (third person

preterite singular *risti*), an apparently East Scandinavian form of the West Scandinavian strong verb *rísta* (third person preterite singular *reist*) 'to carve', as the object *rúnar* rather than **krus** would be expected (contrast **risti:runar** and **risti:runaʀ** in MM 142 Maughold IV and E 13 St Albans I respectively; cf. Barnes, Hagland and Page 1997, 55).

Runes one and two in line B of the inscription are plausibly the final letters of the preposition *eftir* (meaning 'in memory of' in this context). Although the form *eftir* would usually indicate a date in the last decades of the tenth century or later in a Scandinavian context, its occurrence in ten out of seventeen Manx inscriptions using the preposition means that use earlier in the tenth century is feasible (Page 1983, 140 f.; Peterson 1996, 242–44; Barnes 2013, 72). Alternatively, as one of the peer reviewers suggested, line B could be the surviving part of an appositional phrase *faðir Molmuru* 'father of Máel Muire' (or similar), in which case both the names of the person commemorated and of the patron have also been lost. It is also formally possible but unlikely that these characters are instead the final characters of **þair**, ON *þeir* 'they' (masculine), forming a plural subject with the personal name (compare, for example, Ög 22, Ög 201, Sö 187, Vg 6, Vg 14, Vg 55, U 974 and N 29).[8] If **ist(i)** in the lower line is, as is argued below, a form of ON *reisa* 'to raise, erect', **istu** would be required in agreement with a plural subject, and there is no indication of the required branch of **u** (and little room for it either).

Runes three to seven of the upper line seem to be the beginning of the Goidelic personal name *Máel Muire* ('devotee of Mary'), a name with male and female bearers (O'Brien 1973, 229 f.). However, the use of ᚼ to represent the vowel of the first element of the name is problematic. The rune ᚼ denoted different phonemes at different times. In inscriptions from mainland Scandinavia, it denoted /a(:)/ before the seventh century, /ã(:)/ between the seventh century and the early eleventh century, and /o(:)/ and /ɔ(:)/ from the early eleventh century (Barnes and Page 2006, 69 f.). In the British Isles, the use of ᚼ to represent both /o(:)/ and /ã(:)/ is known, the former usage probably being attested slightly earlier in Man than in

[8] The distinction between ᛋ (the reflex of Proto-Germanic */z/) and ᚱ /r/ is maintained in only a few inscriptions from England and one from the Isle of Man. ᛋ is certain on the probably East Scandinavian E 13 St Albans I and probable in E 12 Winchester, perhaps produced during the period of Danish influence under Cnut; it may occur in a garbled form ᛘ in the futhark inscription of E 15 Penrith (Barnes and Page 2006, 78 f., 320–28 and 331–33). On the Isle of Man, it is found in **aftiʀ** in MM 113 Andreas IV, a form that (although etymologically "incorrect") was common in mainland Scandinavia (Larsson 2002, 75; Page 1983, 140 f.). The use of ᚱ for the reflex of Germanic */z/ would therefore be unproblematic.

Scandinavia (Barnes and Page 2006, 62; Barnes 2013, 70 and 75). Consequently, the rune could denote either /ã(:)/ or /o(:)/ in the Sockburn text. The former could perhaps be explained as nasalisation of */a(:)/ following the initial nasal consonant, as recorded for Old Icelandic and occasionally in Viking Age Swedish inscriptions (Noreen 1923, § 50.2; Williams 1990, 64–67). However, the use of ᚾ to denote nasalised /ã(:)/ following /m/ is unparalleled elsewhere in Viking Age inscriptions from the British Isles. The occurrence of /o(:)/ would also be unexpected. The precise realisation of the diphthong in *Máel* in early stages of the Goidelic languages is not known: /ai/ is thought to have merged with /oi/ from the eighth century, and perhaps earlier (Thurneysen 1946, § 66; McCone 1996, 139). Monophthongisation of the resulting diphthong ultimately took place both in Scottish Gaelic and in Irish, and is evident already in spellings of Goidelic names in Scandinavian runic inscriptions from Man, and in Latin and Old English texts from England, especially from A.D. 1000 onwards (Thurneysen 1946, § 66).[9] Representations of the probable monophthong suggest a sound closer to /a/ than /o/. In England, the vowel in personal names containing Goidelic *Máel* seems to have been identified earliest with a diphthong,[10] later with /a/,[11] /æ/[12] and later still with /e/,[13] but never with /o/. In place-names recorded before 1200 (namely *Melmerby*, North Yorkshire, and the lost field-name *Rigrinmelsuthen*, Westmorland), the presumed monophthong in *Máel-* is spelt as <e> (Smith 1928, 255; Smith

[9] Cf. **mal:lymkun** and **mal:mury** (MM 130 Kirk Michael III) and **malbriþ** (SC 2 Hunterston), contrasting with **mail:brikti** (MM 101 Kirk Michael II) and **mailb…ak…** (MM 175 Maughold V); see Olsen 1954, 208 f.; Cubbon 1966, 24.

[10] <Meilochon> for *Malcolm* (Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, c. 731); see *PASE*, s.v. "Malcolm 1").

[11] <Malcolun> for *Maelcolumban* (?*recte* Mael Coluim; *Domesday Book*, North Yorkshire landholder in 1086); <Malculm> and <Malculf> for *Malcolm*, King of the Scots 943–54 (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, annal for 845, MSS ABCG and D respectively); see *PASE*, s.vv. "Maelcolumban 1", "Malcolm 3").

[12] <Maelinmuin>, <Maelinmumin>, <Maelinmun> and <Maelmumin> for *Maelinmun* (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, annal for 892, MSS B, C, AFG and D respectively; on <ae> for /æ(:)/ as an orthographic variant of <æ, ę>, see Hogg 1992, § 2.12, n. 1); <Mælbæaþe> for *Maelbeth*, fl. 1031 (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, annal for 1031, MS E); <Mælcolm> for *Malcolm*, King of the Scots 1005–34 (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, annals for 1031 [MS E] and 1034 [MS D]); see *PASE*, s.vv. "Maelinmun 1", "Maelbeth 1" and "Malcolm 2").

[13] <Melcom> for *Malcolm*, King of the Scots 1005–34 (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. annal for 1031, MS F); see *PASE*, s.v. "Malcolm 2"); <Melmor> for *Máel Muire* in Gospatric's Writ, a thirteenth-century copy of an eleventh-century Old English document from Cumbria (Harmer 1952, 419–24 and 531–36); <Melmuril> for *Máel Muirgaile* in an early-twelfth-century record in the Durham *Liber Vitae* (Russell with McClure and Rollason 2007, 41).

1967, 1: 75 f.).[14] There is therefore no evidence indicating pronunciation of *Máel* with a rounded vowel. The possibility that the Sockburn inscription might use the Anglo-Saxon rune representing /æ/ (i.e. ᚫ) is phonologically attractive given the predominance of spellings of names with *Máel-* with <æ> in Anglo-Saxon sources. However, as noted above, the shape of the rune casts doubt on this reading. In summary, the orthography of the name is not readily explicable, but this need not cast serious doubt on the identification of the name. In England, the personal name *Máel Muire* is also recorded in Allerdale (Cumberland) at some point before the mid-eleventh century, and in the place-names *Melmerby* in the Yorkshire Dales (see above) and *Melmerby* (Cumberland; *Malmerbi* 1201, *Melmorby* c. 1201; Armstrong et al. 1950–52, 223 f.; Harmer 1952, 419–24).

A final question of interpretation concerns the order in which the lines are to be read and here it is suggested that the lower line (line A) should be read before the upper line (line B). ("Upper" and "lower" are used here to describe the positions of lines according to the orientation of the runic characters irrespective of the original or current orientations of inscriptions.) This gives an inscription '[NN] *reisti kross* [?*þenna*] / [*eft*]*ir Máel Muire*' in which the subject at the beginning of line A and perhaps *þenna* at either the end of line A or the beginning of line B have been lost. However, interpretations requiring reading line B before line A are possible. If line B is the surviving part of an appositional phrase ⟨**faþ**⟩**ir molmu**⟨**ru**⟩ 'father of Máel Muire' (or similar), line B would be read before line A and loss of the names of the patron (perhaps at the beginning of line B) and of the person commemorated (at the end of line A or in a further lost line) are to be reckoned with. Less likely is that the inscription was of the form *eftir MM reisti NN krus* … . Similar formulae are recorded, if infrequently, in mainland Scandinavia (e.g. with the monument descriptor *steinn* and ON *standa* 'to stand': DR 192 Flemløse 1, DR 323 Lilla Harrie [lost], U 10 Dalby [cf. Källström 2007, 66]; with the monument descriptor *steinn* and ON *vera* 'to be': N 209 Oddernes 1). In these inscriptions, the use of intransitive verbs means that the word for the monument can follow the verb directly. In the Sockburn inscription, the transitive verb requires a subject, which is unlikely to have been in lost text either at the end of line B or the beginning of line A due to the "verb-second" requirement of Old Norse

[14] *Melsonby* (North Yorkshire) may contain the personal name *Máelsuthain* (Smith 1928, 297), but the lack of indication of medial /ð/ is problematic (Fellows-Jensen 1972, 33); if found, *Máel-* is spelt with <e> in all but two forms where <a> is used (spellings dated 1086 and 1182). *Melkinthorpe*, Cumberland, contains either Goidelic *Máelchon* or a Brittonic name *Mailcun* (Smith 1967, 2: 183); if found, *Máel-* is consistently spelt with <e>.

(Faarlund 2004, 191–93). It would therefore be expected to follow **krus**. Unmarked usage would be for the subject to follow the finite verb, but the subject could plausibly appear after the object, especially if complex (ibid., 195 f.). This interpretation cannot be ruled out, but it seems that nothing comparable is to be found in the Scandinavian Runic Text Database amongst inscriptions using the monument descriptor *steinn*. It would also mean that a subject (perhaps complex) and perhaps the demonstrative *þenna* have been lost either at the end of line A — with no comparable loss at the end of line B — or in an entirely lost additional line. In contrast, the interpretation preferred here requires only loss of the subject at the beginning of line A and perhaps *þenna* at either the end of line A or the beginning of line B. As a final possibility, it is feasible that the inscription contained a passive construction similar to that of SC 8 Kilbar's formula *eftir NN er kross sjá reistr*. There is no evidence for branches of **r** ᚱ in what is interpreted here as a final **(i)** in **⟨r(a)⟩ist(i)**; if (etymologically correct) ᚱ, the character cannot be ᛁ but ᛦ cannot be ruled out due to damage to the inscription at this point. Such inscriptions are, however, far rarer than active constructions and, on balance, reading line A before line B seems the most satisfactory interpretation.

There are other inscriptions in which a lower line is read before an upper line (again using "upper" and "lower" as determined by the orientation of runic characters). As mentioned above, it is possible that the lines ran vertically up or down the monument rather than horizontally. The reading order proposed here for E 19 Sockburn is paralleled in three inscriptions from the Isle of Man. An identical layout is possible for MM 130 Kirk Michael III, in which the lower line **mal:lymkun:raisti:krus:þena:efter:mal:mury:fustra:si(n)e:tot(o)r:tufkals:kona:is:aþisl:ati+** is sensibly read before the upper line **(b)etra:es:laifa:fustra:kuþan:þan:son:ilan+** (cf. Olsen 1954, 215–17). Reading the lower lines first is a necessity for MM 101 Kirk Michael II, where two lines on the face of the stone (continuing the inscription from the edge of the stone) must be read bottom to top to give (on the edge) **kaut** | (on the face's lower line) **kirþi:þãnã:auk** | (on the face's upper line) **ala:imaun+** (Kermode 74 [plate xxx]). Similarly, MM 138 Braddan II is most obviously read with the lower line **(n)roskitil:uilti:i:triku** followed by the upper line **aiþsoara:siin** (Kermode 110 [plate lix]; Olsen 1954, 191). In both cases it is possible that the layout was adapted as a way of fitting texts into available spaces. The most common layout by far was to carve inscriptions on the edges rather than the faces of slabs, so there are few comparable inscriptions with more than one line of text on the same face of a monument (Page 1983, 135). Other than those al-

ready mentioned, these are MM 132 Kirk Michael V, whose second row of runes — or perhaps rune-like characters — on the lower, damaged edge of the edge bearing the main inscription are now worn and uninterpretable but in any case not part of the text of the surviving inscription, and the late inscriptions MM 144 Maughold II, MM 145 Maughold I and (probably late) MM 175 Maughold V (Kermode 1907 [1994], 202 and plates iv, lvi, lxiii and lxiv; Cubbon 1966; cf. Page 1983, 145, n. 7). A few inscriptions from mainland Scandinavia have a similar layout. Jacobsen and Moltke (1941–42, *Text*, cols 821 f.) list ten inscriptions from Denmark where lines are read consecutively bottom to top, for instance DR 220 Sønder Kirkeby and DR 216 Tirsted; the layout additionally occurs in some lines of inscriptions with mixed line-order (*blandet linjefølge*) such as the first three lines on the A face of the Tryggevælde inscription (DR 230; A.D. 900–50), read bottom to top. The layout is paralleled in inscriptions from Norway: N 62 Alstad 2, N 211 Søgne, N 225 Klepp 1, N 239 Stangeland and N 449 Kuli, which are all read with a lower row of runes before an upper row. Collectively, evidence from the Isle of Man and mainland Scandinavia demonstrates that the reading order of the lines suggested here for the Sockburn inscription was permissible, if somewhat less common than reading an "upper" line before a "lower" line.

Conclusion: Anglo-Scandinavian Sockburn

It has been argued that the inscription is most readily interpretable as a memorial formula, probably commemorating someone with a Goidelic personal name and using the Goidelic loanword into Old Norse *kross.* In both content and rune forms, the inscription is most similar in the British Isles to inscriptions from the Isle of Man usually dated to the tenth and early eleventh centuries. It is likely that the Sockburn inscription is of similar date and was produced or commissioned by someone whose range of contacts included Scandinavians in areas bordering the Irish Sea. As a conclusion, how this corresponds to what is known about Scandinavian activity at and around Sockburn in the tenth and eleventh centuries will be considered.

Following the records of (archi-)episcopal consecrations discussed above, Sockburn is next mentioned in documentary sources recording events of the late tenth or early eleventh century, but it is thought that Sockburn had passed into Scandinavian hands during the intervening period. Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de Exordio* and the anonymous *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* record that Sockburn was granted to the

Community of St Cuthbert, along with the adjacent vill of Girsby by Snaculf (ON *Snækólfr*) son of Cytel (ON *Ketill*) during the episcopacy of Bishop Aldhun of Lindisfarne (990–1018; Rollason 2000, 152–55; Johnson South 2002, 66 f.). The assumption of Scandinavian control rests partly on the personal names *Ketill* and *Snækólfr* being of Scandinavian origin (although *Snækólfr* is unrecorded in mainland Scandinavia and may be a form that arose in England)[15] and partly on the Anglo-Scandinavian characteristics of the sculpture from Sockburn (Went and Jecock 2007, 9 f.; Cramp 2010, 10). It is unclear, however, whether the site had belonged to the Community of St Cuthbert before the upheavals of the previous centuries, or whether the site had always been a proprietary monastery that was in the possession of men with (Anglo-)Scandinavian names (Went and Jecock 2007, 45 f.; Cramp 2010, 10 f.).

Scandinavian settlement in the middle and lower Tees valley is usually interpreted as the northernmost part of the wider area of Scandinavian settlement in eastern England that took place from the second half of the ninth century (Watts 1970, 260; 1988–89, 57). These Scandinavians are usually characterised as predominantly Danish, with some Norwegian and Goidelic involvement, reflecting both the movement of Scandinavians from areas further west (particularly into the north of the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire) and the presence of the Hiberno-Norse kings of York and Dublin and their followers (Smith 1928, xx–xxiii; Fellows-Jensen 1968, xxv f.; 1972, 189–94; Edmonds 2009, 11 f.). Scandinavians at and around Sockburn may thus be understood in the context of Scandinavian settlement in eastern England from the ninth century, with some input from Scandinavian and Goidelic speakers from areas around the Irish Sea. This is borne out by a range of evidence from Sockburn. Sculpture at Sockburn shows similarities not only with sculpture from Allertonshire in North Yorkshire, but also with items from the Irish Sea region, especially Cumbria (Cramp 1984, 1: 30 and 135–44; 2010, 14–18). There is intriguing evidence of continued Goidelic influence on personal nomenclature in the name of a (presumably) eleventh-century landholder in Over Dinsdale, part of the ecclesiastical parish of Sockburn, where three carucates of

[15] The personal name *Snækólfr* occurs otherwise in England only in the (lost) East Riding of Yorkshire wapentake name *Sneculfscros* (*Suecolfros Hundred* [sic], twelfth century; Smith 1937, 153). The personal name is recorded in *Njáls saga*, but may be an error for more common *Snækollr* as *-kólfr* is not interpretable as a Scandinavian personal name element and as the name *Melkólfr* occurs in the next line (Fellows-Jensen 1968, 258). Elsewhere, it is likely that *-kólfr* arises from the association of names in *-kollr* with *-ulfr* (cf. **Selakollr* and *Svartkollr* with final <f> in *Domesday Book*; von Feilitzen 1937, § 95, p. 93).

land in Over Dinsdale were held by "Crinan filius Forne" at some point before the early twelfth century (Curtis 1914, 449 and 452).[16] As argued throughout, the Sockburn inscription is further confirmation of contacts with Scandinavians in the Irish Sea region, both in the rune set used and in the probable commemoration, in Viking Age Norse, of or by someone with the Goidelic personal name *Máel Muire*, a personal name recorded in Viking Age England in the Irish Sea region and in an area of Yorkshire where the presence of Hiberno-Scandinavians from areas to the west is reckoned with.[17]

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[16] *Crínan*, also recorded in the Durham *Liber Vitae*, has been interpreted as a personal name derived from an Old Irish adjective *crín* 'old, wrinkled, decrepit' (although the personal name is not recorded in Old Irish sources), and ON *Forni* similarly originated as a byname meaning 'the old one' (Russell with McClure and Rollason 2007, 37; Insley with Rollason 2007, 221). The semantic overlap between the two names is intriguing. Note that this is not "Crinan filius Thorne"' as given in edited versions of the text (Stevenson 1841, 77; Farrer 1915, 269–72; cf. Fellows-Jensen 1968, 312). The manuscript clearly reads "crinan filius forne", the <f> of the personal name being like that of the preceding word, and unlike the <th> of e.g. <themelebi> in the line below; photographs available at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Domitian_A_VII, fol. 55r, ll. 1–2 (accessed 1 Feb. 2017). I owe this information to annotations in Olof von Feilitzen's copy of Fellows-Jensen 1968, now in the library of the Institute for Name-Studies, University of Nottingham.

[17] I am grateful to Judith Jesch for comments on earlier versions of this article, and to the other members of the team of academics and doctoral students detailed at the beginning of the article and attendees at the Nottingham Rune Rede for valuable discussions and contributions in connections with the Sockburn inscription.

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