

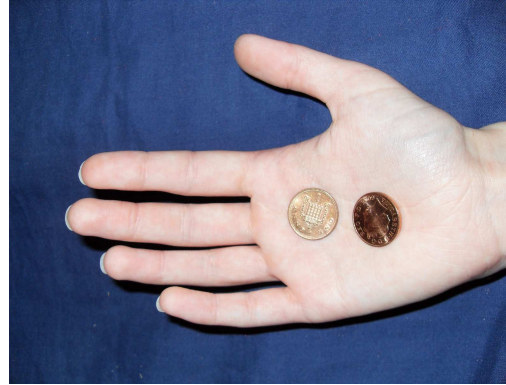
“No ane o them said at onything he awned wis his ain; aathing wis hauden in common. ... It wis distribute til ilkane accordin til his need”

(Acts 4.32b, 35b - Lorimer)

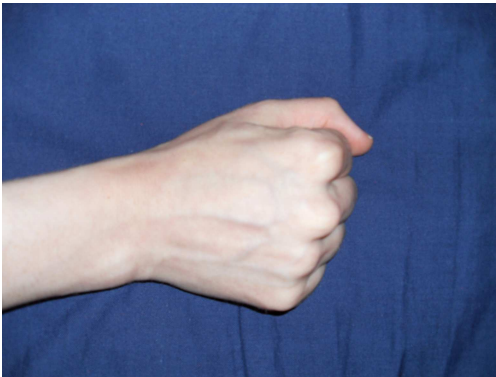
COMMITMENT

*Statelie, lang-robit, an steppin at ease,
The rich men gaed up the temple haa;
Hastie, an grippin her twa bawbees,
The widow cam efter, booit an smaa.*

*Their gould rang loud as it fell, an lay
Yallow an glentin, bonnie an brow;
But the fowk roun the Maister hard him say:
The puir bodie's bawbees was mair nor it aa.*



That's hou the mínister makar George MacDonald tells the storie o 'The Twa Bawbees'. It's hou Mark tells it an aa - a wídraw-wumman i the Temple Treisurie at Jesus deed saw an spak weill o. Bot lang-heids hes speired, 'Wit wey coud Jesus hae seen aa this? The guineas an crouns, mibbe, for the weill-tae-pass wad be shawin aff. Bot the coppers wis fel smaa an the wumman wud hae kivvert thaim wi her haun, bashfu like, wad she no? Wis it the sound o the coins faain? Still an on, hou wad Jesus hae kent at the wumman hed gíen awà her last penny? Wis she a fríen o his? Na na, it's the wark o the aa-kennin storie-teller, yin at Jesus telt:



A man cam tae the offerin plate i the temple court an pit in his teind o a siller píece; a pilgrim cam, an he pit in a guid fower crouns; an a merchan in purpie an pearls strade up an poured in a gowpen o guineas; syne a wídraw slippit by an left the twa fardens frae her purse. Wha, than, gíed the maist? Atweill, I tell ye, the puir wumman pit mair intil the plate nor aa the ithers pit thegither, for they aa gíed out o their owercome, bot she gíed aa she wis aucht, til her last bawbee.'

Whatsumiver wey ye tell it, lívin bi faith, lívin for the luv o God taks commitment - aa your hert an aa your sowl an aa your strenth - tae God an neibour. An whan it comes tae commitment, a hunner percent is ey mair nor ten.

Robt K. Mackenzie

“I hae been aa thing til aabodie in turn, sae as, ae wey or anither, tae sauf some”
(I Cor. 9.22b - Lorimer)

THE GUISER

Aince on a day Jesus yarned o kintra fowk fashin thirsels, o a bit laund, an pairs o owssen, an hedgesides¹. A wheen ears efter a bodie tells the storie like this:

“It is wi the Kíngdom o God ,” go Jesus, “as wi a tax-uplifter at wonned in toun an hed guests in til a denner pairtie. Whan he hed reddied the denner, he sent his servan til aa them at hed gotten invites tae bid them come. The servan cam tae the first an said til him, ‘My maister bids ye come.’ I hae siller,’ sais he, ‘investit wi some merchans. They’r tae see me the eenin. I maun gae eenou an gíe them my biddins. Gíe my apologies, mind, for absence frae the denner.’ He gaes til anither an sais til him, ‘My maister bids ye come.’ ‘I hae sauld a houss,’ sais he til him, ‘an they speir me efter a day o entrie. I’ll no hae the time.’ He comes til a third an sais til him, ‘My maister bids ye come.’ ‘I hae bocht a haill tenement,’ sais he til him. ‘I’m takin the gate til uplift the rents. I’ll no can come. Gíe my apologies, mind.’ Syne he gaes til anither; he sais til him, ‘My maister bids ye come.’ He sais til him, ‘My pairtner’s about tae get mairrit, an I’m tae haud his styag nicht. I canna come. Gíe my apologies, mind, for absence frae the denner.’ The servan comes back til his maister an sais, ‘Them at ye bad tae the denner hes aa med their affcomes.’ The maister syne bad his servan, ‘Gang ye out until the Híe Gate , the wynds an closes. Fesh them ye finnd thair, lívin roch as they ar, at they may dine. Merchans an siclike will niver tak up pleges at my buird!”²

The storie’s gane tae toun! It’s in its burgh brows - denner pairties, business pairtners an lanlords, housses an tenements, wynds an closes. It gangs about like a guiser, an nane maun say “Luik at yon loon wi strae ahint his lugs!”. It pits the same quaisteens: div ee prefer siller or fowk? div ee lou gear or God? An nane maun say “You an your kintra weys! Naething tae dae wi hiz!” Til tounies it’s become a richt tounie.

The wurd’s o the parable isna the samen, bot its spírit is. For we dinna gang bi the letters o the wurd’s, bot bi the Wurd’s Spírit an the Faither’s Spírit.

Syne, glorie til the Faither an the Son an the Halie Spírit, as it wis frae the first, ey is, an iver sal be. Amen.



Robt K. Mackenzie

¹ Luke 14.16-24

² efter Tammas’s Gospel 64

“He band up his sairs an poured uilie an wine upò them.”
(Luke 10. 34 - Lorimer)

THE HAILLER

The tale o the Guid Samâritan is ane the maist o us kens weel. A modren version says it wis a *psychologist* at cam on the hauf deid man, tuik ae luik at the puir victim, an “Man,” quo he tae hisselt, “is this no affy, shockin juist? Whasumiver it wis at did this needs help!” An aff he ran tae gie some counselin tae the puir tribbelt sauls at had beaten the man up! Aye, oor warld is at times unco confusin, is it no?

We ken the story weel as a picter o Christian compâssion an mercy – an sic it is. Bit, gin it’s rael Christian, it’s a picter o God tae, the God whae cam tae us in Jesus o Nazareth, the hailer, the ane wha in his ain body hails the rift atween human fowk an his Faither, an atween yin body an anither - ay, een atween them at hates yin anither, atween victim an mugger, atween killer an kilt. An he’s the yin at comes tae hail the rift atween aabody an the yirth, an atween a body an hersel, a body an his ain saul.

Hailin has tae begin here in oor ain saul – it cannae end thair, bit it maun begin thair. Thon gryte Langholm makar Hugh MacDiarmid describes hisselt in *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* as, “a man torn in twae.” God comes tae us in Christ tae pit thegither whit has bin torn, rived apairt. Syne lat this be said, gif religioun becomes something at rives fowk apairt an hurts thaim, something at gars thaim be incarcerate an cut aff, syne it’s mibbe affy religioun, bit it’s naething avà tae dae wi the Christ.

Ay, this story gies us a wunnerfu picter. In the Sâmaritan comin doon aff his mule tae kneel aside the woundit man, ar we no allood tae see the God whae cam doon tae us in Jesus Christ, cam doon i the bairn o Bethlehem? An whan the Sâmaritan kneels doon aside the woundit man, an pours in oil an wine, can we no see a picter o the God whae in Christ pours his hailin Spírit intae oor sair hairts, oor fractious families, oor tribbelt communities, oor woundit warld? Syne yon guid man liftit the yerkit man. O Christ It has bin said an said weel, “He cam doon tae lift us up! He cam doon tae lift us up!”



Jim Campbell
(frae a sermon for Scott’s Selkirk)

***“Hou happie the redders o strow an strife,
for they will be caa’d the childer o God!”***

(Matthew 5. 9 - Lorimer)

God, it’s said, creâtit religión sae’s the English wad hae something tae screive about, the Welsh something tae sing about, the Irish something tae fecht about, an the Scots – cuid hae something for naething! Aiblins it’s true, bit it seems a wee bit unfair on oor Irish friens acause, let’s face it, whan it comes tae faa’n oot, we Scots ar up thair at the tap o the tree! Some o us cuid stert a stramash in a empy room!

A Scotsman wis marooned oan a tropical island. Be’n a guid enterprisin Scot, he didnae panic, bit med hissel a fair life on his wee bit island. He biggit hissel a wee shack, plotted oot a wee gairden for growin vegetables, an got meat for his waim an claes for his back bi makin hissel a bow an arra for huntin. Bein a religous man, he biggit a wee hut forbye, as a semple kin o kirk. Noo, some five- sax year later, the reek frae the lum oan his shack wis sichtit bi a passin ship an at last he wis rescued. He walcomed the captain ashore an offered him a tour afore leavin his wee kinrick foriver. He shawit him his wee but an ben, his weel tendit gairden, the claes he had made hissel frae animal skins, syne the wee kirk he hed biggit for the wurship o the Lord. The captain wis byornar impressed, muived juist tae see the man hed biggit hissel a plece o wurship. Syne the castawa tuik him awa roon the North end, an thair wis anither kirk, like the first in iverie parteeklar! “Weil noo,” says the captain dumfoonert, “I wis fair titched tae see ye had biggit yersel a kirk, bit whit wey this ither ane?” “Ah weel,” go the castawa, “That’s the ane I cannae agree wi – I’ll hae naaething tae dae wi that kirk!”

I suspec there’s truth i that tale; a student meenister frae the south o Scotland gaed tae preach in a wee híelan clachan o twae-three hunner sauls - an near got lost amang the sax differin kins o kirk! The Irish guid at fechtin ower religión! Aye, gif there wis sic a thing as an Olympic medal for causin strife, we Scots wid win gowd ivery time.

That minds me o a crack wi a mínister frien o mine. His faither wis born in Bonnybrig near Fa’kirk, bit like mony a Scot, brocht up faur frae hame - in Winnipeg, Canada. His faither’s faither wad get gey hamesick an sentimental o a Sabbath mornin. Or grayin, he wid lie abed wi tears streamin doon his face singin, ‘It’s O but I’m longing for my Ain Folk.’ “Aye,” said ma mínister frien, “an my faither telt me at whan they wun hame tae ‘dear auld bonnie Scotland’, his ain folk war aa killin ane anither! This ane hed hed a faa’n oot wi that ane, an anither yin wis gaun aboot wi a face like a can o wurms acause o whit yit anither hed said. Honest tae guidness, whit a faimily mines!”

Bit is that no the story o oor hail human faimily? Iver sen Adam an Eve wis banish’t Eden, it’s bin yin lang tale o strife an war. No for naething the hyme sings: “Oh hush your noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing.” Oor Lord Jesus Christ said “Blissed ar the makars up o strife,” the pace-makars. An whit aboot you an yours? Are you a *makar* o strife – a stirrer up o bad feelin, or are you a *makar up* o strife – a redder o strow, a pace-makar? For mind, you at howp in Christ, at he himsel cums as the Makar up o Strife, the Laird o Gudewill, the Prince o Pace.

Jim Campbell

(frae a sermon for Scott’s Selkirk)

***“Whan this letter hes been read out tae yoursels,
see at it is read out tae the congrâgation at Lâodicea;
an yoursels see at ye read theirs.”***

(Colossians 4,16 - Lorimer)

IMÂGINE

Imâgine a dominie at hes bin lernin his students about Saunt Paul an his letters. He is keen tae ken hou mickle they hae lernt. It's lang or multiple-choice tests! What is he tae dae? He sais til them, “In ae letter Paul speaks o anither, tae Lâodicea. We haena that letter. Frae what ye ken, pit down what ye jalouse he micht hae screived til them.” Ae student, thinkin it wad maist like be sibbest tae what Paul screived til the kirk i Philippi, efter stertin like Galâtians, answert:

PAUL'S LETTER TAE THE LÂODICEANS

PAUL, AN APOSTLE (no frae men, nor throu man, but throu Jesus Christ), til the brether at is in Lâodicea: Grace be wi ye an peace frae the Lord, frae God our Faither an Jesus Christ!

I THINK CHRIST in my ilka prayer at ye ar siccar an stíeve in him an eident in his warks, in howp o the promise o Juidgment Day.

Binna bambaized bi the haivers an claivers o some at wurms in but for tae turn ye frae the truith o the Gospel I preached tae ye. Eenou may God gar them at comes frae me for tae forder the truith o the Gospel tae een sair weil an dae guid warks at ar o the salvâtion o iverlestin life.

Eenou there's my chynes at I thole in Christ, o whilk I am byous blythe. For me this leads til eternal salvâtion, at itsel comes about throu your prayers an the help o the Halie Spírit, be it bi my life or be it bi my deith! For for me, life is in Christ, an deith is gain an gledness.

Himsel will wurk in ye his mercie, at ye may hae the same luv an be aa o ae mind. Therefore, dear fríends, juist as ye hard whan I wis praisent amang ye, een sae grip tae an ack out i the fear o God, an for you it sal be life iverlestin. For it is God at wurks in ye.

Dae gleg like whatsumiver ye dae, an whatsumiver is best. Dear friends, be blythe in Christ an tak tent o them at is gair o onhonest gain. Lat aa your wants be pit plenn afore the Lord. Be stíeve in the mind o Christ, an sic as is pure, an true, an douce, an richt, an clean, an leisome – practíse thir things. What ye hae hard an taen in, haud ben your hairt, an peace will be wi ye.

GÍE ILKANE O the brether a halie kiss frae us. The saunts here sends ye aa their weill-wisses. The grace o the Lord Jesus Christ be wi your spírit. (See at this letter is read out tae the Colossians an that frae them amang yoursels.)

For aa at it kens at Jerome didna haud wi this screive bein bi Paul, the ninth century Buik o Armagh keeps this Auld Latin letter amang the buiks o the New Testament. Deed, we dinna ken wha screived it or whan. Bot we div ken at actin a pairt wis pairt of the skuilin o thae times – 'Ye'r this chiel's advocate; what wad ye say in his defence?' 'Ye'r fâmous, an cum tae Athens/Rome/Embro for the first time; what wad ye say til the proud burghers at gethers tae walcome ye?'

Sum caas the letter a forgerie; that's an ill wurd. Forgerie an fiction is no the same. We dinna ken at it wis screived for tae gowk onie bodie. But fowk get angrie whan they mistak thirsels an syne ettle tae blame sum ither bodie. Aiblins sum didna ey see at it wis a fiction an, whan that wis med clere til them, socht tae blame their blinness on anither. That's fowk for ye!

Nou, Jesus hissel wis fain o fiction. He med up stories, kenspeckle stories about lossit sheep, fund siller, gallivantin an hamefarin sons, nettit fish, growin craps, an a wheen mair. (Nane is about screivin a letter, bot niver heed.) Tae tell stories like yon sais at imâginin is a guid thing. Ay, ye can lat it tak ye awà up the wrang dreill, bot ye canna wirk i the Lord's field ithout it. Ithout imâginin ye canna hae onie unnerstaunin o hou your brither or sister is feelin; an gin ye haena nae thocht o hou they ar feelin, ye canna luvè them; an gin ye dinna luvè them, ye arna heed in the Christ at sais, "*Luvè ilk ither!*"

Sae haud at the imâginin. Practise! Ye cuid dae waur nor tak in haun what Paul micht hae screived til the kirk i Lâodicaea, or een til the kirk i Damascus, or Arâbia. Mibbies it winna lern ithers muckle, bot ye will lern muckle yoursel.

Abuin aa, imâgin! at ye may luvè.

Robert K Mackenzie



A picter of the auld leather kivver o
THE BUIK O ARMAGH.
Its Latin text o the letter tae Laodicaea,
owerset abuin, is gien ablo.

Paulus apostolus non ab hominibus neque per hominem sed per ihm xpm his qui sunt fratribus laudaciae: domino gratia uobis et pax a deo patre nostro et ihesu xpisto¹. gratias ago xpisto per omnem orationem meam² quod estis permanentes in eo et perseuerantes in operibus eius³ sperantes promissionem in diem iudicii⁴ neque distituant uos quorundam uaniloquia⁵ insinuantium sed ut uos euertant a ueritate aeuanguelii⁶ quod a me praedicatur⁷ et nunc deus faciet ut qui sunt ex me⁸ in profectum ueritatis aeuanguelii deseruientes et facientes benignitatem operum quaesunt salutis uitae aeternae⁹ et nunc sunt uincula mea quae patior in xpisto quibus laetor et gaudeo¹⁰ et hoc mihi est ad salutem perpetuam quod ipsum factum orationibus uestris et administrante spiritu sancto siue per uitam siue per mortem est enim mihi uiuere in xpisto et mori lucrum et gaudium¹¹ et ipse in uobis faciet misericordiam suam ut eandem dilectionem habeatis et sitis unianimes.¹² ergo dilectissimi ut audistis praesentiam mei¹³ ita retinete¹⁴ et facite in timorem dei et erit uobis uita in aeterno. est enim deus qui operatur in uobis. et facite sine retractione quaecumque facitis¹⁵ et quodcumque optimum est. dilectissimi, gaudete in xpisto¹⁶ et praecauete sordidos homines in lucro¹⁷. omnes sint petitiones¹⁸ uestrae palam ante dominum.¹⁹ et estote firmi in sensu xpisti et quae intigra et uera et pudica facite et quae audistis et acci et iusta pistis in corde retinete et erit et casta uobis pax.²⁰ salute omnes et amabilia fratres in osculo sancto.²¹ salutant uos omnes sancti. gratia domini nostri ihu xpi cum spiritu uestro.²² et facite legi colosensibus et colosensium uobis.²³

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- 1 cf. "Paul, an apostle (no frae men, nor throu man, but throu Jesus Christ an God the Faither, at raised him frae the deid), an aa the brether here wi me, til the Kirks o Galâtia: Grace an peace be wi ye frae God the Faither an our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galâtians 1.1-3 – "The New Testament in Scots' translated by W. L. Lorimer)
- 2 cf. "Grace be wi ye an peace frae God our Faither an the Lord Jesus Christ! I think my God ilka time I mind on ye, an ilka prayer I pit up for ye aa ..." (Philippians 1.2-4a – *op.cit.*)
- 3 cf. "Staan siccar an steive ... : wurk an better wurk at the wark o the Lord ..." (I Corinthians 15.58 – *op. cit.*)
- 4 cf. "... knowledge o the truth at gangs haund for neive wi gudeliness an howp as weill in iverlestin life, whilk wis promised afore the beginnin o the warld bi God ..." (Titus 1.1b-2 *op.cit.*)
- 5 cf. "Lat nae-ane mislippen ye wi tuim wurd: ..." (Ephesians 5.6 – *op. cit.*); "There is a fell when wanrullie chîels gaein about blaeflummin fowk wi hauer an claiver." (Titus 1.10 – *op.cit.*)
- 6 *aeuanguelii* = *euangelii* (ablò an aa)
- 7 cf. "... a curn men is pittin ye in a stîr an mintin tae whummle the Gospel o Christ. ... anither Gospel ... by that at we preached tae ye." (Galâtians 1.7,8 – *op. cit.*)
- 8 cf. "I am sendin him aince-eerant tae ... cheer your hairts. Alang wi him gaes Onesimus, ..." (Colossians 4.8-9a – *op.cit.*)
- 9 Frae '*et nunc Deus*' til '*vitae aeternae*' the copyin o the Latin hes gane aogley.
- 10 cf. "Nou I want ye tae ken ... at it is for Christ's sake at I am in jyle ... an o that I am blythe." (Philippians 1.12,13,18 – *op. cit.*)
- 11 cf. "Ay, an blythe o it will be, for I ken at throu your prayers an the help o the Spîrit o Jesus Christ what is happnin me eenou will forder the weillfare o my saul afore aa is dune ... be it bi my life, or be it bi my deith! For me, life is Christ, an deith is gain." (*ibid.* 1.19,20c-21)
- 12 cf. "... be ye aa o ae mind ... haein the same lue, saul ane wi saul, aa o ae mind ..." (*ibid.* 2.2)
- 13 Readin '*mei*' for '*dei*' i the prent Buik o Armagh (Royal Irish Academy 1913)
- 14 Readin '*retinete*' for '*retinere*' i the prent Buik o Armagh (*ibid.*)
- 15 cf. "Therefore, my dear frîends, een as ye hae dune what ye war bidden i the bygane, sae nou wurk out ... no juist as whan I wis praisent amang ye, ... ; for it is God at wurks in ye ... Dae aathing wiout girnin an canglin at ye may be blameless an sakeless – fautless bairns o God ... grippin fest til the Wurd o Life." (Philippians 2.12-16a – *op. cit.*)
- 16 cf. "... brether, ... - be blythe i the Lord!" (*ibid.* 3.1)
- 17 cf. "... an owerseer maun be o blameless life, ... nor gair o onhonest gain" (Titus 1.7 – *op. cit.*)
- 18 Readin '*petitiones*' for '*petiones*' i the prent Buik o Armagh (*op. cit.*)
- 19 cf. "Be blythe i the Lord ... in aathing mak your wants kent tae God bi prayer an petîtion." (Philippians 4.4,6b – *op. cit.*)
- 20 cf. "Finally, brether, aa at is true, aa at is noble, aa at is richt, aa at is pure, aa at is leisome, aa at is weill-spokken-o, aa guidness, an aathing wurdie o praise – lat your thochts be on thir things. What ye war taucht an lairnt bi me, what ye hard me say, or saw me dae – practise thir things, an syne the God o peace will be wi ye." (*ibid.* 4.8-9)
- 21 cf. "Gîe ilkane of the brether a halie kiss frae us." (I Thessalonians 5.26 – *op. cit.*)
- 22 cf. "Gîe my weill-wisses in Christ Jesus til ilkane o the saunts. Aa the saunts here sends ye their weill-wisses, ... The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be wi your spîrit!" (Philippians 4.21-23 – *op. cit.*); "The grace o the Lord Jesus Christ be wi your spîrit, brether, âmen!" (Galâtians 6.18 – *op. cit.*)
- 23 cf. "Whan this letter hes been read out tae yoursels, see at it is read out tae the congregâtion at Lâodicea; an yoursels see at ye read theirs." (Colossians 4.16 – *op.cit.*)

"I daena the guid I want tae dae, an am ey daein the ill I want no tae dae "

(Roms 7.19 - Lorimer)

WARLD KIRK

"Aa authoritie hes bin gien me in heiven an on the yird. Gang ee furth, than, an mak disciples in aa the warld," go Jesus, an they quat the trystin-hill an gae back tae Jerusalem. Syne, at the prayer meetin, the Apostles said amang thirsels, "We canna aa gang tae aa the fowks o the yird. We'll niver get roun them aa!" "Weel than," go Peter, "yin'll hae tae gang here, an anither thair, an ilkane tak his skair." Sae they cast caivels, an for Greece it fell on Andro, for Rome on Peter himsel, for Africa on Philip. An on they cast. At last, for he seemed ey ahint, India fell on Tammas. Like Jonah afore him, he didna want tae gae eist. "Whaursumiver ye like," says he, "bot no India!" "Binna feart," threaps Jesus til him i the draim; "Gang ye an preach thair, for mysel, I'm wi ye." Sae Tammas awà throwe Mesopotâmia, an gaed abuid a ship treddin wi India.*

Mibbies it wis sae, an mibbies it wisna, bot whan a Syriac speaker i the early twa hunners telt sicna tale, that body wis richt, richt tae tak a chance. Gin ye dinna chance gettin it wrang, ye'll niver get it richt. Sae the storie-teller yaised the talent he'd bin lippent wi for sake o them at listens stories. Mibbies, likin stories, he did get ower keen on the myths aroun him; sic fauts can be forgien. He tried, an hadena his talent.

Gin siclike fowk hedna chanced bein wrang, nane wad hae bin carvin crosses in India an Scotland baith mair nor a thousan year syne. For, gin Christ's for aa fowks, it's no eneuch tae be i the same kintra as fowk; ye maun lîve i the samen warld. Sae some war intil the warld o stories, ithers the warld o carvin or fermin, pentin or bee-keepin, singin an monie mair. They chanced it, an foun the Spîrit o God in aa thir warlds, an sae eenou the Kirk's in aa the warld. An tae God be the glore.



ninth century cross, Brechin, Scotland



ninth century cross, Chennai, India

* cf. The Acks o Tammas 1