

Encryption and display: Recording new images on the Calderstones in Liverpool

George Nash¹ and Adam Stanford²

Introduction

This paper forms part of an extensive survey of Neolithic and Bronze Age Monuments that includes the Anglesey Rock-art Project (ARAP). The project, conceived in 2002 has, in the recent past been extended to sites to include monuments in North Wales and North-west England. The results from Anglesey have revealed new rock-art at the Late Neolithic passage graves of Barclodiad y Gawres and Bryn Celli Ddu and the destroyed monument at Cromlech Farm (Nash et al. 2006). Outside Anglesey new discoveries have been made at the [probable] Middle Neolithic double chambered stone monument of Dyffyn Ardudwy near Harlech (Nash & Stanford *forthcoming*). In 2006 the authors were commissioned by Merseyside Archaeological Society to record photographically the Calderstones monument. The recording methodology employed during sessions in October and December 2007 included a number of tried and successfully tested photographic techniques including what we term as ‘painting the panel’.

Based on the recent photographic survey this chapter will discuss the rock-art on each of the six stones. This survey, undertaken mainly during darkness hours recorded a number of new motifs including a dagger/sword that is indicative of the Bronze Age rock-art tradition in Galicia, north-western Spain, in particular those sites that occupy the intermediate slopes of the Campo Lameiro Valley, near the provincial town of Pontevedra (Bradley *et al.* 19).

The Calderstones, comprising six highly decorative stones is one of major three sites in England and Wales that form the eastern extent of the Late Neolithic passage grave tradition (*c.* 2,800 – 2,000 *cal.* BC).³ The other two monuments – Barclodiad y Gawres and Bryn Celli Ddu are located in Anglesey, a large island lying off the coast of North Wales. These three monuments along with possible eleven in Scotland (and Orkney) probably mark the [eastern and northern] demise of the megalithic art tradition in Western Europe. Each of the three monuments boasts a unique rock-art assemblage. Barclodiad y Gawres and Bryn Celli Ddu were excavated in the early- to mid-20th century, however there are no radiocarbon dates to determine the pre-construction, use and abandonment phases of these monuments. It is more than probable though that the Anglesey monuments were constructed sometime after the monuments in the Boyne Valley in Ireland were built. Many of the architectural traits and rock-art designs from the Irish monuments appear to have been incorporated into the two Anglesey monuments. The rock-art, although restricted to just two stones at Bryn Celli Ddu, is in abundance at Barclodiad y Gawres and the Calderstones.

The later history of the site, the destruction of the monument and re-erection of the surviving stones has been discussed by Cowell & Warhurst (1984) with a later with a more cohesive narrative by Royden (web page). More general discussions placing the rock-art into a regional and national context has been undertaken by Nash (2007).

¹ Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of Bristol, England

² Archaeology Safaris and Aerial Cam, Tewksbury, Gloucestershire

³ The date range employed in this paper extends from the Late Neolithic into the Early Bronze Age. We assume that the transition is variable both spatially and temporally.

Antiquarian accounts, important in understanding the stones origins include Ecroyd Smith (1868) Simpson (1968), Romilly Allen (1888) and Hand (1910).

The destroyed Calderstones monument currently stands within a specially erected pagoda in Calderstones Park, Liverpool. Its original position is not clear however there are currently moves by Mersey Archaeological Society to survey the area where it once probably stood. The surviving stones that form the Calderstones monument arguably has the most elaborately carved decoration of the three passage grave monuments and the rock-art appears to constitute at least five chronological phases, the earliest dating to the Late Neolithic and the latest to the 20th century.

The rock-art carved onto each of the six stones is mainly abstract geometric designs comprising mainly of concentric circles, cup-and-rings, grooved lines and spirals.⁴ Present on two stones though are eight footprints. Due to the poor conservation conditions the rock-art has weathered and some images are now difficult to interpret. Associated with the megalithic designs are a series of cupmarks that possibly date to the succeeding Bronze Age. Further rock-art including 19th century shoeprints and modern textural graffiti represents the other two carving phases.

The Calderstones in context

The passage grave tradition probably has its origins in the Iberian Peninsula and commences during the late 5th millennium BC. Associated within this phenomenon is megalithic art. This unique and predominantly abstract rock-art tradition appears to have migrated northwards along the Atlantic seaboard into Brittany and later into central and northern Ireland (Shee-Twohig 1981). Within the core passage graves areas of Europe, megalithic art is usually present, although not in central southern Sweden. Megalithic art, consisting of geometric and curvilinear designs is arranged in numerous panel sequences. Motifs include chevrons, concentric circles, diamonds, multiple lines, spirals, triangles and zigzags. In addition to these motifs cupmarks also appear. These particular designs are also found on other monument types and landscapes and have a much wider chronological distribution (e.g. Waddington *et al.* 2004, Nash 2007). Interestingly, the Calderstones has both megalithic art and cupmarks, each probably representing two distinct phases. Also incorporated onto these stones is an array of other motifs that that are dated much later.

The first in-depth recording of the Calderstones was undertaken by Forde-Johnson (1957). Prior to this some reference to the stones were made by Forde-Johnson when describing the artistic styles between these stones and those at Barclodiad y Gawres (1956). Since this initial pictorial record, Shee-Twohig (1981), Cowell & Warhurst (1984) and Nash (2006, 2007) have undertaken superficial discussions using Forde-Johnson set of images. Interestingly, only the megalithic motifs were recorded; excluded were cupmarks on all stones.

Methodology: Painting the rocks

Although six stones from the Calderstones monument it is more than likely that other decorated stones existed. It is not clear though where the surviving stones were

⁴ Many of these motifs are also present on exposed rock outcropping in Northern Britain and are now considered to date from the Late Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age (see Mazel, Nash & Waddington 2007).

positioned within the monument. There are however several clues that are to be found within the composition of two 19th century engravings, one dating to October 11th 1825, the other c. 1840. Both engravings focus on the Calderstones monument that at that time was in a denuded state; both also assist in geographically locating the monument in relation to other landscape features such as nearby Childwall Hall. Incorporated into both compositions are the stone settings and on several stones the engraver has inscribed recognisable megalithic rock-art. In addition, several stones with distinguishable shapes can be identified including Stone A and Stone B. From the limited rock-art present on the engravings plus the shape and location of the stones, one can tentatively construct some of the original Calderstones monument. Stones A and B probably represent the uprights belonging to the chamber. One of the authors has stated previously that the location of particular decorated stones would have been important to the users of the monument (Nash 2006, 2007). At Barclodiad y Gawres, much of the rock-art is positioned in such a way that it can only be viewed whilst in the chamber area. The same can be said for many other passage graves in Ireland. It is probable that the rock-art was special and was part of a restricted visual language that was only privy to an elite and the dead; similarly at the Calderstones a similar practice may have been installed.

The megalithic art on the Calderstones comprises a set of generic megalithic symbols/motifs that include single spirals, conjoined spirals, concentric circles, single and multiple arcs. This repertoire is similar in style and form to those symbols that are found in the Boyne Valley, County Meath on the passage graves of Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth. Similar spiral designs are also found at the passage grave site of Fourknocks, also in County Meath. Interestingly, megalithic art from these monuments and at the Calderstones indicate that certain art was hidden from view (i.e. art was being carved on both faces time using megalithic motifs). The hidden art was probably *seen* in metaphysical terms by the dead.

Due to the fragile nature of the stones, the recording was restricted to non-contact methods. One of the authors had reported in 2005 that each of the six stones had suffered long-term ground moisture percolation.⁵ This process, ongoing for the past 40 years or more had created cavities or pockets underneath the surface of the stone. Several of the panels or what we term as *faces* had suffered from this process. The fluctuating temperatures within the pagoda had also assisted in their deterioration. Furthermore, in the recent past the pagoda had been a target of systematic vandalism and nearly all the stone had been inscribed with textual graffiti.

The methods employed for the 2007 photographic survey included daylight and night-time photography.⁶ The results of the daylight phase, although detailed enough to expose the major designs on each stone did not fully expose all the imagery (Plates * & *). However, the night-time sessions did reveal greater detail on known imagery as well as identifying new motifs. The night-time photographic method – referred to as *painting the rocks* – employed a high resolution digital camera set on a tripod. The camera was set on a fixed exposure and aperture whilst a halogen light was obliquely aimed at the rock-art face. The oblique angle optimised the shadows cast from the

⁵ Conservation Technologies Team from the Museum of Liverpool prepared an action plan for the conservation of the stones in 2005. English Heritage was also informed of their current state of preservation. A proposal to laser-scan the stones was considered.

⁶ Also used but considered a failure was the use of infra-red photography.

rock-art motifs, even those motifs that were heavily eroded. In order to focus on the rock-art panel and to eliminate any background and foreground material, several boards were strategically placed which bounded the light source directly onto the panel (Plate *). Previous experimentation at sites in North Wales included a similar camera to panel set-up. However, two or more halogen lights were used on panels that had uneven surfaces. The lights were moved and used to fill-in areas where a static could not penetrate. The same process was used on several faces at the Calderstones.

Using Forde-Johnson's classification system from both the stones (Stones A to F) and the numbering of each motif set, the authors have sequentially continued the reference system for all newly identified rock-art. In addition we have included non-megalithic art [Phases II – V] (see Table 1).

	Period	Stone A	Stone B	Stone C	Stone D	Stone E	Stone F
Phase I	Neolithic	X	X	X	X	X	
Phase II	EBA/MBA	X	X	X	X	X	?
Phase III	Medieval		X			X	
Phase IV	19 th century		X	X	X	X	X
Phase V	20 th century	X	X	X	X	X	X

Despite the presence of later [historical] inscriptions on each of the stones, Phases I and II hold the greatest interest. The repertoire of symbols is typically indicative of the megalithic art tradition and includes concentric circles, cup-and-rings and spirals (Table 2). Also present but not recorded by Forde Johnson or researchers since are cupmarks. It is probable that these enigmatic symbols are roughly contemporary with the megalithic symbols.

	Stone A	Stone B	Stone C	Stone D	Stone E	Stone F
Spiral	X		X		X	
Double spirals			X		X	
Concentric circles	X	X	X		X	
Double concentric circles		X				
Cup-and-rings				X		
Diamonds	X					
Arcs		X				
Lines	X					
Lines and cups		X				
Cupmarks	X	X	X	X		X
Dagger				X		
Footprints	X	X			X	
Lines in cups						X
Miscellaneous		X			X	X

Table 2. Frequency of prehistoric symbols

Stone A: This stone, the tallest within the Calderstones group comprises megalithic and Bronze Age rock-art; megalithic art is present on both faces. The stone has in the recent past been subjected to differential exposure to the elements; hence the colour patina changes to the stone. Part of the largest design, a series of parallel lines (A1i)

enclosing a triple concentric circle (A1ii), is partially buried in gravel as well as an eroded clockwise spiral (A3). On the upper section of the stone are two footprints that are arranged similarly to footprints on Stone E (E5, E6). Shearing damage has occurred to the edging within the upper section of the stone, left of the two footprints.

Front face: This face, with its complex multi-phased line and concentric circle designs would have probably faced into the chamber. Image A1, similar to Stone C2 at Barclodiad y Gawres in Anglesey has within its design coding both circular and rectilinear forms (A1i, A1ii). This group comprises a triple-lined concentric circle that is flanked by a series of parallel lines. The complexity of this group is not mirrored in Forde-Johnston's tracing (1957, fig. 2). Based on the recent photographic survey there are up to three and four lines flanking the concentric circle.⁷ Also present are a large cupmark (A6) and several diamonds (A7, A8). The diamonds are carved differently to the surrounding imagery and therefore may not be contemporary. Incorporated within the right-hand section of this group is textual graffiti in the form of double-line initials 'R H' (A10). Above this group are two [Bronze Age] footprints (A4, A5). Unlike their counterparts on Stone E, these footprints are more developed; the A4 design possessing an instep. The sole of the footprint appears to have once formed a circular motif, possibly a [megalithic] clockwise spiral.

Rear face 1: On this face are three circular motifs, one of these is located below the gravel line (A3). This motif is much weathered and comprises a clockwise spiral. The upper two motifs (A2i and A2ii) consist of a clockwise spiral and a smaller double concentric circle. Above these motifs are several late 20th century textual graffiti markings, one dating to 1994 (collectively referred to as A9).

Rear face 2: Based on the recent photographic survey no distinct rock-art from any period is present on this face. However, above the current ground level is one, possibly two weathered cupmarks (A11).

Stone B: This stone possesses complex multi-phasing comprising megalithic, Bronze Age and medieval imagery. Based on the orientation of the medieval image, a church (B11) this stone was probably set 20 degrees to the right, assuming that the medieval carving was made whilst this stone was *in situ*.

Front face: Severe-shearing damage has occurred to this face within the upper section. It is highly probable that prehistoric rock-art existed within these areas of the face.⁸ Despite the damage though, a single large cupmark is present on the diagonal left-hand edge (D19). The surviving narrative, forming the central and lower right section of the face comprises two incomplete carved curvilinear arcs; these motif run parallel with each other (B2, B3). Outside a further irregular carved arc and located in the lower section of the face are two pecked footprints; the left footprint facing upwards (B7), whilst the right footprint with six toes facing downwards (B6). These two images probably represent two different individuals. Bisected by a larger irregular arc (B16) are two concentric circles, probably forming a conjoined motif (B5i, B5ii). Both concentric circles are worn; the outer circle (B5i) possessing three outer rings (but with missing core) and inner concentric circle with six probable rings (B5ii). A

⁷ The complexity of this group is also highlighted by Shee-Twohig (1981, Fig 261).

⁸ See also Shee-Twohig (1981, 228).

possible footprint and single line is located above the conjoined circles (B9). It is not clear if this image is megalithic or a later addition. Forde-Johnston (1967, 26) suggests that this image may represent an Early Bronze Age halberd. Inside the two parallel arcs are an anticlockwise spiral (B2) and several possible worn footprints (B8, B11). Superimposed over these images is a carved building, probably a church with cross (B17) that is believed to be medieval in date. If this is the case there may have been access to the chamber area during this time, possibly when the site formed part of a boundary around c. 1568. Dispersed across the prehistoric images and motifs as well as the later sheared surfaces are 19th and 20th century textual graffiti (collectively B18).

Rear face: The rear face has been subjected to severely shearing damage and the only [limited] rock-art dates from the 19th century. A curious symbol comprising a finely carved circle with a line running diagonally through it is located within the central part of the face (B14). Either side of this motif are numerous worn graffiti markings (B15).

Side face A: Located on this face are three megalithic motifs; a quadruple ringed concentric circle (B1) and two worn double [oval] concentric circles (and not spirals as promoted by Forde-Johnston; 1957, Fig. 3) (B4, B12). Dispersed amongst this group are several cupmarks (collectively B13). Three cupmarks are present within the large quadruple concentric circle (B1i, B1ii, B1iii). A further cupmark is present within the upper line of the small double ringed concentric circle (B4i). It is not clear if the cupmarks are contemporary with the megalithic motifs.

Side face B: This side face comprises three megalithic motifs: cup and ring marks, cupmarks and interconnecting lines. It is not clear at this point if these motifs are from a single carving event. All interconnecting imagery extends across the upper section of this face. It is probable that this imagery was originally hidden and stood as a vertical panel (based on the assumption that the imagery of the front face is presently askew – see above). Located

Stone C: This stone, the largest within the Calderstones group has prehistoric art on both faces. On the face containing multiple cupmarks there is evidence of shear damage with most of the upper face missing. The base of up to three cupmarks extends to the new surface. Below the damaged area, the rear face is covered by cupmarks. Examination of this face has revealed that only one megalithic symbol is present; a concentric circle, located at the current base of the stone. Above the damaged area are the remnants of up to six vertical groves, possibly the result of natural weathering. An alternative view could be that the upper section of the stone has been used for polishing. Incorporated onto the front face are up to nine megalithic symbols including spirals, conjoined spirals, concentric circles and the remnants of several lines. Dispersed on both faces are 19th and 20th century textual graffiti. Interestingly, both Forde-Johnston (1957) and Shee-Twohig (1981) make little mention of the multiple cupmarks, located on the rear face.

Front face: Located around the edges of this face is a series of circular motifs (C2 – C6). Within the upper section of the face are up to four naturally weathered groves/lines. Two of the spirals (C3, C5) are carved counter clockwise, whilst C2 is

carved clockwise. Located on the right-hand side of the face and incorporated into a more complex design group is a conjoined double spiral (C6). Carved over the left-hand spiral are several images including a concentric circle (C6i) and multiple lines (C6ii). Based on recent photographic survey several curvilinear motifs are carved below C6. The concentrated group of three motifs including a double concentric circle (C4), spiral (C5) and a single carved circle (C5i) located along the right-hand edge has shearing damage either side. Within the upper right-hand section of face is extensive 19th and 20th century textual graffiti (C8).

Rear face: Forde-Johnston (1957, 26) states that a 'score' of cupmarks are present on this face. Actually there are more 60; ranging in size between 2cm and 6cm in diameter (collectively grouped as C7). Several cupmarks extend to the damaged area within the upper part of the face. Several groups of cupmarks are linear in form suggesting some form of phased design intentionality. At ground level is a quadruple-ringed concentric circle (C1). It is probable that this is the earliest symbol on this face and contemporary with other megalithic symbols on the front face.

Stone D: This roughly coursed sandstone block is decorated on both faces but unlike the majority of other stones within the Calderstones group, Stone D only has prehistoric rock-art on one face. However, probably following the destruction of the monument during the early 19th century a series of seven shoe or boot prints were carved on the front face along with a series of textural graffiti markings. Several of these markings probably date to the 20th century suggesting that this face was exposed and available to people who had the desire to carve. Recent inspection of this face shows that much of the upper section of the original face has either weathered away or has been sheared. Carved across this section are further textual graffiti markings. On the rear face are a series of megalithic and Bronze Age carvings; interestingly the earlier megalithic carvings – the cup-and-ring marks and possibly the cupmark are located on the left-hand section of the stone, whilst a carved dagger, indicative of the Early to Middle Bronze is centrally placed.

Front face: Of the seven shoe or boot prints, three are buried beneath the present gravel (D4 - D10). The style of each carving is roughly similar, although four (D4, D6, D7, D10) have heels. Apart from D8 and D9, all other shoe prints are un-paired and all vary in size. It is conceivable the D8 and D9 represent an individual. Six of the footprints are oriented similarly, facing towards the right-hand side and upper edge of the stone. Inscribed into each print, usually in the sole area of the shoe are a series of letters. It is probable that these textual marks each represent the carver's initials (e.g. 'GLH').

Rear face: The upper central and right-hand section of this face has sheared away and it is possible that rock-art may have been present. The damage to this section of the face may have been recent as no graffiti appears on the new surface. Damage appears to have been inflicted onto some of the face edges; the left-hand section of one of the cup-and-rings is missing. Recorded by Forde-Johnson and located within the upper left-hand section of the stone are three cup-and-ring motifs (D 1 – D3). This motif has been recently stratigraphically dated to the Neolithic and can be considered part of the megalithic art repertoire (see Waddington 2007). According to Forde-Johnstone these are the only prehistoric motifs on this face (1957, Fig. 5). Located within the central section of the face is one definite cupmark, measuring 3-4cm in diameter

(D11) and possibly two smaller cupules (not referenced). Within the central part of the lower section of this face and partially buried by gravel is what appears to be a stylised dagger, similar in form to those found at the Fentans rock-art panel in the Campo Lamerio Valley, Galicia, north-western Spain (see Nash 2003).⁹ The double-lined dagger, measuring c. 23cm in length is carved 10 degrees off vertical (D12). A further cup-and-ring motif is located left of the dagger (D13).

Stone E: This roughly-coursed rounded and much-eroded sandstone block has several rock-art images that are buried. These include a Maltese cross (E3), the lower section of a double spiral (E9), a small concentric circle (E10) and a foot print (E4). This stone has art on three faces and it is probable that some of it was hidden, and facing into the mound. The repertoire comprises three footprints (E2, E4, E5), two clockwise single spirals (E7, E8), a double spiral, sometimes referred to in the earlier literature as a *face* (E9), three double concentric circles (E1, 10, E11), a Maltese cross (E3) and a trapezoidal wedge shape, possible an incomplete footprint (E6). Dispersed across all three faces are a series of textual graffiti marks that I have collectively referenced as E13. Based on the worn edges of each some of the text it is probable that some markings date to the 19th century.

Front face: Based on the concentration of megalithic designs, I suggest that the front face is represented by the two clockwise spirals (E7, E8), the double spiral (E9) and the concentric circle (E10). It is probable that this stone was on display and faced into the chamber of the Calderstones passage grave. The current orientation and position within the pagoda is, in my view correct. The double spiral, found elsewhere within the megalithic world, has been almost completely eroded away. However, based on Forde-Johnston's tracing the two spiral elements can be considered as a single carving phase. The spiral present on the upper section of the stone (E7) appears to be multi-phased, associated with two possible cupmarks (E12, E13) which were either carved before or after the spiral. Further multi-phased activity occurs over (or underneath) the concentric circle (E10) in the form of several lines. However, these lines could be accidental scratches (and are therefore not referenced).

Side face: Located on the upper section of the side face is a damaged double concentric circle (regarded by Forde-Johnston as an anticlockwise spiral; *ibid* 29, Fig 6). This motif may also have later carving activity although Forde-Johnston quite right suggests that it has been subjected to weathering (1957, 31).

Rear face: The face comprises the six images/motifs recognised by Forde-Johnston that include the three footprints, the trapezoidal shape, a concentric circle and Maltese cross. The foot prints appear to be arranged in two groups. The upper section of this stone has been damaged and a small section is now missing and it is probable that rock-art once graced this section of the stone. The first group comprising two footprints (E2 and E4), pecked and measuring c. 20cm in length are each formed from a generic trapezoidal shape. The deeply pecked footprint E2 has five toes, the largest appears to have been added later, whilst footprint E4 only has four toes and unlike the rest of the pecked footprint, the toes are curvilinear. The footprint 'stand' either side

⁹ Similar in form to a dagger found during the excavation of a Middle Bronze Age barrow at Reaverhill Farm, Northumberland in 1964. The dagger, belonging to a group of riveted knives and daggers was triangular in shape with bevelled straight edges and made from predominantly copper (67%) [Accession No. 1964.2]. See also EBA metallurgical classification by Burgess - Phases II to V (1980).

of the Maltese cross and above footprint E2 is a double concentric circle (E1). The outer ring of this motif appears to have been altered to give the appearance of a more rectilinear form. A further footprint with the toe section facing downwards is located to left of the other group and is roughly similar in size and form. Above this and oriented similarly is an incomplete footprint (E 6). Based on prehistoric carved footprints found elsewhere in Britain, I consider the Calderstones' footprints to later than previously considered (e.g. Shee-Twohig 1981), dating to the Early or Middle Bronze Age. Associated with these images is what I would term as a pentiform, comprising five cupmarks that are arranged in what can be described as a domino face (E12) (see Nash & Stanford *forthcoming*). The Maltese cross which is currently buried is considered by Forde-Johnson as dating to the medieval period, probably between the 12th and 15th centuries – type sometimes referred to as *Alisee Pattée* (Foster 2003).

Stone F: This fine-grained sandstone with polished surface contains no distinguishable prehistoric carvings. One enigmatic symbol is located on upper section, although a drawing made by Forde-Johnston shows this carving to be on the lower section (1957, Fig. 7). The present setting and orientation is in my view is correct and it is clear that a large section of what was a pointed stone is missing. It is conceivable that some form of decoration was present on the missing section.

Front face: On this face are three groups of carving. The most enigmatic and difficult to date is a possible roughly gouged cupmark (or natural depression) that has been modified by a series of short radiating carved lines. The cupmark or depression measures *c.* 5cm in diameter (F1).¹⁰ Up to isolated five lines radiate beyond the depression on the left side. Below this are the initials J.S (F2) which are probably 19th century in date. On the right hand side of the face are a series of irregular scratches that are probably the result of previous handling of the stone.

Rear face: The surface of this face is relatively even and the broken section running from the right hand side of the stone, forming a point can be clearly seen. Sporadically carved across this face are a series of pits and scratches that are probably the result of accidental damage. Carved in the upper section though are two vertical parallel lines that are linked by a curvilinear line that may represent a design (F3). Two possible megalithic motifs are recognised by Shree-Twohig (1981, Fig. 264, Fi) and include a rectilinear motif (F4) and an anticlockwise spiral. The rectilinear motif found elsewhere on exposed panels, dates to the Bronze Age and the motif on this face comprises three rectangular boxes that area arranged in a vertical row. The spiral was not recorded during the recent photographic survey.

Side face: Located on the lower section of this face is a single cupmark (F5).

Towards a grammar of art

As stated earlier the destroyed Calderstones monument is represented by six decorative stones and is arguably one of the most decorative megalithic monuments (or remains of) in mainland Britain. The megalithic rock-art, including the cupmarks represents the first two phases of possibly five carving phases. Previously, it is only

¹⁰ This arrangement is also present at several megalithic sites in Wales.

the megalithic art that has been pictorially recorded (e.g. Forde-Johnson (1956), Shee-Twohig (1981) and Cowell & Warhurst (1984)). The rock-art has also been incorporated into wider discussions that also include other passage graves monuments that possess megalithic art (Nash 2007). Unlike its counterparts in the Boyne Valley in central Ireland, the Calderstones appears to represent a megalithic art tradition that is dominated by curvilinear and geometric motifs, usually occurring on the same stone. Also present and probably from a slightly later phase is the presence of carved feet, a rare occurrence within the British prehistoric rock-art sequence.

The carving of feet or footprints can be considered a world phenomenon, occurring as in such places as India and Indonesia (Nash 2004) and within many chronologies. Carved feet and footprints are present within western European Bronze Age art traditions. In Britain only a handful of sites possess these representative images; the most notable of these is a cist originating from the Pool Farm barrow, West Harptree (e.g. Beckensall 1999; Coles *et al.* 2003). The archaeological context in which the rock-art was found firmly places it and the burial monument into the Early Bronze Age (i.e. first quarter of the 2nd millennium BC).¹¹ This date was produced based on human bone from the cist was radiocarbon dated to between 1,920 and 1,735 cal. BC (Coles *et al.* 2003).

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Other motifs and symbols that are not considered as megalithic but probably Early Bronze Age in date include cupmarks, cup-and-ring marks, a dagger, footprints and single and multiple lines (linking cupmarks). This assemblage is found elsewhere on Bronze Age funerary sites (e.g. the footprints on the Pool Farm cist in Somerset). Daggers also occur on funerary and open air rock-art sites throughout Bronze Age Atlantic Europe and the style of the dagger on Stone D is also found in the Campo Lamerio Valley, Galicia in North-west Spain. Symbols and motifs from Phases III to V comprise mainly of textural graffiti although, 19th a medieval (?) church with cross and 19th century shoe prints are found on Stones B and D respectively.

Based on the array of imagery on these stones, in particular those motifs and symbols that date between the Late Neolithic and Late to Middle Bronze Age, it is clear that the Calderstones monument was in use for a considerable period of time, may be up to 800 years. The repertoire of symbols carved on the Calderstones suggest that this monument was probably one of the last passage graves to be constructed and used during the Late Neolithic.

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¹¹ Two radiocarbon dates were undertaken on two pieces of long bone and were calibrated to 1,980 – 1,765 and 1,920 – 1,735 cal. BC.

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