

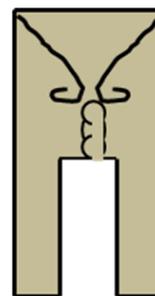
Mithraic Symbols Decoded - Notched Rectangle

There are 16 objects given this name of which 9 are superimposed with Z-Rods. 5 Objects are indistinct – 11 separate designs emerged. There are no instances of the Z-Rod with Notched Rectangle variant and the Notched Rectangle alone on the same Stone. For drawing simplicity and clarity the Z-Rods are shown in the examples below with triangular terminals.



Westfield

Almost all of these designs have cut outs into the long sides of the shapes even including the Westfield example shown here that does not have a Z-Rod across it. In contrast Cargill has neither Z-Rod nor cut outs but maintains the general pattern of the longitudinal notch.



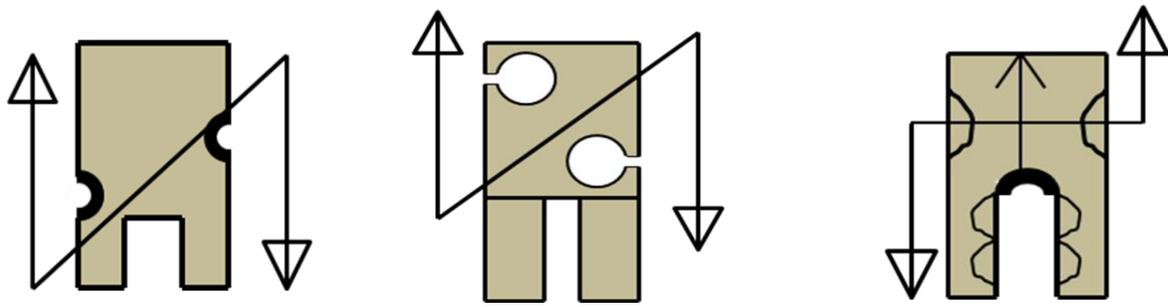
Cargill

The Notched Rectangle shapes appear to represent the layout of an indoor Mithraeum typically having circle shaped cut outs into the longitudinal sides. On the Raven Stone (Tyrie, Aberdeenshire) and Birnie Stone (near Elgin) the overall rectangular footprint has what could be construed as the “side benches” of a Mithraeum with statue niches (one on each side of the Mithraeum and near the Tauroctony end – possibly for Cautes and Cautopates).

The Maiden Stone, in Aberdeenshire, is almost identical to the Raven Stone footprint except the proximity of the cut outs to the Tauroctony end is the opposite i.e. on the Raven Stone the left cut out or niche is nearer than the right and on the Maiden Stone the right niche is nearer than the left. The Tillypronie Stone is another variant on the theme – the niches are opposite one another; similar to the Inverallan Stone. The Ballintomb Stone has only one niche – in from the left and extending about two thirds of the way across the width of the rectangle.

Ardnilly is slightly different again with semicircles cutting into the insides of the “side benches”. There is a high correlation between the Symbol Stone rectangle Symbols and the footprints of Mithraea such as in Ostia, Italy as shown in elsewhere in this website. Ardnilly, Clynmilton and Tillypronie have semicircles on side benches suggesting a seat type indentation.

The interpretation of the Z-Rod shapes on Notched Rectangles is arguably the same as that for Z-Rods & Double Discs – the arrows are a drawing simplification of the “flames” which have been decoded as Cautes and Cautopatres holding their torches to represent morning and night, the equinoxes etc. Additionally, these Z shapes could allude to Hydra linking Cancer and Capricorn.



Maiden Stone

Tyrie & Birnie

Tillypronie

The Notched Rectangle shapes represent the shape and layout of a Roman Mithraeum, in some cases with indentations which equate to the niches which would have housed statues – typically Cautes and Cautopatres. The addition of the Z-Rod in over half of these Objects reinforces the presence of the statues of the torch bearers and could have been used to explain their importance in the mysteries of Mithras.

This is a very significant decode. This Object is the only one on Pictish Stones that requires minimal decoding as it basically records the layout of the Roman Mithraeum and has acted as a key to the discovery that the Pictish Standing Stones were used as meeting places for people practising a version of Roman Mithraism. Not only would it have been a reminder to the “teacher” of the origin of Pictish-Mithraism but an excellent object for the initiate to be told about that origin plus enabling what could be revealed about the torch bearers.