

Create your own Pictish Chariot

The Picts lived in northern Scotland in early medieval times. The North East of Scotland was the heartland of these people, who were descended from the Iron Age roundhouse tribes who lived when the Romans were in Britain. The name “Pict” comes from the Latin for “painted people” so perhaps they were tattooed, or put on war paint when going into battle.

We have no records written by the Picts themselves, but they are mentioned in writings by other people. They carved symbols and pictures on various stones which were put up in many different places with some still being found today – the Dandaleith Stone in Elgin Museum was only discovered a few years ago. No-one knows why these carvings were made or what the strange symbols mean. Many pictures show riders on horseback but only one stone has been found that shows a chariot (from Meigle, in Perthshire), although the Romans reported that the Picts rode chariots into battle.

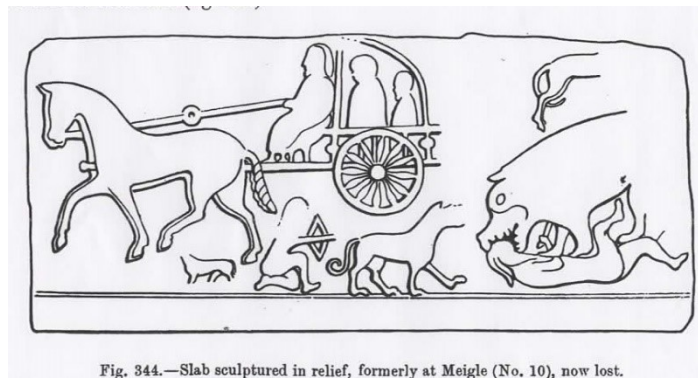
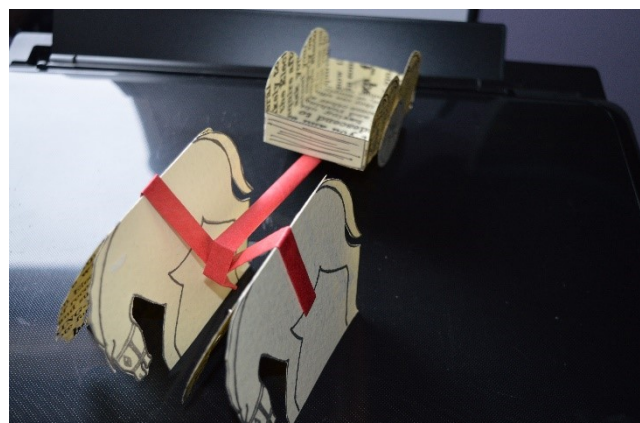


Fig. 344.—Slab sculptured in relief, formerly at Meigle (No. 10), now lost.

Our model here tries to show a chariot made of wood, woven willow and leather, drawn by two of the small ponies found in Britain at the time.

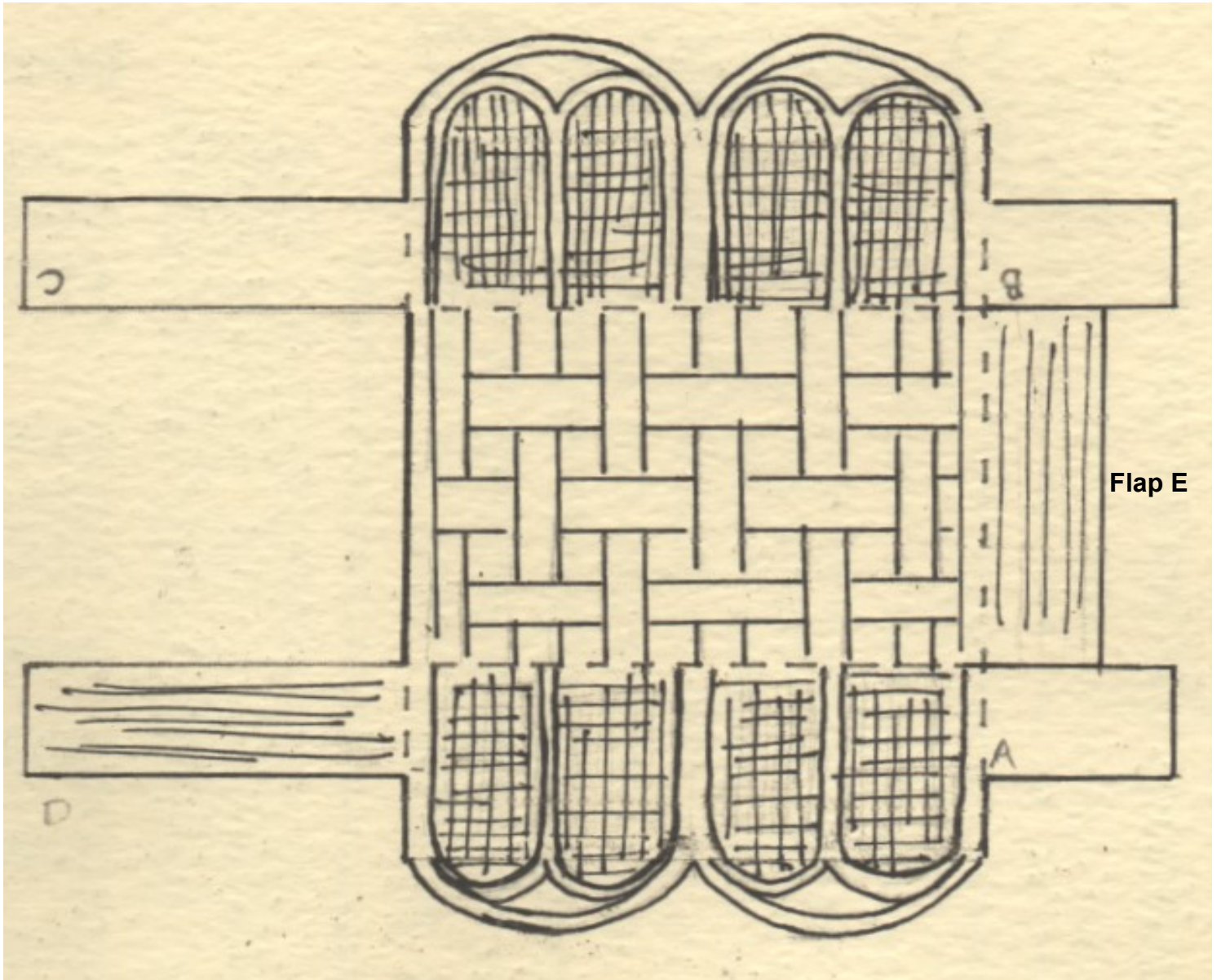


Completed chariot

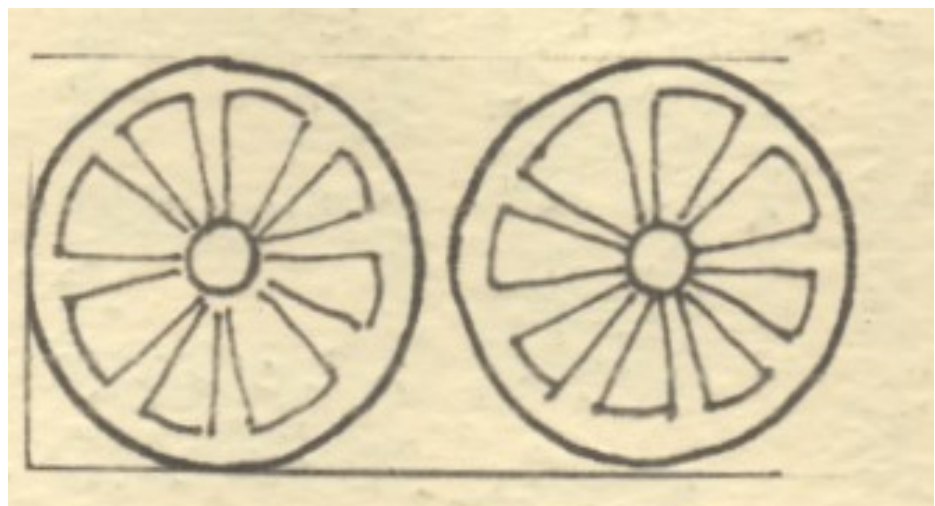


Chariot & horses, showing harness and shaft hooked together.

Pictish Chariot Template

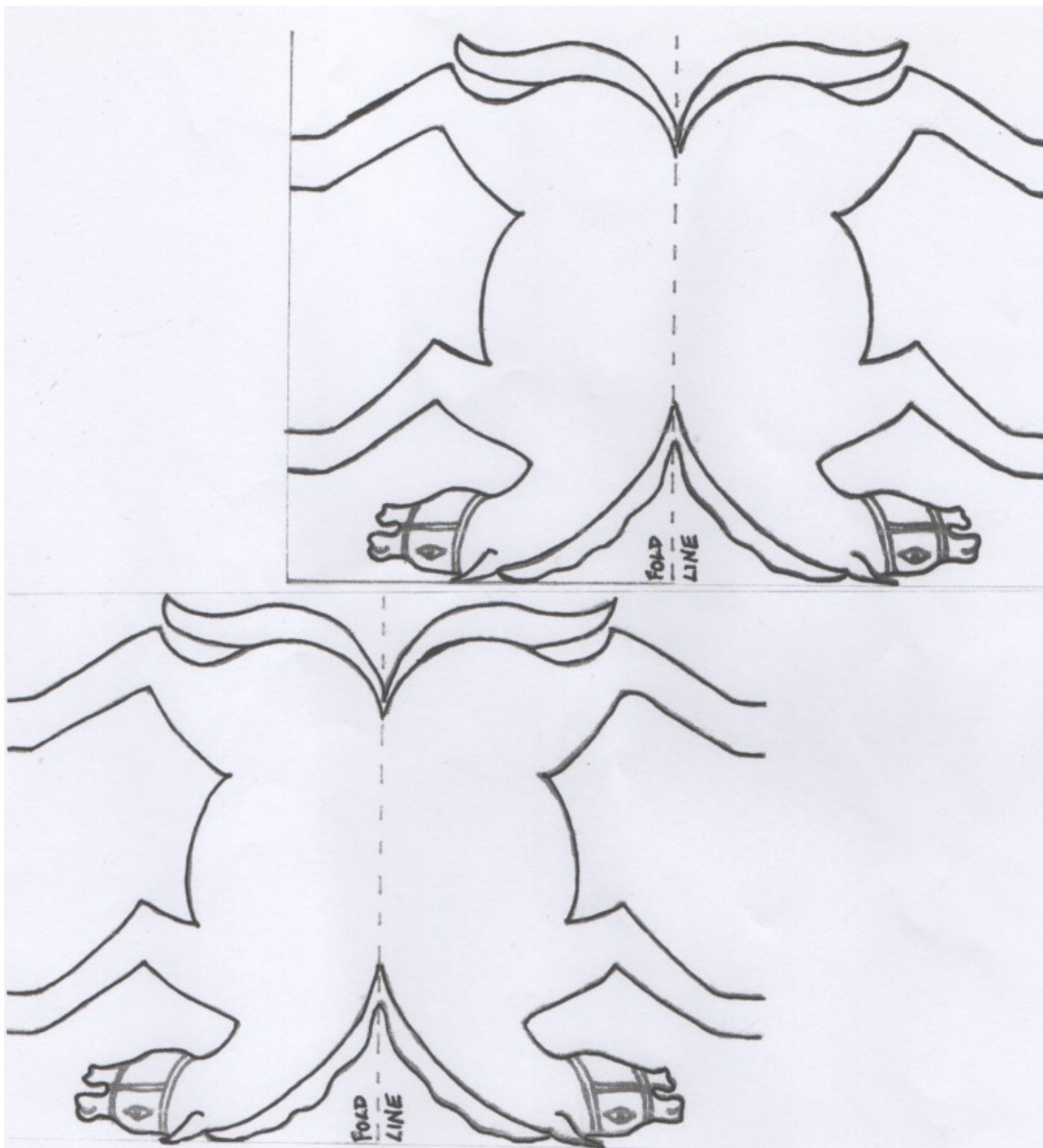


Chariot body and wheels



Chariot horses

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Pictish Chariot Instructions

Print the chariot body and horses templates on A4 paper or card.

The chariot body

- 1) Colour in the chariot light brown, to look like wood and wicker work. Cut out the shape, along the solid, black lines. Snip down the solid lines at the sides of flap E.
- 2) Score lightly along the dotted fold lines, then fold along these lines to make a box shape.
- 3) Using glue or double-sided sticky tape, stick flaps A & B under flap E. Stick flap C under flap D.
- 4) Colour the rim and spokes of the wheels light brown, like wood. Cut them out, round the outside black line only.
- 5) Stick a wheel to each side of the chariot, in the middle.
- 6) Flatten a paper art straw and colour it brown. Stick it to the underside of the chariot, the whole length, to make the shaft.
- 7) Once you have made the horses, attach the shaft to the harness between them.

Chariot Horse

- 1) Cut out both horses, leaving the middle section between the legs, so they stand easily.
- 2) Fold each one along the dotted fold line, so they stand.
- 3) Colour your horses.
- 4) Take a paper art straw and flatten it. Colour it like wood or leather.
- 5) Fold it in half, the fold down each side, to make a **M** shape.
- 6) Fit the harness to both horses and glue it down.
- 7) When you attach the shaft of the chariot to the harness you could take string and make reins from each horse to the chariot, so the driver can guide them.

If you would like a copy of this template to be posted to you so that you can build your own Pictish Chariot and battle the Romans at home, please email us at: curator@elginmuseum.org.uk