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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

DUPPLIN CROSS



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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

DUPPLIN CROSS

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1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

The Dupplin Cross (NO 01905 14490), now standing inside the tower of St Serf's Church in Dunning, Perth and Kinross, is a Class III Pictish freestanding cross of Old Red Sandstone. It once stood at Bankhead, on a slope north of the village of Forteviot, to the east of Dunning. It stands at an impressive 2.61m tall from the base of its shaft, the socket stone is 0.4m high, and it dates the late first millennia AD. It is the only surviving freestanding Pictish cross in Eastern Scotland.¹

It is carved in relief on all four sides and is dominated by the Christian cross with a large raised central boss on both sides, decorated with numerous panels. The front face exhibits a warrior on horseback, four armed warriors and animals next to a notch. The back face exhibits an inscription panel, four pairs of birds surrounding an interlace panel, a naked man rending the jaws of a lion and other animals. The left side exhibits decorated panels, animals and two more similar armed warriors. The right side exhibits further decorated panels, a backwards-facing beast and a seated harpist. The decorations on this cross are vast and elaborate, and are discussed further below.

The stone is freely accessible as a visitor attraction inside St Serf's Church. It is located at the base of the tower and can be visited from April to September. There is lighting specifically designed to highlight the features of the stone.

1.2 Statement of significance

The Pictish symbol stones, cross-slabs and crosses of early medieval Scotland are perhaps the most extraordinary and beautiful of all carved stones in the British Isles. These stones, carved by the Picts, or 'Painted People', 'offer remarkable testimony to their artistic skills and insights into Pictish life and artistic contacts'.²

The Dupplin Cross stands safely within the walls of St Serf's Church. Its significance can be summarised as follows:

- It is an explicit expression of Christianity in southern Pictland, and has been dated to the first half of the ninth century.³
- It is the only surviving freestanding cross in Eastern Scotland and one of only a few complete freestanding crosses in early medieval Scotland.
- It mentions a named king in its Roman alphabet inscription,⁴ almost uniquely, and therefore it explicitly transmits ideas of royal authority and power in Pictland during the early development of the Scottish nation.

¹Henderson and Henderson 2004, 189

²Fraser 2008, 1

³James 2005, 104

⁴See Forsyth 1995

- It is possibly the earliest example of historically dated Insular sculpture in Scotland.
- Its inscription and imagery serve to provide information and improve our understanding of Pictish kingship in early medieval Scotland.
- This stone demonstrates advances in the technical and architectural knowledge of the Picts, as is evident in its form, scale and the notch in the base of its shaft.
- Its quality of carving and the variety of motifs and styles present, highlighting both Celtic and Anglian traditions, demonstrates the cultural significance of this Pictish stone. This stone communicates to us that the Picts were not an isolated or primitive culture.
- It has a topographical association with the nearby documented royal centre at Forteviot,⁵ where Cináed mac Ailpín is reported to have died in AD 858.⁶
- Some of its imagery (the armed warriors) may be interpreted as evidence of a full-time retinue of soldiers,⁷ and if so, this stone may demonstrate a connection between a mounted royal figure and his army.⁸
- It is possible that this stone demonstrates evidence of Christianity being used to legitimise kingship.
- It stands as a fine example of the importance of continual reappraisal of early carved stones in Scotland.

2 Assessment of significance

2.1 Background

Description

This freestanding cross is carved from one piece of Old Red Sandstone and is inserted into a large trapezoidal base. The stone is consistent with a local source from the Strathmore Group.⁹ It measures 3.01m in height, including its base, 0.94m across its arms, 0.46m wide across the base of the shaft, 0.39m wide across the top of the shaft, and 0.24m wide at the top of the cross, by 0.33m thick at the bottom of the shaft, 0.29m thick at the top of the shaft, and 0.18m thick at the top of the cross.¹⁰ It is carved all in relief. It stands within the base of the tower of St Serf's Church in Dunning and therefore the enclosed space of the tower provides its current setting.

The Carved Detail

As a freestanding cross, this carved stone takes the form of a Christian cross on the front and back faces. The carved detail descriptions that follow are based on a visual analysis of two different drawings of the Dupplin Cross,¹¹ as

⁵Alcock and Alcock 1996, 455

⁶ Henderson 1999, 163

⁷Foster 2014, 143

⁸Foster 2014, 158

⁹Miller and Ruckley 2005, 289

¹⁰Allen and Anderson 1903, Part III, 319-20

¹¹Scott 2005, 218; Allen and Anderson 1903, Part III, 322-3

well as from an interrogation of work by Isabel Henderson and Anna Ritchie.¹² All orientations reflect the current position of the stone in St Serf's Church.

Central bosses: The front and back faces of the stone each have a large raised and decorated circular central boss at the centre of the crosshead, with both bosses having a deep border of ribbing. The centre of the boss is badly worn on both faces, although possible step-pattern may be visible on the centre of the boss on the back face.

Front (east) face: Surrounding the central boss, and emanating from the lower arm of the cross, are two stems of vinescroll extending through all four arms of the cross. On the upper arm there is a panel of key-pattern that is surmounted by a finial-like extension. The latter is interpreted as a tiled roof due to the presence of tegulation.¹³ The four arms of the crosshead, but not the panel of key-pattern or finial-like extension, are bordered by roll moulding with scrolled cusps. The cross-shaft is divided into three bordered panels with two strands of square key-pattern separating them. The top panel displays a male figure on horseback in profile and facing left. His eye, nose, helmet, and moustache are all visible, as well as evidence of clothing. The reins of the horse are also visible with possible hints of weaponry. There is a large spear like object protruding from behind the man, perhaps a sceptre. All four feet of the horse are on the ground. The middle panel displays four closely placed foot-soldiers, each with their own sword and shield, and wearing tunics. The shields appear to be suspended from their necks and the soldiers appear to be standing in rank. They are all in profile and facing left. The bottom panel displays two jumping hounds, advancing in the same direction as the figures above. To the left of the hounds is a triangular notch.

Back (west) face: Surrounding the central boss and extending over all four cross arms is animal-headed interlace. The end of each cross arm is decorated with spiral interlace, with further spiral interlace extending almost the full length of the upper arm, which, like the front face, is surmounted by a finial-like extension with tegulation present. Like the front face, the four arms of the crosshead, but not the finial-like extension, are bordered by roll moulding with scrolled cusps. The cross-shaft is divided into three bordered panels with a strand of decoration separating the top two. The top panel displays a square panel containing seven lines of eroded inscription in the Roman alphabet.¹⁴ The most significant part of this inscription reads 'Custantin filius Fircus', known as Custantin mac Forcussa, who was king of both Dàl Riata and the Picts.¹⁵ The middle panel display four paired birds surrounding a circular interlace filled roundel. The bottom panel displays a naked man, most likely David rending the jaws of a lion or perhaps a bear, with a boar below them. To their left is an accompanying sheepdog at the top and a bear-like creature below who is impaled by a spear. This panel is not as neat at the rest as the figures overlap with the panel border at times.

¹² Henderson 1999; Ritchie in Ewart et al. 2007, 319-23

¹³ Henderson and Henderson 2004, 190-1

¹⁴See Forsyth 1995

¹⁵Forsyth 1995, 242

Left (south) face: Surmounted by a finial-like extension, the upper arm of the cross is decorated with a panel of curvilinear split interlace above a panel of diagonal key-pattern, the end of the left arm with key-pattern and the lower arm with a combination of key and spiral pattern. Below this is a strand of decoration. The cross-shaft is divided into three bordered panels with a strand of decoration separating the top two. The top panel displays two lions standing on their hind legs, opposing one another, with their left paw in the mouth of the other and their right paw on the shoulder of the other. They appear symmetrical. The middle panel displays two foot-soldiers identical to those on the front face. The bottom panel is triangular in shape due the irregular cutaway at the base of the cross shaft and it contains a triquetra knot. This irregular cutaway extends through to the front face of the cross to the left of the panel containing the two hounds.

Right (north) face: Surmounted by a finial-like extension, the upper arm of the cross is decorated with curvilinear interlace above a panel of square key-pattern, the end of the right arm with diagonal key-pattern and the lower arm with split interlace work. The cross-shaft is divided into three bordered panels with a strand of square key-pattern separating the top two, as well as a strand below the bottom panel. The top panel displays a backward-facing beast biting its tail, which forms interlace as it passes through its body to its mouth. The middle panel displays a large Pictish harp, with a zoomorphic upper terminal,¹⁶ being played by a seated man. This figure is probably supposed to represent a bard playing for the King, or perhaps represent David himself. The chair also appears to have a zoomorphic back portion. Notably, the harpist is wearing a helmet with a nose guard, perhaps warrior-like, which can also be found worn by the other figures on this cross. The bottom panel displays further split interlace work like that on the lower arm of the cross.

Other: The underside panels of the horizontal cross arms also have carvings. These both contain a backward-facing beast.

Socket stone: There is incised decoration on the edges of the socket stone, however this is more than likely decoration and not Ogham.

Brief History

The following is designed to highlight the brief history of the Dupplin Cross. Providing a full biography for the stone is not possible at this stage in our understanding, as is common with early medieval carved stones. A fuller account of the timeline of the stone is given in Appendix 1, and any further details of archaeological investigation are presented in Appendix 2.

Assigning the name of a patron or carver, or even a date to the Dupplin Cross was once difficult. However, and thanks to the reading of the inscription on its back face, some assumptions can now be made. It was probably erected

¹⁶Trench-Jellicoe 1997, 163

sometime during the first half of the ninth century,¹⁷ in either commemoration of Constantine son of Fergus or by him.¹⁸

Antiquarians believed that the stone was re-erected on Dupplin Moor, a site overlooking royal Forteviot, as a memorial to the Battle of Dupplin Moor in 1332.¹⁹ It is possible that royal Forteviot was the original location of the stone, however this is difficult to ascertain and it is more likely that its original location was where it stood until 1998 overlooking Forteviot. It has however been noted that in 1898 the Earl of Kinnoull moved the stone to this location from the parish churchyard. This evidence is unfortunately conflicting and inconclusive.²⁰

John Adair's map shows that a stone was located to the west of Dupplin Castle, overlooking Forteviot, as early as the late seventeenth century.²¹ This record probably represents the Dupplin Cross.

Concern for the stone led to the construction of a small iron fence around it in the nineteenth century,²² and it was noted that the stone was leaning over in 1922.²³

James Skene illustrated the stone in 1832, depicting it leaning over at an angle.²⁴

In 1925, it was re-erected in its socket stone with a concrete collar inserted around the socket stone, and a new surrounding fence was constructed.²⁵ A cast of the stone was made in 1990 for an exhibition and this process re-revealed the socket stone from beneath the earth.²⁶

In 1994 Katherine Forsyth presented her important findings detailing her translation of the Roman alphabet inscription on the stone.²⁷ The other markings on the socket stone are no longer identified as illegible Ogham.²⁸ These are now thought to be a border design.

In 1995, the future of the stone was debated at a Public Local Inquiry, and by 1998 it had been decided that the cross be moved indoors to St Serf's Church, in nearby Dunning, for its own safety and future conservation.²⁹

¹⁷Foster 2001, 18

¹⁸Alcock and Alcock 1996, 457

¹⁹James 2005, 104; RCAHMS n.d.

²⁰See Hall 2011, 158

²¹Adair 1683

²²OS Name Books: Book 23, Volume 32

²³Strachan 2004, 2

²⁴RCAHMS n.d.

²⁵James 2005, 104

²⁶Fisher 2005, 88

²⁷ See Forsyth 1995

²⁸Katherine Forsyth, pers. comm.

²⁹Strachan 2004, 2

The stone was taken into the care of Historic Scotland in March 1998 and was removed from the hillside overlooking Forteviot in July 1998.³⁰ Kirkdale Archaeology undertook archaeological investigations after its removal, although these did not confirm nor support the theory that the stone was re-erected at this site in the fourteenth century.³¹ The site was de-scheduled in 2001,³² and it was subsequently marked with a simple stone marker in 2002.³³

After removal, the stone was temporarily loaned to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh and put on display until 2001, before being placed permanently in its current location inside St Serf's Church in 2002.³⁴

In 2002 Ian Scott produced new drawings of the cross,³⁵ which have revealed further detail than previously depicted by Romilly Allen's drawings.³⁶ Greater appreciation of the detail was achieved through the creation of a digital 3D model produced from laser scanning at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In 2007, a drawing of the Dupplin Cross by James Skene was nominated as one of Scotland's favourite archive images as part of the HLF funded *Treasured Places*.³⁷

2.2 Evidential values

The Dupplin Cross is the only surviving example of a Class III Pictish freestanding cross in Eastern Pictland, therefore it currently stands out in the archaeological record as one of a kind. Its scale, preservation, detail, complexity, inscription and Christian iconography are of great importance to its current and future potential in research and education.

This freestanding cross was once a large visible statement in the landscape. It probably had the role of a prayer cross, deduced from the wear and shape of the socket stone, as well as perhaps being a boundary marker. It would have been erected under elite patronage – secular or ecclesiastical aristocracy. Significantly, if it was also a boundary marker, and its previous location overlooking Forteviot was its original site, then it may be said to potentially provide evidence of the northern boundary of royal Forteviot in the ninth century.

Although its original location is uncertain, archaeological investigations in 1998 have demonstrated that the stone featured as an important part of the grounds to the west of Dupplin Castle, from at least the seventeenth century

³⁰Strachan 2004, 2

³¹James 2005, 105

³²RCAHMS n.d.

³³Strachan 2004, 2

³⁴Strachan 2004, 2

³⁵Scott 2005, 218

³⁶Allen and Anderson 1903, Part III, 319-23

³⁷ Treasured Places n.d.

until 1998. If indeed it did stand here from the fourteenth century onwards³⁸, or before, it alludes to this site as being a significant location within the landscape of historic Strathearn.

The Dupplin Cross has the potential to provide evidence of aspects of Pictish society, such as religion and kingship. The latter is the most significant aspect revealed in the Dupplin Cross. This will be discussed in the following sections.

2.3 Historical values

The Dupplin Cross as well as other Pictish carved stones, is of incredible historic value. Pictish symbols are explicitly identifiable as indicators of Pictish culture, yet the Dupplin Cross does not have any Pictish symbols. However, the details revealed in the numerous other carvings can help in the elucidation of aspects such as the culture, religion and lifestyle of the people of early medieval Scotland, and the Picts and Scots in this case. The Dupplin Cross is notably significant in that its inscription appears to connect it historically with Constantine son of Fergus.³⁹

Constantine son of Fergus, or King Constantine, was the first to hold both the kingdoms of Dál Riata (Scots) and the Picts simultaneously. He won the kingship of the Picts in AD 789, gained power in Dál Riata in AD 811, and died in AD 820.⁴⁰ The nature of his involvement in the Dupplin Cross is however unclear. He is clearly the person honoured in the inscription, although it is uncertain whether this was contemporary or posthumous.⁴¹

If indeed the Dupplin Cross can be connected to royal Forteviot during the ninth century, then its position to the north overlooking Forteviot appears to be mirrored to the south by the less well-preserved cross from Invermay.⁴² These crosses perhaps denote the boundaries of a historically attested place of significance.⁴³ The find of the Forteviot arch fragment in this area appears to indicate the presence of a Pictish royal palace at Forteviot, which notably was the location of Cináed mac Ailpín's death in AD 858.⁴⁴

The depiction of hounds on the bottom of the front face may allude to the Pictish pastime of hunting. Such imagery can give an insight into the daily life and pastimes of the Pictish elite. It is probable however that the hounds in this case are given less of an emphasis, hence their location at the bottom of the cross-shaft.⁴⁵

Whoever had this large freestanding cross carved and erected was clearly overt in their devotion to Christianity. Be it contemporary with King Constantine in the early ninth century or perhaps with King Cináed mac Ailpín

³⁸James 2005, 104; RCAHMS n.d.

³⁹Forsyth 1995, 243

⁴⁰Forsyth 1995, 242

⁴¹Forsyth 1995, 242

⁴²Woolf 2007, 65; Foster 2014, 59

⁴³Woolf 2007, 318

⁴⁴Woolf 2007, 93-5

⁴⁵Henderson and Henderson 2004, 135

in the mid ninth century is hard to deduce.⁴⁶ That aside however, the inclusion of David imagery (rending the lions jaws and the harp) with iconography relating to Pictish kingship (mounted warrior above soldiers) is used to legitimise kingship in Pictland,⁴⁷ whether it was Constantine, Cináed, or another of the Ailpín dynasty. This stone therefore aids in highlighting the symbiotic relationship between royal authority and the church during the period of the development of Pictland to Alba.

2.4 Architectural and artistic values

Evidence for the Picts predominantly comes from their art, and particularly from carved stones. These carved stones are clearly products of accomplished sculptors and may provide evidence of a structured society for example skilled sculptors must have been commissioned to create these masterpieces, most probably at the behest of the Pictish elite. With the lack of other significant evidence for the Picts, these carved stones therefore give an insight into Pictish society, foreign contacts and cultural resources.

The architectural and artistic value of the Dupplin Cross can be summarised as follows:

The architecture of this freestanding cross is notably impressive. It is masterfully carved from one very large piece of sandstone, with every aspect appearing to be well thought out and planned. Its size, confidently carved iconographies, artwork and decoration are all evidence of highly skilled craftsmanship. Furthermore, evidence of knowledge of metalworking is clearly evident in the roll moulding border with scrolled cusps that surrounds the four arms of the cross.⁴⁸

This form and style of cross is relatively rare in this part of Scotland during the ninth century, with the cross-slab being the most common form of monument in Pictland. This form of cross would not have been out of place in Northumbria, Ireland or Dál Riata. For example, the tegulated finial-like extension would fit with the Irish High Cross tradition and it is suggested to be representative of the Holy Sepulchre.⁴⁹ The double-curved cross arms demonstrate perhaps an influence from Iona, particularly when the St John's Cross is considered.⁵⁰ The inclusion of vinescroll, often found on illuminated manuscripts, on this form of monument in this region is evidence of the coming together of different peoples and ideas at this pivotal time in the history of Scotland. This vinescroll is paralleled on sculpture in Northumberland, on a fragment from Hulne Priory for example, and it has been argued that analogies through art historical analysis provide an early ninth century date for the Dupplin Cross.⁵¹

⁴⁶Forsyth 1995, 242

⁴⁷Forsyth 1995, 242

⁴⁸Henderson 1999, 166

⁴⁹Henderson and Henderson 2004, 190-1

⁵⁰Scott 1997, 130

⁵¹Henderson 1999, 167

The representation of riders is widespread in Pictish stone carving. The static pose of the figure on horseback on the Dupplin Cross is particularly interesting, as it seems to represent an elite figure, perhaps King Constantine. He appears as a 'military commander' situated above his army of heavily armed soldiers below.⁵² The fact that the horse has all four feet on the ground has been suggested to represent 'royal permanence'.⁵³

It has also been suggested that the incorporation of 'David Cycle' iconography,⁵⁴ in both the figure rending the jaws of a lion (or bear) and the figure playing the harp, are more than likely intended 'to be icons of a divinely sanctioned king', and therefore the inclusion of David themes on the Dupplin Cross may refer 'to the divine sanction of royal power'.⁵⁵ This perhaps legitimised the rule of Constantine, although it could have been another king, as was discussed previously. This stone demonstrates knowledge of how biblical ideas can be adopted and transmitted through artwork.

It is also significant to note that the similar diagonal key-pattern can be found on both the Dupplin Cross and the fragment from nearby Invermay,⁵⁶ thus supporting the idea that these two crosses once stood related, although at opposite sides of the valley overlooking Forteviot.⁵⁷ Both crosses can be seen either side of Forteviot in John Adair's 1683 map.⁵⁸

The above discussion of the artistic parallels and the associated geographical spread of the iconographies carved, as well as the messages implied by the art referring to the 'David Cycle', therefore attest to the artistic value of the Dupplin Cross.

2.5 Landscape and aesthetic values

As with many early medieval carved stones, its aesthetic significance has changed over time. This is relative to its changing landscape setting, but more importantly, to its changing audience. Those who view the stone today will have a different experience to those who viewed it within its original landscape setting.

Artistically, the Dupplin Cross is aesthetically significant due to the quantity, nature, complexity and survival of its artwork. Each design is masterfully carved with precision and presented clearly. Its biblical references and iconography of kingship attest to its artistic significance, and its current state of preservation, bar the inscription, is exceptional.

Original Aesthetic

⁵²Henderson and Henderson 2004, 135

⁵³Alcock and Alcock 1992, 240

⁵⁴See Henderson 1986

⁵⁵Alcock and Alcock 1992, 238

⁵⁶Alcock and Alcock 1992, 240-2

⁵⁷See Hall 2011

⁵⁸Adair 1683

It is highly likely that the original location of the Dupplin Cross was either in royal Forteviot itself or on the hillside north of Forteviot, where it is documented to have stood from at least the seventeenth century.⁵⁹ It is unsure whether it was carved and erected during the reign of Constantine son of Fergus or after his death, but it can however be stated with a degree of confidence that the stone was probably related to the documented Pictish activity at royal Forteviot. It possibly would have designated a significant boundary, standing tall for all who passed to see, and it would also have had the function of a prayer cross. It would have created a significant place of religious worship and demonstrated royal power within the landscape it originally stood. It is also likely that this was one of several carved stones in this region around Forteviot, perhaps some contemporary.

Historic Aesthetic

Cartographic evidence depicts a cross, more than likely the Dupplin Cross, standing to the west of Dupplin Castle.⁶⁰ This was prior to the designed landscaped being laid out around the castle during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The stone was subsequently incorporated into the formal grounds surrounding the castle, and this is evidenced in the care taken to improve the surface around the stone, as well as in the enclosure created around the stone in the nineteenth century.⁶¹ The work done to re-erect the monument in the early twentieth century demonstrates that it was deemed important to retain the visual impact of this large stone. The undertaking of such work communicates ideas of an early interest in conserving the stone for future generations, as well as an understanding and acknowledgement of the significance of retaining the monument in this landscape location. More research is required on the designed landscape of Dupplin Castle and the Cross as a feature within it – as well as the symbolism of using the Cross as a feature in this way.

Present-day aesthetic

The stone currently stands inside the tower of St Serf's Church in Dunning, 3 miles west of the hillside it once stood upon. St Serf's Church is a significant location, with multiple phases of construction and a Norman tower, with an early Christian curvilinear churchyard surrounding it. The stone stands in a relatively small and dark space within the church and is lit with purpose built artificial lighting. Only the front (east) face of the stone can be viewed to full effect when standing in the east end of the church, although the gallery, pews and small space of the tower restrict other views of the stone. The lighting and small space impacts on the visual aesthetic of the stone, although it is no longer at risk from the elements or vandalism.

2.6 Natural heritage values

The stone stands inside a church. No natural significance is apparent.

2.7 Contemporary/use values

⁵⁹Adair 1683

⁶⁰Adair 1683

⁶¹OS Name Books: Book 23, Volume 32

Community

The stone stands in a readily accessible location in the village of Dunning. The village has a strong sense of community and its residents have often demonstrated an interest and engagement with its heritage. As a Christian monument, it will undoubtedly have importance to those of the Christian faith in the surrounding community, although this is not assessed. There is an active local historical society in Dunning,⁶² and great interest was expressed from the communities of Dunning and Forteviot in 1995 regarding the relocation of the stone during the Public Local Inquiry. It is clearly a significant asset to the community.

Spiritual

As an explicit manifestation of Christianity this stone has undeniable spiritual and religious value. Notably however, it is also imbued with ideas of kingship and royal authority, as was appropriate for a carved stone associated with a royal centre. Its current position within a Christian church has undoubtedly placed an even greater religious significance on the stone.

Economic

The stone is located in the small village of Dunning, just south of the A9 and close to Perth. As it now stands inside a historic church it is likely that this intriguing combination of carved stone and church may encourage visitors to Dunning, and so lead to a modest contribution to the local economy. Those of the Christian faith in particular may be drawn from afar to pilgrimage to this stone to worship or prayer, and those with an interest in early Scottish kingship may also be drawn to the stone.

Access and education

The site is staffed seven days a week from 9.30am to 5.30pm, open between April and September, and is free to enter. There is a PDF leaflet briefly detailing early carved stones available online for download from Historic Scotland. This is titled *Investigating – Early Carved Stones*,⁶³ and is also available in Gaelic.

Due to the complexity and nature of this stone it clearly has an educational value with regards to discussions of its iconographies and their meanings. As this is the only Class III Pictish freestanding cross in Eastern Scotland it therefore stands as very significant within the corpus of early medieval carved stones in Scotland. This stone overtly displays features of Christianity and royal power, and so may be used as a learning tool to demonstrate aspects of early organised religion and kingship in Scotland.

Corporate value

This stone demonstrates current best practice with regards to the conservation and management of a fragile cultural resource. Under the care of Historic Environment Scotland, it is now housed within the tower of St

⁶² Dunning.uk.net n.d.

⁶³ Historic Scotland 2009

Serf's Church. This protects the stone from the elements and any potential future vandalism, although it has an impact on its aesthetic and landscape values.

3 Major gaps in understanding

- There is no single academic thesis on this stone, although it is widely discussed and referred to in other art historical literature.
- Our understanding of the original location of the stone is uncertain. If the previous location of the stone overlooking Forteviot was its original location, then what was the relationship of this setting with royal Forteviot? The latter site has not been fully determined archaeologically.
- What was the function of this stone? Prayer cross? Boundary marker? Other?
- Can the 'David Cycle' iconography, if it is that, be fully understood in the context of this carved stone?
- Who had the stone created and who was the carver? Was it commissioned by Constantine himself, or in memory of him at a later date?
- What are the wider landscape relationships and connections between the Dupplin Cross and the fragment from Invermay, as well as with the Forteviot arch?
- Can anything further be learned about the stones archaeological context from its previous location overlooking Forteviot?
- More research is required on the designed landscape of Dupplin Castle and the Cross as a feature within it – as well as the symbolism of using the Cross as a feature in this way.

4 Associated properties

Other cross-slabs/crosses – Meigle Museum; St Vigean's Museum; St John's Cross; Aberlemno III; Invermay and Forteviot fragments.

Other – St Serf's Church; Forteviot arch; Abernethy royal centre; St Andrew's Cathedral; Clatthard Craig fort; exhibition cast.

Replicas – Dupplin parish church, Nittshill and Gatehouse of Fleet.⁶⁴

⁶⁴Hall 2011, 159-60

Note – There is a high concentration of Pictish carved stones in Perth and Kinross.

5 Keywords

Pictish; Scots; freestanding cross; Insular art; Northumbria; Dàl Riata; Dunning; Forteviot; St Serf's Church; David; harp; interlace; key-pattern; metalwork; Christianity; Constantine; royal; kingship; warrior; Roman alphabet; inscription; Perth and Kinross

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Appendix 1

685 – Battle of Nechtansmere (or Dunnichen), resulting in the death of King Ecgfrith of Northumbria and a victory for the Picts at the hands of King Bridei son of Beli,⁶⁵ and ultimately leading to a Northumbrian loss of territory in Pictland.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Fraser 2009, 383; Woolf 2007, 10

⁶⁶ Woolf 2007, 4

c.710 – Correspondence between Ceolfrid, Abbot from the Monastery at Jarrow, and King Nechtan of Pictland, in which Nechtan asks for the assistance of masons to help build a church in the Roman fashion.⁶⁷

789 – Constantine son of Fergus won kingship of the Picts.⁶⁸

c.800x850 –The Dupplin Cross is carved and erected, but precisely when and by whom is the subject of much debate.

811 – Constantine son of Fergus gained power in Dàl Riata.⁶⁹

820 – Constantine son of Fergus died.⁷⁰

843 – Cináed mac Ailpín becomes king of the Picts.⁷¹

858 –Cináed mac Ailpín dies at royal Forteviot.⁷²

1332 – Battle of Dupplin Moor.⁷³

1683 – The stone appears to be depicted in John Adair’s map of Strathearn.⁷⁴

1832 – James Skene illustrated the stone as it was leaning over.⁷⁵

1922 – it is noted that the stone is leaning over.⁷⁶

1925 – The stone was re-erected in its socket stone with the aid of a concrete skirt surrounding the socket stone.⁷⁷

1933 – The stone was scheduled.⁷⁸

1990 – A cast of the stone was made for an exhibition.

1994 – Katherine Forsyth presented her reading of the inscription panel.⁷⁹

1995 – A Public Local Inquiry was held to decide to future of the stone.

⁶⁷Henderson 1967, 82

⁶⁸Forsyth 1995, 242

⁶⁹Forsyth 1995, 242

⁷⁰Forsyth 1995, 242

⁷¹Woolf 2007, 351

⁷²Woolf 2007, 93-5

⁷³James 2005, 104

⁷⁴Adair 1683

⁷⁵RCAHMS n.d.

⁷⁶Strachan 2004, 2

⁷⁷James 2005, 104

⁷⁸Strachan 2004, 2

⁷⁹See Forsyth 1995

1998 –After a season of archaeological excavation by Kirkdale Archaeology the stone was removed from the hillside overlooking Forteviot, and subsequently loaned to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh until 2011.

2001 – The site where the stone stood originally until 1998 was de-scheduled.⁸⁰

c.2001/2 – The stone was digitally scanned and modelled in 3D.⁸¹

2002 – Ian Scott produced important new drawings of the stone.⁸²

2002 – The stone was permanently housed in the tower of St Serf's Church in Dunning.

2007 – James Skene's drawing was nominated as one of Scotland's favourite archive images as part of the HLF funded *Treasured Places*.⁸³

Appendix 2 – Summary of archaeological investigations

Kirkdale Archaeology carried out excavations in the summer of 1998. These focussed on the immediate context of the stone and on a larger area to the north. The following information has been collected from Gordon Ewart's 2007 report.⁸⁴

The first phase of excavation found evidence of concrete from the 1925 conservation works. This concrete was discovered in conjunction with the socket stone and it was noted that the south side of the stone had been pinned and grouted. This phase of excavation also revealed a series of fence lines, appearing to relate to the stone.

The second phase of excavation found a paved area to the north of the stone. These excavations have been able to determine that the conservation works of 1925 have unfortunately removed any physical relationship between the socket stone and the soil. It has been suggested that the paved area to the north of the stone may be contemporary and therefore could have provided an area for large groups of worshippers to gather.⁸⁵

Cartographic evidence implies that the stone had been in this general location since the late seventeenth century and it is likely that it had not been moved beforehand. However, the archaeological evidence for this was inconclusive due to the level of disturbance.

⁸⁰RCAHMS n.d.

⁸¹ Strachan 2004, 2

⁸²Scott 2005, 218

⁸³ Treasured Places n.d.

⁸⁴Ewart in Ewart et al. 2007, 331-3

⁸⁵Ewart et al. 2007, 334

