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The Dupplin Cross

An interdisciplinary examination of a Pictish sculptured stone monument

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Abstract

The Dupplin Cross is an Early Medieval monument erected near Forteviot, Scotland. It is now generally dated to the first quarter of the 9th century; evidenced by an inscription that commemorates Custantín son of Uirguist (Constantine son of Fergus), king of the Pictish kingdom of Fortriu, who died in 820AD. This tight date range and the royal association makes this monument a prime candidate with potential to hold information on the nature of kingship and how this institution was presented. This study considers three main aspects of the cross.

Firstly, the sculptural qualities, including the form and carved elements, are analysed by producing a detailed description, followed by a thorough analysis and comparative study, incorporating a literature review. This study shows that both the form and the elements are very much connected with the wider assemblage of Pictish sculpture along with a few significant links to the sculpture of the other Insular regions. Two particular connections of note are the group of sculptures displaying similar horsemen, termed the 'static riders', and the group that includes a particular form of key-pattern.

Secondly, the stone itself was studied by means of a literature review, map-based analysis and fieldwork. This identified an outcropping of sandstone, close to the cross's location, that is a possible source for the stone out of which the monument was manufactured.

Lastly, since the original location of the monument is known, the landscape it stood in is considered by means of field observation along-side map- and GIS-based analysis. This shows that the locational choice was quite deliberate in order to maximise the view both to and from the monument.

This study has furthered our knowledge of the Dupplin Cross. Its results contribute to the wider understanding of Pictish sculpture and the Early Medieval institution of Kingship in Pictland.

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Acknowledgements

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Thanks to John Borland, who gifted me a copy of the reprinted *ECMS* with the suggestion that I could put it to good use.

My partner, Jamie Wallace, also deserves many thank yous for his patient support.

1. Introduction

Figure 1: The Dupplin Cross where it now resides in St Serf's Church in Dunning, Perth and Kinross
(DP245565; © Historic Environment Scotland)

The monument known as the Dupplin Cross is a piece of Early Medieval sculpture that, until recently, stood near the village of Forteviot in Lower Strathearn, Perth and Kinross, Scotland. In 1997 it was decided that the monument would be removed from its place on Dupplin Estate to be kept in a more stable environment in order to protect it from further weathering. It therefore came into the care of Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland or HES). After conservation by Graciella Ainsworth Sculpture Conservation, it was temporarily loaned to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh before returning to Strathearn in 2002 to be displayed in St Serf's Church in Dunning, 6km away from its previous location (Foster 2001,18).

There are a number of factors that make this monument particularly worthy of an in-depth analysis. Firstly, its proximity to Forteviot is significant as this place was the site of a Pictish royal centre with the cross erected presumably to perform a role within the extended landscape of that centre. This landscape situation, within the setting of a known royal centre, contrasts with that of most other later Pictish sculpture, which are more often than not in ecclesiastical settings or have lost their original provenance entirely. Secondly, the monument is intact and in relatively good condition, allowing all of its elements to be considered as a whole without the uncertainty that comes with the loss of decorated surfaces. Lastly, the partial reading of a prominent inscription on the cross shaft has provided a more robust dating criterion than that based on art historical methods. From that inscription the date can probably be narrowed down to the first quarter of the 9th century, although, there is the possibility that it was erected slightly earlier or later in the 9th century. These aspects of the inscription are discussed more in section 2.2.

1.1. Placing the Dupplin Cross in context

The Dupplin Cross can be considered within two interlinked contexts. Firstly, Forteviot and its physical and historical situation, and secondly, the collection of Early Medieval Insular sculpture, with a particular place within Pictish sculpture.

Early Medieval Forteviot has been the subject of several studies; the most recent of which was a long-term project, the Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot Project (SERF) run by the University of Glasgow, which culminated with the publication of *Royal Forteviot* (Campbell and Driscoll 2020). The results of this that are relevant to the current study are summarised as follows.

Forteviot has long been thought to be a major power centre of the Pictish region of Fortriu (Aitchison 2006,16). A reassessment of this situation by Alex Woolf found that Fortriu was more likely to have been centred further north, in the Moray region, and this is now generally accepted to be the case (Woolf 2006; Campbell and Driscoll 2020,30). Nevertheless, Forteviot and Fortriu are connected in that they are both associated with Custantín son of Uirguist; he was commemorated at Forteviot on the Dupplin Cross and his death notice in the Annals of Ulster described him as 'King of Fortriu' (Broun 1998,77). This situation

is evidence for the expansion of Fortriu into the south to envelope the province of Circin during the reign of Custantín (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 30). The SERF Project confirmed activity at Forteviot, before, during and after Custantín's reign, by excavation and radiocarbon dating (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 18–9).

As well as being physically a part of Forteviot, the Dupplin Cross is also a constituent part of the wider collection of Early Medieval Insular sculpture that remains today, a remnant of what was once displayed as part of royal centres, within churches and their precincts and out in the landscape marking significant locations.

When the imagery on the Dupplin Cross is taken as a whole, it fits about as well within Pictish art as any other Pictish sculpture, despite numerous opinions to the contrary. Some elements are the epitome of Pictish style, bar the Pictish symbols which are absent, while others do find more comparisons in other Insular regions. This dichotomy, of Pictish and non-Pictish, will be kept in mind throughout this work, however, it may prove to be false. Henderson makes the point that, although the three main traditions – Pictish, Anglo-Saxon and Irish – generally tended to create monuments that superficially looked different in terms of their forms they each shared a repertoire of motifs and the monuments had broadly similar functions (Henderson and Henderson 2004, 28–9)

1.2. History of the study of the Dupplin Cross

The earliest account of the Dupplin Cross is an annotated field sketch by James Skene in 1832 (Figure 2). Although it is very much a sketch, only showing the clearest figures, it does show two important details – the tilt that the cross stood at before being re-erected in 1925 and that Skene does not mention or draw the inscription, filling the panel with a grid and slight curves. It is not clear whether he recognised that the panel contained text, but it does seem to show that the inscription was already unreadable in 1832.

The Dupplin Cross was then covered in *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (*ECMS*), a two-volume book comprising three parts (Allen and Anderson 1903). In part I, an introduction to the subject, Joseph Anderson makes only a single passing comment on Dupplin. Romilly Allen contributed part II, a classification system of the form and motif types, and part III, a descriptive

illustrated catalogue, in which the Dupplin Cross is represented with a verbal description and relatively large drawing (Figure 3). Allen's drawings are impressive, however, there is a lack of detail, and a tendency to miss out entire elements. This was probably due to being at the whim of the natural light when drawing outside, as well as his use of hard lines to define the shapes, giving the impression of certainty. For those less-than-certain areas it may have been necessary to leave them blank rather than giving a false impression. For a contrasting drawing style compare Allen's with Scott's (Figure 5).

Isabel Henderson has written prolifically on Pictish sculpture and in the 1980's wrote several motif focussed papers, on vine-scroll and the 'David Cycle', that included the Dupplin Cross (Henderson 1983; 1986).

Katherine Forsyth wrote the first dedicated paper; "The Inscriptions on the Dupplin Cross" (Forsyth 1995). This was hugely significant as it provided a dating criterion that was independent of the art historical methods. This was the beginning of more sustained and granular attention on the monument.

The reading of the inscription and the cross's subsequent move prompted Henderson to write "The Dupplin Cross: a preliminary consideration of its art-historical context" (Henderson 1999). As stated in the title, this is intended to be a preliminary study, as such, many of the abstract motifs are not considered. There is a great deal of discussion surrounding most of the more prominent motifs, in which Henderson is able to draw many comparisons with other Insular art-pieces. Henderson does not include a separate description and does not follow a face-by-face progression; although a description and full discussion was not the aim, rather it was to establish the art-historical context; she concludes it is Pictish with Northumbrian elements. Henderson is very confident in her interpretations of some panels with no alternatives considered; however, there are alternatives, which will be discussed below in section 2.3.

The paper "The Dupplin Cross: recent investigations" (Ewart *et al* 2007), presents a multi-faceted view. Anna Ritchie writes on the cross itself while Dennis Gallagher extends the focus to look at the cross in the recent landscape, an aspect that had not previously been considered, and Gordon Ewart discusses the results of the excavations during and after the removal of the cross; again, the opportunity to study this aspect had not previously arisen. Ritchie follows a systematic order, starting with the overall form then face-by-face and combines

description with interpretation. There is not a great deal of discussion, but rather a survey of interpretations current at the time. As with Henderson's studies, the abstract ornament is given a very cursory description with no discussion. Typical of this approach is this sentence 'Panels of both geometric and curvilinear interlace are carved on the ends of the side-arms and the sides of the upper and lower arms of the cross-head'; no distinction is made between those various patterns (Ewart *et al* 2007, 323).

Mark Hall, in his paper "Tales from Beyond the Pict" (2011), brings the Forteviot collection together, and considers their cultural biography and their presence in the landscape.

With *Royal Forteviot* (Campbell and Driscoll 2020), along with its counterpart *Prehistoric Forteviot* (Brophy and Noble 2020), the entire sculptural collection at Forteviot is thoroughly placed in context. The stones are all discussed, although the descriptions are relatively brief.

Throughout this succession of studies, there is a clear progression from focussing on the details of individual panels to considering both the cross itself and its wider context in the landscape and its biography as a continually present monument.

Figure 2: A field sketch by James Skene in 1832
(DP029442; © Courtesy of HES, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Collection)

Fig. 334A.—Front.
Free-standing cross with sculpture in relief at Dupplin. Scale ⅒ linear.

Fig. 334B.—Left side.

Fig. 334C.—Back.
Free-standing cross with sculpture in relief at Dupplin. Scale ⅒ linear.

Fig. 334D.—Right side.

Figure 3: Romilly Allen's drawing of the Dupplin Cross in ECMS (Allen and Anderson 1903, fig. 334)

1.3. The aims of this thesis

The questions that could be asked of Pictish sculpture are numerous but there are several that the Dupplin Cross is particularly well suited to pursue.

The Dupplin Cross was not an isolated creation; it was intrinsically part of the wider collection of Early Medieval art, and the sculpture in particular. The nature of those connections have been the subject of previous investigations, especially in the work of Isabel Henderson (Henderson 1986; 1999; Ewart *et al* 2007). Nevertheless, there is more that can be gleaned by considering the monument as a whole and as part of a dynamic system rather than the selective approach taken by some of the previous work noted above.

One of the aims of this thesis is to identify the traits that the Dupplin Cross shares with other sculptures. Once the natures of those connections are analysed, by means of the methodology detailed below, the artistic links between monuments become apparent, especially where shared traits are clustered. It is possible to say that certain elements were either innovative or derived from other sources and if they, in turn, were influential. In some cases a relative chronology can be proposed. It is plausible that this network of

connections reflects social links between the institutions and individuals responsible for the creation of those monuments.

It has been noted by numerous scholars that the prominent horse-riding figure is stylistically and narratively divergent from the majority of riders on Pictish sculpture. This panel deserves particular attention. Similar figures appear on a few other sculptures, which opens up how this image can be interpreted, both in why the image appears as it does and what its intended message was. The nature of this particular image and its connections with others will be considered in order to understand how they were linked and to determine whether they were contemporaneous or otherwise.

Although some of the images were likely chosen by the patron to convey a deliberate message, the monument was created by a sculptor, or sculptors, who are likely to have imparted some of their individuality; whether consciously or not. The sculptors' style can be formed by a number of factors. A person's intrinsic creativity could be considered the fundamental element of artistic individuality. Nonetheless, the training they received and the working-practices they developed would have affected how that creativity was expressed. By looking at some of the apparently inconsequential aspects - those often considered to be 'decorative' in contrast to the figurative and more obviously 'symbolic' elements - it might be possible to see something of the sculptors' identities, both on an individual and a group basis. This could come across subtly, such as how panels are arranged and bordered, or with a more striking design choice, such as how key-pattern is utilised. These characteristics may not be obvious to the viewer, either modern or medieval, but when analysed with a view to their potential value they can be informative. Intriguingly, comparison with other sculpture might reveal a signature element recreated across multiple sites.

Since the monument names, and very likely portrays, a king and was a deliberate feature of the landscape of a royal centre, it was evidently intended to play a role within that context. What that role was, and how the cross performed that role, is one of the main questions that can be asked of it. A message was being conveyed via a stone erected in the landscape; the nature of that message and how it was encoded in the imagery and in the choice of the very stone on which it is carved will be explored throughout this work. In this

vein, since it has already been established that Custantín son of Uirguist was a significant figure at both Forteviot and Fortriu (see section 1.1), it is essential to detect any shared sculptural elements, if there are any, that can elucidate the nature of the relationship between those two areas.

This thorough examination informed the re-evaluation of many of the elements, which has revealed alternative interpretations of some of the panels, as discussed throughout sections 2.3 & 2.4.

1.4. The methodology

In order to meet these aims and respond to the questions posed a detailed examination of the monument was conducted using several means of observation to build as complete a description as possible. This description is presented below, in section 2.1, alongside the drawings of Ian G Scott so that readers can follow the written description whilst consolidating their understanding with the visual representation, or vice versa, with the text providing focus for those perusing the drawing initially.

The key source of this information is the Dupplin Cross itself and observation in person. By necessity this took place in St Serf's Church under the lighting that is currently installed there. To meet the goals of this study it is important that each element of the cross's decorative scheme is considered equally in the first instance, all should be described so that when it comes to their analysis, they can all be included; the constituent parts of the monument are all relevant to gaining a fuller understanding of it. A full description at this level of detail, and the subsequent analysis, has not been done before for the Dupplin Cross.

To ensure that all of the elements were given due consideration a structured approach was taken following the conventions and relevant terminology used by *The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* (Cramp 1991) and *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculptures in Wales* (Edwards 2013), which are considered best-practice. This ensures consistency and allows for easier comparisons with other sculpture. The monument is described face-by-face, starting at the top and focussing on each panel or border in turn down to the foot. The base-stone is also considered as it forms an

integral part of the monument. The description is separated from the discussion of the various features.

As well as the sustained and repeated personal scrutiny of the actual cross, it was also necessary to use other methods of 'seeing' the monument as they provided alternative viewpoints and further ways of understanding what was being observed. These additional means involved a 3D virtual model, photographs, drawings and verbal descriptions; the utility of each is discussed in the following paragraphs.

A newly available resource that can allow personal observation is a 3D virtual model, currently free to access online (Figure 4). It was created using laser scanning by Historic Environment Scotland. This is a high-resolution replica and includes the whole monument. What makes it useful it the capability it gives the user to zoom in on details and to manipulate the model within the virtual space; changing the obliqueness of the light and the appearance of the model's surface. This allows areas that may be always in shadow to be lit or shadows in low relief areas to be enhanced. One drawback to this mode of observation is that a sense of scale is lost, another is that the models are usually divorced from any surroundings; although, both of these are also true of drawings and, to some degree, photography.

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due to copyright restrictions
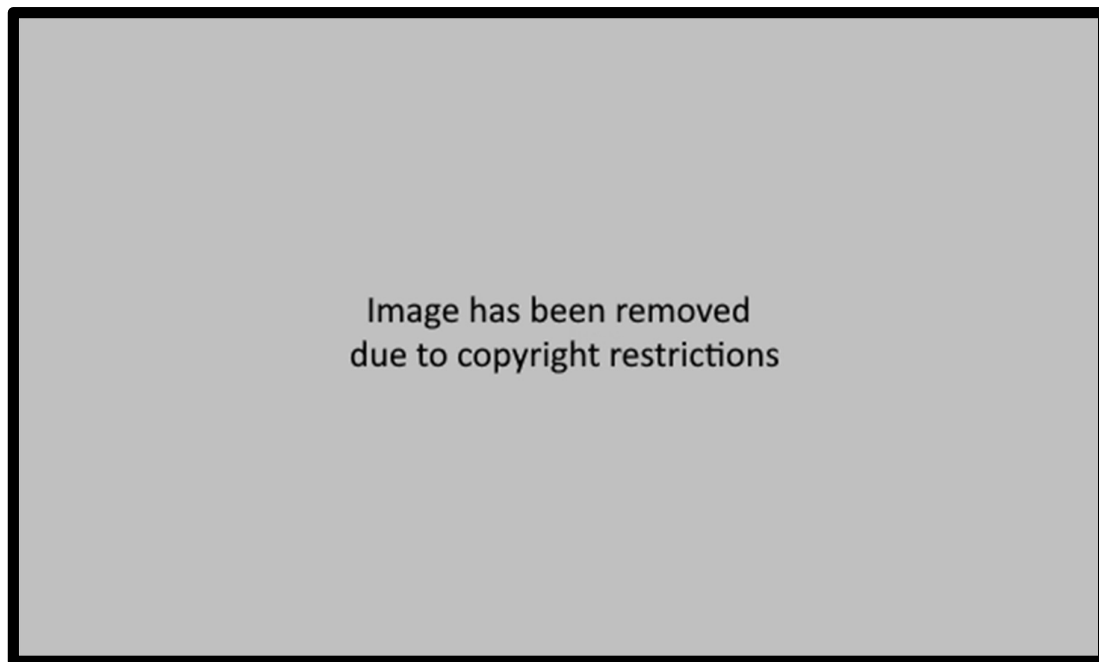
Figure 4: The 3D model created by Historic Environment Scotland
(viewed on sketchfab.com/3d-models/dupplin-cross-433750ac887848eaaa2b690dddcb71c8)

Photographs are also of use. For this study, many of the photographs referred to were those stored by HES and made digitally available via the Canmore website. This includes photographs taken before (Figure 116) and during the cross's removal from the site as well as those taken indoors by professional photographers and additional lighting (such as Figure 1). This variety of situations aided in understanding the monument.

Drawings are an essential tool in understanding monuments of this type. The drawings of Skene and Allen, previously discussed, were useful in their time but ultimately lacked detail and dimensionality. The drawings of Ian Scott rectify this by providing the full coverage required along with the perspective of someone with long experience of drawing these monuments and the knowledge that has developed from that. It should be noted that these drawings are not infallible, they come from another person's interpretation with the same possibility that bias or error may have crept in as any piece of interpretation (Scott 1997). However, when used as a check against the author's own preconceived thoughts and as a comparative tool they are invaluable. The drawings of Ian Scott and John Borland, with their measured and consistent style, allow equal comparison to be made across the collection.

Figure 5: The Dupplin Cross showing faces A – D from left to right, drawn by Iain Scott (© HES)

(note - all subsequent drawings of the cross are taken from this)

The pieces of previous writing mentioned above all contain verbal descriptions to various degrees. However, they are of limited use for building a thorough description as none of them cover all of the features and elements that make up this monument. In some cases, their descriptions contradicted the initial observations made during this study, prompting additional checks to ensure that the description in this study is as accurate as possible (in all such cases the author's initial observations were verified). Sources of this type really became useful when it came to comparing the Dupplin Cross with other artworks that share similar forms or motifs.

When all of these sources – in-person observation, detailed drawings, virtual 3D models and photographs – are used alongside each other, continually checking between each to reach a consensus, the most accurate description can be obtained.

The description has been separated from any discussion of the monument in an attempt to develop as objective a description as possible and so force a reappraisal of the entire monument by the author and the reader. This method is the convention of most modern writing on Early Medieval Insular sculpture.

The same detailed approach as that of the description was taken when it came to discussing the form and decorative repertoire. Previous studies of Early Medieval sculpture have tended to focus on interpreting the panels and elements that contain human(-like) figures, animals or plants as they could be assumed to be the most important and/or held a symbolic meaning to those who created them. Abstract and framing ornament was neglected, either overlooked entirely or receiving only slight comment. However, recently it is being realised that those focal motifs are not the whole story and that the ones that could be considered 'space-fillers' can be highly informative, potentially revealing more about the sculptors and their artistic world than the patron prescribed figures. Two significant contributions to this approach are the doctoral theses of Michael Brennan on Insular interlace (2011) and, subsequently, Cynthia Thickpenny on key-pattern (2019), who each developed and adapted methods of analysing those patterns that made it possible to witness the artists' agency in individual artworks. To achieve this level of understanding in this study, it was essential that the abstract elements were recorded, described and analysed to the same degree as the all the others; at least initially, from that even foundation it was possible to identify and build upon the elements, figural and non-figural, that held further potential.

Every element or panel will be discussed but, rather than a face-by-face top-to-foot approach, they will be grouped thematically. There are three main groupings with sub-sets as follows:

1. The form of the monument; which includes the cross with its finial along with the base-stone.
2. The figural elements; including the human figures (horseman, spearmen and harper) and the animal and beast panels.
3. The non-figural elements; including decorated panels: key-patterns, interlace (including zoomorphic interlace), vine-scroll, and curvilinear ornament; and organisation elements: panels, frames and bosses.

Some of the panels could have been considered as part of more than one group. For example, the zoomorphic interlace could have been included with the animals or with the interlace. These were assigned to a group depending on which aspect was dominant.

Once these groupings were established the details of each panel was considered and then compared or contrasted with similar motifs on other artworks, especially sculpture. The scope of this comparative study is wide; encompassing Insular sculpture, metalwork and manuscripts as well as some Continental media. Within the scope of this study, it was not possible to complete an exhaustive study of all the potentially relevant objects, therefore, certain realms received more attention than others depending on the material type, geographical origin of manufacture or known societal connections. Geographically and socially, this meant that objects found in, and dated to, the Pictish areas and period were focussed on, then those of Northumbria and Dál Riata, then Ireland and the rest of the British Isles.

The availability of images in freely accessible databases, such as Canmore, is invaluable. It is far quicker to consult a series of images, both drawings and photographs, looking for similar features rather than reading through descriptions to find similarities that may or may not be there and that may or may not have been described fully or accurately. Despite the great advantages of Canmore, it does have shortcomings. Not every entry includes images and of those that are illustrated those images are often wholly inadequate to the task at hand, often not clearly showing all the decorated surfaces.

Many of the Early Medieval manuscripts have been digitised and are made available freely by the various institutions holding them. This is a wonderful resource for viewing objects that would otherwise be inaccessible for various reasons and was crucial for identifying or verifying some of the connections made in section 2.3.

The *ECMS* is also useful for comparative work as it lists other monuments and manuscripts that include certain motifs, which was particularly useful for identifying some of the more obscure examples. However, as some motifs have been re-interpreted and new discoveries made since its publication in 1903, it cannot now be relied upon as an exhaustive source. All of the work of Isabel Henderson is, likewise, of value as she includes a great range of materials and

geographic spread. All of the comparisons made in previous publications were checked by the author and either verified, queried or refuted.

As well as the study of the monument's appearance it is also worthwhile to consider the stone itself and the manufacturing process from undressed rock to finished monument (see section 3). Precisely where the stone was sourced from is the most pertinent question that can be asked in this regard. Access to, and the applicability of, scientific methods was limited for this study so the cross and base were closely examined by eye to characterise the lithology. Those characteristics were compared with those of the other Forteviot sculptures and local stone sources to ascertain whether any likely connections exist.

The monument's place in the landscape is also of interest (see section 4). As discussed below, its location appears to have been quite deliberately chosen and it acted as one of a pair, along with its counterpart, the Invermay Cross. The location was explored at both a local level and a wider regional level. This involved desk-based study of maps, both historical and current Ordnance Survey maps, and previous studies, e.g. Hall (2011). Two field visits aided in understanding the topography and a sense of the views encompassing the cross, both from and to it. A viewshed analysis by GIS (QGIS) was also used to examine the details of the view as well as its furthest possible expanse.

When the cross's place in the landscape was considered with a regard for some of the results of the comparative study a radial set of links were seen; indicating social connections and routes of travel with major ecclesiastical centres in all the major directions surrounding Forteviot.

2. The Monument

2.1. Description of Dupplin Cross

2.1.1.   The form

The Dupplin Cross is a monolithic free-standing cross which is held in a cross-base by a mortice and tenon joint. A monument of this form is also known as a high-cross. The shaft is rectangular in plan and tapers in slightly towards the top on both the broad and narrow faces. At the bottom of the shaft, the lower corner between faces B and C is angled inwards, reflecting the loss or removal of stone prior to or during carving. This angled corner appears to have been smoothed but left undecorated. It also cuts face B off from the tenon. The tenon extends 20 to 30cm below the lowest decorated panel, varying from face to face as not all the panels finish at the same level. The tenon is no longer visible as it is fully inserted into the base, nevertheless, the drawings of Ian Scott suggest that it was given a smoother finish on face A and the angled corner than on faces C and D, which are rougher, although this may be a result of weathering.

The head of the cross is significantly extended vertically on the upper arm which is approximately twice as long as the other three. At the top of the upper arm is a further extension which is quite distinct from the rest of the decoration on all faces; this part will be termed a finial to distinguish it from the main cross-arm. The cross-head has round hollows where the arms meet, and the arms themselves are also concave. Where these double curves meet a cusp is formed. All of the hollow angles are undecorated apart from a simple incised border in three of the four, with the upper west angle probably eroded away. The upper extension is straight-sided and continues the taper of the shaft. The side arms are not perfectly perpendicular to the shaft and upright arms, with a slight tilt up on the south arm and down on the north arm.

2.1.2.   Orientation

When the monument stood on the hillside at Dupplin the cross was orientated east-west and this orientation was maintained when the monument

was moved into St Serf's Church. Following the convention established by *The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* (Cramp 1991, xiii), the west face is designated 'face A', and the remainder, in anti-clockwise order, labelled B-D.

2.1.3. Condition

The cross is largely intact with only a few fragments lost; most notably from the boss on face A, tips of the arms and the edge between faces C and D. The damage between faces C and D includes the loss of much of that edge and the incision of two defined grooves near the top of face C, which might indicate deliberate human action rather than weathering.

It is weathered on all surfaces with face A showing the most sign of erosion from the elements; the prevailing westerly and south-westerly winds being the main cause. The narrow faces (B and D) of the shaft and lower cross-arm seem to have fared better than the rest, probably the result of the slight protection given by the projecting arms. All faces show evidence of surface cracks developing. Some are superficial but others have the potential to be the focus of catastrophic fracturing if weathering were to continue.

The base has suffered more weathering than the cross, with all faces now significantly worn, from the weather as well as livestock and people standing on it. The sides are stained grey from direct contact with the soil. The lower portion has concrete adhering to it from repair works carried out in 1925.

2.1.4. Measurements

Cross

The height is 2.92m (0.3m of which is the tenon).

The height of the shaft, including the tenon, is 1.56m and the height of the cross-head is 1.36m.

At the foot of the shaft the width is 0.46m and depth is 0.34m.

At the top of the shaft the width is 0.39m and depth is 0.29m.

The centre of the boss is positioned 1.71m above the level of the base on faces A and C.

The span of the arms is 0.93m at the lower corners.

Base

At the bottom edge the length is 1.4m, width 1.15m. The height is 0.6m.

Today, the total height of the cross standing in its base is approximately 3.22 metres. Although the finial of the cross is weathered it does not appear to have lost a significant amount of material so this height is not far off the original height.

2.1.5.   The carvings on the cross

On the whole, the decorative style appears to be largely consistent over the cross. However, the layout and sizing of panels and the use and decoration of borders and frames vary greatly from face to face. The only consistent treatment of borders is around the very edge of all the faces. Here flat-band moulding is used, which is relatively broad and fairly constant at approximately 30 millimetres all round, and undecorated apart from the scrolls around the cross-head on faces A and C. Most, but not all, panels also have a narrow border, of approximately 10 millimetres, framing them individually or in groups. These frames either enclose the whole panel or only the tops and sides leaving the bottom open. Unless otherwise noted any borders or frames mentioned are undecorated.

Face A (West face)
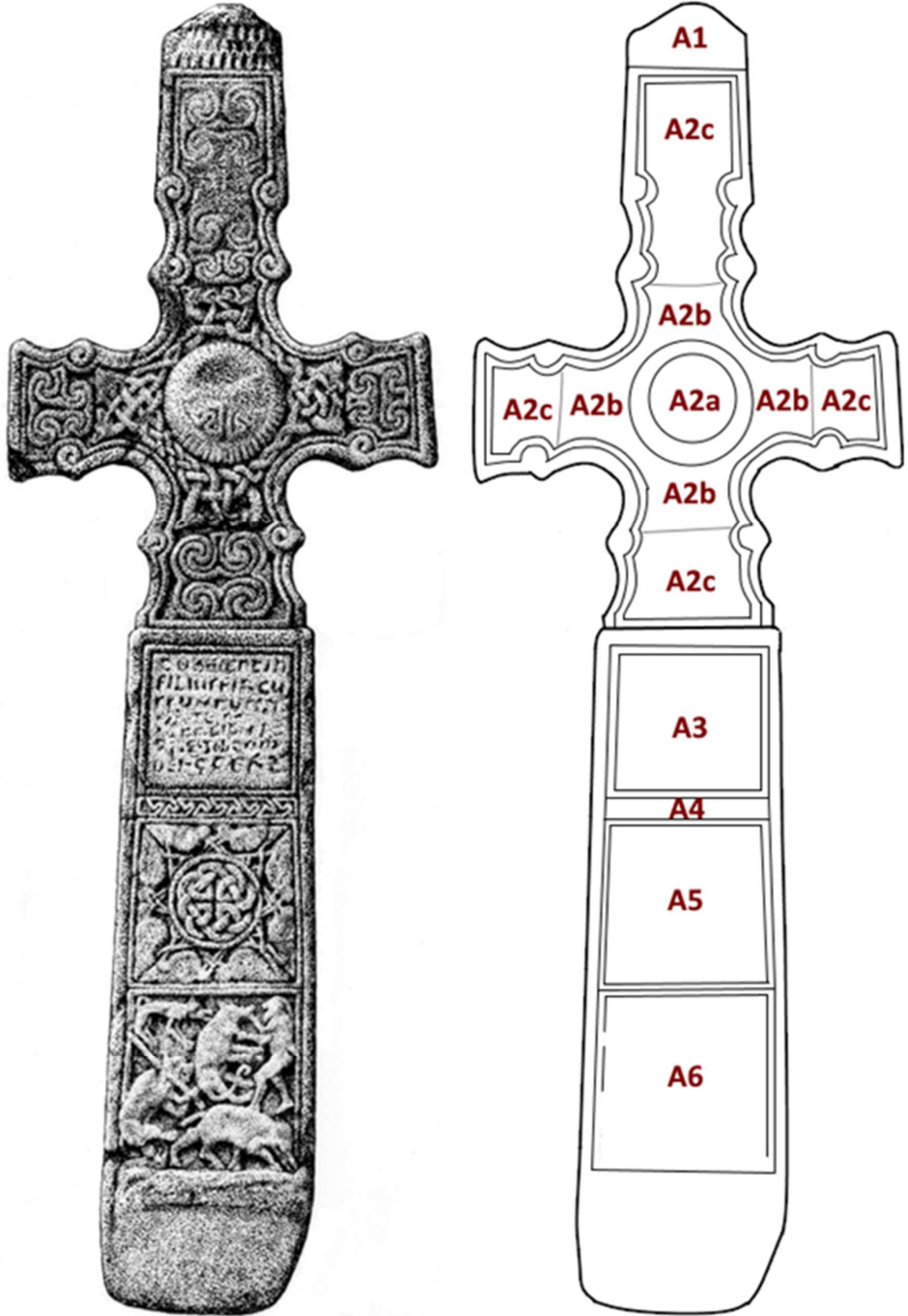
Figure 6: Face A – drawing and labelled panels

Cross-head

A1 - The finial on this face seems less eroded than the others and extends vertically before terminating at a rounded-off point. At least three tiers of tegulations are visible up the side, with the tip appearing to be either blank or the detail eroded. All sides of the finial show tegulated decoration, so-called because it takes the appearance of roof tiles (latin – *tegula, -ae*). All of the tiles on each face have concaved sides. The finial is discussed further in section 2.3.1, page 48.

A2 - The whole cross-face below the finial is treated as a single field with a central domed boss. Unlike the other faces the upper arm on this side is brought right up into the extension; with the same decorative motif being used over the entire cross-head. This area is enclosed by a double-frame. The outer is wider with inward spiralling scrolls at the cusps of the double-curves but not at the corners of the arms. The inner border follows the shape created by the scrolled cusps of the outer. All of the borders are discussed in section 2.3.1, page 48.

A2a -The centre of the cross-head has a single large boss. About half of the height of the boss is decorated with radial narrow ribs. There are no borders. The centre has been significantly damaged but the remains of key-pattern, possibly cruciform, are discernible. The bosses on faces A and C are discussed further in section 2.3.3, page 108 and key-pattern is discussed in section 2.3.3, page 95.

A2b - Surrounding the boss is a cruciform design of zoomorphic interlace with eight beast heads, two on each arm, facing each other and biting the tail of another. This panel of interlace is discussed in section 2.3.3, page 103.

A2c - All four arms are decorated with sets of triple-spirals connected by C-curves; each has been laid out differently, resulting in neither vertical, horizontal nor rotational symmetry. This motif is discussed in section 2.3.2, page 113.

Shaft

The face of the shaft has three panels; increasing in size from top to bottom. The upper two are approximately square while the lowest is slightly taller than it is broad.

A3 - The top panel contains an inscription over seven lines in roman script (Forsyth 1995, 239). This area is now very worn and virtually illegible under normal viewing conditions, which also appears to have been the case when Allen recorded the cross in 1903 as he describes it simply as defaced and does not record any contents (Allen and Anderson 1903, 320). This panel is enclosed by a narrow border. The inscription is discussed further in section 2.2.

A4 - A horizontal band of key-pattern; repeating five times across the band. The key-pattern bands are discussed in section 2.3.3, page 100.

A5 - The middle square panel has a central circular arrangement of interlace made of two continuous strands. The interlace is discussed in section 2.3.3, page 107. A circle encloses this, on which stand eight birds arranged around the circumference, two to each side, filling the square panel. Each bird crosses beaks with its neighbour on the same side and legs with the bird on the adjacent side. They have rather long beaks and legs. There are no surviving details of eyes, wings or feathers. The species is unclear. These elements are discussed in section 2.3.2, page 79. The panel is enclosed by a narrow border.

A6 - The lowest panel contains an active scene of human and animal figures, all in profile. In the top right is a male human figure facing left grappling with the jaws of a four-legged animal which confronts him. The legs of the man are fully visible indicating that he is either naked or near-naked. The animal is positioned vertically, head uppermost, and is not standing on its hind legs but has a mid-air position. It has a long tail tucked through its hind legs, a large head and small ear; attributes that may indicate this animal could be a lion. To the left of them is a smaller, dog-like animal with an upright curled tail. It faces right and touches the animal previously described. Directly below the man, and in contact with his foot, is a quadruped walking to the right. The features of this animal could identify it as a boar: heavy low-set head, long snout with a possible tusk, mid-length narrow tail and a distinct bend of the hind legs. To the left of the 'boar' and also facing right is another four-legged animal-like figure either holding or pierced by a pole; a spear or long stick. This may be a bear; identified by the short tail. As with the 'lion', this creature is vertical but not apparently standing on its hind legs. This panel is discussed further in section2.3.2, page 72. It is framed by a narrow border on three sides but is open at the bottom.

Face B (South face)
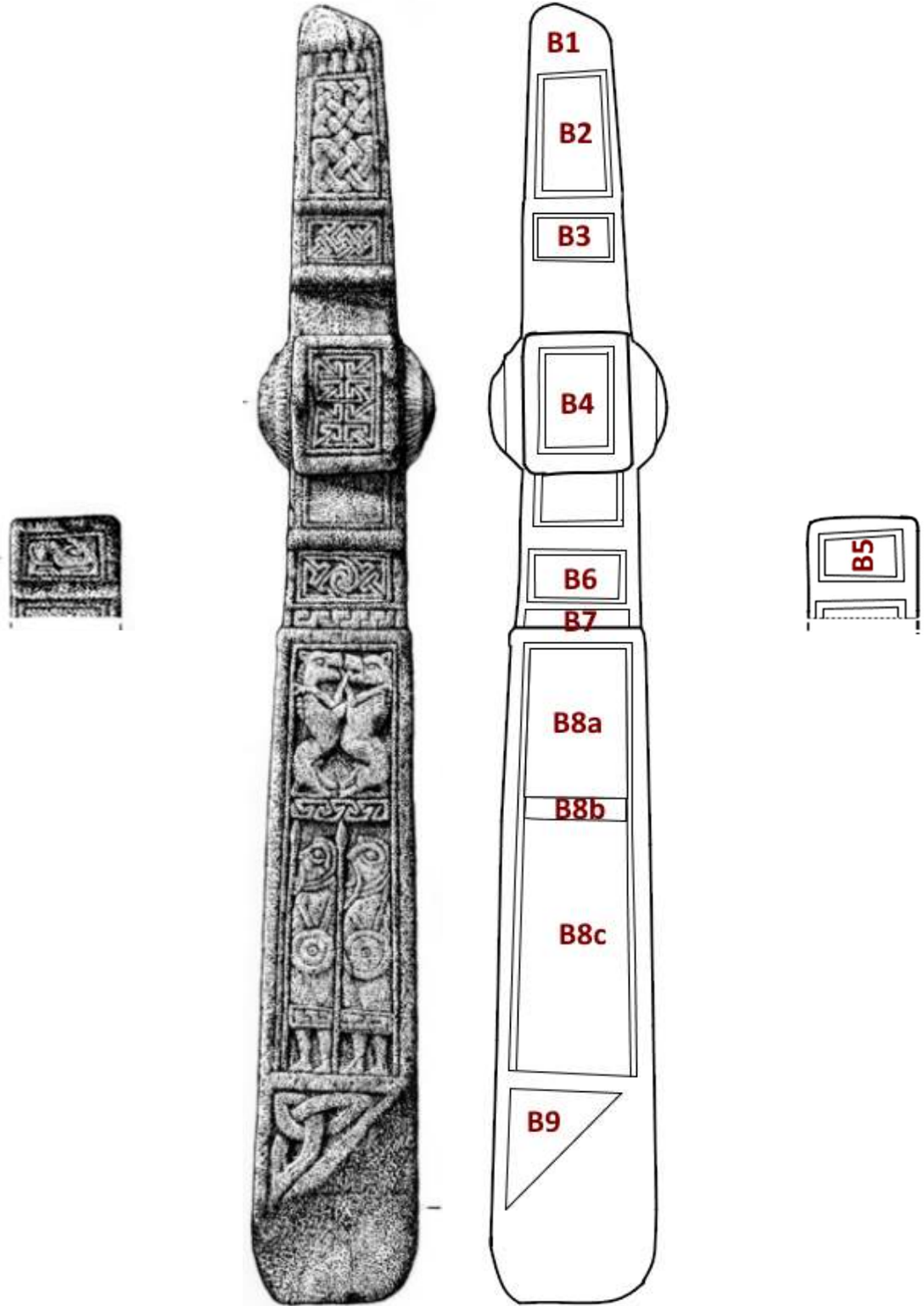
Figure 7: Face B – drawing and labelled panels

Cross-head

B1 – The finial has clear tegulation with concave sides to the tegulae. Only one row is visible at the bottom of this section; above this the stone is either damaged or deliberately shaped to slope back.

B2 - A panel of tightly packed median-incised interlace made up of two continuous strands.

B3 - Within the curve of the upper arm is a small panel of diagonal key-pattern in a border. A notable feature is the central motif which forms a four-path rectilinear spiral, with the arms turning out clockwise. All of the rectilinear spiral panels are discussed in section 2.3.3, page 89.

B4 - The outer face of the side-arm contains key-pattern in a border. Initially, this looks to be two blocks of the same key-pattern simply stacked one on top of the other but there is an irregularity in how it has been laid out meaning that the path has to diverge twice where the patterns meet. This panel is discussed in section 2.3.3, page 95.

B5 - On the underside of the arm, on the outer of its two concave sections is a small panel containing a crouching beast in a border. It is a quadruped that looks over its back and bites its own tail; a miniature version of the large beast on face D, although the tail simply passes behind the beast's torso rather than piercing it. This one's forelegs appear to extend straight back from the shoulders rather than bending naturally. Both of the under-arm panels are discussed in section 2.3.2, page 87.

B6 - On the curve of the lower arm is another panel of key-pattern; similar to the one above (B3) but flipped on the horizontal axis and the centre is a curvilinear triple-spiral rather than the four-path rectilinear spiral. The arms of the spiral turn out clockwise.

B7 - A band of simple step-pattern of interlocking S-shapes finishes the foot of the cross-head. All of the bands of step-pattern are discussed in section 2.3.3, page 100.

Shaft

The shaft has three panels. The upper two are framed by narrow moulding on the top and sides but are open at the bottom. They can be considered as one panel divided into two fields by a band of key-pattern.

B8a - The top panel contains two facing beasts. They are equine with the faint remains of a mane but the heads appear to be more dog-like with square muzzles rather than the rounded one of the horse on face C. They each have a pointed ear and large eye. The sculptor has not carved them as perfect mirror images of each other. The upper bodies are positioned as if they are rearing, but the hind legs are horizontal rather than vertical as would be natural for a rearing stance. Their forelegs interlace with right legs resting on the other's foremost shoulder and left legs seemingly in or at the other's mouth. Both seem to be male with the genitals clear on the left-hand animal and less pronounced but still discernible on the right-hand one. These animals are discussed further in section 2.3.2, page 82.

B8b - A horizontal band of key-pattern in the same style as that on the shaft of face A, though with only three repeats.

B8c - The middle and largest panel on this side contains two male figures in profile facing left. They each have a large eye, blocky nose and long moustache. The lower eyelids and hint of a mouth on the profile edge can be detected. They carry circular shields with carrying straps and long spears which reach from the ground to above their heads, i.e. the full height of this sub-panel. The left shield is made up concentrically but the outer two circles of the right shield are off-centre. The right shield is also the largest of all the shields on the cross. Both figures wear tunics with broad hems decorated with simple step-patterns. The one on the left, with Z-blocks and the other with T-blocks, giving them an element of individuality. These figures are discussed in section 2.3.2, page 65.

B9 - Below the warriors is a triangular panel formed to fit the shape created by the missing corner. This holds a single-stranded triquetra knot with pointed tips. This panel does not have a narrow border but does sit in the main frame established for all the panels.

Face C (East face)
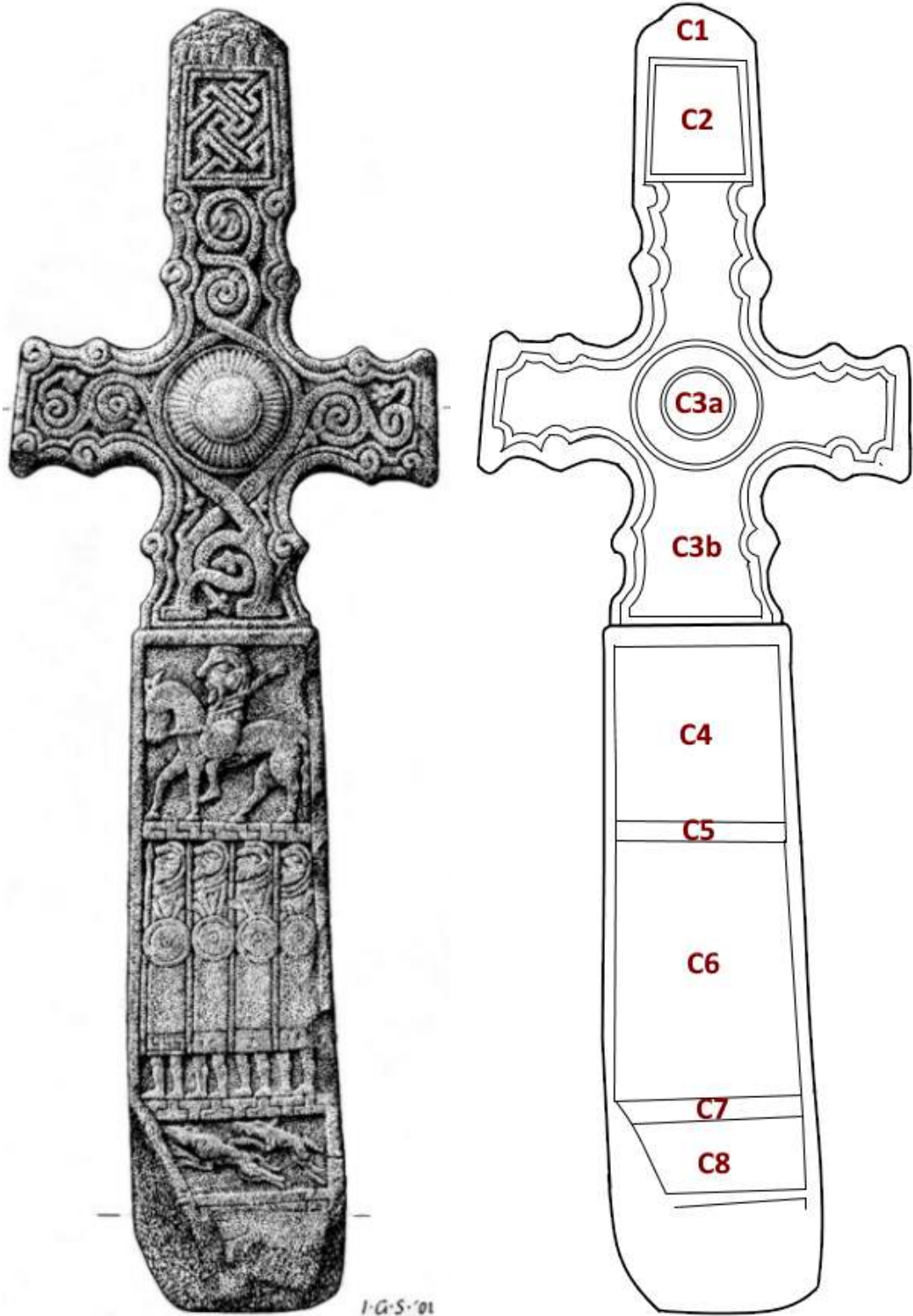
Figure 8: Face C – drawing and labelled panels

Cross-head

The main cross-head has a double border. The outer is wider with scrolls at the cusps of the double-curves and the outer corners of the arms; face A lacks these outer scrolls. The inner border is about half the width of the outer. It is continuous and follows the path created by the scrolled border as well as dividing the upper panel from the main cross.

C1 - The finial has a tegulated design although this is now very weathered with the apex not evident.

C2 - Below the tegulations, in the extended arm, is a panel of diagonal key-pattern. The central four-path rectilinear spiral turns out anti-clockwise.

C3 - The rest of the cross-face is decorated by foliage in the form of medallion vine-scroll which surrounds the central boss.

C3a - The boss is separated from the vine-scroll by a narrow border. The outer two-thirds of the boss is decorated with radial narrow ribs; approximately 50. Another narrow band defines the centre which now appears fairly smooth and blank; although dimples and faint grooves hint that it may once have been decorated.

C3b - The vine-scroll is made up of two broad stems which grow up from separate rectangular bases on the lower arm. These intertwine and sprout tendrils each terminating with trilobate leaves. They then separate to grow either side of the boss where each stem bifurcates; with the main stems continuing to the upper arm and a tendril spreading out onto each lateral arm. On each of the lateral arms the decoration is very similar to the other but they are not mirror images. The tendrils branch again; one spiralling and terminating with a trilobate leaf while the other spirals on the left arm and simply twists on the right then both terminate with a bunch of fruit in a rosette form. One of the stems on the upper arm spirals twice, interlacing with itself and the other stem which it meets in the centre of the second spiral. Because of weathering it is unclear exactly how they terminate; it may be as two leaves, two bunches of fruit or a leaf and fruit. In his drawing Ian Scott has depicted it as two pointed leaves. The vine-scroll is discussed in section 2.3.3, page 110.

Shaft

The shaft is divided into three panels separated by bands of simple step-pattern. There is no inner border around any of these panels unlike most of the others.

C4 - The top panel occupies about a third of the shaft and contains a horse and rider standing in profile and facing left. The rider is very prominent with a disproportionately large head; it is the same size as his torso. He appears to sit very low on the horse, unnaturally so, but this is probably a necessity of having to fit both horse and rider in the panel. His left leg, the only one visible, hangs down behind the horse's foreleg. Little detail of his clothing is preserved although there are faint folds visible around his neck which may be depicting a cowl or cloak. His large head is dominated by a large almond-shaped eye, blocky nose and long moustache drooping below the chin. His head is covered by something which extends down and round to below his chin; perhaps representing either a hood or hair and beard. Behind the rider's neck is a long straight object; projecting up at a diagonal angle. J. Romilly Allen suggests this is a spear (1903, 321), however, it is relatively broad for a spear and there is no trace of a point projecting below the horse's neck as is usually shown on other Pictish sculptures.

The horse appears to be well proportioned. The horse's head is pulled in close to its neck; either this was meant to show the horse on a very tight rein or the sculptor had to position it this way to fit a large horse into a narrow frame. A rein is clearly visible but no other pieces of harness or saddle are discernible. The horse is positioned with both of its right legs before the left legs and with all four hooves on the ground. It has a long tail falling nearly to the ground, the top half of which forms a zigzag, perhaps representing a braided style. Two ears are clear and an eye may be discernible but this is not as clear as the eyes on the other larger human or animal figures. Unlike the two beasts on face B, its sex is not made obvious. The horse and rider are discussed further in section 2.3.2, page 59.

C5 - Horizontal border of simple step-pattern in the form of interlocked Z-shapes; comprised of six full blocks and one partial.

C6 - The middle panel occupies about half of the shaft and contains four, nearly identical, male figures in profile and facing left. They are not naturally

proportioned but have large heads, thin torsos, long thighs and very short lower legs in comparison, the calf muscles and knees are discernible. This stretched form is perhaps a result of having to squeeze them to fit all four into the panel. Each has his allotted space, bounded by his own and his neighbour's spear and/or the frame, and they fill it entirely. They appear to be stationary with both feet on the ground and legs straight. These men have the same blocky nose, large eye, head covering and folds around the neck as the horseman. There is not much trace of facial hair visible but that lack cannot be certain, though, what is certain is that they do not have the distinctive long moustache of the horseman or the figures on face B. They all wear knee-length cloaks or tunics with deep borders on the bottom hem, within which can be seen decoration of simple step-pattern Z-blocks on the left-most warrior with the stone being too worn at this point to tell if the others are decorated or not. All carry round shields, each a slightly different size from the others; the leftmost shield has the largest diameter, the two middlemost are equal and the rightmost is the smallest. All of the shields are marked with a central dot and two circles; one around the centre and one near the edge perhaps indicating a boss and rim treatment. That they are formed by three concentric circles with a dot for a centre perhaps indicates the use of a compass to aid the initial laying out. The shields appear to be carried on straps over the shoulders. They all hold a spear each, which extends from the tops of their heads to the hem of their cloaks; therefore, shorter than the spears of the two figures on face B. These spearmen are discussed with the pair on face B in section 2.3.2, page 65.

C7 - Horizontal border decorated with a simple step-pattern of interlocking T-shapes; comprised of seven full blocks and two partial ones.

C8 - The lowest panel contains two leaping beasts, which can be identified as dogs. They are arranged to fit with the cut-off corner in a way that looks deliberate and aesthetically pleasing rather than cut short. They face left, as the figures above do, although, they are portrayed in mid-stride, actively moving, in contrast to the others' stationary stances. This panel is discussed in section 2.3.2, page 86.

Face D (North face)
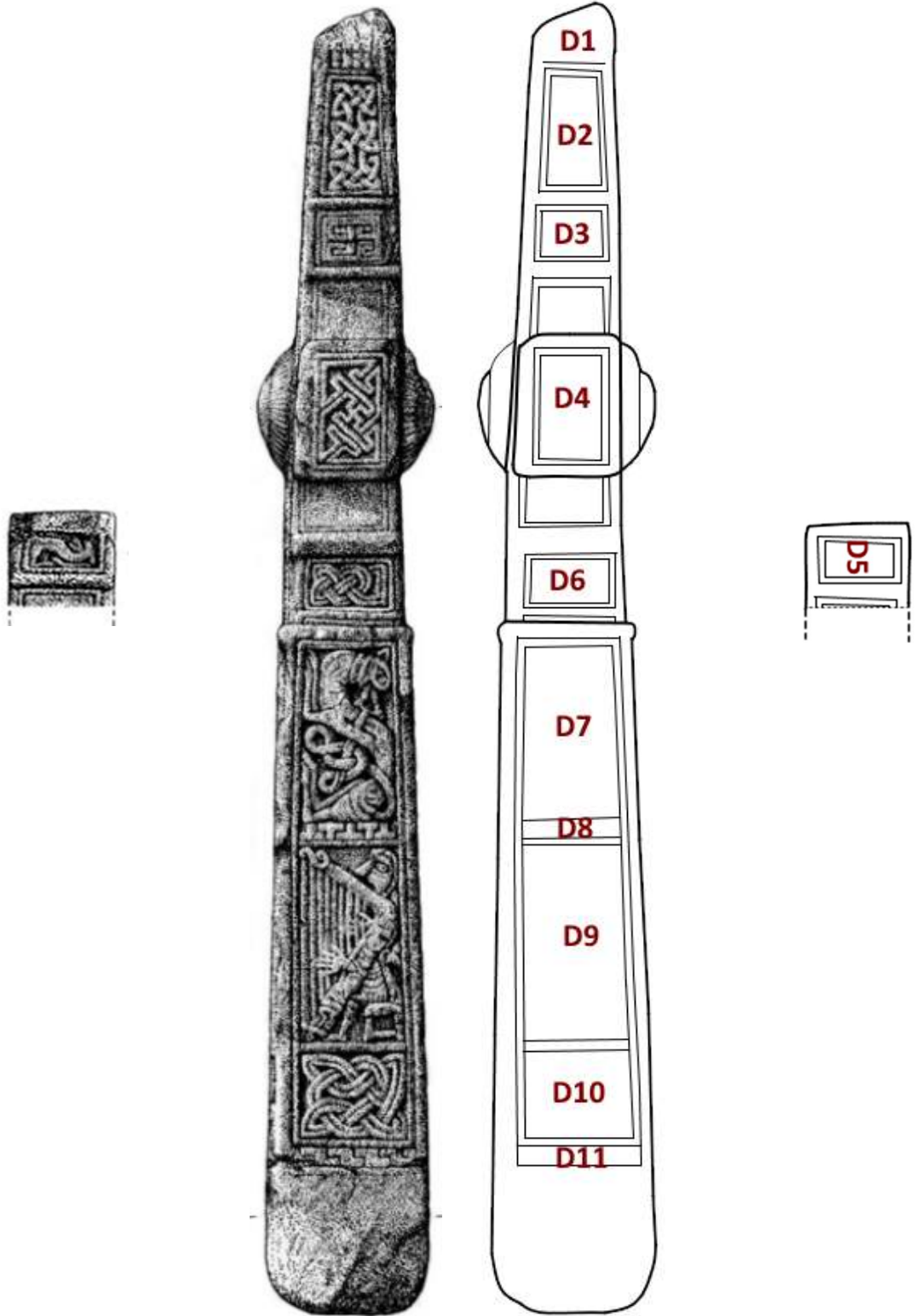
Figure 9: Face D – drawing and labelled panels

Cross-head

Five panels, all enclosed by narrow borders.

D1 - The finial on this face has a single surviving tier of clear tegulations below a sloping top.

D2 - Within the extension is a panel of interlace of one continuous strand.

D3 - In the curve of the top arm is a small panel of orthogonal key-pattern which seems to have been laid out or carved crudely as the top and the bottom are unmatched. In comparison with the other panels of key-pattern, this one appears out of place. This is discussed further in section 2.3.3, page 99.

D4 - The outer face of the arm has a panel of central four-path rectilinear spiral key-pattern, although it is arranged differently to those on faces B and C. The spiral turns out clockwise then changes direction to turn anti-clockwise.

D5 - The under arm has a small panel containing a crouching beast. This panel is partially damaged which makes the beast's tail difficult to make out but it appears to go up and over the beast's back. It has a pronounced muzzle and open mouth. The forelegs seem awkward as they by laid out straight back from the shoulders and under the beast. The hind leg looks more natural.

D6 - The lower arm is decorated with a small panel of median-incised interlace of one continuous strand.

Shaft

The three main images on this side are contained within a single narrow border, although they are divided from each other by horizontal bands.

D7 - The top panel contains a single large quadruped, in profile, that is tightly compressed to fill the entire space. It is resting or crouching with bent legs all pointing forward with its back arched and head looking backwards. All four legs have clawed feet. It has a pointed ear, large eye, long jaws with a square chin and nose and an open mouth. Around its neck are two incised lines creating a band reminiscent of a collar. Indistinct detail along the neck and shoulder hints at either its pelt, a mane, feathers or scales. Its tail is long and forms a knot below the stomach before passing through the beast's body via a slit in its side. The beast then bites or consumes the tip of the tail. The beast is orientated vertically, although it would look more natural if the panel was rotated 90º anti-clockwise. This panel is discussed in section 2.3.2, page 84.

D8 - A horizontal band of simple step-pattern in the form of five interlocked T-shapes.

D9 - The middle panel shows a left-facing figure in profile playing a large harp and seated on a chair. The harp is a distinctive triangular shape with nine vertical bars; either depicting nine strings or eight strings and a supporting bar. This panel is particularly well preserved and a lot of detail can still be seen, such as the harp strings carved in relief with both hands playing; the right hand is behind the strings, playing the shorter strings and while the left hand is positioned lower and on the near side, playing the longer strings. Because of the placement of this hand all five fingers can be seen. Some details of the clothing style can be discerned; his lower legs are visible suggesting a tunic of knee-length or shorter quite unlike the floor-length clothing of the seated figures shown on the nearby Fowlis Wester 2 cross-slab. The chair has no arms and the base appears to be open with a cross-bar near the feet. The upper back of the chair is ornamented with an animal head with a simple eye and a broad beak or muzzle that appears to be open; there is a similarity to the head of the beast above. The frame of the harp also seems to show decoration with a scrolled top terminal and a different style around the foot, which is perhaps eroded step-pattern. This figure and the instrument are discussed further in section 2.3.2, page 68.

D10 - The bottom panel is smaller than the others and holds a design of median-incised interlace with one continuous strand.

D11 - The foot is finished off with a band of simple step-pattern in the form of interlocked Z-shapes.

Face E - Top

The top of the finial is very weathered and is now difficult to distinguish from the sides. The sides appear to slope back; perhaps for practical purposes to allow water to run off or to form a roof shape. The uppermost point may have been a ridge running from front to back.

The base-stone
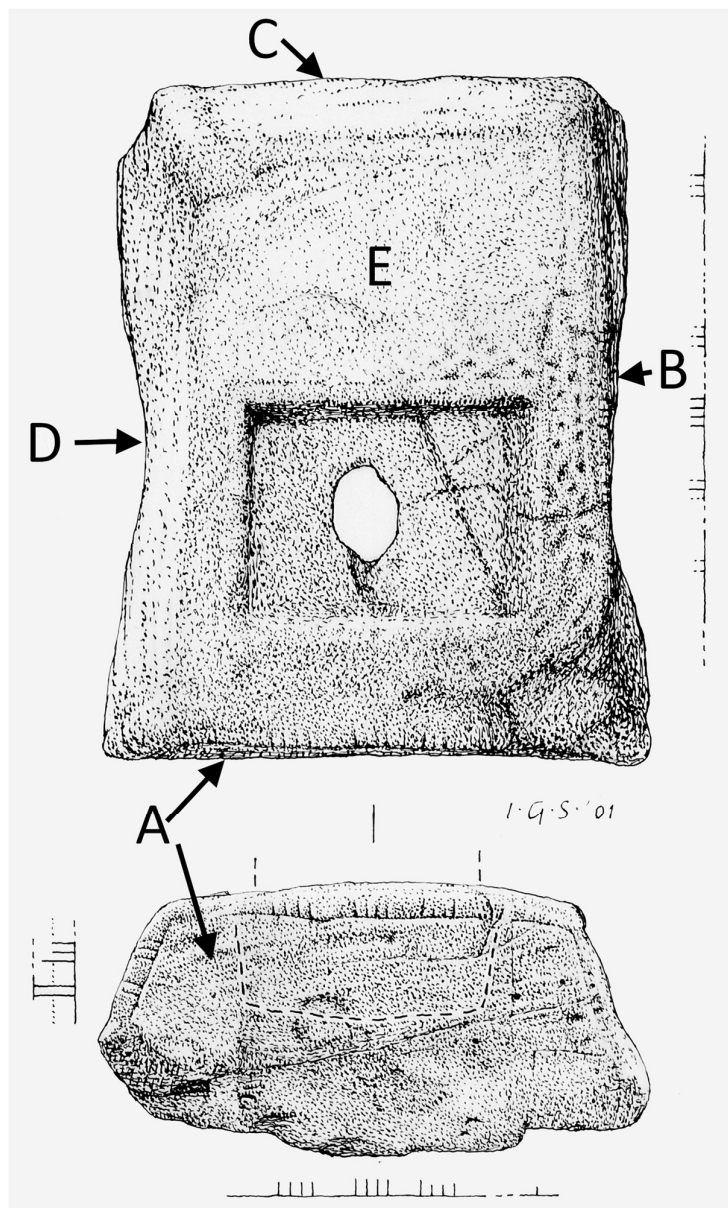
Figure 10: The base-stone drawn by Ian Scott (© Crown Copyright HES)(faces labelled by author)

The naming of the faces of the base will follow that set for the cross; therefore, face A is the west-facing side, moving anti-clockwise around the stone to faces B, C and D, with face E being the top. Face F, the bottom, is not described as it is not visible; the irregular nature of the lower edges indicates that face F is undressed.

The base is rectangular in plan, tapering in slightly towards the top on faces B, C and D (south, east and north) but vertical on the west side. Faces B and D are slightly concave in their lower middle reaches.

The socket is rectangular and shaped to fit the projected intact foot of the cross rather than the polygonal shape required to allow for the missing corner. The socket is cut to about half the depth of the base and a smaller rough hole continues cut right through to the bottom. In plan, the socket is off centre and closer to the west side. This means that a larger area is available to the eastern side in front of face C. This larger surface is now slightly hollowed. Dimples around the socket are the faint traces of a decorative band, perhaps of interlace as suggested in Ian Scott's drawing (Figure 10).

The vertical edge between faces A and D shows clear sign of decoration. The edges are bound by a rolled moulding formed from a groove on either side of, and parallel to, the arrises. Within this moulding, there are bundles of short parallel strokes running across the arris from groove to groove. This can also be made out on the upper edges of faces A and B and probably continued around all of the visible edges. At the time of their discovery it was suggested that these could have been part of an ogham inscription (Forsyth 1995), though, when the stone was lifted and the carving could be observed more fully it became clear that it was not ogham due to the regularity of the spacing and the lack of diagonal strokes.

The base is discussed further in section 2.3.1, page 55.

2.2. The inscribed panel

Figure 11: The inscription panel, photographed indoors with raked lighting (DP245570; © HES)

The inscription is positioned at the top of the cross shaft on the west face (panel A3). This is a prominent location on the monument, making the inscription, and its message or intent, particularly noticeable to all who came near the cross. This also matches the positioning of the panel on the opposite face that contains a distinctive horseman. It is contained within a roughly square panel 30cm wide by 29cm high.

Part of the inscription was finally read after its potential was realised. Katherine Forsyth investigated the panel by utilising a high-quality latex moulded cast that had been produced for the National Museum of Scotland for the 'Work of Angels' exhibition jointly hosted with the British Museum and the National Museum of Ireland. This allowed methods of work that would have been damaging on the stone itself; such as repeatedly applying and removing charcoal and chalk to differentiate the inscribed letters from the upstanding surface (Figure 12)(1995, 239).

Figure 12: The inscription marked with charcoal, a. lines 1-2, b. lines 1-3, 7 (from Forsyth 1995, 241)

As noted above, this inscription is now very worn to the point of near invisibility. This appears to be due to the letters being only shallowly inscribed and the subsequent weathering of the western face. On the other hand, Forsyth does consider the possibility that the still unreadable middle portion may have been re-cut at some point, either to correct an error or adapt the message (1995, 239).

The text is written over seven lines in both minuscule and majuscule letters, with approximately eight or nine letters per line. The resulting length, at over sixty characters, is the longest roman alphabet inscription known from Early Medieval Scotland (Forsyth 1995, 239-41).

Although only a portion of the text has so far been made out, it can be understood with a good level of certainty. The first two lines and first letter of the third line make up the name Custantín son of Uirguist, alternatively Constantine son of Fergus, which is written as Cu[---]ntin Filius Fircus (Forsyth 1995, 140). Confidence in this reading is high as there is a Pictish king of that name recorded in a number of sources; more of whom in section 2.2.1.

Unfortunately, the rest of the inscription was too worn to allow a fuller reading by the techniques that were available at the time. Some letters were recognisable but not enough to allow for any sense to be made of them.

Forsyth fully discusses the form of the names and therefore the languages that are involved in the resulting orthography of this inscription. She concluded that the *Fircus* is formed as it is, rather than the Pictish *Uurguist* or Old Irish *Forcus*, because it has been Gaelicised by the orthographer in a manner that was somewhat unusual (1995, 240). The inclusion of *filius* suggests that the language of the whole is Latin, although the possibility remains that it could be either

Irish or Pictish, as *filius* is part of the name and disconnected from the rest of the text (Forsyth 1995, 241).

As discussed, only a third of the message can now be read, the name of a king. It is unknown just how much further information the remaining portion contained. As it is, the monument contains the image of a high-status horseman and a name in the prime position of the inscription. Therefore, it can be said with some confidence that the horseman is representing Custantín son of Uirguist, whilst also acknowledging that the undeciphered text could hold information that refutes that.

The Dupplin Cross was consistently dated to the mid or later 9th century, the reign of Cináed mac Ailpín or later, based on stylistic grounds and its association with Forteviot (Alcock and Alcock 1992, 241). However, the discovery that it bears the name of a Pictish king who reigned from 789 to 820 raised the distinct possibility that the monument could be older than had been supposed. Caution should be taken as the naming or honouring of a person does not necessarily mean it was erected during their reign. This is exemplified by the inscription on the Pillar of Eliseg, Denbighshire, which was erected by Concenn, ruler of Powys (died 854), in honour of his great-grandfather Eliseg, repeatedly naming him and stating his success against the neighbouring English (Edwards, 2009). Forsyth does consider the possibility that a comparable situation took place at Forteviot, and that the cross was erected by a member of the mac Ailpín dynasty as a means to legitimise themselves by commemorating a previous successful and long-reigning king; although she does point out that whereas Concenn was directly descended from Eliseg, the mac Ailpíns were not related to Custantín (Forsyth, 1995, 242). It is notable that Custantín's name takes precedence in the Dupplin text, as does Concenn's on the Pillar or Eliseg where it is stated that he erected the stone.

Forsyth concludes, cautiously, that on the balance of the available evidence the cross likely dates to during Custantín's reign or shortly after his death, i.e. the first quarter of the 9th century, whilst acknowledging that the unreadable portion of the inscription may have held information that established the date outside of that bracket (1995, 243).

The reading of the inscription has been invaluable in furthering understanding of the Dupplin Cross. However, it also opened up additional

questions. A large portion of it is still unread and holds great potential. It may name a second known individual or place, both of which could influence the supposed date and firm up the knowledge of how the cross, Custantín and Forteviot were connected to the wider world.

There are now nine known crosses or cross-slabs from Pictland with roman alphabet inscriptions; five of which are in Latin. The severely damaged inscription on the Crieff Burgh Cross, PER, is also likely to be in Latin (Hall *et al* 2000, 168–9). Of these the Crieff Burgh Cross provides the closest parallel to Dupplin, despite its condition (Figure 13). They are both contained in square panels in prominent positions on the cross-shafts and the inscriptions appear to be of comparable lengths, with Dupplin being slightly longer. What does differentiate them is that the script used is quite different from each other (*ibid* 2000, 168).

Figure 13: Crieff Burgh Cross inscription (DP239464; © HES)

2.2.1.   Custantín son of Uirguist

Since his name appears so prominently on the monument it is worth covering what is known of Custantín son of Uirguist. He is first mentioned in The Annals of Ulster which records a battle in the year 789 amongst the Picts. This resulted in Custantín being victorious and Conall son of Tadg defeated and escaping.

He is also named in the Pictish king-list, which at this point appears to be a nearly contemporary document. The Dál Riatan king-lists, however, are far less clear. In the Dál Riatan lists Custantín is included along with his son Domnall, who is recorded as reigning at an earlier date than his father. This arrangement is unlikely considering that the reign lengths and dates do not correlate well, therefore, it seems that the lists cannot be taken at face-value (Broun 1998). As

a solution it has been suggested that, rather than Custantín ruling an independent Dál Riata as well as Fortriu, the situation may have been closer to Custantín placing Domnall as king of Dál Riata as an effective sub-king to Custantín's over-lordship (Woolf 2007, 64). This would effectively make him king of both regions simultaneously which may be why he and his brother are included in some versions of the Dál Riatan king-list.

As well as the more official lists and records, Custantín, his brother Onuist and his nephew, Wen son of Onuist, are named in the Durham *Liber Vitae* as people for whom St Cuthbert's monks would pray. This does not detail why they were to benefit in this way but it does suggest that they had significant connections with Northumbria; probably political as well as religious (Broun 1998, 81).

It has been thought that Custantín was Dál Riatan as his patronym was equated with the Dál Riatan king Fergus son of Eochaid (died 781) (Broun 1998, 75; Woolf 2007, 63). However, Broun postulated that the Uirguist in question was not the Gaelic Fergus but rather that Custantín and his brother, Onuist, are the great-grandsons or nephews of the first Onuist son of Uirguist; making this family apparently Pictish (1998, 81). Woolf puts forward the evidence of the orthography of their names in the sources in support of this. Firstly, the Pictish king-list appears to have been written before Gaelic became the main language for record keeping and therefore retains Pictish names rather than the Gaelic equivalents. The second is their inclusion in the Durham *Liber Vitae*, compiled in Northumbria, which chooses to use the Pictish names (2007, 60 & 67).

On his death in 820 Custantín was succeeded by his brother, Onuist son of Uirguist (820-34). Custantín's son, Domnall, was already in position as king of Dál Riata and his other son, Drest, succeeded Onuist as king of Fortriu (834-37). Wen son of Onuist then became king in 837. Subsequently, the dynasty established by the first Onuist son of Uirguist and strengthened by Custantín was obliterated by a battle against the Norsemen in 839 (Woolf 2007, 66). At this point there appears to have been a large number of claimants to the kingship of both Pictland and Dál Riata but it is Cináed mac Ailpín who secures them and his dynasty held them. It could be considered that Custantín set the precedent of dynastic kingship over both east and west.

It is interesting to note that the name *Custantín* had not been recorded as a kingly name, either Pictish or Dál Riadic, prior to the reign of Custantín son of Uirguist. Whereas afterwards it was a name given to two further kings, both of the family of Cináed mac Ailpín over two generations: Constantine mac Cináeda and Constantine mac Aeda. This does show that there was not a determined break from the past and previous kings but whether the choice of the name was a conscious link with a strong king or the name had become more generally popular at this time is harder to say.

Additionally, Custantín's name is important in other ways. It is a deliberate deviation from the traditional choices of Celtic/Pictish names; chosen either at his birth or later in his life, perhaps by himself. It connotes Constantine the Great, the Christianising Roman Emperor and shows a knowledge of the history of Roman Europe and Byzantium and aspirations to be connected with that legacy (Foster 1998; Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 206–7).

Although it is usually Cináed mac Ailpín who is remembered for establishing Dunkeld Cathedral, and housing some of the relics of St Columba there, this place likely had an earlier founding under the reign of Custantín. It is stated in a note attached to his name in the later version of the king-list that Custantín founded a church at Dunkeld. Although this is a later addition and therefore it cannot be known for certain if it is authentic it would seem unlikely that this particular connection would be made without some basis in history (Broun 1998, 81). As discussed above Custantín had power over Dál Riata at a time of upheaval on Iona; Viking attacks had necessitated the decision to remove St Columba's relics to a safer place and Kells was already in preparation for that role. Woolf has suggested that it is possible that Custantín wished the relics to remain in his kingdom and as king he would have had power to do this; if a suitable location was provided (2007, 65). Diarmait, Abbot of Iona, travelled to Pictland during the Custantín's reign, showing that there was certainly contact between Iona and the east (Clancy 1996). Although Cináed mac Ailpín is credited with moving the relics and placing them in a specially constructed church at Dunkeld it may be that he completed the project that was begun by Custantín.

2.3. Discussion of the form and sculptural elements

All of the panels and individual elements will be considered as they are all informative in some way. Previous studies of the monument have focused mainly on the most prominent panels, such as the horseman, warriors, harper and the vine-scroll, with others receiving only a passing comment or not being covered at all. These discussions have been worthwhile but it is when the, seemingly, inconsequential features are considered alongside those that have received more attention that a more detailed impression of the place of the cross within Insular Art can be gleaned. This, in turn, informs our understanding of the surrounding ecclesiastical, social, royal and political contexts in which it was created.

2.3.1. The form of the monument

The cross

The cruciform shape of the Dupplin Cross is unusual for eastern Scotland as cross-slabs are far more common in this area at this time. *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland (ECMS)* lists fifty free-standing crosses and one-hundred-and-thirty-nine cross-slabs across the whole of Scotland (Allen and Anderson 1903). It does not distinguish by early medieval regions and subsequent discoveries will have changed the numbers somewhat but it gives an idea of the ratio of free-standing to cross-slab – a more up-to-date count has not yet been published. The majority of the free-standing crosses are fragmentary as this form is more vulnerable to weather damage and deliberate breaking up. What makes the Dupplin cross especially valuable is that it is complete (Henderson 1999, 162).

A clear division is made between the cross-head and shaft, both in the decoration and the shaping. Henderson compares it with the Northumbrian style but also points out that this style is not entirely new to the Pictish repertoire as it can also be seen on cross-slabs (1999, 170). The shaft is being put to the same purpose as that of typical Pictish cross-slabs; to convey a message by a series of figural scenes, some of which were required to extend across more than a single face because of the narrow confines of the shaft. The scenes are comprised of Biblical and secular themes, in both symbolic and literal images.

The double-curve of the arms is not common in Pictland, with only two fragmentary examples; Forteviot 4, PER, which is the lower arm of a free-standing cross and Kirriemuir 17, ANG, a cross-slab (Figure 14 a & b).

The double-curved arm is seen more often to the west and the south, exemplified by the St John's Cross, Iona, ARG, and Masham 5, North Yorkshire, respectively (Figure 14 c & d). Both of these crosses are considered to be older than Dupplin and it is conceivable that either region could be the source of this style appearing at Forteviot. However, Dupplin does not imitate either of these monuments or their regional styles in their entirety.
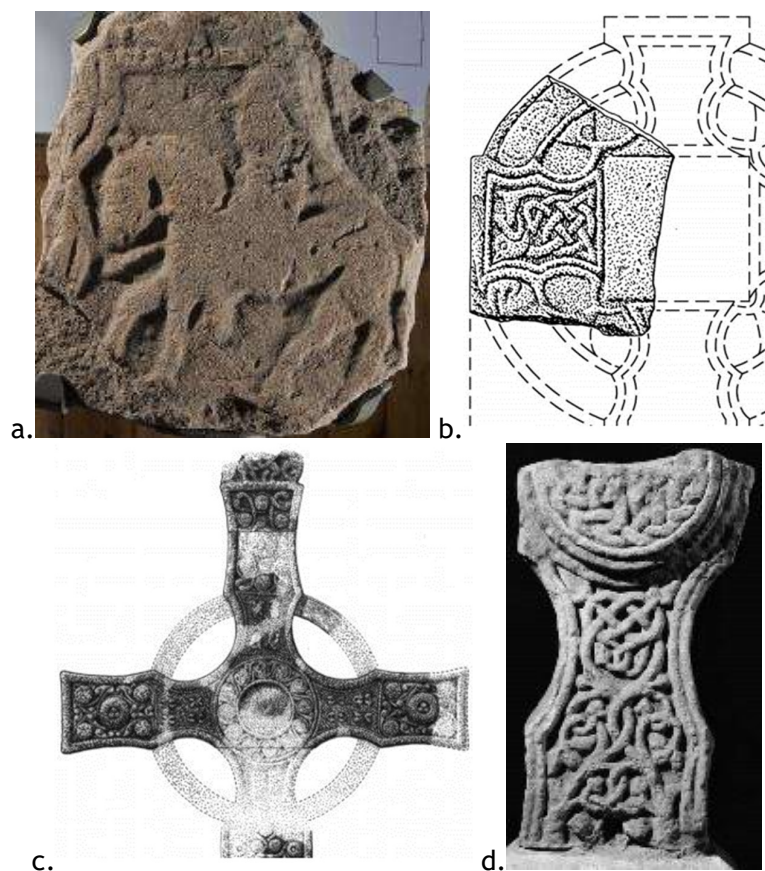
Figure 14: Double-curved cross-heads
a. Forteviot 4 (DP245619; © HES), b. Kirriemuir 17 (SC769889; © Crown Copyright: HES),
c. St John's Cross, Iona (SC377096; © Crown Copyright: HES), d. Masham 5 (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer D. Craig)

A feature that attracts attention today, often because it is seen as a flaw, is the niche in the lower-left corner between faces B and C (Figure 15a). Although this is formed by the absence of the full corner of the stone the effect, once packed into the base-stone, is of a niche. One possibility is that this is due to a natural feature of the chosen stone; either there before work began and not

thought to have detracted from its suitability for a monument or the corner detached before this area was detailed and it was still considered acceptable (Ewart *et al* 2007, 323). Two other crosses also display this feature; the Maiden Stone, ABD, and Meigle 1, PER; both are cross-slabs rather than free-sanding crosses (Figure 15 b & c). The Maiden Stone is missing the lower back right with the decoration of the side flowing into it. It is the same corner on Meigle 1; but here there is another aspect of particular interest, the corner facet and the tenon preserve numerous cup and cup-and-ring marks indicating that this was once a prehistoric monument, either a standing stone or exposed bedrock. What the significance of this might be is not the focus here but it is noteworthy that prehistoric monuments were being reused for Early Medieval sculpture and this is something that will be returned to in section 3.3. Since the presence of a niche is not unique it has been suggested that there may be some symbolism or practical function, so far unidentified (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 150).

Figure 15: Niched stones

a. Dupplin, b. Maiden Stone (SC1079157; © Crown Copyright: HES), c. Meigle 1 (SC397215; © Crown Copyright: HES)

Mouldings and Frames

The majority of the edges are finished with grooved moulding with an inner narrow relief border; the widths of these are consistent across the sculpture with the outer border measuring approximately 30mm (it was not

possible to be more precise due to weathering of the edge) and the inner band is 10mm. Only a few areas are treated differently. Most notably the entire shaft on face C has flat-band moulding without the inner band. This has the effect of accentuating the panels on this face; this may have been either intentional as it contains the king's image, or functional to allow for larger figures, perhaps both. The triangular panel containing the triquetra knot (panel B9) also does not have the narrow band. The tegulated finial has no moulding at all as it is the only fully three-dimensional element on the cross, rather than a relief panel.

The treatment of the edges of Pictish crosses, either free-standing or cross-slabs, is very varied. They can have no accentuation to the edge or a raised edge, known as moulding. Where there are mouldings, they are usually plain but occasionally they have decoration.

The Mugdrum Cross, FIF, is a free-standing cross comparable with Dupplin and despite being extremely weathered it appears to have mouldings, narrow inner borders and broader bands separating panels (Figure 16a). Sueno's Stone, MOR, is also similar in the way that the scenes are strictly organised in framed panels; this is a definite shift from the looser, and sometimes very busy, narrative scenes more commonly seen on Pictish sculpture (Henderson and Henderson 2004, 135)(Figure 16b). The combined use of mouldings and inner borders is also seen on several of the high-crosses of Ireland, for example, the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise, Offaly, and the related monuments at Monasterboice, Louth; all dated to the early tenth century (Stalley 2020).

Borders, both broad and narrow, are commonly used in metalwork and manuscripts to contain and divide areas of decoration and figures. They make it easier for the eye to follow the individual elements of the compositions, especially in the case of manuscripts. It is possible that the crosses were copying this use from the metalwork and manuscript models or that it developed separately for the same purpose.
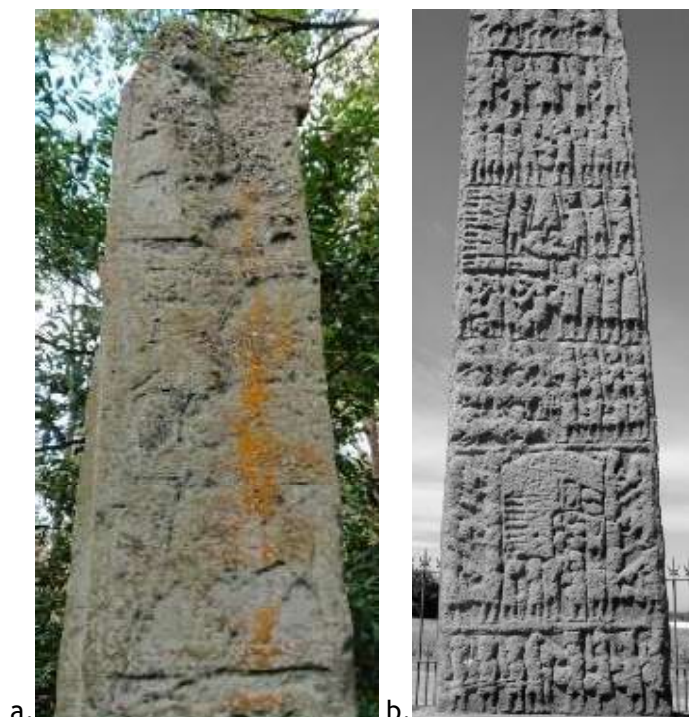
Figure 16: Framed panel crosses
a. Mugdrum cross-shaft, b. Sueno's Stone (SC1409220; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection)

Figure 17: Looped moulding surrounding the cross-head on faces A & C

On faces A and C, the moulding around the cross-head was treated in a distinct fashion on the cusps of the double-curves and outer corners (Figure 17). Henderson describes it as forming double-scrolls by interlocking sections of the moulding (1999, 166). She compares the sculpture with metalwork examples

where this treatment takes place, such as the Crieff mounts, PER, the Hunterston brooch, AYR, and the Asby Winderwath Common plaque, Cumbria and suggests metalwork as the source (*ibid* 1999, 166). However, Henderson was mistaken in her description and, therefore, these comparisons. The moulding on Dupplin is not a series of unconnected sections interlocking in scrolls, rather, the edge has the appearance of being twisted over on itself to form a loop, like cord or wire, before continuing its path; it is continuous and does not terminate and start again. There are comparable examples, although on cross-slabs, where the outlines of the crosses are clearly following the same treatment on Skinnet 1, CAI, and several at Clonmacnoise, Offaly, Ireland (Figure 18). A 7th century buckle from Constantinople is a near duplicate of this design element but is even more reminiscent of twisted cord or wire (Figure 19). The Dupplin moulding may be based on an object like this buckle or they may both be skeuomorphs based on objects that are edged with wire embellished by twists, or perhaps even an embroidery technique used on cloth.
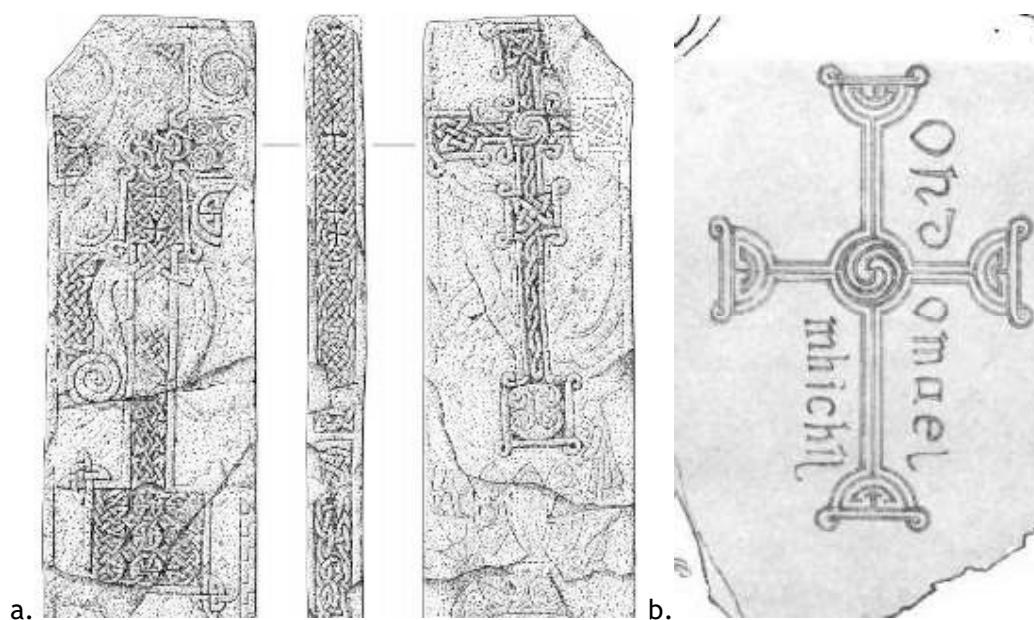
Figure 18: Looped mouldings on cross slabs
a. Skinnet 1 (SC1359074; © Crown Copyright: HES),
b. Clonmacnoise 142 (from Petrie and Stokes, 1872, fig. 158 (CC Public Domain Mark 1.0))

Figure 19: Buckle with looped moulding, Constantinople (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

These looped cusps on Dupplin also tell us about the approach the sculptor took to their work. The direction in which the loops twist shows different levels of irregularity from one face to the other. Face A is wholly regular; all of the loops are on the inside and they all twist clockwise. Whereas on face C they vary between loops lying on the inside and outside and them twisting clockwise and anti-clockwise, the arrangement seems to be partially related to whether they lie on the left- or right-hand sides.

Finial

Figure 20: The tegulated finial on the Dupplin Cross

There is no doubt that the extension to the top of the Dupplin Cross was shaped and decorated in a way that is quite different to the rest of the cross; it has the appearance of a tiled or shingled building. This is completely different from the tops of any other Pictish sculpture, or indeed, any other known cross in Scotland. Apart from the Dupplin Cross, tegulated finials are exclusively Irish; with examples at Monasterboice (Figure 21), Durrow and Kells amongst others. The Dupplin finial is very weathered so it is now difficult to be certain about the shape it once took; whether it always had the slopes running to north and south or if there were once vertical gables there, as the Irish examples have.

Figure 21: Tall Cross, Monasterboice (Gerd Eichmann, CC BY-SA 4.0)

The Irish finials are seemingly representative of an object or structure with probable symbolic resonances so to understand the Dupplin finial we must start by looking to the Irish research, which, so far is not decisive (Stalley 2020, 19–21). Several things could be being represented here: a contemporary building, either secular or religious, a mythological or biblical building, or a reliquary. There are examples in other media that may share the same model or symbolism. The Book of Kells features a church with a shingled roof and elaborate gables that is strikingly similar to the Irish examples (Figure 22a). There are several small shrines or reliquaries that are formed as a house or church; the Monymusk reliquary is one example (Figure 22b). Both of these examples have sloped side roofs, as the Dupplin finial does.

a.   b.

Figure 22: Buildings in Insular Art;
a. Book of Kells, Folio 202v, (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin), b. Monymusk reliquary

As well as the representative and symbolic meaning they carried, the finials may also have had a practical function. Finials that were formed from separate blocks, laid with the laminar planes horizontal, were more resistant to the rain and may have been considered sacrificial and replaceable. Since Dupplin is formed from a single monolith that practical aspect is less clear. Nevertheless, it now has a sloping profile which may have been original and designed to shed rainwater reducing the risk of frost damage. Alternatively, but in a similar vein, Stalley suggests that the finials are skeuomorphs of protective caps placed on timber crosses (2020, 21). With only one example in Scotland, it is not clear whether the representative nature is the same; it may be that it was thought appropriate that the part of the stone taking the full force of the weather and effectively sheltering the rest was designed to represent a roof. Despite there being no other tegulated finials in Pictland, there are several with sloped tops perhaps designed to perform the same function: Aberlemno 2, Aldbar, Farr, Glamis Manse, Nigg, St Vigeans 10 and Camus Cross, ANG.

It is interesting to note that St John's Cross also features a finial, as well as the double-curved arms noted above, but there is no sign that it was shaped like a building. Instead, it appears to feature animal and human forms.

Henderson stated that this tegulated type of finial is a 'distinctly Irish trait', which is suggestive of influence from Ireland, although she does not state that as such (1999, 167). However, given that the Dupplin Cross likely dates to the first half of the 9th century and many of the Irish examples date to the early 10th century (Stalley 2020, 62), if there is influence travelling in a particular direction it is certainly arguable that it was from Strathearn to Ireland. Although the Dupplin finial features the same tegulated roof it lacks the defined walls with figural panels that is a feature of the Irish examples. This may show a different point of focus that the two regions took.

Figure 23: St John's Cross finial (East face SC377094 & West face SC377096; © HES)

The base-stone

Although the base is a separate stone it is part of the monument as a whole. Its primary function is to hold the cross upright but it may have had multiple functions beyond that. Since the socket is deliberately off-centre, making a platform on the eastern side of the cross, it has been suggested that this area could have been used for standing or kneelingin front of the cross (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 155). The stone is 60cm thick and since the decoration only extends down half its height and the surface of the lower half is rough it is evident that the base would have stood proud of the ground by approximately 30cm, thereby elevating the cross and platform area.

The base-stone has been shaped with three steeply sloping sides and one vertical side. This is close in style to the truncated pyramidal bases that occur over a wide region and which are thought to be symbolic of the Mount of Calvary, where Christ's crucifixion took place (Fisher 2005, 86). The base of the nearby Invermay Cross has similarities but they are not identical (Figure 24). The variations are slight but all together they are significant. They are close in size but Dupplin is slightly longer. They both have off-centre sockets, although this is far more pronounced at Dupplin and may be incidental at Invermay. Invermay has a raised lip around the socket which is absent at Dupplin, where, in its place, is a band of interlace. Invermay has four sloping faces to make a truncated pyramid. All of these differences indicate that the bases were not carved to the same model.
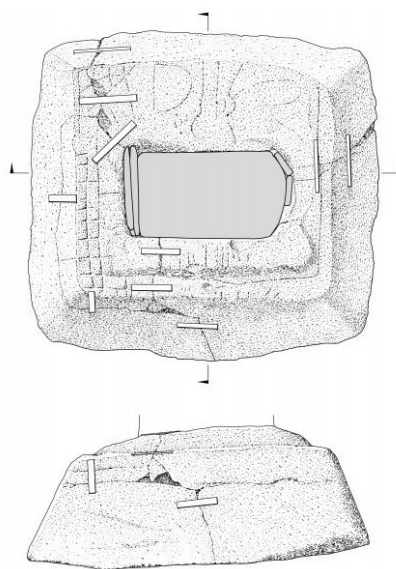
Figure 24: Invermay cross-base (SC2229800; © HES)

The worn interlace decoration around the socket of the Dupplin cross-base can be paralleled at Culross, FIF, where a cross-base has a four-strand braid around the chamfered upper edge (Figure 25). It has also been compared with the recumbent slab at St Vigeans 14, ANG, which is bordered by an interlace band (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 157), although the interlace pattern there is different.

Figure 25: Decorated cross-base at Culross
(SC1589447; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection)

The incised border accentuating the arris can be seen elsewhere in the Pictland, again on the Culross cross-base. It can also be found in Ireland and northern England; exemplified on West Cross, Kells and Lindisfarne 19, N. Yorkshire. Yet, Dupplin is embellished by perpendicular cross-stokes spanning the arris, contained within the border and seemingly arranged in groups of four (Figure 26). No other examples of decorated edges taking this form in sculpture were found during this review. It has been likened to cable-moulding (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 155), which is seen on Northumbrian and Irish sculpture. However, cable-moulding would typically be formed by continuous diagonal strokes rather than clustered perpendicular strokes.

Despite the lack of parallels to the grooves in sculpture, manuscripts can offer close parallels in the form of frames decorated with intermittent but regular groups of strokes, as can be seen in the Book of Kells and the Book of Deer, with groups of three and two respectively (Figure 27). This is one of several characteristics that show a connection between the style of the Dupplin Cross and manuscript art.

At the time of their discovery, it was suggested the grooves could have been part of an ogham inscription (Forsyth 1995, 237). However, when the stone was lifted and the carving could be observed more fully it became clear that it could not be ogham as the strokes are too regular with no diagonals. Despite it not being a functional ogham inscription the strong resemblance of these marks to those making up ogham is perhaps deliberate, though in appearance only.

Figure 26: Dupplin Cross base *in situ* showing grooved edges (SC2252097; © Crown Copyright: HES)

a.   b.

Figure 27: Manuscripts with scored frames
a. Book of Kells, folio 32v (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin),
b. Book of Deer folio 5r (© Cambridge University Library CC BY-NC 3.0)

A hole pierces the floor of the socket, which Ewart *et al* described as being cut to insert a reinforcing metal rod in 1925 when conservation work was done on the cross (2007, 329) but a similar hole also pierces the sockets of the base-stones at Dull, PER and at St Blane's (Figure 28), so this may be an original

feature that was then utilised in 1925. This may have been a design element that allowed the drainage of rainwater to prevent it collecting at the foot of the shaft, potentially destabilising the monument during repeated freezing and thawing.

a.   b.
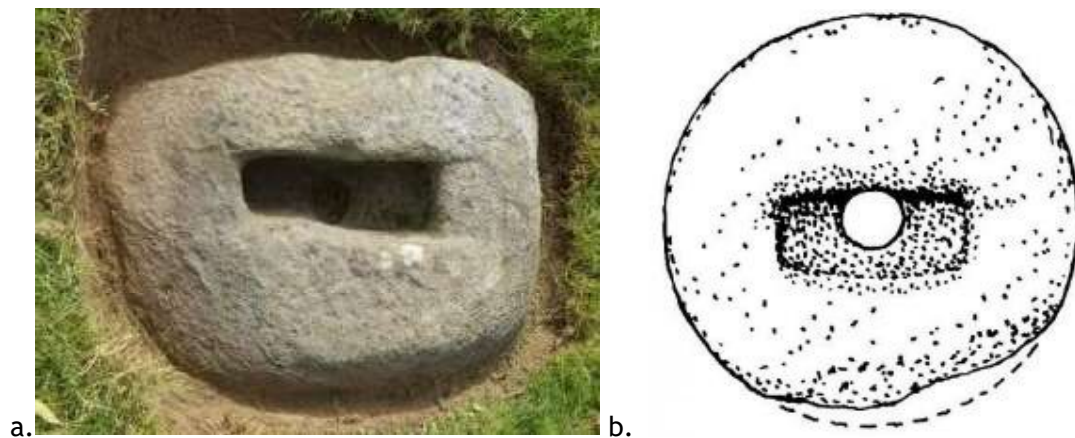
Figure 28: Pierced cross-bases

a. Dull (DP203969), b. St Blane's (SC403038) (both © Crown Copyright: HES)

2.3.2. Figural elements

The human figures

The Dupplin Cross features nine human figures over five panels, all depicted in profile. All of the figures appear to be male; based either on the context of the figure or the way in which they are represented. All of the larger figures are dressed in the masculine fashion of knee-length tunics and those that have moustaches are certainly male (Ritchie 2005, 40). Two of these panels feature armed men on foot, as a pair (B8c) and a group of four (C6). One panel depicts a seated figure playing a large harp (D9), and another is filled with a man on horseback (C4). The bottom panel on the front of the cross (A6) includes a human figure wrestling a long-tailed quadruped; this figure is smaller in scale than the others and is discussed within the context of the surrounding animals (page 72).

The Horseman

The shaft of the cross is dominated by a profile rider on horseback. There are numerous examples of horse-riders in Pictish sculpture, many of which are discussed by Goldberg and which he terms 'the majestic rider', arguing that this image is strongly linked with the theme of the *Adventus*, the occasions when a lord arrived at a place with much anticipation and ceremony (Clarke *et al* 2012, 154). This is a theme that will be returned to later when the positioning of the Dupplin Cross in the landscape (see section 4).

Hughson (1991) demonstrated that these figural portrayals are well observed by the artist and accurately depict details of the posture of both horse and rider. More recent work by Thickpenny (2020) has confirmed this analysis and strengthened it further, showing that the postures depicted indicate that stirrups were not used. The great majority of Pictish examples feature horses in motion; either at hunt, travelling or occasionally in battle. Most are shown at a trot with their legs forward over the horses' shoulders; a position that would have been both effective and comfortable for bareback stirrupless riding. Only those either galloping, walking slowly or stationary would have ridden with legs hanging down (Thickpenny 2020, 3). The Dupplin horseman, in contrast to the convention, is clearly stationary: his leg hangs down vertically and all four of his mount's hooves are in contact with the ground. Although this was noted by

Leslie Alcock and Elizabeth Alcock, they did not appreciate the significance of these features, erroneously believing them to be unnaturalistic. Expecting, rather, to see a king riding into battle, they interpreted the stationary pose as a distortion symbolic of 'royal permanence' (1992, 238-40). Instead, the Dupplin rider should be recognised as belonging to a distinct type of sculpted equestrian; this will be termed the 'static rider'. The pose of the horse can be both naturalistic and symbolic, as the situation it portrays may be.

Figure 29: Horsemen in the 'Static rider' group
a. Dupplin, b. Forteviot 4 (DP245619; © HES), c. Benvie (SC948325; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection),
d. & e. Dunkeld Apostle's Stone (SC397541 & SC397900; © Crown Copyright: HES)

The features which distinguish the 'static rider' from other forms of rider are as follows: the stationary pose of the horse (i.e, all four hooves in contact with the ground), the rider's manner of riding with the leg hanging directly below his body, the greatly oversized head of the rider and a prominent position on the monument, particularly if he is alone. There are some other features shared by this group but they have been discounted as diagnostic features either

because they are not exclusive enough, such as being left-facing or the way the horse's head is held tight in to the neck, or they are too susceptible to weathering, such as whether the rider is moustached or carries a shield.

According to these criteria, there are a small number of other closely related 'static riders'. The closest parallel is on Forteviot 4, where the solo horseman occupies an analogous position, midway up the cross, and is penned in by the frame (Figure 29b). Although the detail is more worn than on Dupplin, the Forteviot example appears to match it in almost every detail. The only exception is that the tip of the spear is visible at Forteviot but not on Dupplin. Both are prominent horsemen, placed fairly high on each cross but the Dupplin horseman is on the shaft, whereas on Forteviot 4 he is on the cross-head itself. This may seem like a minor difference but since Dupplin has no human figures on the cross-head it is significant. This has implications when it comes to considering what the relationship between these crosses.

Another particularly similar horseman is at Benvie, ANG, with the distinctive moustaches and zig-zag shape of the tail; perhaps depicting a plaiting or other form of decoration (Figure 29c). Though it is notable that the Benvie figure is holding a circular shield and is accompanied by a small dog in the same panel. Like Dupplin and Forteviot, the Benvie rider is closely constrained by his frame. Unlike Dupplin, though, Benvie is not solo – there is a second, very similar rider in a second frame below, although they are slightly smaller, less detailed, and with a less elaborate coiffeur.

The examples on faces A and B of the Dunkeld Apostle's Stone, PER, are poorly preserved, but nonetheless, it can be seen that they share the same proportions and details (Figure 29 c & e). They are in a prominent position; however, they are not singular, despite being on separate faces they stand at the same level and would appear to belong to the same scene in the same way all six spearmen on Dupplin appear as a group.

Despite the many similarities between the Benvie and Dupplin horsemen, when the monuments are considered in their entirety it is obvious that they are quite different in form and arguably they performed quite different functions. It may be that Benvie is a particularly good copy of the Dupplin horseman, employing the newly fashionable kingly imagery but not associated directly with the declaration of kingship in the landscape. Similarly, Kirriemuir 3 also utilises

the particular proportions and pose of Dupplin but is a poorer version and a much smaller monument (Figure 30b).

Other sculptures could be said to be part of a wider collection of horsemen that share some of these features but not enough to make up such a cohesive group. In the Pictish area, these are Mugdrum, Kirriemuir 3, Dunblane, PER, and Tullibole, KNR (Figure 30). Mugdrum is poorly preserved with some of the details gone or obscured by lichen but at least three horsemen are visible one of which is more prominent than the others and appears to be stationary. As mentioned above Kirriemuir 3 is very similar but cruder and accompanied by another horseman. The Tullibole horseman is proportioned like Dupplin and stationary but the horse is not created as accurately and the figure is not alone in its frame. There are also a few in other areas of Britain; to the west is St Blanes 7 and 6, BTE, Kilmory 7, ARG, and Govan 4 (Sun Stone), LAN. Although none of these sculptures are close enough to be grouped with the Dupplin horseman, some of them have other features that could indicate some form of link. These additional links will be further discussed in other sections.

Figure 30: Other horsemen that share traits with the 'static rider',
a. Mugdrum (SC1433475; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection), b. Kirriemuir 3 (SC769958; © Crown Copyright: HES),
c. Dunblane (DP250631; © HES), d. Tullibole (© National Museums Scotland)

As well as the object on the shoulder, the rider also appears to be wearing a sword or scabbard at his waist. This is very faint now but discernible. Ewart *et al* (2007, 322) also mention a shield, however, this is not now apparent, if it was ever there.

As mentioned, the group of horsemen of which Dupplin is part, as well as the more loosely associated ones, most commonly carry spears that point forward and down towards the ground in front of the horse. This does not seem to be the case on Dupplin; here there is nothing visible in front of the horse's chest, despite the area appearing well preserved. However, this rider does appear to be holding something that projects back from the level of his neck. This was considered by Allen and Anderson (1993, 321) and Aitchison (2006, 122) to be a spear and the lack of the point was overlooked. Ewart *et al* (2007, 322) proposed that it may actually be a sceptre resting on the rider's shoulder although they did not detail why. There are examples of royal sceptres in use in Early Medieval contexts. The Psalter of Charles the Bald contains a portrait of the Carolingian king seated on a throne, holding an orb and sceptre; the position of the sceptre, upright against the right shoulder, holds parallels with the way the Dupplin rider is apparently holding his object (Figure 31a). An item from the 7th century Sutton Hoo burial, Suffolk, is thought to be a whetstone sceptre and may have been carved in southern Scotland (Enright 1982) demonstrates that elite accessories such as this were known in Britain (Figure 31b).

Campbell and Driscoll take this vein further by suggesting specific identifications. The *slat na righe* ('King's rod') was a rod made of hazel that symbolised legitimate royal authority (2020, 205). This practice is first documented in Ireland in the 12th century but it may appear on the late 9th century Cross of the Scriptures, Clonmacnoise (FitzPatrick 2003, 78). They also make the argument that the Roman or Byzantine world might be a source of this image, or at least parts of it, given that Constantine the Great appears to be the namesake of Custantín son of Uirguist. In this case the object may be intended to represent the *vitis* ('vine staff') carried by commanders and which is portrayed in Roman sculpture (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 206).

Accepting that the object is not a weapon and is instead something more symbolic (be it sceptre, rod or staff), then this rider is distinctly different from the others with which he can be grouped. His presentation becomes particularly

royal and comparable with other images and accessories of kingship in other areas of the British Isles and the wider Continent. With the varied suggestions put forward above, it would seem pertinent to ask whether the object was something used in Pictland at this time to symbolise royal legitimacy, and if so, how did that practice relate to similar practices elsewhere, or if it was simply an image known to represent authority that was adopted and adapted? Unfortunately, it is not within the scope of this work to address that question further.

Figure 31: Sceptres

a, Charles the Bald enthroned in the Psalter of Charles the Bald, fol. 3v (source Bibliothèque nationale de France)

b, Sutton Hoo Whetstone Sceptre (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

The Spearmen
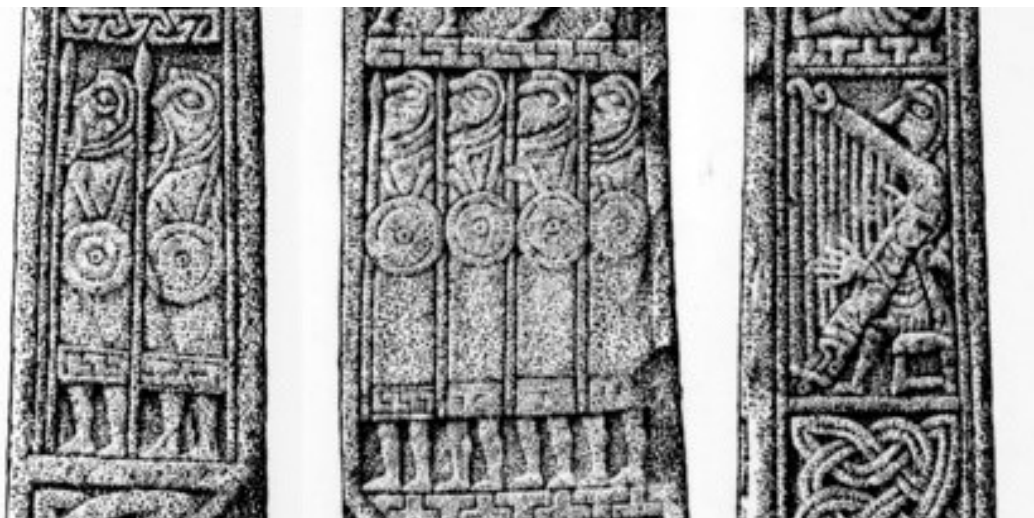
Figure 32: The Dupplin Cross spearmen and harper

Over faces C and D are an arrangement of six men; four are tightly packed below the horseman and two are to their left, these being at the front of the group since they all face left. All are carrying near-identical shields carried on straps over their shoulders, varying only slightly in size, and spears, the longer of which belong to the two men at the fore. Likewise, they are all are dressed similarly in knee-length tunics with decorated hems, indicating embellishment by varying the structure of the woven fabric or with applied embroidery.

Henderson describes the group of four as 'foot-soldiers' and the bodyguard of the king and the two on face D as 'more senior looking soldiers' (2004, 172), although the term 'soldiers' may be anachronistic. Alock and Alcock suggest a similar distinction between the two groups (1992, 40). There is a hierarchy or degree of status being portrayed here. This is most clearly communicated by the visible facial hair; the horseman and pair of senior warriors have distinctive moustaches that droop well below the chin whereas the group of four are either clean-shaven or have short moustaches (Henderson 1999, 172). The relative size of the heads may also be suggestive of status; they are all large, not because they are crudely carved, but because there is deliberate design here, with the horseman having the largest head, disproportionate to the extreme, then the pair of warriors on face D slightly smaller, with the group of four on face C being the smallest.

It might be possible to say more about these figures as their number and arrangement match part of the social arrangements described in *Crith Gablach*, an early Irish law tract, which Woolf deduces to mean:

> "…a maximum of six retained household warriors, four of whom have decidedly base origins." (2013, 382)

An important question at this point is whether these figures were a literal representation of six men or are they indicative of a larger group? Equally, do they represent actual individuals, people who would have been recognised and whose relationship with the king was significant, for example sub-kings or relations, or do they represent specific roles in the royal household, significant in the sense that they were essential to Kingship as an institution? These are questions that cannot be answered here but are worthy of future study.

There are several other Pictish sculptures with comparable groups (Figure 33). The Dunkeld Apostle's Stone has a tight group of four left-facing figures which appear to be stylistically related and similarly positioned below the horsemen, but whether they once held spears and shields is no longer possible to tell due to erosion. There are two comparable stones in Morayshire, both quite different in scale and form from each other and Dupplin; a small cross-slab from Drainie, MOR, where the two shield-and-spear-bearers stand below a horse, and the 6.5m tall Sueno's Stone that has ranks of similarly proportioned spearmen as well as swordsmen. A group of shield-bearers in the company of horsemen also appear on the fragment of sculpture at Dull, which includes a rank of shield-bearers although in the style of dress and positioning they are not very similar, they also lack spears. The symbol stone from Birsay, ORK, has a group of three shield-and-spear-bearers but they also carry swords and the long style of their tunics and square shields contrasts with Dupplin.

All of the human figures on the Dupplin Cross have the same stylised facial features of a block-like nose and large almond-shaped eye and all are shown in profile. On the horseman and warriors this style gives the appearance of helmets with nose guards, on the other hand, the harper also has these features indicating that this is not the case (Allen and Anderson 1903, 321; Henderson 1986, 90, 102; 1999, 172). There do appear to be folds of a garment around the necks of the horseman and warriors which may extend over their heads giving the impression that they are wearing hoods of some kind. Alternatively, the

head covering may be a simple hairstyle, without the curls that are seen on other stones. All of the facial features, head-coverings and long moustaches described above can also be seen on the Forteviot Arch (Forteviot 4) (Figure 34). The clothing of figure on the left is also has a hem decorated with Z-blocks. This indicates some contemporaneity at least if not a fully planned sculptural scheme.
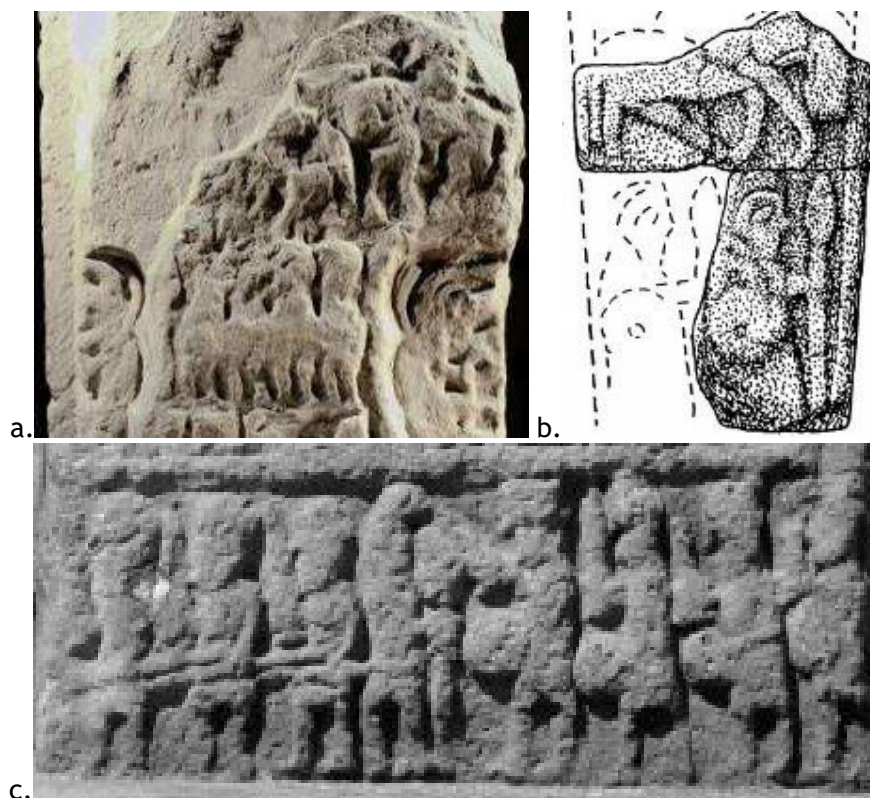
Figure 33: Sculptures with comparable warriors

a. Dunkeld Apostle's Stone (SC397541; © Crown Copyright: HES), b. Drainie 8 (SC1091971; © HES - Ian G Scott Collection), c. Sueno's Stone (SC1409220; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection)

Figure 34: Forteviot Arch (Forteviot 4)

The Harper

Figure 35: The Dupplin harper

The harper on face D has been identified by most previous scholars as a representation of the biblical King David, in his role as Psalmist, rather than shepherd (Allen and Anderson 1903, 321; Henderson 1986, 175; 1999)(Figure 35). This is based on his association with the harp, the strength of which is demonstrated by the fact that the instrument appears as an isolated object on the cross-slabs at Aldbar, ANG, and Nigg, ROS, albeit beside a recognisably Davidian scene (i.e., rending the jaws of the lion) (Figure 36 a & b). There are several reasons to question this traditional interpretation and grounds for suggesting an alternative explanation of the Dupplin harper. Firstly, David is already depicted in a separate panel, on no other monument identified during this study is David himself depicted twice. Secondly, the Dupplin harper and his harp is significantly more pronounced than representations of David on other sculptures and dwarfs the panel of David and the Lion on face A. Thirdly, the panel has more in common stylistically and in terms of scale with the horseman and warriors on the faces C and D. The upper edge of this panel lines up with the upper edge of the warrior panels perhaps with the intention being that they should be viewed as a series; see Figure 32, where this relationship is demonstrated. This leads to the possibility that the harper was not intended to

be David; alternative interpretations of this figure's role become available. It is feasible that they are in fact the court poet (*filid*); a role that was responsible for extoling the good reputation of the king by reciting his achievements and ancestry, and therefore an important position. Woolf suggests that in Ireland the role of the retained court poet begins to emerge around about AD 900 (Woolf 2013, 388). If this harper can be seen as an essential figure attached to the king or the court then it could be argued that this role developed in Pictland earlier than the Irish equivalent.

Of course, this figure could be representing two roles, both David the Psalmist and the court poet. As mentioned above, the horseman figure is the king commemorated by the cross, but when considered in terms of the *Adventus* the king takes on a partial god-like/Christ-like aspect, symbolising the divine nature of kingship, a widespread theme which runs through Imperial imagery (Clarke *et al* 2012, 155). If the image of the king on horseback can represent two aspects of Kingship, the secular and the divine, then perhaps the harper, in this circumstance, can also hold a dual role; the mundane but necessary court poet, but also likened to David, acclaiming God during his life and Christ on the Harrowing of Hell, itself an *Adventus* (*ibid*, 159). This theme was a popular element of sermons, one of which describes David saying "Come, let us exult in the Lord for our king fighting for us was victorious" (*ibid*, 159).

Whomever this harper is intended to be, the level of detail and apparent accuracy portrayed on Dupplin is remarkable and allows a greater understanding of how the harp was constructed and played. The accuracy of the sculptor's work is exemplified by the skill with which they have realistically carved the player's hands plucking the strings from both sides; this striving for depth to the image necessitated that the strings also be carved in relief, despite their fineness, as incised lines would have destroyed the illusion of depth. In this image the harp is being played set on the floor and resting on the harper's left shoulder while they play seated. It is a large harp with the top of the fore-pillar rising to just above the player's head. The frame of the harp is decorated; at the foot it is no longer clear but the terminal of the upper string carrier appears to have scrolling or a stylised bird's head.

The size and elaborate decoration combine to make a very impressive object. Ritchie stated that the harp has nine strings (Ewart *et al* 2007, 323).

Instead, it is more likely to have been of triangular construction with a fore-pillar thus consisting of eight strings and a slender pillar as depicted (Sanger and Kinnaird 1992, 16). The presence of a fore-pillar is clearer on the triangular harps on Aldbar and Monifieth 4, and is somewhat visible on Nigg (Figure 36). It can be ascertained from the sculptures that the construction of these harps was likely one piece of branching wood for the box and string carrier with a separate fore-pillar. Dating the Dupplin Cross to the first quarter of the 9th century, as argued above, makes this and the Nigg harp the earliest images of the triangular harp in Scotland, and indeed it is also likely that they are the earliest in Europe (Sanger and Kinnaird 1992, 20). Therefore, this was not an imported image from Ireland or elsewhere but an instrument that was probably already used in Pictland.
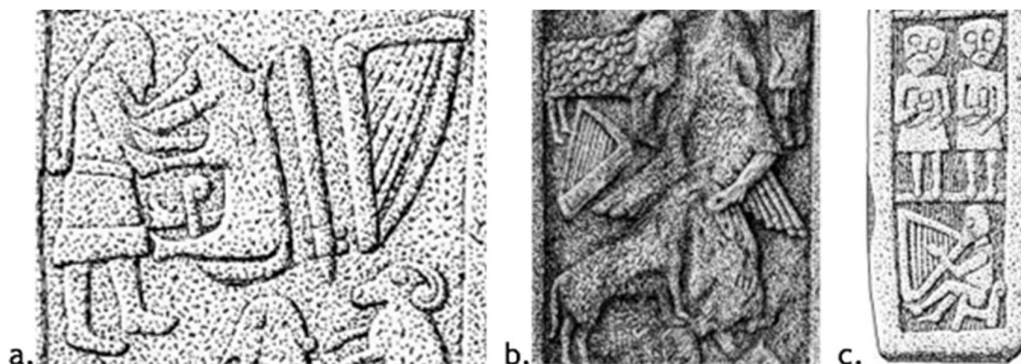
Figure 36: Pictish harps in sculpture
a. Aldbar (SC1050149; © Crown Copyright: HES), b. Nigg (SC397220; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection),
c. Monifieth 4 (SC1358356; © Crown Copyright: HES)

As well as an ornate harp, the harper is also furnished with a chair embellished with an animal head on the chairback. There are other examples of seated figures in a range of styles, from the unembellished bench on Aldbar, the simply decorated scroll-topped chairbacks seen on Monifieth 4, Dunfallandy, PER, and Fowlis Wester 2, PER, up to the animal backed chairs on Dupplin and Fowlis Wester 2 again (Figure 37a). While the Dupplin animal holds its head up with mouth open the Fowlis Wester one has its head down with mouth closed; in this way they each appear to mirror the mood of the subject, the first celebratory song and the second more contemplative.

Animal-headed chairs can also be seen in other mediums and forms, such as the chair with lion-like heads in which St Luke sits in The St Chad Gospels

(formerly The Lichfield Gospels) and the stone terminal from Monkwearmouth, Durham (Figure 37 b & c).

Figure 37: Animal-headed terminals
a. Fowlis Wester 2 (SC1433477; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection),
b. The St Chad Gospels, St Luke (© The Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral),
c. Monkwearmouth 16, 30cm tall (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass)

The animal and beast figures

Panel A6 – a human and animal scene
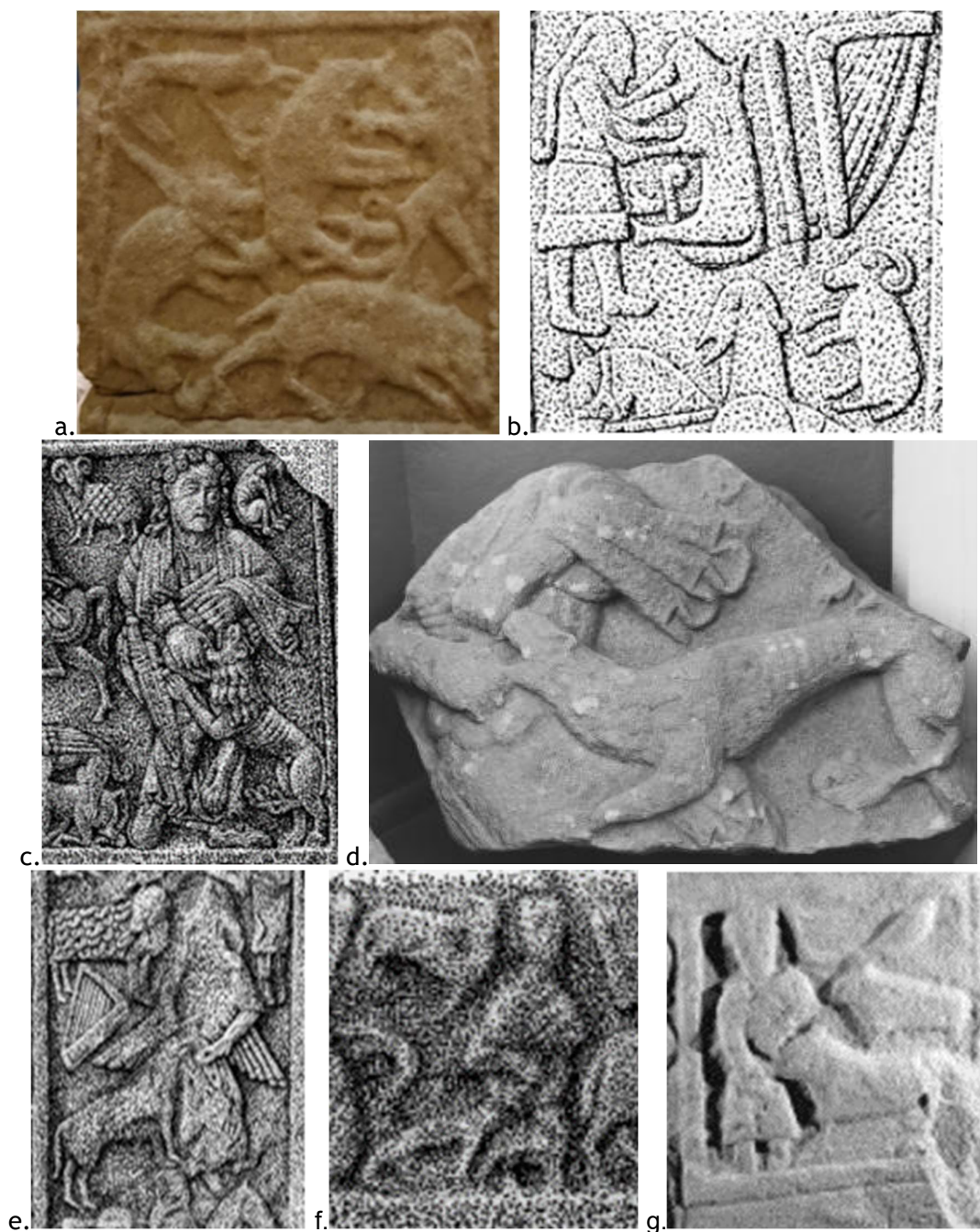
Figure 38: Pictish examples of David and the Lion imagery

a. Dupplin, b. Aldbar (SC1050149; © Crown Copyright: HES),

c. St Andrews Sarcophagus SAC543A (SC346082; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection),

d. Drainie 16 (SC504047; © Aberdeenshire Council. Courtesy of HES), e. Nigg (SC397220; HES. Ian G Scott Collection),

f. Kincardine (SC706137; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection), g. Aberlemno 3 (SC936605; © Crown Copyright: HES)

This panel, at the foot of face A, consists of one human figure and four different quadrupeds and is widely considered to be depicting biblical King David

as a shepherd grappling with a lion that is attacking his flock (Allen and Anderson 1903; Henderson 1986; 1999; Henderson and Henderson 2004; Ewart *et al* 2007, 322; Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 151). No other explanations have been discussed in the literature to date, but, as shall be shown, there are aspects of this particular panel that differentiate it from all of the other sculptural David imagery.

The David and the Lion scene occurs widely in Insular art, surviving in sculpture and manuscripts. In Pictish sculpture it appears on seven stones. These are spread over a wide area and cover a range of monument types including free-standing crosses (Dupplin), cross-slabs (Aberlemno 3, ANG, Aldbar and Nigg), a sarcophagus (St Andrews 543A, FIF), a recumbent stone (Kincardine, ROS) and a fragment which may be a shrine panel (Drainie 16) (Figure 38). In Argyll it is found on the Kildalton cross, Islay (Figure 40a). It also appears in Ireland at Durrow, Offaly; Kells Market Cross, Meath; Monasterboice Tall Cross, and Donaghmore, Down (Henderson 1986, 96; Stalley 2020). In modern North Yorkshire it is found on Masham 1 (Figure 40b).

This scene is also represented in other media from different regions. In manuscript form it is used to embellish an initial letter in the Vespasian Psalter, which was created in southern England (Figure 39b). The liturgical comb pictured in Figure 39a, an example of Continental ivory work dated to around 870, also features the scene of a man rending the jaws of a lion, although the dress is quite different with the figure on the comb wearing a cloak fastened at the neck which is not apparent on any of the Pictish examples.

a.

b.
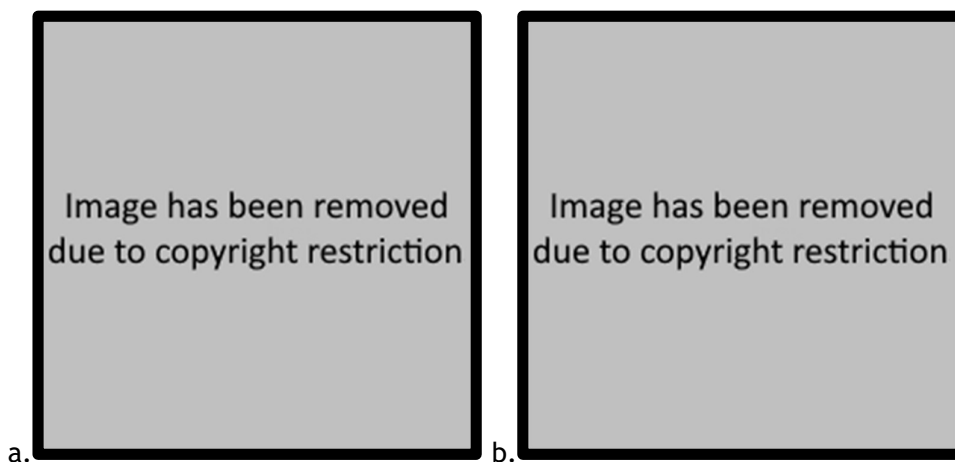
Figure 39: David and the Lion imagery in non-sculptural media

a. Vespasian Psalter, f. 53r (© British Library),

b. Ivory comb (MR 358; © 2020 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre)

There were two distinct ways in which David and the Lion could be represented in the Pictish sculpture. The most common has David presenting a three-quarter view with the lion in profile and partially in front of him, sometimes rearing on hind legs, sometimes on all fours, this will be termed as a 'fore lion' arrangement. The other has David facing the lion, both in profile and vertically positioned, with the lion appearing to be in mid-air as if David has lifted it off the ground as its hind legs remain at right-angles to its body rather than reaching down for the ground, termed as an 'adjacent lion' arrangement. The only common feature of these two arrangements is that David grips the lion's jaws with two hands. Only two of the seven stones show the latter arrangement; Dupplin and Aldbar (Henderson 1986, 106).

There are also multiple ways in which David is attired: toga, tunic and possibly naked or near-naked. All of the togaed figures correspond with the 'fore lion' arrangement (Aberlemno 3 is too worn to discern whether the clothing is a toga or tunic). Again, Dupplin and Aldbar are different from that group; on Dupplin the figure appears to be bare-legged at least, if not entirely naked, while the Aldbar figure wears a knee-length tunic (Henderson 1999, 175). The Masham and Kildalton examples follow the 'fore lion' arrangement. Most of the recognised Irish examples have a different arrangement altogether with David kneeling on the lion's back while only the Donaghmore Cross employs the arrangement of Dupplin and Aldbar, although, there David is frontal facing rather than in profile (Henderson 1986, 95–6).
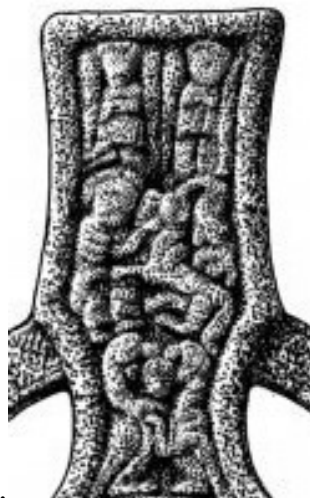
a.   b.

Figure 40: David and the Lion imagery on sculpture outwith Pictland
a. Kildalton (SC416744; © Crown Copyright: RCAHMS), b. Masham 1

It is worth noting that the two examples of non-stone media discussed above both use the 'fore lion' arrangement despite the different attire. Since that arrangement appears to be so formulaic across media there must be a shared model from which they ultimately derive. Since Dupplin and Aldbar differ from this it has been suggested that they are following a different model, such as Heracles wrestling the Nemean Lion of Classical mythology (Roe, cited in Henderson 1986, 106). This model could be the source of the 'mid-air' position of the lion and the nakedness of David (Figure 41).

Figure 41: Heracles wrestling the Nemean Lion – note the 'mid-air' position of the lion
(R.8448; © The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

David is there as a Christian image showing salvation (*ibid* 1986, 100), but as well as that he also represents a warrior anointed by God to become a king; he was a protector of his flock which then extended to his people. It is the latter symbolism that would be the principle focus on the Dupplin Cross with its obvious royal connection (Henderson 1999, 175). The analogy between the biblical story of King David and Early Medieval kingship would have been known and understood by those viewing the monument.

In addition to David and the Lion, the two essential figures that represent this story, other animals also appear alongside them at Dupplin. The small animal in the upper left corner may be the sheep that David is often paired with because it represents the flock that David was shepherding. Nonetheless, in this case, the animal appears to be far more dog-like, with an upright curled tail and narrow waist, so it may be representing a sheepdog accompanying David (Ewart *et al* 2007, 322). Having a dog instead of a sheep is very unusual. The David on the St Andrews Sarcophagus has a creature that could be described as dog-like standing over his shoulder but that animal is nothing like the active dog that

appears to be helping David on the Dupplin Cross. One other possible David scene has a dog present; on Lethendy 2, PER, a harper is accompanied by a collared dog with a similar curled tail to that evident at Dupplin, though this would be an unusual method of conflating David's dual aspects.

Figure 42: Panel A6 with two additional figures highlighted

The lower register of this panel includes figures that are particularly unusual components of the David and the Lion scene (Figure 42). Henderson described them as another version of David, this time holding a stick and the tail of the animal in front of him that she interprets as a bear; a second animal that the Bible also tells as attacking David's flock (1999, 174–5). Conversely, the figure with a stick is actually more animal-like in its posture, with the same 'mid-air' positioning as the lion, and appears to have ears, snout and a short tail, so this is more likely to be the bear impaled by a stick or spear (Ewart *et al* 2007, 322). Within a narrative scene such as this, the 'mid-air' and unnatural position of two animals here is perhaps intended to represent a lifeless figure in the same way that the dead warrior on Aberlemno 2 is portrayed at an angle and clearly not standing upright (Figure 43). If indeed this is the bear of the biblical story, then it is unusual for it to be included alongside David and the Lion in Insular Art as it appears on no other known examples.

Figure 43: Aberlemno 2 - note the 'mid-air' positioning of the dead man pecked at by a carrion bird
(SC1358489; © Crown Copyright: HES)
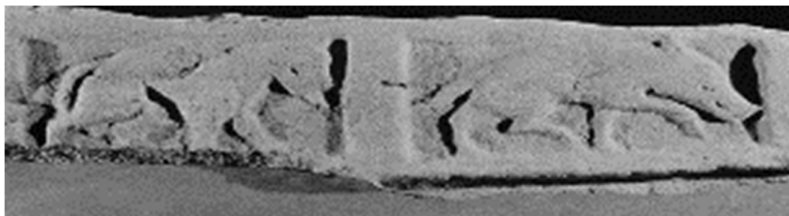
Figure 44: Boar on a sarcophagus lid from Portmahomack (SC1593001; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection)

The animal below David is closer in appearance to a boar, rather than a bear, given its posture, large heavy head, short tail, and the hint of a tusk-like tooth. There is life to this animal and it appears to be moving to the right. There is a close parallel in the boar on a sarcophagus lid from the monastic site at Portmahomack, ROS. The David scene on Dupplin has already been shown to display divergences from the standard portrayal of this story, both because of the dog accompanying David rather than a sheep, and the inclusion of the bear. However, these elements could be considered as an expansion of the traditional story. The boar, on the other hand, is a very distinct divergence as this animal forms no part of the biblical story.

Since this scene is contained within a bordered panel it can be assumed that it is meant to be read altogether with a meaning that would have been understood by some, if not most, medieval viewers. The inclusion of the boar, therefore, is significant in some way. It is not just filling a gap, quite the opposite, as it has been given the same prominence as David himself, being close in size to each other. Campbell and Driscoll suggest that it may be part of a boar hunt (2020, 151), but that does not fully explain why it appears alongside David. It may be that a boar hunt is closely associated with royal activities so it was considered natural to link it with a biblical king. Another possibility is that it may be that boars and their image had implicit connotations with the Early Medieval idea of Kingship; in which case placing the boar in contact with David is a statement of divinely sanctioned royal power being conferred on the current king, perhaps combining Christian and indigenous symbolism. A comparative situation might be the incised boar at Dunadd, a site of royal inauguration (Campbell 2003). At the other end of the scale, the sculptor may have considered the boar to have been a local equivalent to the lion and bear and included it because it was familiar. Although this is mundane it would still be significant as it would provide a glimpse of the sculptor's personal creativity.

This pair of figures has been considered to be very similar to the figures on the fragment of the Invermay Cross (Figure 45) (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 151). Indeed, there are similarities, however, when compared critically they are quite different in nature. Firstly, this face of the fragment employs only incised carving, whereas, Dupplin is fully sculpted in relief. This is a stark contrast in techniques. Secondly, the quality appears to be markedly poorer on this face of the Invermay fragment. On Dupplin the leading animal is naturalistically portrayed and clearly a boar, whereas, on Invermay the species of this quadruped is not recognisable. Thirdly, on Invermay, both figures appear to have a stick, which is not the case on Dupplin. Cumulatively these differences are significant and suggest that this image was not carved by the same hand that carved Dupplin. It may not even be a depiction of the same story. This disparity contrasts starkly with the situation of the key-pattern on the adjacent face of Invermay, which is remarkably like the Dupplin key-pattern, as discussed below from page 89.

Figure 45: Invermay Cross fragment
a. Photograph (SC1605963; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection, rotated),

Panel A5 – encircling birds

Figure 46: Panel A5, birds

Henderson (1999, 174) identified the birds surrounding the roundel as doves and argued that this panel alluded to St Columba, whose name means 'dove', a point made by Adomnan in the *Life of Columba*. This connection was further strengthened by the cross hidden in the central interlace, with the panel as a whole being a 'coded' reference to St Columba (Henderson 1999, 174; Henderson and Henderson 2004, 190). Columba was, at this time, an important saint to the Picts and indeed Custantín may have actively promoted the cult of Columba in this region, including the transfer of Columban relics to Pictland and the foundation of a church at Dunkeld in which to house them (see section 2.2.1). A connection between the iconography on Dupplin and historical events would therefore correspond very satisfactorily. Nevertheless, the argument that the entire panel is referring to St Columba is entirely dependent on the birds definitely being doves, or at least being intended as such. With such a significant point being dependent on them, a closer analysis is necessary to identify, or rule out, any other possible species.

To begin with there are several identifiable species portrayed on other sculptures that can comfortably be ruled out. They are unlike the birds of prey, the corvids and the geese or swans (Figure 47 a-d). They are also unlike the dove on the Mary Stone at Brechin Cathedral, ANG (Figure 47e).
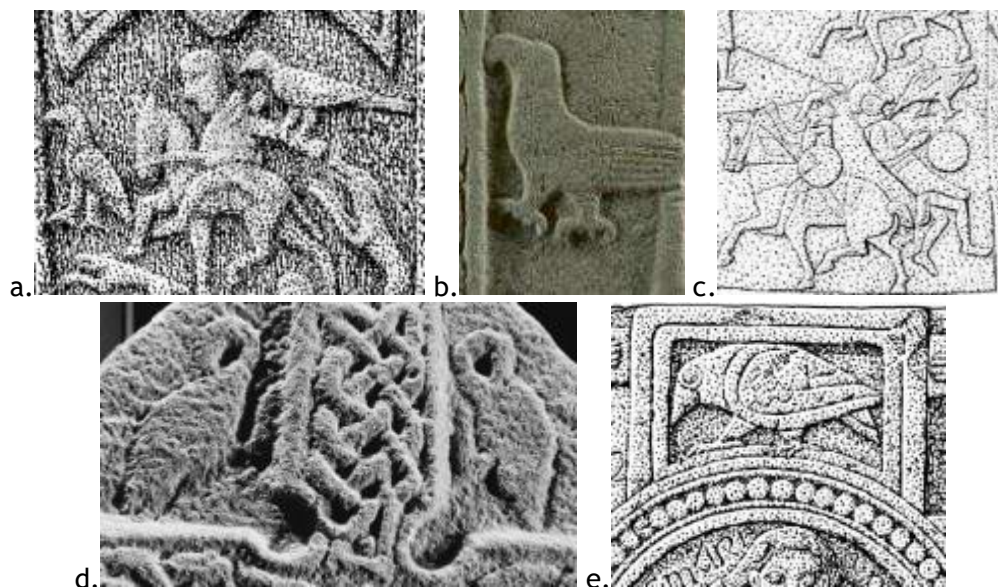
Figure 47: Birds in Pictish sculpture

a. Elgin, MOR (SC952426; HES. Ian G Scott Collection), b. St Vigeans 2 (SC936640; © Crown Copyright: HES),

c. Aberlemno 2 (SC1358489; © Crown Copyright: HES), d. St Vigeans 10 (SC1950750; © Crown Copyright: HES),

e. The Mary Stone (SC1050161; © Crown Copyright: HES)

There are no features that are particularly dove-like (Figure 48a), apart from perhaps the feet with toes that extend forward and back, although this in itself is not diagnostic enough. On the contrary, the birds in this panel have relatively long legs and long beaks, which are certainly not dove-like, and they have a smooth-backed profile without the protruding wing-tips evident on doves. Those features point to a different type of bird altogether, wading birds, such as oystercatchers or snipe, the former having the strongest resemblance to the Dupplin birds with their broader beaks (Figure 48b & c).

Figure 48: Bird species

a. woodpigeon, b. oystercatcher, c. snipe (all from Swaysland 1903)

Of course, it may be that these features have been simply exaggerated for design purposes; it allowed the beaks and legs to cross, perhaps minimally emulating the approach taken on other sculpture and manuscripts where birds can become fully interlaced.

If the stone was originally painted, as is likely, then their colour would be an obvious identifying feature; a pale colour would clearly have indicated doves and ruled out most other contenders. Additionally, common knowledge of the time may have made it unnecessary to render the doves in a naturalistic way as everyone viewing it knew what the subject was. Neither of these situations are likely to ever be known.

As has been shown, the visible features do not support the interpretation that these birds are doves above any other species. That, in turn, weakens the Columban connection put forward by Henderson. If they are not doves but another bird then that opens the possibility for other interpretations. The close resemblance of these birds to oystercatchers offers an alternative saintly connection, with St Bride, as their Gaelic name, *gille-brighde,* means servant of Bride. The church at Abernethy, PER, 16km from Forteviot, was perhaps first established in the 5th century and is known to have been dedicated to St Bride by the 6th century (Proudfoot 1997, 60).

Despite the connections that can be drawn it cannot be said with certainty that these birds and the central roundel are intended to invoke any individual saint. This arrangement of birds can be seen in other contexts, such as the brooch found as part of a hoard near Rogart, SUT. Although the details are quite different, the concept is the same; long-billed birds arranged around a circle that contains a cross.
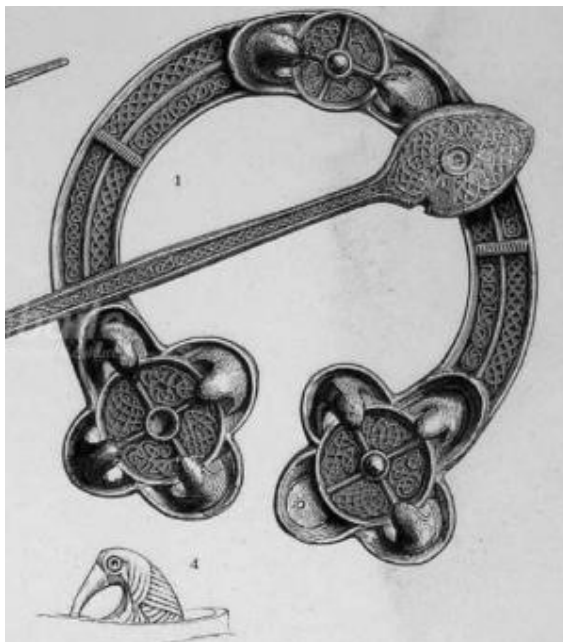
Figure 49: Rogart brooch (in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. 8, 1871: Plt. 16)

Panel B8a – a pair of facing animals

Figure 50: Panel B8a - Facing horses

The pair of animals at the top of the shaft have received varying notice and very little discussion. Allen and Anderson (1903, 321) simply call them beasts, while Henderson (1999) does not discuss them at all. Ewart *et al* describe them as lions but do not detail why (2007, 323). Certain features do tell against this and on balance they are more likely to be horses as suggested by Campbell and Driscoll (2020, 152). This is seen most clearly in the length of the neck; the shape of the feet which is hoof-like rather than a paw or claw; the fact that fetlocks are visible above the rear hooves; and the mane is equine rather than leonine as it is restricted to the back of the neck and does not extend across the shoulders or in front of the neck. The tails are not particularly diagnostic but are consistent with horses.

The heads of these creatures are closely comparable with a pair on the Meigle 8 fragment, particularly in the detail that they also appear to have a foot in the mouth of the other (Figure 51a). Another pair of upright facing animals with a forefoot in the other's mouth is on Kirriemuir 2 (Figure 51b). There they are more like dogs or cats than horses. That there are at least three stones with similar motifs suggests that there is some meaning to these pairs of animals and their facing position with forefeet at the other's mouth. It is interesting to note that this opposed beast imagery also appears on one of the 10th century hogbacks at Govan (Figure 52). Those beasts do not have their forefeet at the

other's mouth but they do share the crossed limbs and upright orientation. Like Kirriemuir 2, they do not have the appearance of horses.

Figure 51: Facing animals with forefeet at the other's mouth
a. Meigle 8 (SC397912), b. Kirriemuir 2 (SC769090) (both © Crown Copyright: HES)

Figure 52: Facing beasts on Govan 11

Both of the animals on Dupplin appear to be male with the genitalia present (Figure 50). In contrast, the ridden horse on face C on Dupplin would appear to be female.

A pair of facing horses also appear on the Govan sarcophagus with their necks crossing (Figure 53a). This and similar motifs in Ireland are generally recognised as a sign of peace and mutual friendship as the horses appear to be grooming each other (Figure 53b). This is what may also be being symbolised on Dupplin. Alternatively, it could also represent a stallion fight, especially as these horses are clearly male. The stance is typical of a fight between two well-matched stallions, in which they rear up to lock forelegs (Figure 53c & d). Admittedly this does not explain the unnatural stance of the hindlegs, although that might be due to the space available.

Figure 53: Horse behaviour and portrayal in sculpture

a. Govan Sarcophagus (SC2093179; © Crown Copyright: HES), b. pair of grooming horses (CC0 1.0),

c. Dupplin Cross, d. pair of fighting stallions (© Mike R Jackson - cropped)

Panel D7 – a backward-facing beast

Figure 54: Panel D7 – backward-facing beast

The uppermost panel contains a large beast with its head turned back to bite its own tail with teeth bared (Figure 54). It is not immediately clear what type of creature this is intended to represent; or indeed, whether it is even a natural animal.

Its apparent collar led Ewart *et al to* compare with it the collared beast on Lethendy 2 (2007, 323) (Figure 55c); even so, the collar and the vertical orientation of these beasts are the only things they hold in common. The collar would suggest a dog, but on the other hand, there is a very slight trace of a mane represented by curled locks down its neck which could therefore suggest a captive lion. A far closer comparison can be made with the pair of beasts on Invergowrie 1, ANG (Figure 55a & b); which share a number of features: possible collar, curled locks, ball-and-claw feet and a long thin muzzle with fanged mouth pinching or consuming a tail, albeit, the tail of their partner rather than their own.

A notable feature is that the tail pierces the beast's own body. This is not a common feature of Pictish sculpture but can be seen on a similar beast on the Rossie cross-slab, PER (Figure 55d). This creature also shares the backwards-facing head and ball-and-claw feet, but there are clear differences too: their ears, the arrangement of their legs and the Rossie beast is biting an unattached snake rather than its own tail.

The shared feature of the ball-and-claw feet is perhaps significant in identifying the nature of this beast. Kelly Kilpatrick makes the point that the Pictish sculptors were adept at carving realistic animal feet so the fact that these feet appear unnatural may suggest that these beasts are from Pictish mythology; the details of which we no longer have (pers. comm.). The combination of features that the Dupplin, Invergowrie and Rossie beasts share suggests that they are representing a mythical creature with common aspects that would have been recognised by all or part of the contemporary society rather than one made-up by the sculptors of each stone.

Figure 55: Sculptured animals comparable with the collared backward-facing beast
a. Invergowrie 1 (SC2028868; © Crown Copyright: HES),
b. Lethendy 2 (SC1595945; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection), c. Rossie (SC391030; © Crown Copyright: HES)

Panel C8 – two hounds

Figure 56: Panel C8, pair of dogs

The pair of dogs occupying the small panel at the foot of the cross have only received passing comment. Ewart *et al* consider them to be a 'reminder of the royal pastime of hunting' (2007, 322), possibly akin to the fuller hunt scenes that feature on so many other crosses. At the same time, there may be more to

them than that. They could indicate status as they are part of the retinue of the horseman. They may also be symbolic of his royal role as a protector, connoting David and his sheepdog seen on face A.

It is interesting to note that a comparison can be made between these dogs and the pair of spirited greyhounds that accompany Culhwch on his horseback journey to Arthur's court, a story included in the collection of Welsh tales now known as the *Mabinogion*. The description of Culhwch in that passage focuses more on the appearance of Culhwch's horse, hounds, trappings and weapons than on Culhwch himself, they are the features that define him in that moment (Davies 1997, 130). It could also be said that this is something that is seen on the Dupplin Cross, the people, animals and accessories that define Custantín in his kingly state.

Panels B5 and D5 – two small beasts
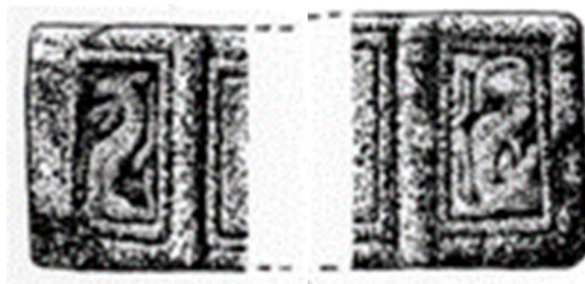
Figure 57: Panels B5 and D5

Finally, there are two small quadrupeds on the underside of the arms, one on each side. One bites its own looping tail in a similar fashion to the larger beast on the shaft of face D. The other has a similar pose but the tail is looped under the body. These beasts have never been discussed in any previous work.

These beasts are almost hidden, only becoming visible when the viewer is close to the cross and looking up. No other instances of beasts located in a similar position on other Insular free-standing crosses were identified during this review, so with this being the only example, it is not possible to say whether their location was intentionally discreet or circumstantial.

There are not many beasts quite like these. A very similar animal flanks the cross on St Vigeans 24, a cross-slab (Figure 58a). This space between the arms on cross-slabs is often filled with a beast of some description. There are also other examples of backwards-looking creatures occupying this location, such as on the St Madoes cross-slab (Figure 58b). Obviously, this space is absent on a

free-standing cross so the under-arm area may have seemed like a suitable location to continue the use of beasts such as these, despite the space being more restricted.
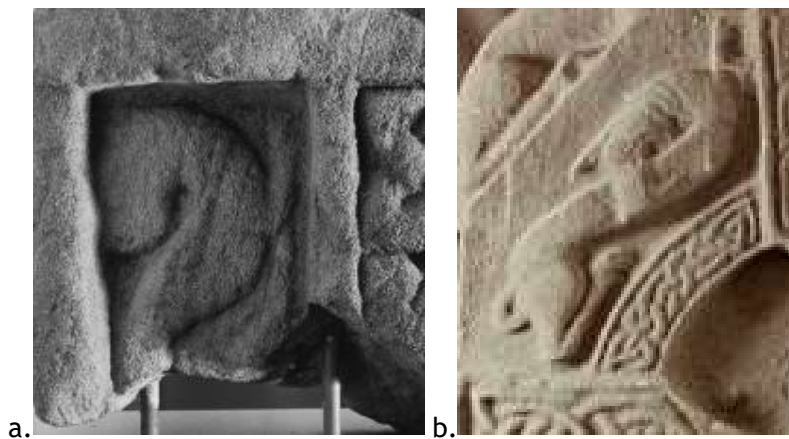
Figure 58: Backward-looking animals in sculpture
a. St Vigeans 24 (SC1950801; © Crown Copyright: HES), b. St Madoes (SC397536; © Crown Copyright: HES)

2.3.3.   Non-figural elements

Key-pattern panels

Figure 59: Key-pattern panels on the Dupplin Cross

Key-pattern, at its simplest, is generally composed of straight lines lying parallel and perpendicular to each other, with some intersecting at angles, which are arranged to form angular spirals (Thickpenny 2019, 39). They have both negative areas, making the background, and positive lines, making the path. Cynthia Thickpenny (2019) conducted a detailed analysis of the structural properties and sculptural processes at work in these patterns and the terminology she developed will be followed here.

The Dupplin Cross has seven examples of key-pattern panels, every one of which is a different design. There are three distinctive types on this monument: diagonal key-pattern with a central spiral, diagonal key-pattern with repeated mitre units and orthogonal key-pattern.

The four-path spiral panels

Figure 60: The four-path spiral panels

These panels are the most numerous on this sculpture, with four in total. Although they are of a similar structure, they all have slight differences from each other (Figure 60). This appears to be a deliberate action of the sculptor as the basic design has been tweaked in distinct ways to provide variety across the whole composition and is not the result of a haphazard process.

Figure 61: Four-path spiral panels reoriented for comparison

Panel C2 can be taken as the base design, as from it all of the others can be derived with only a slight alteration to the pattern structure and/or by flipping of the whole panel. The different sizes of the panels and whether they are orientated horizontally or vertically also results in design variety but they may be more coincidental as a result of fitting a panel into a particular space. Figure 61 shows reoriented and resized versions of these four panels to show their basic similarity and differences. The horizontally orientated panels B3 and B6 were rotated 270 degrees to a vertical orientation. This allows changes to the initial design to be more clearly observed.

Panel D4 is identical to the base (C2) except for a slight re-arrangement of the path making up the central spiral, which gave an additional turn to the spiral and resulted in the direction of spin being clockwise rather than anti-clockwise (Figure 61). This subtle alteration gives quite a different appearance to the key-pattern but it is not immediately apparent to an observer what exactly that difference is.
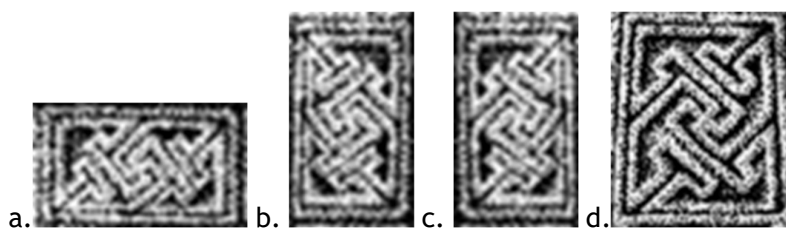
Figure 62: Comparing panel B3 with C2
a. B3 as it appears, b. rotated 90°, c. then mirrored horizontally, d. C2 as it appears.

Panel B3 was subtly altered from the original by rotating it 90 degrees to fit a horizontally aligned panel and flipping it on the horizontal axis (Figure 62). This gives it a different appearance without actually changing the structure of the key-pattern.

Figure 63: Comparing panel B6 with C2
a. B6 as it appears, b. rotated 90°, c. C2 as it appears.

Panel B6 was also rotated 90 degrees but it was significantly altered by replacing the central four-path rectilinear spiral with a curvilinear triple-spiral (Figure 63).

Central four-path spirals are uncommon in the surviving sculptural key-patterns with only eight examples noted during the course of this research, three of which are on Dupplin. There are other similar key-patterns that are formed slightly differently. One version has the same outer structure but when the paths come to the centre, they then turn away again without joining together to form a four-path spiral; two examples of this form are Drainie 32 and St Andrews 573 (Figure 64), less frequently the central paths can fork and join in the centre without forming the spiral element; this form is again seen at St Andrews. These are closely related key-patterns to the Dupplin version and illustrate how structurally minor alterations could create strikingly different designs.
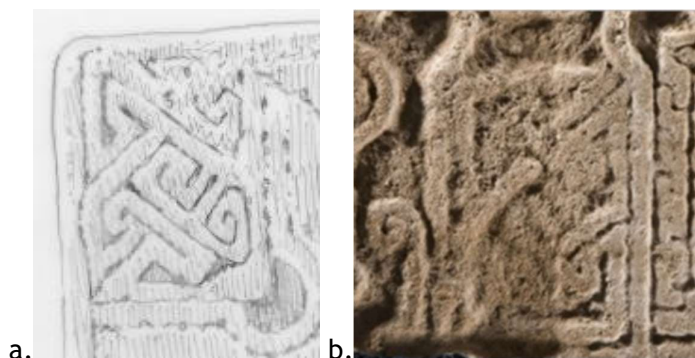
Figure 64: Single-path centre key-patterns
a. St Andrews (© HES with permission of J Borland), b. Drainie 32 (DP097923; © Crown Copyright: HES)

Outwith Pictland this four-path spiral can also be seen on Lindisfarne 6, Northumbria, dated to the late 9th to early 10th century (Cramp 1984). Though, here the external structure of the key-pattern is different with the path extended to fill the corners completely; yet another example of how these patterns could be manipulated to provide variety (Figure 65).

Additionally, it was used in the borders of a manuscript, the Harley Golden Gospels. The manuscript form is much looser than the sculptural, particularly on folio 9r, where the tight space necessitated the foreshortened termination of the spiral paths (Figure 66a). Another variation is used on folio 50v, where the ground and the path are reversed, making the ground the element that spirals in the centre rather than the path (Figure 66b). The manuscript versions make clear the free-hand nature of the pattern creation.

Figure 65: Lindisfarne 6 (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass)

a.

b.

Figure 66: Harley Golden Gospels
a. f.9r (rotated), b. f.50v (both © British Library)

A nearly exact duplicate, that utilises the same structure and central rectilinear four-path spiral as Dupplin, appears on the Invermay fragment (Figure 67a). Even here, however, a minor variation means it is not exactly the same as any of the Dupplin panels. Instead, the Invermay panel is a mirrored version of the Dupplin base panel C2 or a rotated version of B3. It also has a median-incised line along the entire path, which is not a feature apparent at Dupplin. That Dupplin and Invermay both have this distinct design indicates a connection between the two sites. It is not likely that the flipping of the design is the result of taking a rubbing of the Dupplin panel and transferring that onto the Invermay stone as the proportions are slightly different between the two. It has already been shown how skilled the sculptor or sculptors were at adapting the base design, therefore, once the rules of the pattern were understood they could be easily replicated elsewhere as desired.

Another version of this key-pattern is used on a cross-slab at St Andrews (stone 549) (Figure 68). Again, it has been slightly modified and matches none of the other examples exactly.

a.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　b.
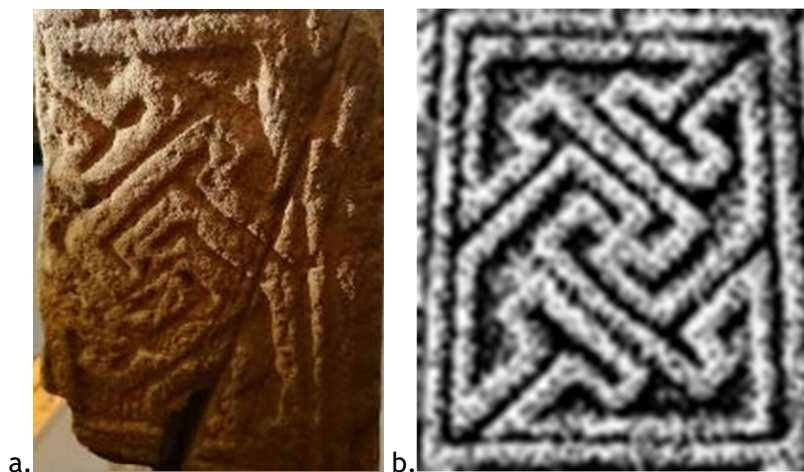
Figure 67: a. Invermay key-pattern, b. Dupplin panel C2

Figure 68: St Andrews SAC549 with the spiral magnified (© HES with permission of J Borland)

Two Pictish sculptures use the four-path rectilinear spiral key-pattern in an expanded form with multiple spirals repeating vertically and horizontally, very much like the example from the Harley Golden Gospels on folio 9r (Figure 66a). These are St Andrews 555 (previously no. 14) and the heavily weathered cross at Mugdrum (Figure 69 & Figure 70). These are very similar renditions of this key-pattern and both feature on the shafts of free-standing crosses.
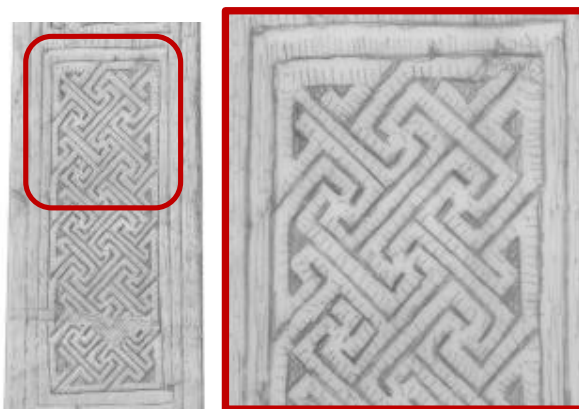
Figure 69: St Andrews SAC555 with the top portion magnified (© HES with permission of J Borland)
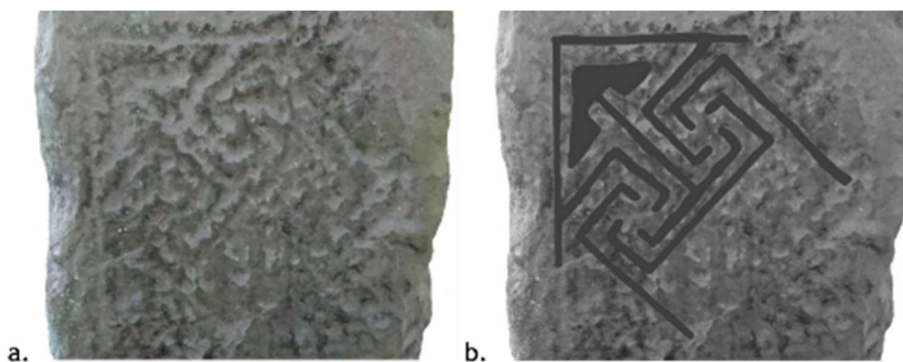
Figure 70: Mugdrum key-panel
a. As it appears in the field, b. with the proposed interpretation of key-pattern highlighted

The curvilinear spiral element of Dupplin's panel B6 is a striking contrast to the rectilinear patterns. The insertion of a curvilinear spiral into key-pattern is not particularly unusual and can be seen on a range of Pictish sculptures, such as St Andrews 601 (Figure 71a – cross-face), Drainie 18, MOR, Hilton of Cadboll, ROS, as well as on the Irish example of Muiredach's Cross at Monasterboice. What is unusual is that the spiral at Dupplin is a triple-spiral rather than the double-spirals of the previous examples. This forces the path to become asymmetrical as a triple-spiral cannot be formed from the four available paths without two of those paths joining and the other two remaining separate. The

double-spiral examples remain rotationally symmetrical by either joining two pairs of paths at the same location or only having two available paths.

There are only a few other examples of a triple-spiral being used within key-pattern. One of these is St Andrews 601, which has one side decorated in key-pattern with spirals repeated along its length (Figure 71a) while another is at Leuchars, FIF (Figure 71c), approximately 10km from St Andrews. Kirriemuir 18 is particularly interesting as it has a square panel with curvilinear triple-spirals and a rectilinear four-path spiral (Figure 71b).
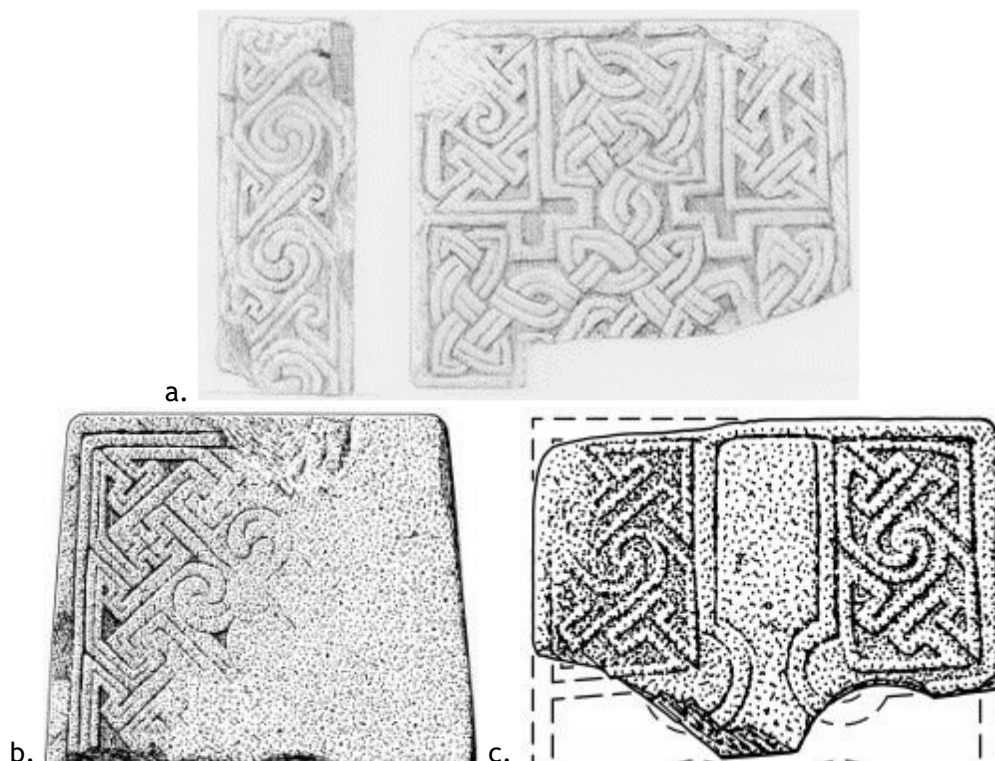
Figure 71: Triple-spiral centres

a. St Andrews SAC601 (© HES with permission of J Borland), b. Kirriemuir 18 (SC769886; © Crown Copyright: HES), c. Leuchars (SC1095177; © HES)

The mitre pattern panels

Figure 72: Dupplin Cross mitre pattern panel B4

So-called 'mitre-patterns' are a sub-set of key-patterns used for small panels or other constrained spaces. They are constructed solely from the corner of a specific pattern which is then flipped and repeated to fill the space while maintaining the continuity of the path (Thickpenny 2019, 209). This portion, a 'mitre unit', is mirrored to form a symmetrical unit, which is then repeated four times with 90-degree rotation to form a larger pattern (*ibid* 2019, 212). These larger blocks can be used singly (Figure 74) or repeated multiple times to create bands (Figure 72 & Figure 73) or cover larger areas.

On the Dupplin Cross mitre patterns appear twice: on panel B4, where a square mitre panel is doubled to create a rectangular panel, and at the centre of the cross on A2. In both instances, mitre units have been used to create blocks that give the impression of arrows pointing inward. On panel B4 two of these blocks are stacked one on top of the other and their paths joined. The same mitre unit and compositional form was used on other sculpture in Pictland (Monifieth 1, ANG), and Northumbria (Lindisfarne 6), as well as in manuscript form in the 10th century Book of Deer (Figure 73). It should be noted that in comparison to the others the Dupplin panel appears to have a discrepancy in the path formation; the central horizontal divide between the two blocks is not symmetrical, whereas in the others it is, the path has been forked in a different location. This difference in form sheds some light on the creative process; the patterns may have been carved organically with minimal preparation, allowing the creation of differences, consciously or not, or mistakes were adapted to continue to maintain the basic rule of path continuity. The Book of Deer also shows deviations within the mitre pattern panels.

A similarly constructed block is used extensively at St Andrews with many examples, but the arrow shapes point outward rather than inward, giving it a radically different appearance (Figure 74).

Figure 73: Inward pointing mitre unit examples

a. Monifieth 1, lower block (SC948354; © © Courtesy of HES, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Collection),

b. Lindisfarne 6 (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass),

c. Book of Deer 4V with part of the border magnified (© Cambridge University Library CC BY-NC 3.0)
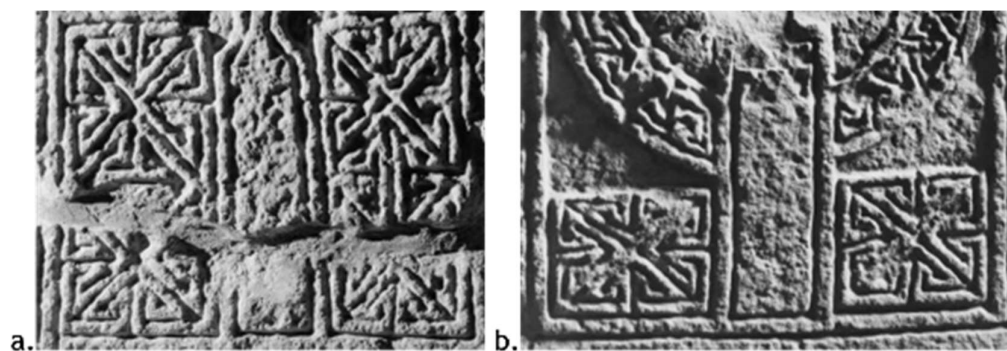
Figure 74: Outward pointing mitre unit examples

a. St Andrews SAC562, b. St Andrews SAC549 (SC1589441 & SC2083218; © HES - Tom and Sybil Gray Collection)

Panel A2a, located in the centre of the boss, is a heavily weathered and damaged area of the cross, nevertheless, the trace of decoration is recognisable as key-pattern. A slight correction to the pattern drawn by Ian Scott (Figure 75a) is necessary; J. Romilly Allen, drawing the cross a century before Scott, recorded it more accurately as key-pattern (Figure 75b), which has been confirmed by personal observation, 3D modelling and photography (Figure 75 c & d). From this, it appears the decoration is in fact a mitre pattern, based on the same key-pattern as panel B4, only in circular form.
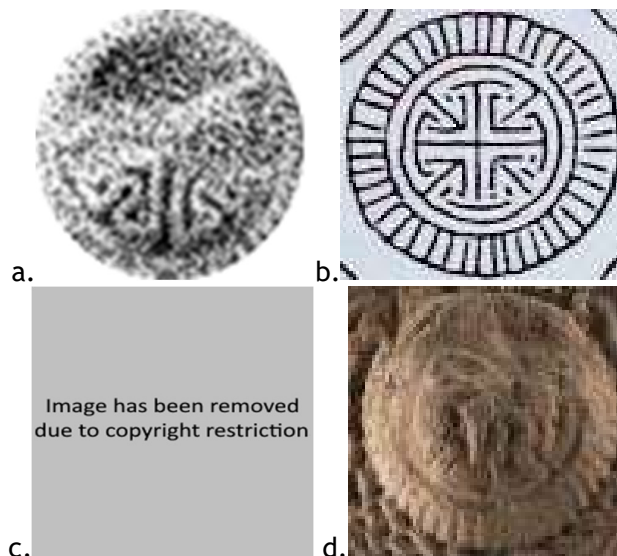
Figure 75: Dupplin Cross panel A2a; a. Scott's drawing, b. Allen's drawing, c. 3D model, d. photograph

This has a direct sculptural comparison with the boss on the free-standing cross Gainford 14, Durham (Figure 76a). It also matches the decoration on the spherical terminal on the thistle-brooch from Skaill, ORK (Figure 76b). This key-pattern, in particular, may have been chosen because it contains an equal-armed cross within its structure.

Figure 76: Mitre unit key-pattern bosses
a. Gainford 14 (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass), b. Skaill brooch

The orthogonal key-pattern panel

Figure 77: Dupplin Cross panel D3

The final example of key-pattern (panel D3, Figure 77) differs from the others in having an orthogonal rather than diagonal orientation, with the lines of the path running parallel or perpendicular to the outer frame, rather than at an angle. Normally key-pattern like this one would repeat one of the individual spirals across the entire panel using one of either rotational or mirror symmetry (Thickpenny 2019, 65). This particular panel, conversely, is a hybrid as one spiral, the bottom right, originates at a different point from the others and has one less turn. A similar irregularity occurs within the arms of the cross on the cross-slab at Farr, SUT. The right arm maintains rotational symmetry for each of its spirals whereas the upper and left arms are both hybrids; each contains a single mirrored spiral, rather than a rotated spiral; albeit in different positions within each arm (Figure 78). The other complicated key-pattern panels at Farr appear to have been completed, more-or-less, correctly so it cannot be considered an inferior sculpture.
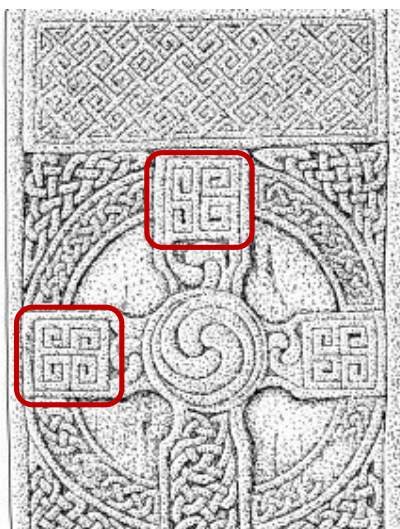
Figure 78: Farr key-pattern (SC1358269; © Crown Copyright: HES)

It is possible that these panels, both on the Dupplin and Farr crosses, are deliberate deviations from the established rules. It could also be that these

panels were worked by a less accomplished sculptor, one who did not have a full understanding of key-pattern structures. Or, it may show a brief loss of concentration of a sculptor, otherwise highly skilled, after a long period of complicated work. This possibility is particularly likely at Farr, where the intricate pattern of the topmost panel may have interfered with the intended pattern on the arms. Thickpenny reasoned that the sculptors were also the pattern designers as she identified panels that appear to have been manipulated midway through the work, suggesting that every detail of the designs were not necessarily laid out prior to carving (2019, 230–1). If that was the case then this panel on Dupplin may be the work of someone just beginning to learn how to carve key-pattern; and it could be considered that its location high up on the cross and small size made it a suitable area on which to cut their teeth, so to speak. It should be considered that this and other elements on the Dupplin Cross and other sculptures that might today be thought of as flawed or inferior work may not have been viewed as such when they were created.

Decorated Bands

Figure 79: Dupplin Cross - decorated bands

As well as plain bands bordering many of the panels, seven horizontal bands act to either divide larger panels, provide a ground on which figures stand or to embellish areas. They are decorated with either key-pattern or a related pattern known as step-pattern.

Bands A4 and B8b are key-patterns. The same pattern is found on two small fragments: Drainie 10, MOR, where it decorates an edge, and Meigle 29, PER, where it decorates the hem of a cleric's tunic (Figure 80).
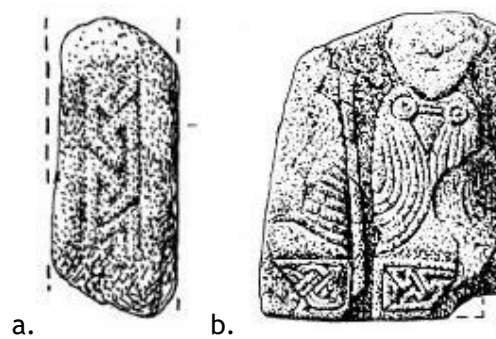
Figure 80: Key-pattern bands on other Pictish sculpture
a. Drainie 10 (SC1091980; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection), b. Meigle 29 (SC394800; © Crown Copyright: HES.)

The interlocked T-shapes of bands C7 and D8 are a rare step-pattern which Allen only identifies in sculpture at Dupplin and Benvie and in one manuscript (Allen and Anderson 1903, 332).

The interlocked S- and Z-shapes filling bands B7, C5 and D8 are a step-pattern that is seen throughout Britain and Ireland (*ibid* 1903, 331). Examples located near Dupplin are Invermay, Kirriemuir 3 and Benvie; where it mingles with other forms of step-pattern (Figure 81a, c & d). At Invermay the use of step-pattern is similar to that at Dupplin, as a horizontal band only, whereas at Kirriemuir it is used to decorate the vertical flat-band moulding and at Benvie is used more freely to embellish the space around the upper horseman and to decorate one of the narrow faces. This pattern of utilisation corresponds with the understanding that Invermay is likely contemporary with Dupplin whereas Kirriemuir and Benvie are likely to be later sculptures deriving from the Dupplin style (discussed above in section 2.3.2, page 59, and below in section 2.4). Step-pattern is also seen on Drainie 32, MOR, this time to border a comb symbol (Figure 81b). At Govan (Figure 81e) step-pattern is used to embellish the area around the horseman on the sarcophagus, in a similar way to its use on Benvie; perhaps showing that the sarcophagus is also deriving this style from Dupplin as Benvie seems to. The Book of Kells uses step-pattern as an embellishment to linear and circular borders (Figure 82). Both of the step-patterns described above are also used as decoration in the hems of the spear-carriers' tunics, likely representing a woven or embroidered embellishment on the garments.
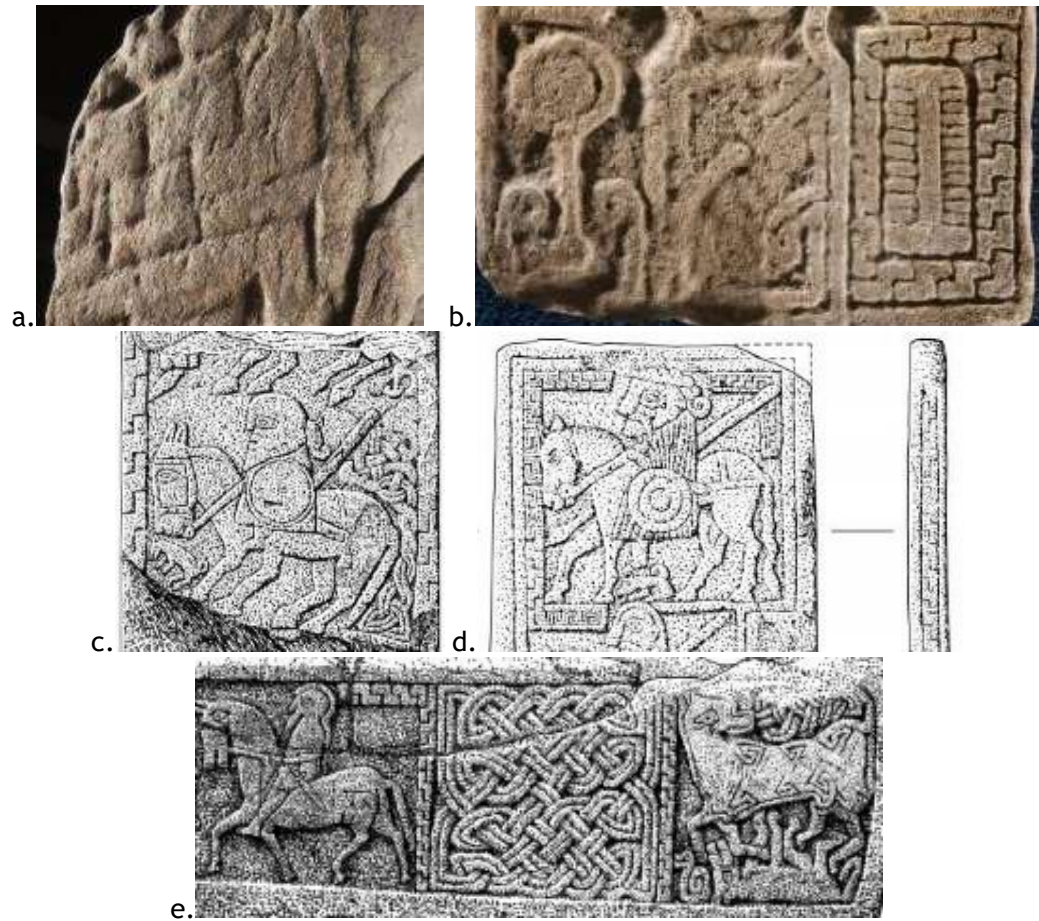
Figure 81: Step-pattern borders in sculpture

a. Invermay (DP250619; © HES), b. Drainie 32 (DP97923), c. Kirriemuir 3 (SC769958), d. Benvie (SC1359701)

(b, c & d © Crown Copyright: HES), e. Govan Sarcophagus (SC872463; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection)

Figure 82: Step-pattern border in the Book of Kells, Folio 32v (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin)

Interlace panels

Figure 83: Dupplin Cross interlace panels

Animal-headed interlace

Figure 84: Dupplin animal-headed interlace

Superficially these animals appear to be arranged symmetrically, two heads in each arm with their tails extending to the jaws of another (Figure 84). Though, it is noticeable that three of the arms are linked with a twisting pair of bodies (top right, top left and lower right) while the fourth connection (lower left) is a plait of three bodies, so the design is not as symmetrical as first

appears. The knots in each arm are also different. However, it is only when the paths of the individual bodies are tracked that its full asymmetry is revealed (Figure 85); one body has two heads while another is headless. The interlacing is fully correct in terms of the over-and-under sequence. This same quirk is also evident in a panel of interlacing snakes in the Book of Kells f. 27v (Figure 88a).

It is not possible to be certain whether the plaited connection is the result of a mistaken path, an intentionally added path or if the sculptor intended plaits in each connection but realised that they did not have room for that so switched to twists. Each of these possibilities adds to the suggestion previously stated that the sculptors did not fully layout their design on the stone prior to carving.
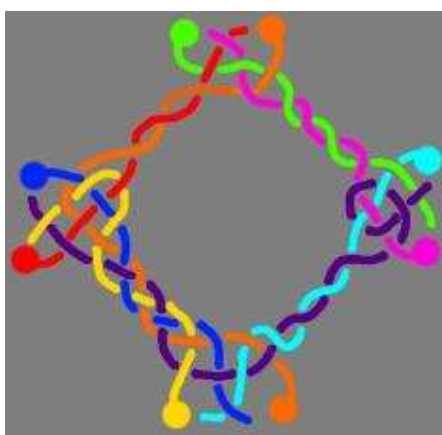
Figure 85: Animal-headed interlace with individual paths highlighted
Note the asymmetry and that the orange path has two heads while the purple path is headless.

Animal-headed interlace in this style can be seen taking various forms elsewhere, with very similar ones on Glamis Manse, ANG, Benvie and Kirriemuir 17 & 3 (Figure 86). The former three are particularly interesting as they are located on the arms of the cross. Of all of them, Kirriemuir 17 is the closest in the form of the beast's head. Nevertheless, on all of these the beasts are kept to the arms and do not coil around the boss as on Dupplin.

As well as the examples given above, there may be another, local to Dupplin, on the Invermay Cross, PER (Figure 87). The fragment thought to be the foot of the cross has a band of interlace that may have an animal head at the left-hand end, although the damaged state makes this difficult to be certain. Moreover, this identification is strengthened by the survival at the other end of the interlace of a central ridge of small discs or pellets framed by incised lines, which is precisely how the snakes on Muiredach's Cross are decorated (Figure 88b). These features have not previously been noted on Invermay.
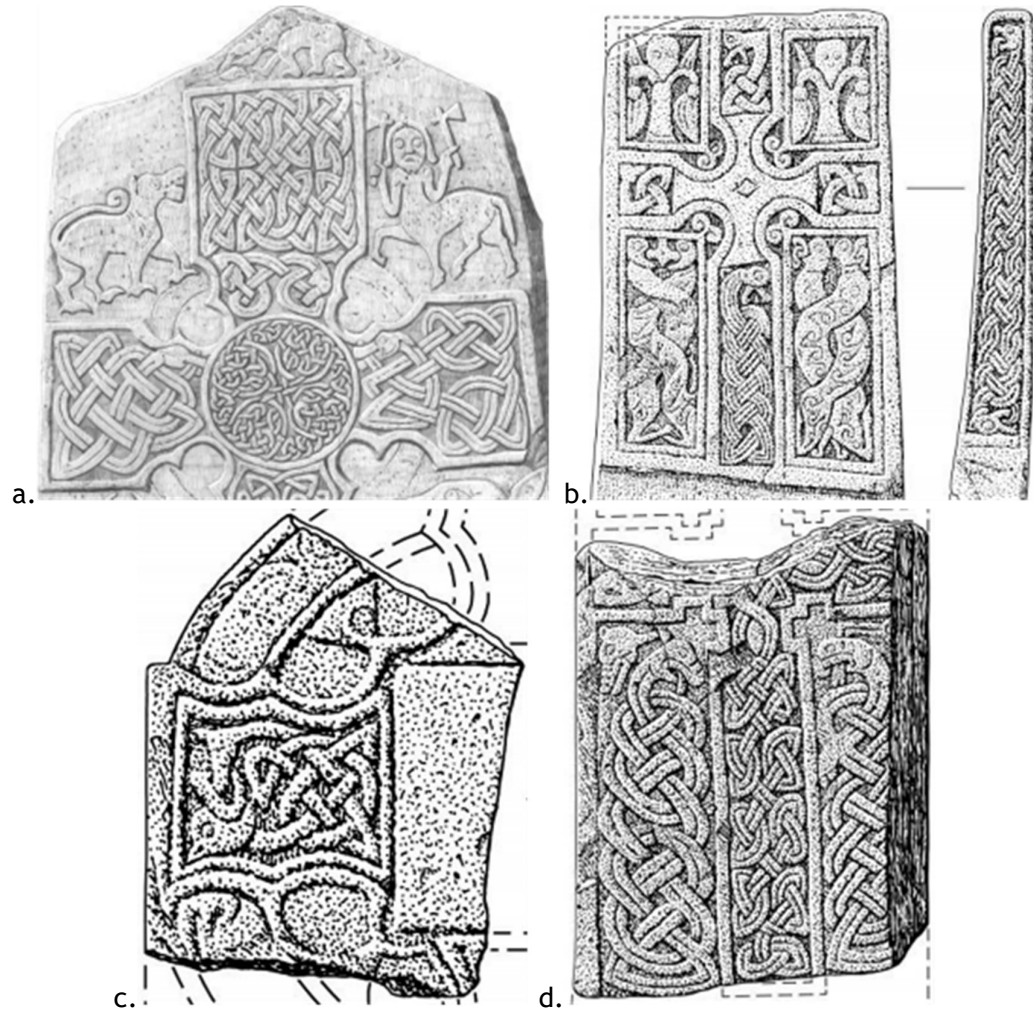
Figure 86: Beast-headed interlace in sculpture
a. Glamis Manse (SC2100308; © HES), b. Benvie (SC1359701),
c. Kirriemuir 17 (SC769889), d. Kirriemuir 3 (SC769958) (b, c & d © Crown Copyright: HES)

Figure 87: Invermay 1.1
Red: possible animal head, blue: pellet decorated ridge.

Snake-bodied animals are a common feature in Insular Art, especially in religious contexts, given their associations with both the Devil and Christ's resurrection (Meehan 2018, 62). They are particularly suited to interlacing, from

simple twists as on Muiredach's Cross to the more intricate versions of Nigg and the Book of Kells (Figure 88). These three examples all show the different ways that these animals' heads have been portrayed. In the Book of Kells they are shown from above with long ears or lappets (*ibid* 2018, 62), while at Monasterboice they are also shown from above with cat-like heads (Stalley 2020, 74) and at Nigg they are probably in their most naturalistic snake form with narrow smooth heads (Henderson 1987, 58). Yet these are all considered to be snakes and their symbolism is judged on this identification, particularly when they are surrounding a boss (*ibid* 1987). It might be that the sinuous animals on Dupplin are also intended to be snakes, despite their un-snake-like heads. If they are snakes then their position, entirely surrounding a boss, may be significant. Henderson's analysis of snake-bosses (1987, 64) showed that they never occurred on the same monument as vine-scroll but on the Dupplin Cross there may be both on opposite faces. It is not possible to say whether this animal interlace was intended as a snake-boss, with the same symbolism, or if the familiar combination of snakes and bosses was being employed but the symbolism was not intended.

Figure 88: Snakes in Insular Art

a. Book of Kells f.27v (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin), b. Muiredach's Cross, Monasterboice (in Stalley, 2020), c. Nigg (SC397221; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection)

Plain interlace panels

Figure 89: Dupplin Cross interlace panels

All of the interlace panels on the Dupplin Cross employ different patterns but they all share the same style (Figure 89). This style uses broad bands and appears relatively 'chunky', in comparison to some other sculptures, such as Forteviot 2 and Nigg.

The use of broad bands means that there is no room for intricacy; the patterns are therefore fairly simple. Panels B2 and A5 are composed of two interlacing bands while the other four are single bands. Despite being simple they are all 'correct' in that they interlace entirely in an over-under sequence and there are no dead-ends.

Three panels (Figure 89 - B2, D6 and D10) are median-incised with a single line running along the length of the band. This is seen at many other sites, for example, Invermay, Forteviot 3, Dunning 1, PER, Crieff Burgh Cross, PER, Benvie, Kirriemuir 3, Meigle 27 and 29, Lethendy 2, many at St Andrews, the Maiden Stone, Drainie 10 and Kilmartin 4, ARG. Being median-incised is potentially a dating criterion, and, since all of these sites also show other comparable features or are located close to Dupplin it is a feature worth bearing in mind.

The interlace filling the roundel in the centre of panel A5 (Figure 90a) is directly comparable with the roundels used to decorate a Canon Table in the Book of Kells and the boss on Kilmartin 4 (Figure 90b & c). This is a simple motif made up of two cords that interlace to create a cross-shaped void at the centre; something that would have added an additional level of significance.

Figure 90: Interlace roundels
a. Dupplin Cross, b. Book of Kells f.5r (© The Board of Trinity College Dublin),
c. Kilmartin (SC391335; © Crown Copyright: HES)

Bosses
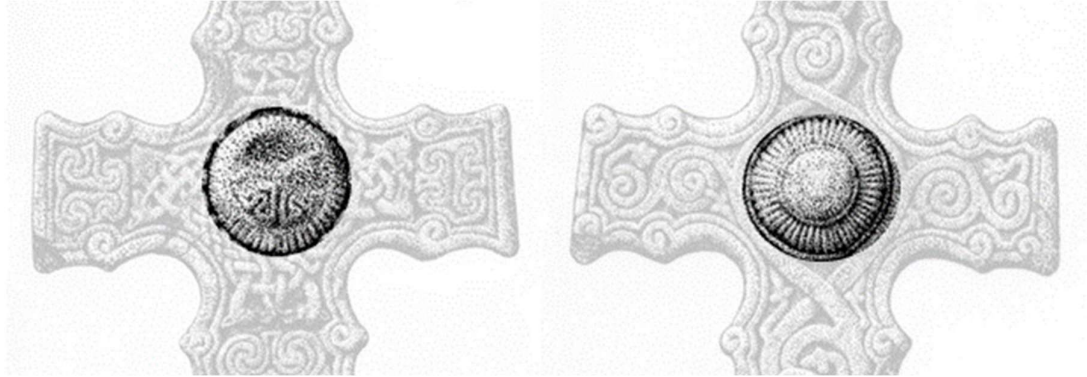
Figure 91: Dupplin Cross bosses on faces A and C

The central boss on each side of the cross-head is a very prominent feature of the Dupplin Cross. Differential treatment of the centre of cross-heads is widely seen in Pictish, and indeed, Insular sculpture, but is by no means ubiquitous. The high-relief nature of the Dupplin bosses is more unusual but can still be compared with others in Pictland (Edzell 2, ANG, St Andrews 591a, St Vigeans 9, ANG) (Figure 92) as well as Dál Riata (St John's Cross), Northumbria (Gainford 12 and 14) and Ireland (the North Cross, Ahenny).
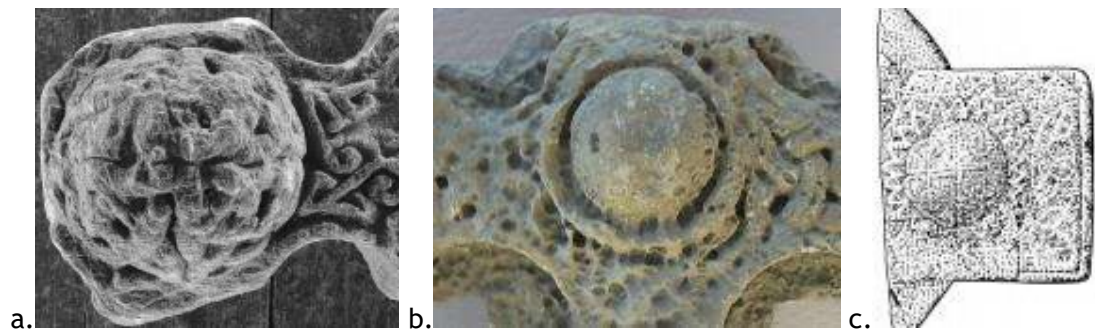
Figure 92: High-relief bosses in Pictland
a. Edzell 2 (DP009393), b. St Andrews SAC591a, c. St Vigeans 9 (SC1097205) (a & c © Crown Copyright: HES)

The ribbed decoration is unusual in Pictish sculpture and no other examples of this texture being employed have been identified. However, it can be seen on metalwork examples from the 8th to 10th centuries; sometimes infilling elements and creating contrast, such as on the Crieff mount, sometimes forming the bezel of a gemstone or glass cabochon, such as on the Clunie brooch, PER, a mount from Lincolnshire and Bologna shrine and sometimes surrounding boss-like decorative elements, as on a brooch from the Skaill hoard (Figure 76b).

The bosses appear to be skeuomorphic studs alluding to the elaborate studs or cabochons that often feature on metalwork, such as the Lough Kinale book-shrine (Henderson 1999, 169). Although the centre of the boss on face A (panel A2a) is now damaged and worn it is just possible to see that it has cruciform key-pattern decoration which is drawn confidently in the *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (Allen and Anderson 1903, 322). This may be deliberately taking the skeuomorphic element further by depicting the metal inlay within a glass stud that could have been used in such settings (Youngs 1989). This affinity with metalwork would suggest that the entire Dupplin Cross is a skeuomorph of a precious-metal bejewelled cross, perhaps an altar or processional cross, rather than directly referring to the original crucifixion cross. Other skeuomorphic depictions are seen taking other forms, such as Alyth, PER, which is a cross-slab with its cross tanged as if for insertion into a base. If the cross was once painted, or even had gilded elements, then the effect of imitating a precious-metal item would have been significantly enhanced.

It is interesting to note that the brooch found at Skaill (Figure 76b) also shares this same key-pattern. It is possible that they were both imitating the form of a cabochon set within a bezel. But, since the Skaill brooch is later than Dupplin Cross there is the possibility that the brooch was made in imitation of the sculpture since they both share the same internal pattern; the distance between them is not an obstruction to this connection as brooches and memories held by artisans are highly mobile.

Figure 93: Metalwork with ribbing; a. Crieff mount, b. Clunie brooch, c. Lincolnshire mount LIN-63C9C7
(a & b. © National Museums Scotland, c. CC BY-SA 4.0 The Portable Antiquities Scheme (cropped))

Vine-scroll
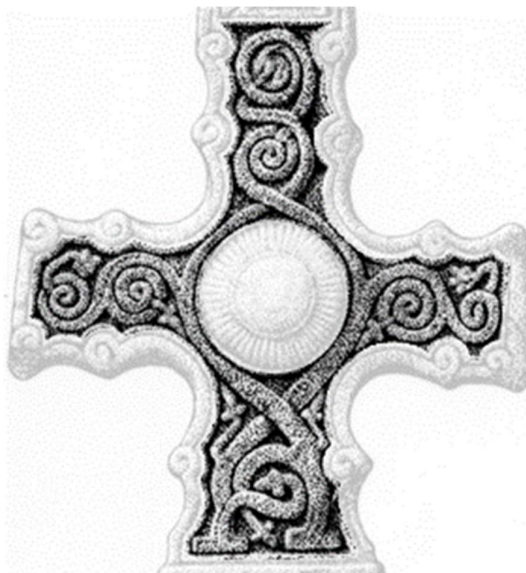
Figure 94: Dupplin Cross vine-scroll

Most of the cross-head on face C is filled with vine-scroll (panel C3b, Figure 94). The symbolism of the grapevine is eucharistic and refers to the idea of Christian salvation (Henderson 1999, 168). Other than the image of the cross itself it is the most overtly Christian motif on the monument.

Vine-scroll in Pictland was derived from Northumbrian sculpture, becoming part of the repertoire of Pictish sculptors and increasingly favoured (*ibid* 1999, 168). There are at least another ten examples in the Pictish area, displaying a range of vine forms, both vine-only and inhabited. These range from Easter Ross to Fife; arranged in several geographical groups: the Tarbat and Hilton of Cadboll cross-slabs, ROS, St Vigeans 1 and 12, ANG, and St Andrews 558, 569 and 571 as well as apparently solitary stones, Sueno's Stone, Crieff Burgh Cross, Mugdrum, Abernethy 5, and Dupplin. At least three of these have an inscription, Dupplin, Crieff and Drosten's Stone.

None of these examples of vine-scroll are particularly like that of Dupplin in all of its aspects. Nevertheless, some of them do share other similarities. Abernethy 5, and St Andrews 569 are the closest in appearance, all sharing the broad vines and bunched fruit. It is quite different from the narrow, inhabited vines of Hilton of Cadboll, Tarbat and Sueno's Stone. Although the Mugdrum vine is inhabited it shares the broadness of Dupplin and may have tendrils terminated with animal-heads in the same style as the interlace on face A of Dupplin. The Dupplin vine is faintly median-incised, which is also seen on Mugdrum and

Abernethy 5. Notably, all but one of these other examples have the vine-scroll arranged only as a border; the Crieff Burgh Cross is the only one to have it as a main decorative element on the cross itself, where it is deployed surrounding the boss on the cross-head in the same manner as Dupplin but in quite a different style (Hall *et al* 2000, 162)

Figure 95: Vine-scroll on St Vigean's 1 (SC1950770; © Crown Copyright: HES)

a.

b.

Figure 96: St Andrews vine-scroll, a. SAC558, b. SAC569 (both © HES with permission of J Borland)

a.   b.   c.   d.
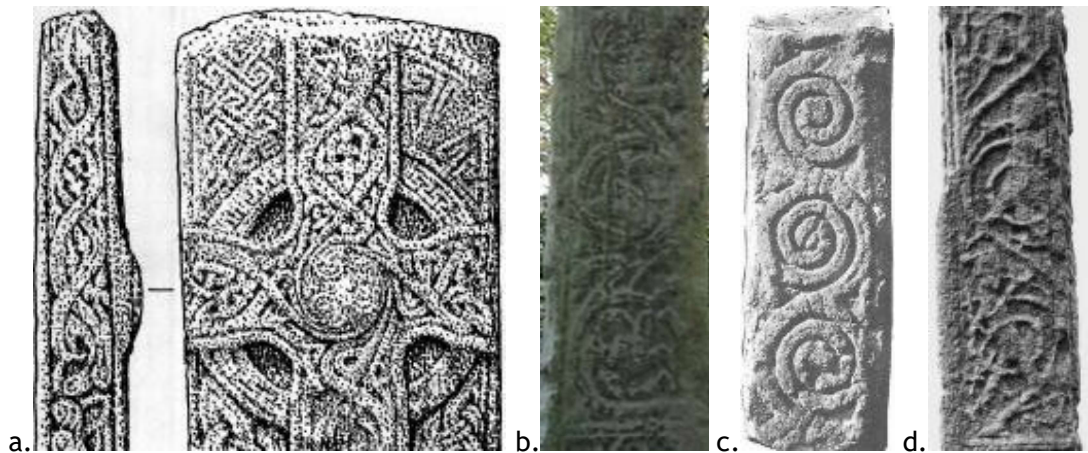
Figure 97: Pictish crosses with vine-scroll

a. Crieff Burgh Cross (SC530047; © HES. Ian G Scott Collection), b. Mugdrum,

c. Abernethy 5 (in Allen and Anderson, 1903), d. Sueno's Stone (SC2034595; © Crown Copyright: HES)

The 'brick-like plinths' from which the vines grow are unusual in Insular art compared with either chalices or earth piles (Henderson 1999, 167). In this regard, the closest parallel is a fragment of sculpture from Hulne Priory, Northumberland, which has a stepped base to the vine and is dated to the first half of the 9th century (Cramp 1991, 193) (Figure 98). Hulne Priory also shares the tight coils of the tendrils.

Figure 98: Vine-scroll plinth at Hulne Priory (© Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass)

The Dupplin vines have a very organic quality; growing asymmetrically and striving to fill all of the available space, yet they are balanced in overall appearance. This asymmetrical growth contrasts with other versions of vine-scroll where symmetry or repetition is more rigidly maintained, such as Lastingham 3, E. Yorkshire, and Masham 5, N. Yorkshire (Figure 99); both of which, Henderson considers to be comparable with Dupplin because of the shared combination of double-curved arms, central bosses and vine-scroll around the cross-heads (1999, 167). Although these three sculptures – Dupplin, Lastingham and Masham – do share these features their appearance is quite different overall from each other. The form of the Dupplin vines is essentially medallion vine-scrolls as they travel in a criss-cross fashion up the head. There is a comparison to be made with Hexham 1, Northumberland, seen as the source of medallion vine-scrolls in sculpture (Cramp 1991, 174–6; Henderson 1999, 167). However, although the growth form is similar in the bottom arm of the cross-head, where the stems start in the outer corners and leafed tendrils fill the space between it quickly takes on its own form.

Figure 99: Northumbrian vine-scroll

a. Lastingham 3, b. Masham 5, c. Hexham 1 (all © Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, photographer T. Middlemass)

The vines are depicted with only leaves in *ECMS* and Henderson also describes them as berry-less (Allen and Anderson 1903, 323; Henderson 1983; 1999, 168). However, there is actually one berry cluster, formed as a rosette, on each of the side arms, which are depicted in Ian Scott's drawing of 2002. These berry clusters are similar to those on the Easter Ross cross-slabs, which share the rosette form, although those vines are inhabited by animals; which are not present at Dupplin.

Triple-spirals and C-curves

Figure 100: Dupplin Cross triple-spirals and C-curves

The use of triple-spirals joined by C-curves is widespread and considered typical of the Pictish repertoire (*ibid* 1999, 169). The spirals connected by curves is a very flexible way of filling different shapes; it can be easily extended with varying sized spirals to fill corners and the types of spirals can be combined from double to quadruple spirals depending on the needs of the space. The curves can also be terminated or detoured into E-shapes if there are no available spirals to connect to, as happens on all of the arms of Dupplin. As well as sculpture it is also seen in manuscript form in the Book of Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels, where its versatility is particularly suited to that medium (Figure 102).

In the west of Scotland, the only example in sculpture is on the Keills Cross, ARG. A few examples are seen in Ireland, for example, the Boho Cross. There appears to be an absence of connected spirals in Anglo-Saxon sculpture; Allen and Anderson do not note any examples in the *ECMS* and Cramp does not cover this decorative form in *Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament* (Allen and Anderson 1903; Cramp 1991). It is notable that the Lindisfarne Gospels employ this decorative element so exuberantly, despite the apparent lack in the sculptural record.

The appearance of these joined triple-spirals on the Dupplin Cross is far from finessed, with sizes and orientation varying across the arrangement. As with other elements on the monument this is indicative of a free-hand approach taken by the sculptor. Despite the high occurrence of this motif the sheer variety in the way it is presented could allow, with further study, a dating criterion to be developed and connections to be identified. For example, the arrangement seen on Dupplin is very like that on St Andrews SAC591 (Figure 101); a partial cross-head from a free-standing cross that features a central domed boss on the opposite face (Figure 92b).

Figure 101: Triple-spiral and C-curves on St Andrews SAC591c (SC2083209; © Crown Copyright: HES)

Figure 102: Triple-spiral and C-curve panel in the Book of Kells. Folio 27v
(© The Board of Trinity College Dublin)

2.4. Conclusions

2.4.1. Connections; an overview of the comparisons and contrasts

The preceding discussion has highlighted that the iconography of the Dupplin Cross is connected in numerous and diverse ways with both the Pictish and the wider Insular assemblage. These connections indicate that the style of the cross was inspired from some sources, developed contemporaneously with others and, in turn, was itself influential. In some ways, however, it also shows a deviation from the established repertoire. This may be because there was an overarching change in artistic fashion or because this monument was exceptional in its function and context. Of course, exceptionality may only be apparent because this monument survived still standing and intact unlike those that are fragmentary or undiscovered.

The various connections and differences that were explored individually above will now be drawn together to tell part of the Dupplin Cross's story; how it came to look as it did and how it may have been influential itself. When the figural and non-figural elements are looked at as groups it becomes apparent that they are working in different ways.

On the whole, the figural elements show a divergence from the established Pictish repertoire. This is particularly noticeable in the form of the Dupplin horseman. As was pointed out above, horsemen are common on Pictish sculpture, though, they are usually portrayed with the horse mid-step, i.e., in motion, whereas the stationary Dupplin horse is distinctly different.

The warriors show a similar divergence; their appearance is regimented and stiff as opposed to the mid-action tableaus seen on the Aberlemno 2 or Dull where they are part of the scene rather than in a separate panel.

Similarly, harps and harpers are not uncommon, but they are not usually shown to quite the same level of scale as the Dupplin harper. As discussed above, this harper is commonly considered to be David, as the Psalmist. On the other hand, if the harper is intended to be viewed as part of the warrior group then their attribution might be better considered as a representation of a

contemporary role associated with the king, perhaps playing a part at particular events such as the inauguration ceremony.

If the harper is a distinctly different version of David then the figure fighting a lion on face A is somewhat more in keeping with other representations of David. But even here there are differences. The adjacent positioning of the lion relative to the figure is only seen on one other Pictish stone, whereas the 'fore lion' is seen on five. They all vary in scale with Dupplin being one of the smaller. This disparity in the scale of the harper to the lion fight is unconventional as the harp is usually of secondary importance to the lion-fight. So, the Dupplin figure-with-lion has some differences from the wider repertoire; alone this may not be significant but when other aspects are considered it becomes more unusual.

There are several other aspects of this panel that together make this a particularly unusual representation of David. Firstly, the bear in the lower-left corner, while pertaining to the biblical telling of David's story, is not an animal that is included in any other known Insular rendition. Secondly, the boar in the lower right corner is not mentioned in the story and is not included with any other version of David iconography. These are significant deviations from the established repertoire of David iconography so far identified.

The large tail-biting self-piercing beast on face D does not have many close comparisons, with Rossie Priory being the only other identified that is pierced through its body but there it is a separate snake that is piercing. Although there are no close parallels this figure is in keeping with the well-established use of mythical or hybrid beasts on Pictish sculpture.

The patron of the Dupplin Cross appears to have desired a different approach for the figurative panels, perhaps taking inspiration from Carolingian and Byzantine imperial monuments. This may reflect a borrowing of artistic style with no particular connotations. Even so, it is more likely that the choice of these motifs also indicate that the model of royal power was changing at this point in time and that a combination of political, religious and social connections with extensive external regions were proving influential but not overpowering; they were blending with traditional Pictish and wider Insular social and artistic constructs. Whatever the reason, the patron was certainly not looking to use the established Pictish motif of the spear-carrying horseman at

hunt accompanied by other riders and hounds. The only figurative panel that could be considered close to that in nature is the pair of dogs below the warriors, perhaps alluding to the hunt without the full scene being necessary.

While the figurative elements appear to be diverging due to change and possible extensive sources of influence, the non-figurative elements describe a different picture, drawing on traditional Pictish motifs with some elements that were a more recent addition to the repertoire.

The triple-spirals and C-curves are overwhelmingly Pictish and were long used as decorative elements.

Likewise, key-pattern panels are a particular favourite of Pictish sculptors; they occur widely and with great variation so it is not surprising that they also occur on the Dupplin Cross. At the same time, four of the Dupplin panels show a particular variation with the creation of the four-path spiral pattern. The four Dupplin panels certainly display this to full effect; the sculptor has explored the multiple ways the basic pattern could be manipulated to form individual design. The motif of the singular four-path rectilinear spiral only occurs on two other stones, Invermay and St Andrews 549. The extended variation of this pattern is used on the Mugdrum Cross and St Andrews 555. The curvilinear triple-spiral variation pattern has a similar range. Together they spread across lower Strathearn and northern Fife, indicating a connection that was probably contemporary and perhaps even indicates the hand of a single sculptor experimenting with their particular innovation.

There are three examples outwith this tight range, each from different locations and each using the extended variation rather than the single spiral: these are, Kirriemuir 18, Lindisfarne 6 and the Harley Golden Gospels. The Harley Golden Gospels were probably created at the court of Charlemagne in Aachen and is dated to the first quarter of the 9th century (British Library, n.d.). That date is remarkably similar to the date the Dupplin Cross indicated by Custantín son of Uirguist being named in the inscription (see section 2.2); if both are correct, this would represent the very contemporary Continental use of a motif that is otherwise restricted to central-east Scotland, with one outlier in northern England (dated to the last quarter of 9th to first half of 10th century).

Pictish interlace is very variable from sculpture to sculpture and the Dupplin panels are not out of place within the assemblage. The zoo-morphic

interlace shows a wider association with zoo-morphic interlace elsewhere but also a particularly close connection with Kirriemuir and Benvie.

It is not uncommon for Pictish crosses to include bosses but the high-relief massive form at Dupplin is somewhat unusual. They do occur in Pictland but they also occur on Northumbrian free-standing crosses.

The vine-scroll could be considered a Northumbrian import but it also became widely used in Pictland. There is variation in the style on the Pictish examples but this does not appear to correlate strongly with any regional connections.

The use of borders and frames to divide the elements into separate panels is a deviation from many other Pictish crosses where narrative scenes and decorative elements were often displayed within the same space. Containing images in neat borders has wide connections, including manuscript art and Irish crosses.

The free-standing cross with double-curved arms is a form that is not typical of the Pictish region. It is more common on Ionan and Northumbrian sculpture. However, Pictish crosses are not homogenous; most are cross-slabs but the forms of the crosses on them vary greatly, so it cannot be said with certainty that the double-curves are particularly un-Pictish.

The only highly unusual element is the finial representing a tiled or shingled roof. This is dramatically different from any other surviving Pictish sculpture and appears to closely connect the Dupplin Cross with the Irish sculpture. If the Dupplin Cross dates to the first quarter of the 9th century as discussed above then it would appear that it was it that was the first known monument to adopt this element rather than the Irish ones.

These connections and differences show a blending of traditional elements, such as the triple-spirals and C-curves, with a radically different approach to figural elements; particularly in the human figures. Other elements, like the key-patterns, are given a distinctive local appearance with the inclusion of the four-path spiral centres and curvilinear triple-spirals.

 From looking at these connections between the Dupplin Cross and sculptures elsewhere, a set of co-occurrences is apparent. Benvie, Kirriemuir and Aldbar, all in Angus, all share multiple characteristics with Dupplin. The main element in this set is the 'static rider', which on the Benvie slab is almost

identical to Dupplin. Horsemen also appear on the others, but there they do not have all the characteristics that would group them with the Dupplin rider. The animal-headed interlace is also seen on Benvie and two cross-slabs at Kirriemuir. The step-pattern borders are seen at Benvie, Kirriemuir. As well as the horseman, Aldbar is also connected by having the same arrangement of David and the Lion; the only other stone that has this arrangement in Scotland. Amongst the sculpture at Kirriemuir there are several other features that are also seen at Dupplin; these include the double-curved arms, the upright facing beasts with their forelimbs at the others' mouths and key-pattern with four-path spirals and curvilinear triple-spirals.

This set of connections could suggest several types of interactions taking place between these sites. It could be that they are contemporary with each other and all following a developing style. Though, what is more likely is that the Dupplin Cross, and possibly the other Forteviot sculptures, are the source of these elements being used in the ways that they are. The Dupplin Cross is quite a different monument from the others at Benvie, Kirriemuir and Aldbar, both in terms of its size, form and functioning as part of the Forteviot landscape, which is primarily a royal site rather than an ecclesiastical one. Dupplin is the high-status monument that the others are emulating in certain ways, perhaps to convey that the patrons of those monuments had social connections with the patron and king commemorated on Dupplin.

It has been shown that the figurative and non-figurative elements have taken different paths, diverging and more traditional, respectively. This may reflect the different roles that the patrons and sculptors took in creating the whole monument. The patron or patrons likely had a specific ideology that they wanted to convey through the choice of figures. Whereas, the sculptor or sculptors were working within a traditional range of motifs that reflect the local Pictish as well as wider Insular style, although they were free to innovate within those boundaries, as can be seen with the creation of the four-path central spiral key-patterns.

2.4.2.   The nature of Kings and Kingship as evidenced by the Dupplin Cross

The combination of the Christian iconography with the inscription, unambiguously naming a king, is telling. Custantín was a King declaring his Christianity with a monument that shows how deeply interlaced those religious beliefs and ideologies were with the notion of Kingship.

The inclusion of biblical King David was not simply a religious image but also signified the ideal model of kingship; representing a warrior and protector who is also spiritual and cultured. These were all qualities that would have been required in a king so in placing David with Custantín the latter's reputation was declared as comparable with that of the former. As well as simply portraying an example of a king to aspire to, the story of David was of a king sanctioned by God, so this was also a way of proclaiming the divine right to rule.

In this light, the image of the stationary horseman is likely to be far more than a literal representation; rather, it may be symbolic of an immutable king, a very different way of perceiving kingship, as discussed above. Likewise, if the object held over his shoulder is a sceptre, this is also a departure from the Pictish image of spear-wielding nobility, to something more in line with the regal images and descriptions of Carolingian kings.

As far as any connection that can be made with Fortriu and the modern Moray region, there are no absolute parallels that are particular to those regions only. Nonetheless, there are a series of features that do overlap and are enough in number to be considered significant.

The collection of fragmentary sculpture from Kinneddar, an Early Medieval ecclesiastical site, has five pieces that are comparable, both on stylistic grounds and figurative content (confusingly they are named after the parish, Drainie). Drainie 16, with the David and the Lion image, has clearly royal connotations. However, as mentioned above, it is composed differently to the scene on Dupplin and, rather, is a near duplicate to the David that appears on the St Andrews Sarcophagus. Drainie 8 displays two standing figures holding spears and shield below the remaining legs of a horse. There is no trace of the horse-rider but the composition is similar to that of Dupplin. Drainie 10, 18 and 32, all noted

above, display decorative elements that are comparable with Dupplin, although none have been used in exactly the same way and are also used elsewhere.

Amongst the many scenes portrayed on Sueno's Stone are several panels in which the figures are distinctly reminiscent of the style of Dupplin, and also Dunkeld. The use of borders around panels are strictly organised scenes are also reminiscent of Dupplin. That it may also have been one of a pair of pillars is temptingly suggestive of a relationship like that of Dupplin and Invermay.

Taken together, the Kinneddar collection and Sueno's Stone are indicative of a phase of sculpture manufacture broadly contemporary with Dupplin and with at least some royal patronage. It is interesting to note that the sculpture from the promontory fort at Burghead only shares general stylistic forms and horseman with a round shield on shoulder straps, which is otherwise not comparable with either the Dupplin horseman or spearmen. There certainly does not appear to have been a concerted effort to use sculptural iconography and style to mirror each place in the other. The use of sculpture in the landscape of Forteviot is highly ostentatious (see section 4) and not readily mirrored elsewhere in Pictland. It is plausible that this display was either a desirable or necessary means of proclaiming the overlordship of Custantín son of Uirguist, King of Fortriu, in southern Pictland. Additionally, and more speculatively, if the scene on the front of Sueno's Stone is a royal inauguration scene (Historic Environment Scotland 2015), and if their contemporaneous dating can be confirmed, might it be Custantín, or a near successor of his, at the centre of that panel?

3. The Stone; sourcing and working

As part of understanding the Dupplin Cross it is also necessary to consider the material from which it was made, the stone; including where it was sourced and how it was worked to create the finished monument.

Although the location of the cross gives the impression of an isolated monument, it is part of a collection of sculptures centred on Forteviot. For that reason, a study of the lithological qualities of the extant group will be included alongside that of the Dupplin Cross. It will be informative to know whether they share a source or were procured from various locations.

3.1. Lithology of the sculptures

3.1.1. Forteviot collection

Dupplin Cross

The cross is made from a medium-grained sandstone with fine mica that catches the light. The colour is mainly pinkish-brown, with faint patches and steaks of grey visible when viewed under bright white light (Figure 103). No clasts or laminations are visible.

The base-stone (Figure 104) is a medium-grained sandstone with fine mica. The colour is pinkish-grey. There are no clasts on the upper surface but some do appear on the sides and these increase in frequency lower down. Clasts include off-white clay, red and white quartzite, white quartz, pink granite and yellow sandstone. Holes created by differential weathering are very evident. Diagonal lamination is visible on the west side.

The cross and its base-stone are made from sandstones with very similar characteristics, though the base is slightly courser-grained and also includes a considerable presence of clasts suggesting that the two are not from the same source formation. Even so, sandstone can vary significantly within short distances, due to changes in the depositional conditions or an environment that produced graded bedding with larger grains and clasts normally deposited lower in the bed with finer grains in the upper zones (Tucker 2011, 141). So it may be that these two stones are from the same formation but slightly different areas;

with the cleaner stone selected for the detailed carving and the one with inclusions arranged so that the cleaner zone was uppermost.

Figure 103: Grey streaks within the pinkish-brown sandstone of the cross

Figure 104: The base-stone displaying clasts in the lower zone and diagonal lamination in the upper zone

Figure 105: Fragments of sculpture kept in Forteviot Church
From upper-left to right: Forteviot 4, 2, 3 and Invermay 1.1 & 1.2 and 1.3 & 1.4

Invermay Cross

The Invermay Cross is represented by four fragments. Fragments 1.1 and 1.2 share an interlace band that runs across both and are thought to be from the lower portion of the monument (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 143–149). Their outer surfaces are orangey while the interior, observable on the broken surfaces, is grey. This difference is due to the different lengths of time that each surface has been exposed to the weather; the orange being from longer exposure. Large mudstone clasts are visible. The bedding is vertical (Figure 106).

Fragments 1.3 and 1.4 also share a panel, key-pattern this time, that pairs them together. These have weathered in a similar way to 1.1 and 1.2; orangey surface with a grey interior. 1.4 has multiple large mudstone clasts visible. The bedding plane, along which this unit had previously broken, is diagonal.

These two units are similar in colour and fabric; however, the directions of the bedding planes are quite different (Figure 106). This casts doubt on these units being from the one monolithic cross, although a composite cross would still be a possibility.
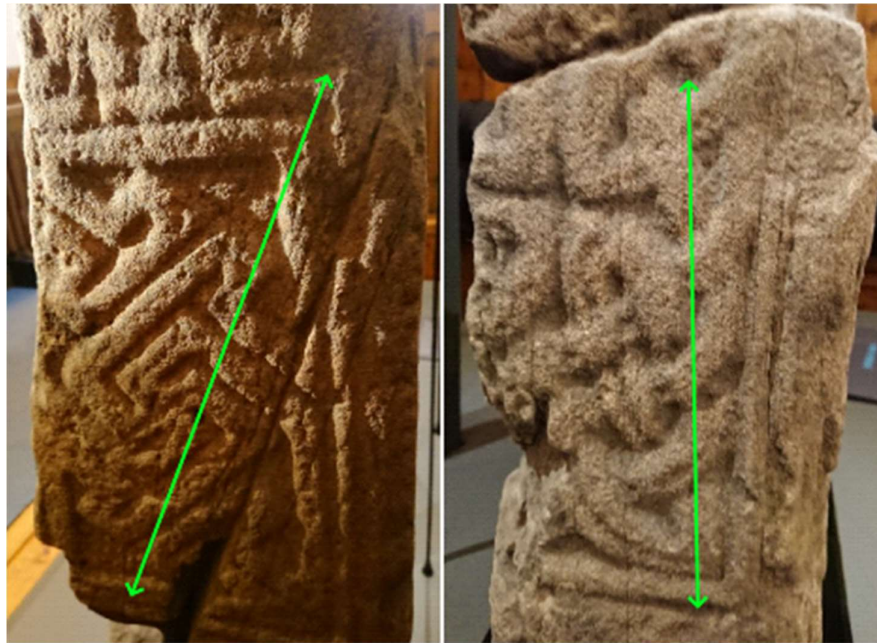
Figure 106: Invermay Cross fragments with the direction of bedding planes indicated by the green arrows

Forteviot 1 - The Arch

The arch is on display in the National Museum of Scotland. It has not been possible to view the stone. All that can be said is it is sandstone with vertical bedding planes (Campbell and Driscoll 2020, 134).

Forteviot 2 – Cross-slab

This sandstone has an orangey surface colouring with areas of black staining and mica sparkle. It is courser grained than Dupplin Cross

A single mudstone clast. The bedding direction is vertical.

Forteviot 3 – Free-standing ringed cross

This fragment is made from pinkish-brown sandstone with mica sparkle. There is no obvious surface staining. No inclusions or laminations are visible.

Of all the Forteviot cross fragments, the colour, texture and lack of visible laminations, make this stone the most similar to that of the Dupplin Cross.

Forteviot 4 - Free-standing cross

The sandstone of this fragment contains lots of mica along with small orange and grey inclusions. Like some of the others, the outer surface is orangey while the broken areas show a grey interior. The bedding plane is vertical.

3.1.2. Other sculptures outwith the Forteviot environs

As well as looking at the sculpture local to Forteviot it is also relevant to look further afield in the effort to recognise more distant connections.

One such connection is visible in the research of Miller and Ruckley when they described the Dupplin Cross as being the same type of stone as the Dunfallandy Stone; type J in their categorisation. They are the only two of that type in their study (Miller and Ruckley 2005). Neither of these stones were suitable for magnetic susceptibility analysis so they could not be correlated with a quarry in that study. Dunfallandy is not from a site near to where it now stands, the only stone in their study that was so clearly not of local origin, and therefore must have been transported from elsewhere (Miller and Ruckley 2005).

This correlation raises the possibility that the Dunfallandy stone may have come from the same outcrop as Dupplin. If the source of Dupplin can be identified that also gives a potential source for Dunfallandy. It is generally thought to date from the 8th century, although just when in that century is far from clear; making it older than Dupplin but perhaps not by much (Historic Environment Scotland 2019, 4). Nonetheless, the Forteviot area was being actively used during the 8th century so the stone may have been procured or gifted from there to the church at Dunfallandy (Figure 107).

Figure 107: The Dunfallandy Stone (DP027927; © Crown Copyright: HES)

3.2. Characteristics of the local geology

Forteviot and the Dupplin Cross and Invermay Cross sites are underlain by the Scone Sandstone formation, part of the Arbuthnott-Garvock Group. This formation is described as consisting largely of "…grey, yellow, brown, red and purplish or reddish brown, generally medium- to course-grained … sandstones characteristically containing calcareous mudstone and limestone clasts…Pebbles of metasedimentary and volcanic rocks are also present" (Browne *et al* 2002, 28). This description is generally consistent with the Dupplin Cross and its base-stone, as well as the other Forteviot sculptures as described above.

3.3. Identifying the source of the stone

If the stone used for sculpture can be characterised, comparisons might be made between sculptures and connections made with specific quarries. There are several ways by which this might be done: X-ray fluorescence, magnetic susceptibility analysis, thin-section microscopy and study by eye.

X-ray fluorescence was not within the means of this study and thin-section analysis is too destructive at this time.

Magnetic susceptibility analysis has previously been carried out on the Dupplin Cross as part of Miller and Ruckley's study. Unfortunately, the stone of the cross proved unsuitable to this type of analysis, although they do not state why (Miller and Ruckley 2005). Regrettably, neither the base-stone nor the other Forteviot sculptures appear to have been included in their study as this would have allowed a potentially valuable contribution to the comparison of the Forteviot collection.

Only by eye observations were possible for this study so attention was paid to the characteristics of the Dupplin Cross and the other stones in the Forteviot collection; noting the lithology, the colour, grain size, mineral composition and laminations if visible. These qualities are described above and can be compared with those of the stone at potential quarry sites or other sources. First, these sources and their locations must be located.
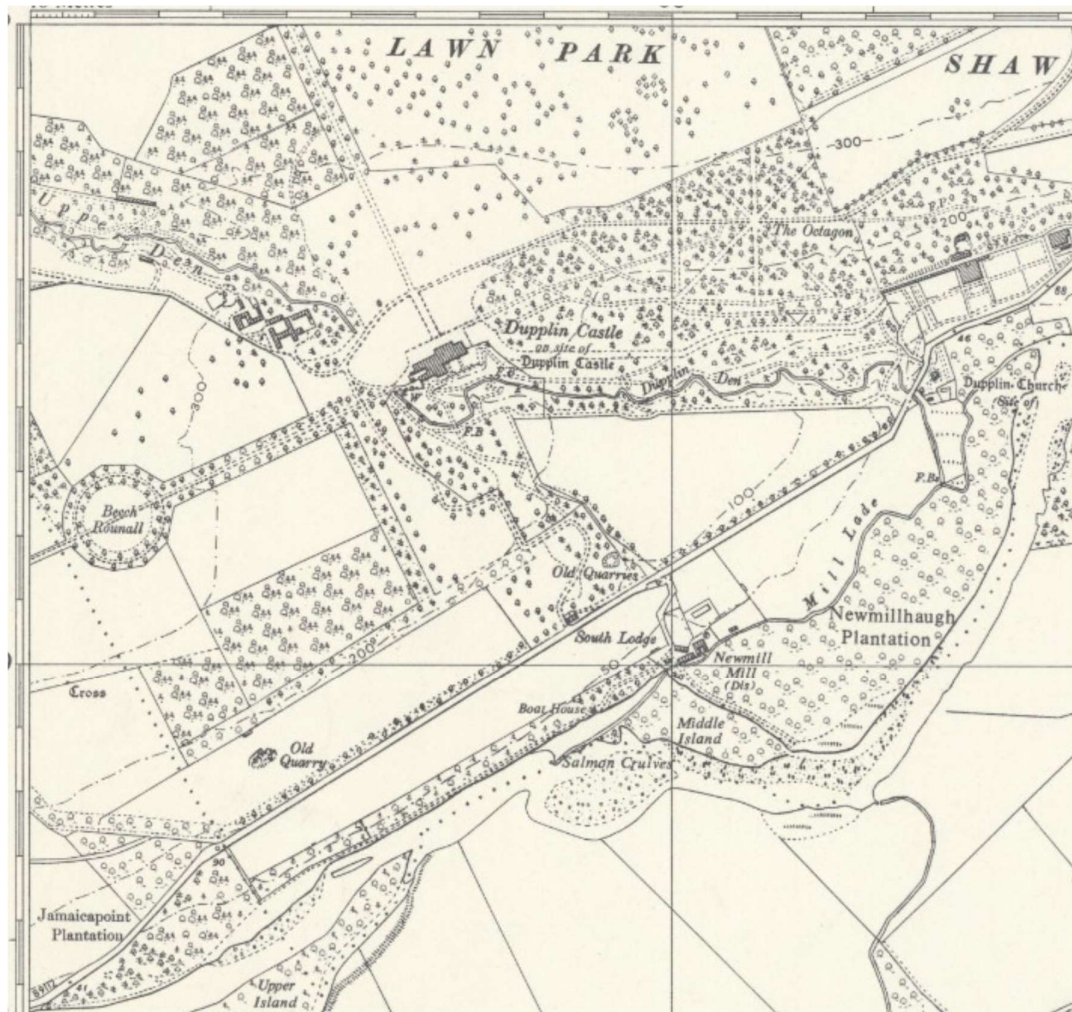
Figure 108: Portion of the 1959 OS map sheet NO01NE (© Ordnance Survey CC-BY)

The Ordnance Survey map of 1959 marks the locations of several 'Old quarries', including one located 330 meters southeast of the Dupplin Cross site, OS grid reference NO 05357 18846 (Figure 108). This is also marked as an outcrop on the 1859 map. Comparison with geological maps shows this to be a sandstone outcrop. The other nearby quarries are located next to the estate drive at the South Lodge. These will not be considered as the geological map shows them to be located on an igneous dyke, which would have been the preferred material for road construction and may have been used for the drive.

The sandstone quarry site was visited in November 2021 to assess its form and the characteristics of the outcropping sandstone. It is a large hollow, approximately 30 metres across, with a vertical rock face at the rear, cutting into the hillside. The floor was overgrown but with the appearance of large spoilheaps surrounding the open side of the quarry. There was evidence of rock cutting in the form of regularly spaced grooves across a lower bed which are

artificial (Figure 109). From this cursory visit it is not possible to date any periods of use and an Early Medieval rockface will likely have been subsequently removed by later quarrying. Archaeological excavation in the quarry itself and the area around it may be able to supply more information.

Figure 109: The quarried outcrop of sandstone 330 metres from the Dupplin Cross site

The exposed rock surface is highly weathered and obscured by lichen, which made characterising the rock on-site impossible beyond confirming that it is sandstone. Consequently, a loose but *in situ* rock was taken for more detailed study. The sample was cleaned and one surface was smoothed to reveal the internal grains (Figure 110). The mineral content and grain size are similar and there are no clasts. A side-by-side comparison may have made the comparison more conclusive, however, it was unfortunate, that at the time of writing this was not possible.

The colour is not viewed as reliable as the different exposure times and weathering conditions that the sample and the monument have been through can result in different colours. This differential weathering is evidenced on the sample and several of the Forteviot fragments described above. This sample also represents only a small part of one bed outcropping here; a different sample may have made a more conclusive match or been very different. Therefore, it

cannot be said that this sample and the stone of the cross are unequivocally from the same source; nevertheless, they are not so different as to rule it out.

Figure 110: Sample of sandstone from the Dupplin quarry; partly smoothed with weathered surface visible

Bedrock is not the only source of stone available in the Forteviot area. Glacial erratics were certainly used as a source for crosses in Ireland as a part-formed broken high-cross still lies in a field of boulders at Ballintubber, County Wicklow. There are glacial erratics to be found in the field edges that are of a size that could feasibly be used to create a large cross (Figure 111). However, those that were observed up close were not sandstone, being either volcanic or low-grade metamorphic (Figure 112). The majority of the rock types up-glacier, i.e. in a north-west direction towards Lochearnhead, are metamorphic.

These stones are large enough and, as already loose, quarrying was not needed, although transport still was. The disadvantage of this source is that it would not reliably split along bedding planes as sandstone naturally does. When bedding planes are well utilised the desired thickness of the sculpture can be created at the point of quarrying, greatly reducing the volume of stone that needs to be removed to create the cross form. These boulders also may not have

been considered to be the most appropriate stone for the sculptor's requirements, particularly as good quality sandstone was available.

Figure 111: Large glacial erratic close to Dupplin Cross site

Figure 112: Detail of the above erratic. Note the large grain size and quartz veins

As well as glacial erratics, there was also a potential alternative source of suitable stone in prehistoric monuments. Several Early Medieval sculptured stones, of various iconographical content and scale, have been created from prehistoric stones previously carved with cup-marks. Meigle 1, Aberlemno 1 and Balblair, INV, are examples that have preserved and appear to respect the

underlying cup-marks (Figure 113). They were probably already standing but the possibility remains that they were quarried from bedrock with cup-marks.

As discussed in section 2.3.1, the corner missing from the Dupplin Cross may have been a way of acknowledging the previous life of the stone in the same that the retained cup-marks do, by preserving a facet of the uncarved surface.
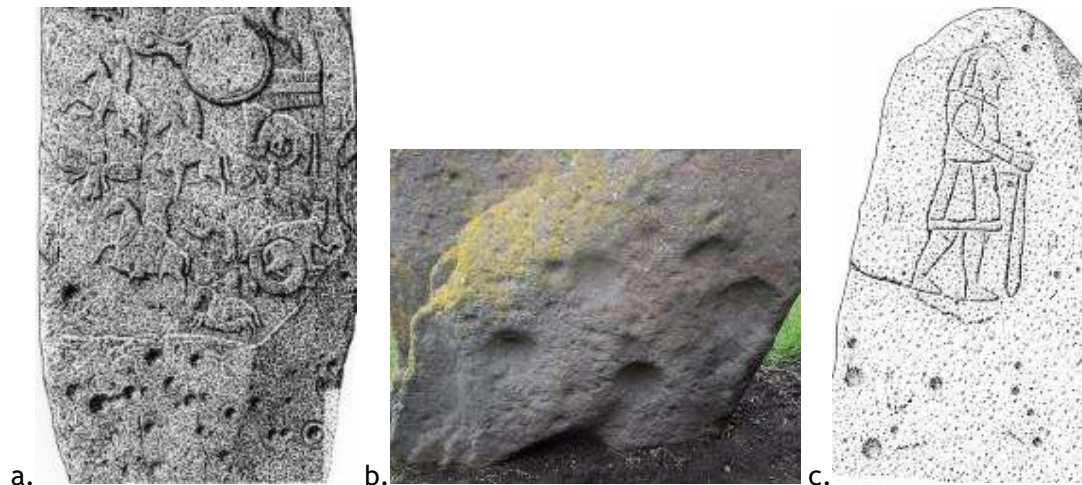
Figure 113: Early Medieval sculptured stones displaying prehistoric cup-marks
a. Meigle 1 (SC397215), b. Aberlemno 1 (DP372998; © HES), c. Balblair (SC1358003) (a & c © Crown Copyright: HES)

From these potential sources for the Dupplin Cross the use of erratics can be discounted. The re-use of prehistoric standing stones is a particularly interesting source, especially considering that the prehistoric remains near Forteviot appear to have been respected and possibly utilised by the Early Medieval activity. However, there are no cup-marks or other sign of prehistoric use on the Dupplin Cross, or the other Forteviot monuments, so this hypothesis cannot be proven. Therefore, the most likely source is quarrying bedrock.

3.4. Manufacturing the cross

Once the most appropriate stone has been sourced there is much that needs to be done before the final monument can be realised. If the desired stone is from a bedrock source it will need to be quarried to release it. The most likely order for the subsequent stages is as follows: the free stone must then be prepared to a certain degree, it is then transported to, or near to, the erection site, where the detailed carving takes place, then it is erected and probably painted (Stalley 2020, 28–41). Most of these phases carry great risk, either of

breakage of the stone or personal injury to the body or the reputation of those responsible for it.

To quarry a block from bedrock a surface parallel with the bedding plane is first uncovered. The outline of the desired block can then be marked and a groove cut to define the area to be separated. Wedges are then sequentially hammered in on the edge to force the block to separate from the underlying beds; the position of these wedges defines the thickness of the block (Stalley 2020, 27).

Assuming a rectangular block of stone the minimum dimensions needed for the Dupplin Cross would have been approximately 3m x 1m x 0.4m giving a volume of 1.2 cubic metres. The weight of a sandstone block of that size would be 2.8 tonnes. This could be greatly reduced to make transport easier by roughly shaping the block into a cross at the quarry site. This would have meant that the form of the cross was determined at this initial stage, probably under the oversight or even directly handled by the master sculptor, partly by what the sculptor desired and partly by what the bedrock and subsequently the released block would allow (Stalley 2020, 28).

Shaping the stone into a cross before transport would make the object more prone to breakage if it is miss-handled, but this risk was perhaps somewhat mitigated by the advantages of manoeuvring a lighter object.

 Once the stone was prepared it had to be transported from the quarry site to where it would be finished and erected. Stalley suggests three possible methods: floated on waterways, carried on ox carts and dragged by oxen with the aid of rollers and levers (2020, 30–31). Given that the stone used for the cross does match that of the local bedrock it can be said with reasonable confidence that transport was not likely to have been very long-distance, indeed it could have been as little as 330 metres. Over this short distance dragging may have been the most suitable method as it meant the stone needed less lifting, which was a particularly risky point in the procedure.

Whether the cross was roughed out at the quarry or after transportation, the detailed sculpting would have taken place at or near the erection site. Stalley acknowledges that this stage is enigmatic; the degree to which the crosses required finishing is unknown, they may have been nearly complete on arrival or still been very rough (2020, 32). Of course, different sculptors may

have had different working practices, dependent on training, preferences and differing levels of acceptable risk at each stage.

Since the Dupplin Cross is made of sandstone it is by nature highly prone to surface damage from pressure and rubbing, with any detailed work and the edges would have been particularly vulnerable during transport. It is likely, therefore, that it still required a fair degree of finishing work after transportation. This work might have taken place next to the erection site, which would minimise transport and handling. If so then it might be that the area of rough paving several metres away is the remains of a work area (Figure 114). It is considered to be contemporary with the Dupplin Cross, and although Ewart suggested it was a viewing area for use after the cross was erected it may equally have been a work area; there were no finds to point to any particular function (Ewart *et al* 2007, 334)
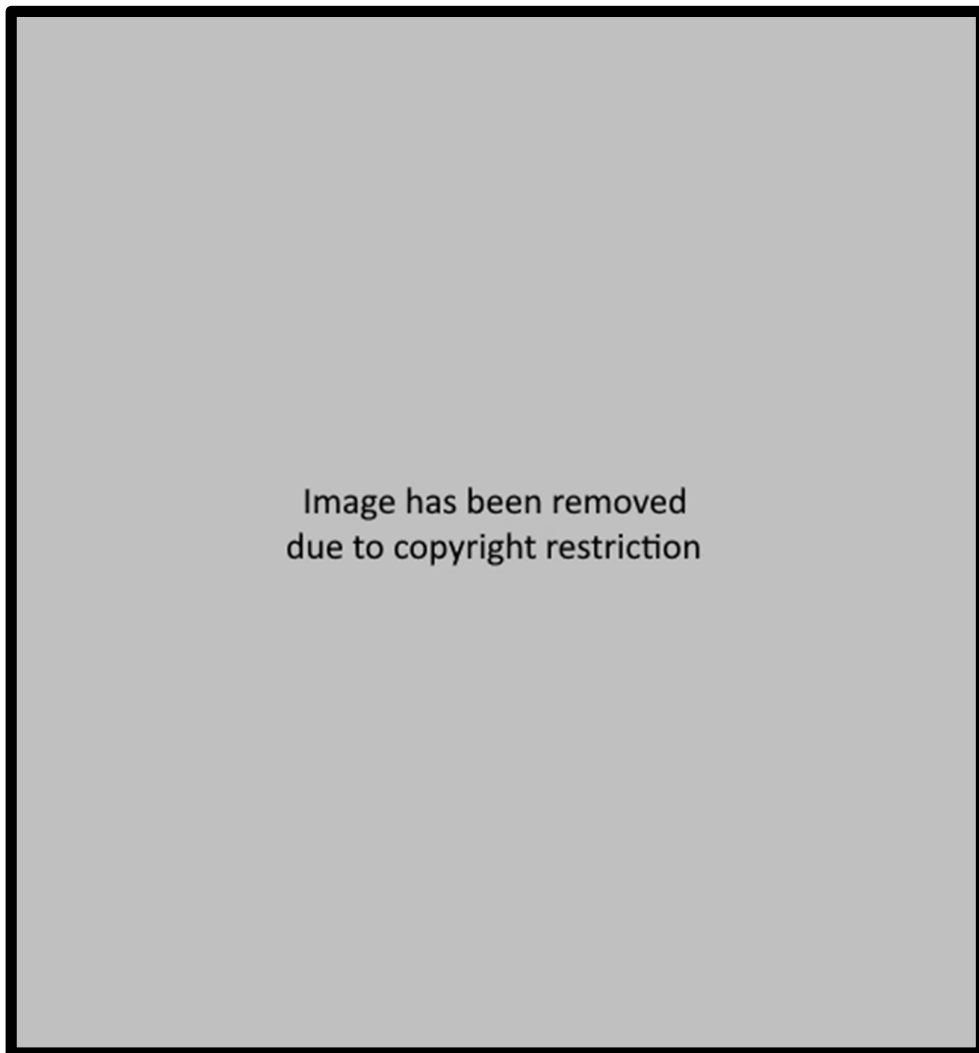
Figure 114: Excavation trenches around the Dupplin Cross showing a rough paved area (Ewart *et al* 2007, 332)

Another question is whether the stone was carved upright in its final position, laid horizontal or at an angle somewhere between. An angle is unlikely as it would not have been possible to work the lower side and the movement of its weight while turning would have been less predictable. The upright or flat positions each had pros and cons in terms of ease of carving and risk of damage. In the case of the Dupplin Cross, since the undersides of the arms are carved it was unlikely to have been upright as this would have been exceptionally difficult and uncomfortable for the sculptor (Stalley 2020, 33).

Over most of the cross there is no sign or remaining toolmarks, suggesting that they were either carefully erased during the finishing stages or been removed by weathering. There is one area in which a trace does survive. Under strong raked lighting punch marks can be seen outlining the hounds, particularly down the back of the right-hand animal (Figure 115). These marks are evenly spaced and would have been used define the initial shape to be carved before being smoothed out by chisels as carving progressed.

Figure 115: Slight marks from a punch tool outlining the right-hand dog and the edge of the panel

Stalley concluded that the Irish high-crosses were erected by means of constructed frames from which the stone was lifted with rope running through a pulley at the top and either held by a team of labourers, or wound by a windlass or treadwheel (2020, 39). This method was the most controllable and reduced the risk of damage to the stone.

The final stage of creating a monument such as the Dupplin Cross would have been applying paint, the use of which is evidenced at Portmahomack and St Andrews. How detailed this painting was is difficult to say as only slight traces of pigment have been found so far. Stalley's opinion is that it would have been "applied in a controlled way, picking out details rather than covering everything in polychrome" (2020, 41). The application of paint would have transformed the appearance of the stone; and if it was desired that that appearance was to last these exterior monuments would need to be repainted regularly until at some point this task dwindled and ceased. It may be that the painted surface was only meant to be temporary, to make the new monument even more impressive and set its appearance in the memories of those that were there to witness it, after which it was allowed to fade.

3.5. Conclusions

There is certainly no lack of suitable stone in the area around the Dupplin site. The most practical source appears to have been the quarry a short distance from the site. On the other hand, it is important to remember that other considerations may have been more important. For example, someone may have had an obligation to supply the stone or it may have gifted; in these cases that may have meant that the stone was transported from further afield (K Forsyth pers. comm.). The sourcing also has a bearing on the Dunfallandy Stone — Dunfallandy may have been sourced from the Dupplin quarry or it and the Dupplin Cross may have both come from elsewhere.

The comparison with the Forteviot collection was inconclusive, with regards to matching any of the lithologies by eye, as they are fragmentary and were exposed to different weathering patterns. Without a magnetic susceptibility analysis on the group it is not possible to say more on whether they are from the same source as the Dupplin Cross.

4. Landscape; the setting and performance

Figure 116: The Dupplin Cross *in situ* before its removal in 1998 (SC1849677; © Crown Copyright: HES)

'It should be noted that landscape archaeology refers here, not simply to the biophysical environment but to a cultural landscape theorized as a space composed of three aspects: the material, social and cognitive.' (Foster *et al* 2016, 53)

In keeping with this view of landscape archaeology, the physical location of the Dupplin Cross in the landscape will be discussed along with the role it was created to play in the socially constructed landscape. Its presence, in turn, may then have influenced people's perceptions of that landscape in ways that were not intentional.

Figure 117: Stone plaque marking the area from which the Dupplin Cross was removed in 1998

To discuss the positioning of the Dupplin Cross it first needs to be ascertained whether the site on which it stood before being removed was the original site on which it was erected. A map by John Adair, dated 1683, appears to mark both the Dupplin and Invermay crosses in approximately their modern locations. Hall does consider the possibility that the Dupplin Cross may have been moved to that location in a later period, perhaps following the Battle of Dupplin in 1332, but then goes on to state that all evidence considered that the modern location is the original one (2011, 158-62).

Figure 118: Adair's map of 1683 entitled *The Mappe of Straithern, Stormont, Cars of Gourie with the rivers Tay and Ern, surveighed & designed John Adair* (© CC-BY National Library of Scotland)
The Dupplin and Invermay crosses are circled for clarity.

This is significant and makes the location of the Dupplin Cross particularly worthy of study as many of the Early Medieval crosses were either erected on ecclesiastical land as part of the church precinct or have been moved to churchyards or private gardens and designed landscapes later in their lives.

With the confidence that the site from which the cross was removed in 1998 is where it had stood since it was erected allows the surrounding landscape to be discussed more meaningfully. Field and map-based observations are combined with GIS viewshed analysis to investigate the monument's impact within the local and wider landscape.

4.1. The Local landscape
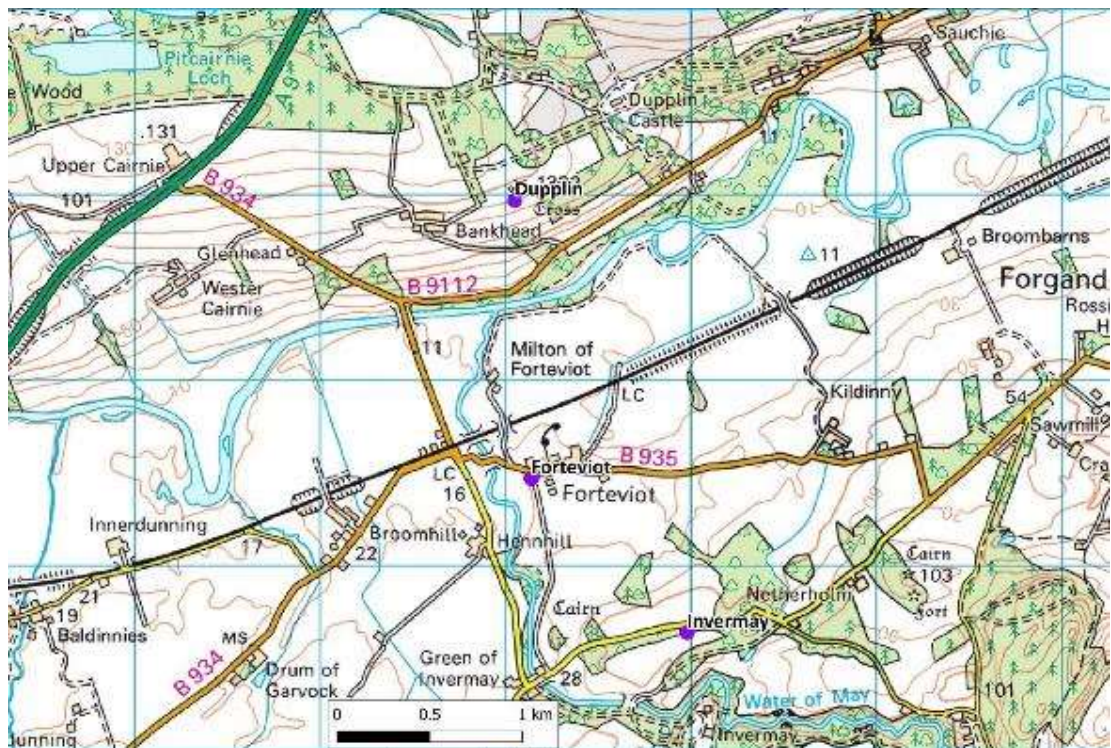
Figure 119: Modern map of the area around Forteviot, marking the Dupplin and Invermay crosses
(© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey; 100025252)

The Dupplin Cross was located 1.5km north of Forteviot, which is itself located in lower Strathearn on the valley floor. The Invermay Cross, on the other hand, is 1.2km to the southeast of Forteviot. The comparable locations and proximity to old routeways, discussed below, of both crosses is notable; they do appear to have been erected to bracket Forteviot. At this point the valley is at its narrowest as the Ochil Hills to the south are in close proximity to the Gask ridge to the north.

The monument was sited 90 metres above sea level; approximately 80 metres above the valley floor. This is right on the shoulder of the hill slope before the gradient reduces but continues to climb. It should be noted that the Invermay Cross somewhat parallels this positioning; standing just above 60 metres, slightly short of two small summits. In other words, both monuments are in elevated positions but neither is located on a summit or crest.

Figure 120: Southwards view from the Dupplin Cross marker
The approximate site of the Invermay Cross is marked by the arrow

Figure 121: Northwards view from near the Invermay Cross
The site of the Dupplin Cross is marked by the arrow

This position means that the Dupplin Cross would not have been visible above the horizon from Forteviot, although it would have made its full height

visible, assuming that the line of sight was not obstructed by trees or built structures. Even just a little higher and its visibility to and from the valley floor reduces quickly because it would be hidden by the lower slope of the hill.

It is not now possible to determine just how visible the cross would have been. The level of visibility would have depended on whether the cross was painted or not. If it was bare stone it would have been less visible. However, if applied colour contrasted with the surrounding vegetation then it would have stood out. It could have been made all the more striking by the paint colours being changed throughout the year depending on the season, white or yellow in summer and red in winter, for example.

On the other hand, the monument stood with the main cross faces orientated East and West, in line with the main direction of the River Earn as it flows eastwards to where it joins the Tay. It, therefore, presented a side-on view from Forteviot, indicating that it was not intended to be explicitly viewed from there, but the glimpse available may have been enough to remind those in Forteviot of its presence. Of course, this monument was erected within the rules of Christian architecture, which necessitated an East-West orientation; in this case the importance of those rules would have over-ridden landscape design, even for a royal focal-point.

4.2. Wider landscape

To investigate what the wider view may have been like GIS (QGIS) was used to conduct a viewshed analysis from the site of the Dupplin Cross as well as the Invermay Cross and the site of the current church in Forteviot. This method was chosen as it was clear that the site of the monument had an expansive view and the viewshed analysis clarified the geographical features that view encompassed. It must be noted that this method does not take into account any vegetation, such as trees, that may have obscured the view either to or from the viewpoint in question.
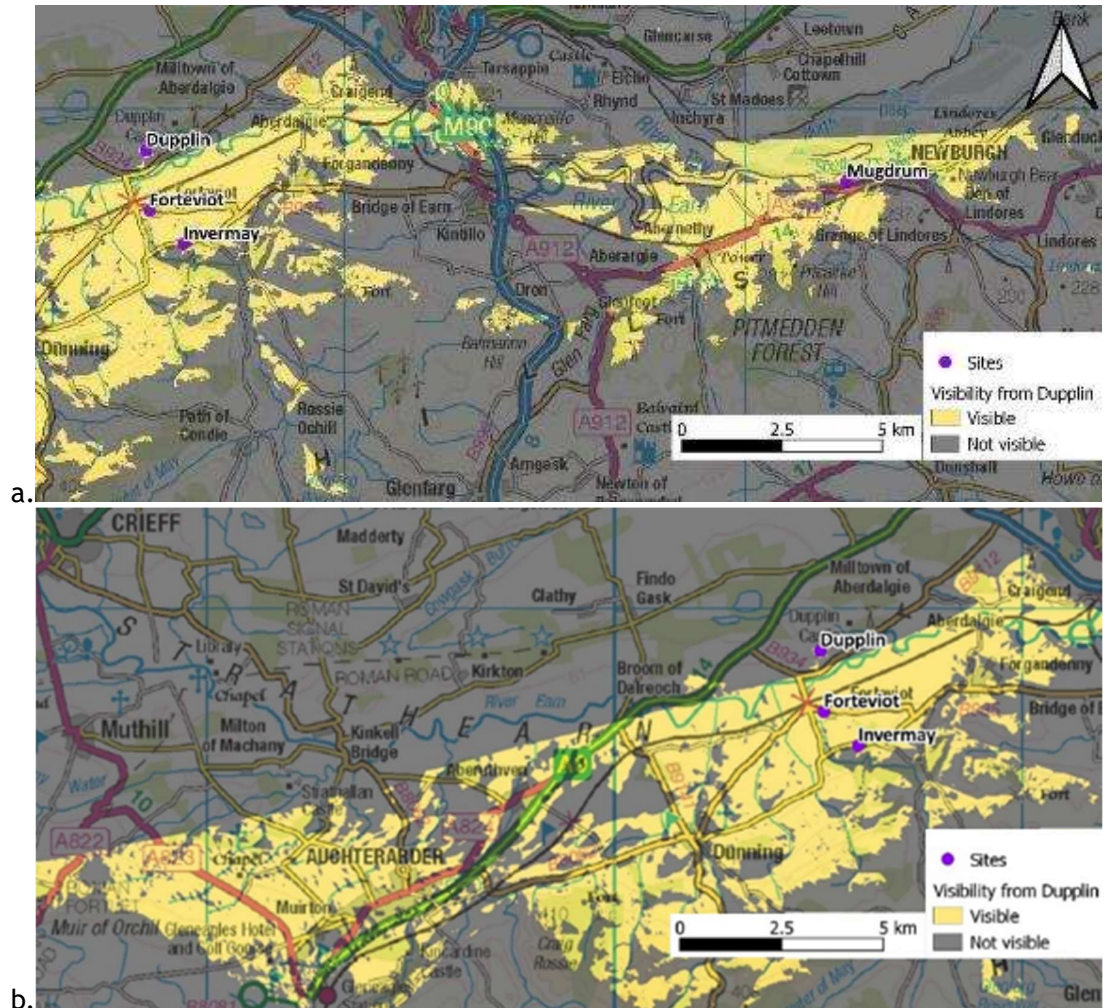
Figure 122: Viewshed analysis from the Dupplin Cross
a. focussing on the eastern view towards Newburgh, b. focussing on the western view
(viewshed by author, base map © Crown copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey; 100025252)

The analysis showed that Newburgh, FIF, where the Mugdrum Cross is situated, is theoretically visible from the site of the Dupplin Cross (Figure 122a). As the Dupplin Cross stands at 90 metres (295 feet) above sea level, at that altitude a person with average vision on a clear day could see approximately 33km (21miles) (the formula for determining how many miles an individual can see at higher levels is the square root of the altitude times 1.225. In this case ($\sqrt{295}$) x 1.225 = 21). From Dupplin to the harbour at Newburgh is 18.5km so Newburgh and half the width of the Tay could have been visible at that point; and at the Earn/Tay confluence then the entire width could have been visible. Unfortunately, this could not be verified by field observation as there is now plantation woodland obscuring this view (Figure 123).

This leads to the possibility that boats may have been visible on clear days or at night if a light was burning, either on the boat itself or from a signal light on the shore. This may, of course, be circumstantial but it could be the case that a watch was kept near the cross, hoping for an expected arrival or fearing an enemy's approach.

Alternatively, this view may have been symbolic rather than practical in nature; the cross with the image and name of the King watched over the Tay, the sea entry to Strathearn. It also has a far view to the west, extending to beyond Auchterarder where Strathallan and Strathearn meet; a view that becomes far more restricted if one were to move higher up the hill (Figure 122b & Figure 124).

Figure 123: Eastwards view from the Dupplin Cross marker

Figure 124: South-westwards view from the Dupplin Cross marker

Arguably, the position of the Dupplin Cross was chosen because of the optimal view it held, encompassing Forteviot itself, the other cross at Invermay and the extensive panorama of Strathearn to both east and west; and that view would have been significant, in either a practical sense or symbolic or even combining both.

Although the cross was potentially visible at a distance and certainly had even wider views from it, it must be considered that this monument was also intended to be encountered up close, as attested by the detail of the carving on it, despite the isolated position it held in the modern landscape. The nature of this close interaction is particularly unclear. Excavations carried out when the monument was removed from the hillside revealed an area of rough paving, sub-circular in shape. This was the only feature in the excavated area, apart from the fence and hedge lines. There were no artefacts or dateable materials found, however, since it seals the same cleared subsoil as the cross-base they are likely to be contemporaneous (Ewart *et al* 2007, 334). This paved area and the extended platform on the cross-base described above suggest focused activity at the monument, with space for groups to assemble, perhaps with some or all having the opportunity for intimate prayer on the platform (*ibid* 2007, 334).

As well as people deliberately visiting the cross, travellers would likely have passed it on-route to and from Forteviot. The Early Medieval routeways have been reconstructed (Figure 125), with main roads running east-west on either side of the River Earn and a north-south track linking them by way of a ferry crossing over the Earn directly below the Dupplin Cross (Campbell and Driscoll. 2020, 32-8). This linking road passes both Forteviot and the two crosses. The Pillar of Eliseg, discussed in section 2.2, was also erected on a routeway that would have been used for local as well as long-distance travel (Murrieta-Flores and Williams 2017, 90–2).

When discussing routeways the theme of the *Adventus* discussed in section 2.3.2 may be relevant. If the image of the horseman is related to the *Adventus* it may be that the Dupplin Cross displays the stately processionary nature of the king entering the royal centre at the place that it happened.
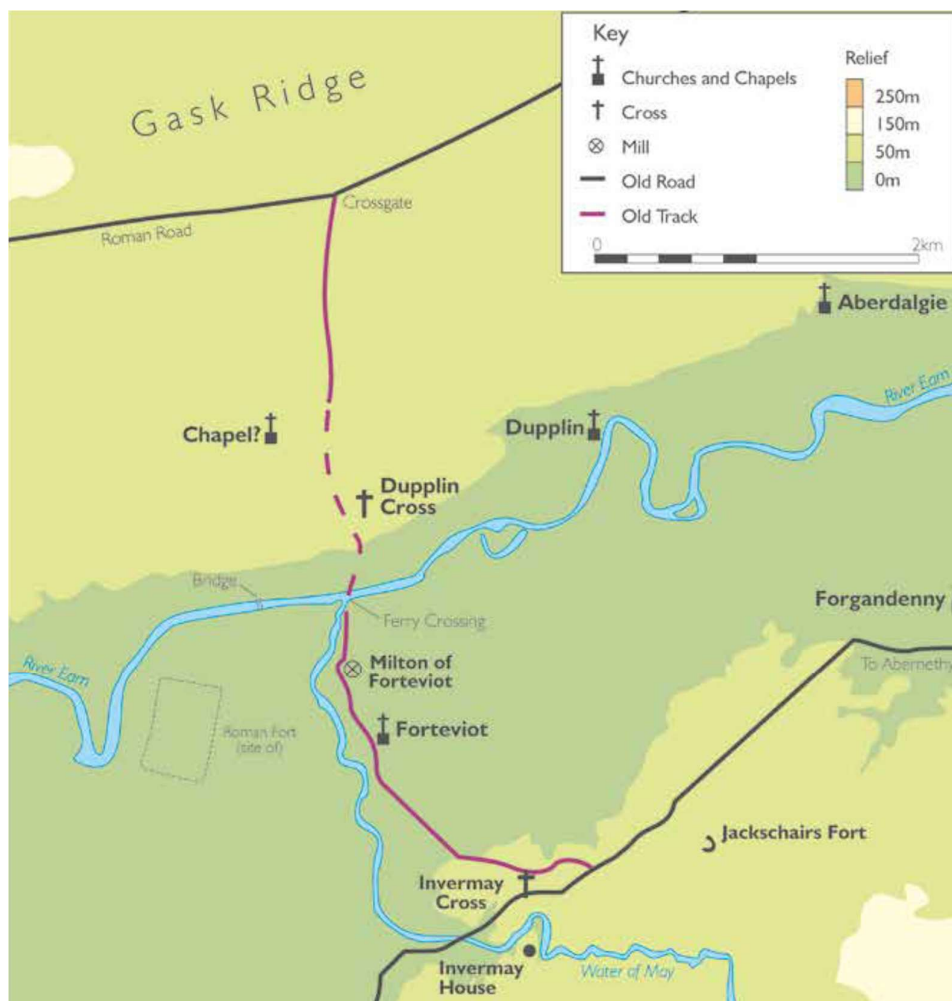
Figure 125: Map of Forteviot area showing the medieval road network and river crossing places
(in Campbell and Driscoll 2020, pg. 33, fig. 2.2)

The Dupplin and Invermay crosses were significant landmarks on journeys taken to and from Forteviot. It is possible that other crosses in the region, particularly those that appear isolated, also marked routeways; either mid-points or destinations (Figure 126). As pointed out in section 2.3.2, both the Dupplin Cross and the Apostle's Stone at Dunkeld share the same 'static rider' image as well as a shared historical connection in Custantín son of Uirguist. Shared imagery can also be seen between Dupplin, Invermay, Mugdrum and St Andrews; but in this case in the key-patterns (see section 2.3.3). This route also passes Abernethy, where an early church is recorded as being dedicated to St Bridget and was gifted by a Pictish king (Proudfoot 1997, 60; Evans 2011, 60). As discussed above, there may have been an early harbour at Newburgh, perhaps with the Mugdrum Cross indicating its royal connection. This harbour could have facilitated a sea route to St Andrews rather than the journey continuing by land.

Figure 126: Map showing routeways between Forteviot and ecclesiastical sites that share sculptural and/or historical links
(base map © Google)

More tenuous, but still possible, are the connections with two sites that both display cruder versions of the 'static rider'. These being, Dunblane, a significant Early Medieval site in itself, and Tullibole, a small church perhaps serving as a mid-point on the way to Culross and the abbey there, headed by St Serf. St Serf is also connected with Strathearn and possibly founded the first church that stood on the site of St Serf's Church in Dunning.

Having Forteviot at the centre and Dunkeld, St Andrews, Culross and Dunblane surrounding it, the routeways connected these important Early Medieval sites into a wider and more dynamic landscape than each could claim on its own. Perhaps the shared imagery acted to bolster the recollections of each place in the minds of those people who travelled between them creating a cohesive group of places and people.

4.3. Conclusions

The precise location chosen for the Dupplin Cross was very deliberate. As has been shown it optimised both the close-by view to Forteviot *and* the wide-sweeping far-off views. It was potentially visible from Forteviot and Invermay under certain conditions and was also undoubtably intended to be seen close-up; formal ceremonies and worship may have taken place at it as well as more casual observation by those passing on the track that ran near it. Apparently isolated monuments like Dupplin, Invermay and Mugdrum were erected as means of communication in locations where they would be seen by those travelling locally and further afield.

When the Dupplin Cross was removed from the hillside it became disconnected from the landscape in which it had long played a part. Although the *stone* has been preserved it was perhaps at the cost of diminishing the *monument*. On the other hand, even if the cross had been retained *in situ*, the surrounding landscape has also changed, particularly the road layouts and our methods of travel. It would not be possible to truly experience the monument as it was originally intended to be experienced.

5. Conclusion

The Dupplin Cross has been know of by many for a long time. Nevertheless, it has, at points, been greatly misunderstood and misdated.

The reading of the inscription, partial as it is, opened the door to further investigation and Isabel Henderson's preliminary study began that work in 1999. The research presented here aimed to extend and deepen the understanding of the monument by thoroughly reviewing the Dupplin Cross in all of its aspects: iconographical, locational and lithological. In these regards it was successful.

Investigating the position in the landscape clarified that the precise position of the Dupplin Cross appears to have been very deliberate; chosen in order to maximise its visibility from Forteviot as well as widening scope of the view from it. Analysing the landscape with GIS also revealed the intriguing possibility that the river Tay was visible from it.

After considering a number of potential sources for the stone, the outcrop of suitable sandstone close to the site of the cross was identified as the most likely quarry from which the stone was obtained.

It was possible to comment further than ever before on all of its iconographical elements. Numerous connections with other sculptures and art media, both Insular and further afield, have been detailed and analysed; with the key findings summarised below.

One of the most significant conclusions is the identification of the key features of the 'static rider' group of horsemen: a stationary horse, the large head of the rider and the rider's leg hanging straight down. This clarification of the main features, along with the secondary ones, allowed the 'static rider' group and the extended type to be analysed. Likely modes of duplication and transfer were identified; with one set being transferred contemporaneously, Dupplin, Forteviot 4 and Dunkeld 2, while the other set was created some time later in emulation, Benvie, Kirriemuir 3 and Aldbar. All of these are deliberate recreations of a kingly image first used to represent Custantín son of Uirguist.

A second group of monuments exemplify a different mode by which the elements could be transferred; those containing the four-path spiral key-patterns. This otherwise rare motif is consistent in style and yet marked by the confident modifications of display throughout this group of sculptures. It is

arguable that it is the result of a single sculptor experimenting with a design of their own innovation.

With regards to the aim of identifying if there was a sculptural connection between the historically and epigraphically linked regions of Fortriu and Forteviot, the results are inconclusive. There are several commonalities but none are distinctly the same, certainly not in the way that the 'static rider' and key-pattern groups are. For now, all that can be confidently said is that the sculpture appears to be broadly contemporaneous and that there is some shared sense of figurative style. The parallels with Sueno's Stone are intriguing and, if our understanding of that monument's dating and what it portrays can be improved, may be illuminating.

As well as the above connections, it was possible to open up some of the previously held interpretations of several of the panels. Firstly, Henderson's certainty that the birds in panel A5 represent doves despite their lack of resemblance to that type of bird. Secondly, the harper being an image of biblical King David when it in fact bears a closer affiliation with the group of spearmen. And finally, bringing to the fore the discrepancy of the David and the Lion panel with all other representations of this scene with its inclusion of a bear and a boar. The possibility that alternative legitimate interpretations exist is intriguing and all of these panels deserve further dedicated questioning in an effort to gain a more definite meaning.

An important point to highlight, particularly as it has not been noted by any previous studies, is that the tegulated finial on the Dupplin Cross predates the far more well-known Irish examples with which it bears a close resemblance. This deserves further study than was possible here, with the vital questions being whether this feature developed in both places independently or was it created in Pictland first before being transferred to Ireland?

The research and results set-out above only covers a small portion of the life of the Dupplin Cross. It is difficult to say how long it was considered an active player in the actions of those attending the royal court at Forteviot but it did persist as an upstanding monument in the landscape until very recently. Although its context and role continually changed it was always there and, to a greater or lesser extent, affecting the people who knew of it. This latter part of the monument's life, and its new place indoors, is also worthy of future study.

Particularly as this is a monument that, until so recently, still stood in *in situ* it is an ideal candidate for exploring the impact that removing it from the landscape has had on appreciation and understanding by the public and scholars alike.

Over the past few decades there have been numerous calls for an updated *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, which would certainly have aided the comparative study aspect of this research. Furthermore, if this endeavour were undertaken it would be an opportunity to not only update the catalogue of known sculpture but to upgrade it with modern capabilities. All monuments and fragments should be fully illustrated, by multiple methods where possible, and fully described. This data should be searchable with the ability to view a wide swathe of related monuments or drill down on key features. The results of a search should be viewable in multiple formats as required, such as a list, images or dots on a map. A searchable and flexible database, like that described here, would make research similar to that presented here faster and more complete.

6. Appendix B – Abbreviations

Counties

Aberdeenshire	ABD
Angus	ANG
Argyll	ARG
Ayrshire	AYR
Bute	BTE
Caithness	CAI
Fife	FIF
Inverness-shire	INV
Kinross-shire	KNR
Lanarkshire	LAN
Moray	MOR
Orkney	ORK
Perthshire	PER
Ross and Cromarty	ROS
Shetland	SHE
Sutherland	SUT

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