Rhynie, A Powerful Place of Pictland

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NOTES

Chapter 1

1 See footage recording the circumstances of the find here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4rxHpT5nxA.

2 See the Scotland Archaeology Strategy (http://archaeologystrategy.scot), Aim 4 *Encouraging Greater Engagement* and the HES Corporate Plan, *Heritage for All*, specially *Heritage and Society* (https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=1f65f457-a602-4ddc-af61-aa2500933d61).

Chapter 2

1 In the paper it was noted that nearly 40% of Class I stones were found in a pair or a part of a group of monuments, suggesting that the relationships between monuments were an important avenue for research.

2 The objectives of the project as set out in the 2011 paper included moving beyond art historical analyses of the symbol stones and their styles: 'REAP is not attempting to offer new "translations" of the symbols [at Rhynie]; we have approached looking at the symbols and monuments in new ways, by looking at the wider monumental landscape, rather than focusing on the symbols alone. The monuments are treated as markers within a socially significant landscape; the monument is not merely the venue for symbol display, and the display of symbols may not even be the reason why a monument was erected (see also Clarke 2007). By altering our focus on these monuments, we aim to break down preconceived notions of symbol stones as isolated objects and attempt to recontextualise them within their surroundings through our landscape approach to fieldwork' (Gondek & Noble 2011: 285).

3 And now see work by Peteranna and Birch 2019, confirming early medieval phases of the 5th–6th century AD and 11th–12th century AD.

4 Erroneously called Strathdon – Donside is the correct name for the area.

Chapter 3

1 We thank Gordon Noble, Dauvit Broun, Jacob King and Alex Woolf for their comments on the contents and drafts of this chapter, and Gordon Noble for his help with all the images.

2 *arduis atque horrentibus montium iugis.*

3 We are grateful to Professor Carole Hough for confirming this reading.

4 Pronounced /straþˈbogi/, locally /straˈbogi/ (Alexander 1952: 382); Gaelic *Srath Bhalgaidh* (Watson 2002: 205). Macdonald (1891: 31) gives the Gaelic pronunciation in Strathspey in English orthography as 'Stravalagyn or Stravolagyn', while Diack gives 'sra-bhalgan, sra-valgi, sra-valagi' (Alexander 1952: 382).

5 William dean of Strathbogie witnesses several charters 1223 x 1227 eg *Moray Reg.* no 62.

6 In their discussion of Irish place-names, Flanagan & Flanagan (1994: 143) render it *holm*, ie flat land beside a river or lake.

7 This appears in another source as **Rath Ethairt*. There is little to decide between the two forms, although the *Srath-* reading is slightly more likely to be correct.

8 Originally Strathdighty Martin, 'the strath of the Dighty Water' whose parish church was dedicated to St Martin.

9 'The strath of the Water of Feugh'.

10 *Strathbolgyn* 1223 x 1226 *Moray Reg.* no 62; *Strathbolgy* 1226 *Moray Reg.* no. 69; *Stratbolgin* in the Verse Chronicle added to the Melrose Chronicle (Anderson et al 1936: xxv), from the same source as additions to the Alba king-list (Anderson 2011: 268, 276, 284, 288–9), whose archetype probably had **Strathbolgin*. Early forms are all compounded with *Strath*.

11 NJ522388. Described in the OS Name Book both as a deep pool and a deep pot (OS1/1/25/33 and OS1/1/40/183).

12 NJ521350 OS Name Book OS1/1/36/105–106: 'A deep Pot in the Bogie Water . . . Tradition records this as being the place where an infant son of Baron Barclay of Gartly was drowned, on returning, from being baptized at the Chapel of Brawlandknows, when the "Bogie Water" was flooded after a great fall of rain; and the place where the infant was drowned, is still called "Lord John's Pot".'

13 For a discussion of this suffix, see Taylor & Márkus 2012: 409–11.

14 All these parishes are in the medieval deanery of Strathbogie, Moray diocese.

15 The early forms make it clear that the first element is Gaelic *dabhach*: (church of) *Dauendor* 1236 *Mor. Reg.* no 88; (church of) *Dauachendor* 1270 x 1279 *Abdn. Reg.* ii, 52; *Dauachyndore* 1361 *Abdn. Reg.* i 89. It would seem to have been re-interpreted as *achadh* 'field, farm' in the 15th century, first appearing as *Auchindoir* in 1445 (Alexander 1952: 153).

16 *New-mardrom* and *Auld-mardrom* 1511 *RMS* ii no. 3599 (in the barony of Strathbogie); *Auld-Mardrum* 1576 x 1578 *RMS* iv no. 2814.

17 For the creation of parishes in Scotland, with particular reference to the diocese of Moray, see Taylor 2014.

18 It should be noted that the foundation account of the bishopric of Mortlach recorded by John of Fordun, a priest of the diocese of Aberdeen writing in the late 14th century, ascribes its foundation to King Máel Coluim II (1005–34) (Woolf 2007: 300).

19 Between Mortlach and the Spey lay the parish of Inveravon (Strathspey deanery, diocese of Moray), and the parishes of Aberlour and Artendol, westerly outliers of Strathbogie deanery, diocese of Moray.

20 *Abdn. Reg.* I, 6, 85. The Latin is somewhat unclear here, but this is the meaning in the later text *Aberdeen Reg.* II, 125.

21 The first is from Hector Boece (XXX Book XI, chapter 77); the second from *Aberdeen Breviary*, 155.

22 e.g. *Abdn. Reg.* I, 411 (1537).

23 *ecclesia sancti m'huluoch' de Tharuelund St A. Lib.* 246–7; described and dated to 28 March 1165 × 1171 at Beam et al (https://poms.ac.uk/record/source/2823/# [accessed 17 April 24]).

24 1724 *Geog. Coll.* I, 30. See saintsplaces: Saints in Scottish Place-Names – St Luke's Well, Kildrummy (Mo Luag's) (gla.ac.uk), where it is given as *Sammiluaks*.

25 He also gives its form as Clochmaloo (Macdonald 1891: 253), with the stress on the final syllable, which reflected local pronunciation. The name St Luag's Church used by Canmore to refer to the medieval parish kirk of Rhynie is a modern back-formation from Cloch Maluidh.

26 Bearing in mind the problems of the Bannatyne edition, for which see Ross 2006.

27 All now digitised and almost all transcribed online on ScotlandsPlaces.

28 See for example *Lind. Cart.* no LIX.

29 Out of the six davochs in the parish of Rhynie identified by Alasdair Ross, three are in the land of Noth, namely Smithston, Milton of Noth and Old & New Noth (Ross 2003: vol 1, 100; vol 2, 115).

30 Gregory Toner, in his detailed study of this element in medieval Ireland, identifies a wide range of referents including 'a (large) settlement, probably within an enclosure, and by extension a city'; 'part of a (monastic) complex'; 'a palisade or stockade'; and 'a ringfort, circular earthwork, or cashel', with the common feature running throughout being the notion of enclosure (Toner 2000: 21).

31 *Carynyndard* 1532 *RMS* iii no 1194, probably a scribal or editorial error for **Carnyndard*; *Carndard* 1552 *Aberdeen-Banff Ill.* 4, 425. Both Cairnmore (as a settlement) and Cairnbeg do not appear until the OS 6-inch map of 1870. *Cairnbaird c* 1771 RHP260/1 is clearly an error on the part of the surveyor.

32 Duncan de Forbes receives a charter from Alexander III *c* 1271 of the lands Forbes and Kearn in free barony (*RRS Handlist/Alexander III* no 198). This is the earliest reference to the Forbes family.

33 *Drumynour* 1440 *Aberdeen-Banff Illust.* 4, 395. The name is pronounced with the stress on the medial syllable *-inn-*.

34 Anglicised as *inver*, sometimes as *inner*, found in place-names throughout Scotland.

35 *Blairindynnie alias Hauch of Bogy* 1557 Alexander 1952, 178. The farm steading itself is at NJ51742893.

36 It can be compared with the Fife name Pitdinnie (*Peddunin* 1223), which certainly contains this element. See Taylor & Márkus 2006: 217–18.

37 (church of) *Kerin c* 1250 *St A. Lib.*, 356; *Kierne c* 1250 *Abdn. Reg.* ii, 52; *Kyern c* 1250 *Abdn. Reg.* ii, 55.

Chapter 6

1 The term ringfort has been utilised in this monograph to denote thick-walled enclosures (generally around 60m diameter or less) that lie on lower ground in hilltop or hillslope locations without major 'natural' defences (Taylor 1958: 19; Noble et al 2013: 1141–2).

Chapter 9

1 Interesting parallels can also be found further west: for example, the *c* 0.08ha oval enclosure at Dun Mac Sniachan in Argyll with its massive vitrified wall; the finds-rich and likely multi-period 0.15ha enclosure at Dunagoil, Bute; or the oval 0.1ha fort at Carradale Point, Kintyre (Stratford Halliday pers comm). However, given the geographical location of Tap o' Noth, the discussion in this chapter concentrates on those examples from north-east Scotland.

2 Overall, there are a number of parallels for the upper fort at Tap o' Noth in eastern Scotland, but few sites have clear sequences and few were excavated to modern standards. With regard to size, these sites enclose total areas ranging from 0.08ha (Greencairn) to 0.68ha (White Caterthun) (Lock and Ralston 2022: 430–1, table A2.1). The majority of the forts outline here are therefore around the size of Tap o' Noth or smaller and fall within the generally modest size range of most vitrified forts within Scotland (Lock and Ralston 2022: 430–1, table A2.1).

3 An outer wall found by Neish may represent an earlier fort (Canmore ID 33450). Neish reports many finds from the dig including weaponry, a bronze spiral ring, a stone cup, and a bronze enamelled pin, but details on the findspots and the arefacts themselves are lacking.

4 Requiring fires of between 1040 and 1215 Celsius (Nisbet 1975: 7).

5 Excluding the early debates on whether these sites were actually volcanos! eg see Nisbet 1974: 4; Ralston 2006: 147. For a useful and detailed rundown of these theories (and others) see Nisbet 1974: 4–5.

6 Nisbet 1974: 7 lists earlier experiments on vitrification in the 19th century that mainly involved the uses of kilns.

7   As well as negative impacts of the weather and the termination of the burning prior to natural extinguishment, the relative lack of vitrification was also ascribed to the freshness of the wall timbers and rampart superstrucutre, and the use of softwoods rather than hardwoods (Ralston 1986: 34).

8   Similar debates have surrounded the burning of (migration era where identified) forts in Sweden with debate over a number of decades oscillating between those supporting vitrification as a deliberate act to strengthen the ramparts and those arguing for incidental vitrification following accidental burning or burning through enemy action (See for example Kresten & Ambrosian 1992; Kresten et al 1993, 2003; Sjöblom et al 2022; Bornfalk-Back 2022). The most recent study argues against the deliberate construction idea (Bornfalk-Back 2022).

9   However, it must be noted that there has not yet been an experimental burning that involved the comparable amount of oak timbers likely utilised in timber-laced ramparts of the type found at these oblong forts. Burning on hilltops would have also led to much greater levels of updraught in the fires on the forts as opposed to the experimental ramparts built at lower elevations.

10 Nisbet 1974: 5–6 assessed where vitrification was most obvious in relation to the inside wall face, outside wall face and the central core – top to bottom. Clearly there are differing patterns of vitrification with some showing evidence of vitrification on the inside wall face only, whereas others show the outside only and some show both. The overwhelming pattern, however, is for vitrification to be most obvious in the wall core due to the intensity of the fire concentrating here. Indeed, Nisbet suggests that instances where vitrification is evident at the inside or outside edge is due to the destruction of the wall faces themselves. Nisbet's work suggests it would be difficult to trace where fires had been started at vitrified forts in relation to the concentrations of vitrified material alone.

11 At Tap o' Noth there is the pollen evidence from the well that could be suggestive of the stalling of domesticated animals within the summit enclosure (Jones, Chapter 8). The presence of carbonised barley grains from trench 3 and within some of the peat layers may also suggest settlement and occupation within the fort. However, some of the evidence could come from pre-fort occupation (eg the dates from trench 3 are early in the sequence) and from the redeposition of material, eg the use of clay from more lowland contexts for lining the well.

Chapter 10

1   This is a 11th-century source, so it is not certain it provides a contemporary record.

2   Some of the residences of rich magnates in first-millennium AD Scandinavia have also been interpreted as sites of seasonal assembly (eg Riisøy 2013: 35).

3   These sites have previously interpreted as central places for minor kings or chiefs (Semple et al 2020: 162), perhaps mirroring some of the potentially multiple roles explored in relation to Rhynie (Chapter 12). The courtyard sites can date back to the early centuries AD and appear to have been a long-lived phenomenon.

4   Each 'house' may have been the preserve of representatives from each local assembly unit within particular administrative units.

Chapter 12

1   The microbotanic and phytolith signatures from Cairn More building and Tap buildings were very similar (Prado; Chapter 8).

2   Cereal grains from the Craw Stane complex and granary weavils from Cairn More provide direct evidence for the use of cereal products at both sites (Niehaus and Ramsay; Chapter 8).

3   And in the pre-modern period more generally – see Brück 1999 and Bradley 2005b for detailed overviews of the blurred divide between ritual, the everyday and elite practice.

4   Small amounts of cereal grains were found in association with Structure 1 within the complex too (Niehaus and Ramsay; Chapter 8).

5   And perhaps other objects (eg pelts or meat that would be archaeologically difficult to document).

6   The presence of seaweed at the Craw Stane complex provides interesting evidence for connections to coastal areas (Niehaus and Ramsay; Chapter 8).

7   One trope of Irish tales (found in the possibly comic Old Irish Ulster Cycle saga-text *Scéla muicce Meic Dathó*) is the dispute at the feast over the 'champion's portion', the first, best part of the prize food, the order by which food and drink was distributed being important for status and honour (Ní Bhrolcháin 2009: 43–5).

8   Access to a diversity of landscape resources through wide networks of dependent settlements was central to Glanville Jones's 'multiple estate model' (Jones 1961a, 1961b). Jones's ideas perhaps created overly static and schematised views of the landscape and were based on administrative and fiscal arrangements drawn partly from the high medieval period (Roberts & Barnwell 2011; Seaman 2012: 174). Nonetheless, the idea that early medieval centres may have been positioned to exploit a range of landscape types with a series of subservient settlements related to an estate centre and linked by render and service dues seems a pertinent idea for considering landscapes such as that of the Upper Strathbogie valley.

9   The formation of the Scandinavian kingdoms has witnessed intense debate. Previously scholars such as Hedeager (1992) and Näsman (1999) have suggested that the kingdom of the Danes its royal centres took shape in the 6th or 7th century AD, but others, such as Johan Callmer (1991: 269), have been reticent to date this any earlier than the 8th century AD. However, the discovery of earlier hall complexes has led to re-evaluations of the evidence.

10 See MacLean (2014) for a review of the archaeology of this region, including an intriguing enclosure at Tomnahurich.

11 Further axe-wielding figures are known from cross-slabs at Rossie in Perthshire, Hunter's Hill in Angus, and the now lost cross-slab from Strathmartine, Angus (Shepherd & Shepherd 1980: 216; Kilpatrick 2011) (Illus 12.14d, g and h). While the presence of these axe-wielding figures on obviously Christian cross-slabs could indicate a later date for the Rhynie Man style figures, the relief carving and the obviously Christian

context of the cross-slab depictions of these individuals provides marked differences. The depiction of these fon Christian cross-slabs may represent the continuing relevance of important mythical figures associated with Pictish identity and belief (Kilpatrick 2011), but it could also indicate the Christian castigation of earlier pagan practices associated with these otherworldly figures. The axe carriers on a cross-slab from Papil, Shetland, for example have been considered an antithesis to the Christian imagery found on cross-slabs, interpreted as a depiction of hell (Henderson & Henderson 2004: 156). Here we may be seeing a process by which figures that were highly significant in a pre-Christian context were increasingly recast in the Christian world in a deliberately unfavourable light.