

Pictish Symbol Stones – Case Study Kintore

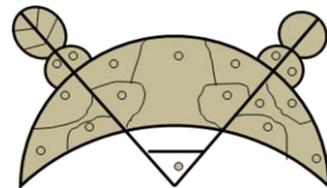
Features – several Class 1 Stones with typical Symbols over two sites (one now a levelled “hill”) near a river. One of the few examples of connections with the number 7.

Found in three locations – dug up in a church yard, found when Castle Hill was removed for the creation of a railway line and in a garden – these four Stones are now in three locations but may at one time have all been together. The raised land could well have had significance when the Stones had their original use in the Mysteries of Mithras especially as the location is adjacent to a river - the River Don. Decodes for the Z-Rod and Double Disc, Mirror, Triple Disc with bar and Pictish Beast (there are three at Kintore) are described in Case Studies above. The Salmon may have Celtic connections symbolising knowledge and wisdom, perhaps reinforced by the Stone being next to a river. The rather indistinct Tuning Fork object at Kintore is stylistically different from the other ten examples.



There are three unusual Symbols here. Double Crescents of a “back-to-back” configuration are also at Newton of Lewesk, Ulbster and Dunrobin Dairy Park only – drawn by mirror imaging maybe these are more artistic licence than putting over a particular message. There is one other example of a “Concentric” Square at Newton of Lewesk – it is very plain unlike Kintore where the design has opposed, scallop-like, ornate corners.

Of particular note is the V-Rod and Crescent. Although following the “standard” shape the infill here makes this example very much a “one- off”. Generically this Symbol is decoded as the soul’s travel from and to Heaven beyond the Celestial Sphere. These journeys are via the seven Planets – one of the reasons when the number seven is of supreme interest in Roman Mithraism. The “dots” on this Stone do not appear well on the adjacent photograph so the drawn version is shown above.



Looking at the clusters of “dots” there are seven dots near the left hand (downward) pointer or arrow – two on the outer of the crescent and five within the crescent. By the right hand (upward) pointer there are eight dots the “extra” one being just below the pointer compared with the downward pointer – error or of significance or merely the difficulty in counting the dots when there are other marks on the Stone? Between the pointers there are also seven dots – two on the outer side of the crescent and five within the crescent. It must be remembered that the number of known Planets when these carvings were made is not the number known now. The Moon and Sun were also considered to be Planets with the Earth at the centre of the Planet circles and, indeed, the universe – not as a Planet itself.