

= Camus Cross =

The Camus Cross , otherwise known as the Camuston or Camustane Cross , is an Early Medieval Scottish standing stone located on the Panmure Estate near Carnoustie in Angus , Scotland . First recorded in the 15th century in a legal document describing the boundaries between Camuston and the barony of Downie , and described in the 17th century by Robert Maule , it is a freestanding cross , rare in Eastern Scotland .

The cross is thought to date from the tenth century , and exhibits distinctive Hiberno - Scottish mission influences , in common with several other monuments in the area . Tradition and folk etymology suggest that the cross marked the burial site of Camus , leader of the Norse army purportedly defeated by King Malcolm II at the apocryphal Battle of Barry . The name of the stone is likely to derive from the extinct village of Camuston , which has a Celtic toponymy .

= = Location = =

The Camus Cross is in the Downie Hills , approximately 4 kilometres (2 @. 5 mi) northwest of Carnoustie in Angus , Scotland . It is situated at the centre of a 1 kilometre (0 @. 62 mi) long avenue leading east @- north @- east through Camuston Wood from the Panmure Testimonial to the Craigton to Carnoustie road , at (grid reference NO519379) . The avenue is part of Panmure Estate and leads , beyond the road , to the former site of Panmure House .

= = Description = =

The freestanding cross is carved from Old Red Sandstone and stands 2 metres (6 @. 6 ft) high , approximately 0 @. 6 metres (2 @. 0 ft) wide at the base , 0 @. 8 metres (2 @. 6 ft) wide at the arms , and approximately 0 @. 2 metres (0 @. 66 ft) thick . It stands on a low earth mound , 7 @. 5 metres (25 ft) wide (east to west) , 4 @. 5 metres (15 ft) wide (north to south) and 1 metre (3 @. 3 ft) high , in the centre of the Camuston Wood avenue , facing east to west . All faces and sides are sculpted . The cross has suffered significant weathering , most notably on the west face , which has obscured some of the designs .

The stone bears no idiomatic Pictish symbols and , under J Romilly Allen and Joseph Anderson 's classification system , it is a class III stone . Intact freestanding crosses of this age are comparatively rare , perhaps due to their vulnerability to damage , and the only ones in Eastern Scotland are the Camus Cross and the Dupplin Cross in Strathearn . Fragmentary remains of other crosses include heads found at Forteviot , St Vigean and Strathmartine and shaft fragments found at Monifieth , Abernethy , Carpow and Invermay , as well as some socketed stones where crosses once stood .

The western face is divided into three sections . The uppermost section is almost completely weathered . The antiquarian Alexander Gordon , who described the stone in 1726 in his *Itinerarium Septentrionale* , records this panel as holding a crucifixion scene , with the figure of a man at the right hand side and the left side completely defaced . Below this is a depiction of a centaur holding a bow , with the lowest panel having a symmetrical floral scroll design .

The eastern face is usually interpreted as a depiction of Christ flanked by angels above the four evangelists , although Robert Maule , in the earliest description of the stone , described the scene as Moses giving out the Law .

The carving on the Camus Cross shows distinct similarities with those on the Brechin Hogback stone and point to an Irish Ecclesiastical influence . The foliar designs on the north and south edges , originally seen as Ringerike @- like (and hence , Scandinavian in origin) , consist of tendrils and volutes with " wave @- crest " thickening . These features bear closest similarity with Irish insular art of the late tenth century , and the treatment of the symmetrical foliar scroll design on the lower portion of the west face is diagnostically Irish . The full @- face figures on the east face are of an identical type to those on the Brechin Hogback . In the case of the Brechin Hogback , the figures are carrying objects that are characteristic of early medieval Irish monasticism .

= = History = =

The Camus Cross is currently thought to be a late Pictish / early Gaelic era monument , dating from the 10th century . The earliest record of it is in a legal document of 1481 , describing the boundary of the lands of Camuston , owned by Sir Thomas Maule , and the barony of Downy , owned by the Earl of Crawford . The boundary was described as running " a magna cruce lapidea de Cambiston " (' from the great stone cross of Camuston ') . It was mentioned in the context of the Battle of Barry in Hector Boece 's *Historia Gentis Scotorum* in 1527 , and first described in detail by the antiquarian Robert Maule , who erected it at its present position in 1620 , after moving it six feet to centralise it within the Camuston Wood avenue .

The croce standis southe and northe , sa the bread syd thear of the ane to the east and the wther to the west ; that syd quhilk lowkes to the east is dewydit be mwllers of steane in thre stages ; the firs and hiest part quharof is the portrait of ane man , rudlie vroght in reasit work , at the southe arme quharof as apperis , the figure of ane fowle , to the quhilk the handis neir ; the second sectione or stage hes tua pourtraits of men lyk to the first , vithe the forme of ane quadrat or four noket breist plat on thear breist , lyk wnto that quhar withe Moses is painted , in the quhilk wes ingrawen the nems of the tuel tribes of Israel , and lykuayes the lawest and thrid rank efter the sam maner . On thear heads thay heawe clos bonnets twrnannd hard thearto , quhilk appeirandly is Moses representine the lawe befor the cominge of Christ , and thearfor ar set towardis the east as representine the begininge and infancie of the world ; then on the west syd in the first rank and hiest is the Crucifix. opposit to Moses , signifiinge the latter dayes to approche and the declyninge age . In the second rank wnder the Crucifix ane man on hors bak , lyand bak owir , drawand ane bowe , the head of the arrowe very grytm that it semes rather to be ane bolt then arrowe , albeit the bowe dois rather appeir to be ane hand bow nor cros bowe . In the lawest and thrid rank tehar is only the draught of ane floure , weil done , wpone aa rud ane stone . On the southe and northe sydes of the sam , quhar the croce is mor narrowe , ane prettie work efter the forme that browdinsters do vse [...]

Camus was the supposed leader of a Norse expeditionary force defeated by the armies of King Malcolm II at the Battle of Barry . Tradition , popularised in the sixteenth century by historian Hector Boece , states that Camus fled the battle scene when defeat was imminent , and was caught and slain at the point where the cross now stands . The battle , and its main protagonists , including Camus , are now known to be historically inauthentic .

The name of the cross is likely to derive from the village of Camuston . No trace of this village can be seen today , and it had ceased to exist by the time of the first Ordnance Survey map , published in 1888 , but surveyed in 1857 to 1859 . Its former location is indicated in the 1794 map by Ainslie , about half a mile to the east of the cross . Camuston can be found with earlier spelling variations , for example , ' Cambistown ' as it is called in documents from 1425 and 1426 , and has a Celtic rather than Scandinavian etymology .

A burial disinterred in 1598 , near the Camus cross , was attributed by Maule as being the body of Camus :

Not far thearfra in the bank of Camstone , the zeir of God Im fywe hundrethe nyntie and aught zeiris , thear wos ane greawe fownd withe ane bread stone on eury quarter thearof efter the forme of ane malt cobile , quharin did ly the heale bons of ane man of gryt statwre , the thee bone quharof ves neir als longue as bothe the schank and thee bone of any reasonable man of this age , the harne pan gryte , and vanted the palme bread of ane hand thearof , quhilk had beine the straik as appeirithe of ane sword , it wes thought to heawe beine Cames the chief mans bwriel .

Little information of the burial exists , but goods found in the cist were kept at Brechin Castle . These were sketched by Jervise and are typical of Bronze Age artifacts , found fairly commonly in the area .