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**Designations:** Scheduled Monument (SM90135)

**Taken into State care:** 1950 (Guardianship)

**Last reviewed:** 2011

**HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND  
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

# **EDROM CHURCH NORMAN DOORWAY**



We continually revise our Statements of Significance, so they may vary in length, format and level of detail. While every effort is made to keep them up to date, they should not be considered a definitive or final assessment of our properties.

# EDROM NORMAN DOORWAY

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## SYNOPSIS

The monument comprises a 12<sup>th</sup>-century Romanesque structure, interpreted as the main doorway into the medieval church. It was probably removed from the adjacent church in the 1730s and re-used as the entrance into a private burial vault - the Logan Aisle. A church at Edrom is first recorded in the early 1100s, when it was granted to Durham Cathedral. The monument is regarded as one of the finer pieces of Romanesque architectural sculpture surviving in Scotland.

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## CHARACTER OF THE MONUMENT

### Historical Overview

- 11<sup>th</sup> century - the discovery of part of a 'hogback' stone in the churchyard c.1907 suggests the site has an ecclesiastical history reaching back into the first millennium AD. Edromshire as an entity existed by AD 900.
- early 12<sup>th</sup> century - the church and lands of Edrom are granted to 'Saint Cuthbert's monks' (Durham Cathedral) by Earl Cospatrick of Dunbar. The grant is confirmed in 1139 by David I.
- 1167 – a dispute over the church and lands of Edrom results in the property being granted to Coldingham Priory.
- 1508 – Archbishop Robert Blackadder of Glasgow bequeaths money in his will to build a chapel dedicated to St Mary at Edrom church.
- post 1560 - Edrom church continues in use after the Reformation.
- 1737 - Edrom church is extensively remodelled. It seems likely that the Romanesque structure is moved to its present location at this time.
- 1790 - the date of the first memorial in the Logan Aisle.
- 1950 - the property comes into state care.

### Archaeological Overview

- No recorded archaeological excavations or interventions have taken place at Edrom graveyard.
- As a repositioned structure, the monument has been removed from its medieval archaeological context.
- The sensitivity of the surrounding area, as a churchyard which has remained in use for a millennium, will be dominated by burials.

### Architectural/Artistic Overview

- The structure is a good example of the Romanesque architecture which became popular in SE Scotland and Northumberland in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

- The structure has three orders of arches - the two inner orders with varieties of chevron, and the outer one with an embattled moulding. There are two orders of engaged shafts, and there was initially a pilaster on each side (to connect with the outermost arch order). Three of the capitals have elaborate foliage trails with masks at the corners; the others are fashioned in the form of cushions or scallops.
- The most remarkable element of the structure is the foliate detail on the capitals of the nook shafts which are paralleled in the more elaborate SE processional doorway of **Dunfermline Abbey**.
- The similarities of detail with **Dunfermline Abbey**, coupled with the church's link with Durham Cathedral, show that the Edrom structure has a distinguished artistic pedigree.

### Social Overview

- The structure is a clear representation of the antiquity of the parish and a key piece of local heritage.
- The monument has some social meaning to the church community. However, it has no personal associations, and any connection to the Logan family who built the Aisle seems now to be lost.

### Spiritual Overview

- Whatever its function in the Norman church, the structure would have played a key liturgical and spiritual role in the life of the parishioners of Edrom.
- The structure's removal to its present position was probably entirely due to its artistic merit.
- The structure no longer plays any spiritual role in the life of the parish.

### Aesthetic Overview

- The arch is an attractive feature, the carved detail, although weathered, still retaining much of its beauty.
- The vaulted burial aisle has a tendency to be rather gloomy. However, the surrounding graveyard is neat and well-kept.

### What are the major gaps in understanding of the property?

- Where was the original location of the structure and precisely what function did it serve?
- Did the 18<sup>th</sup>-century reconstruction accurately reflect its original form? Was there, for example, a tympanum originally (eg, Linton, Roxburghshire), and was the outer order supported on attached shafts?

## ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Key Points

- The structure is a good example of Romanesque church architecture. The carving of the capitals is finer than that generally found on other parish churches of a similar date.
- The structure and its associated burial aisle are attractive features in the graveyard, next in importance to the church itself.

### Associated Properties

*(historic associations)* - Durham Cathedral; Coldingham Priory.

*(other Romanesque parish churches/church fragments in the Scottish Borders)* – Bunkle; Chirnside; Hobkirk; Legerwood; Linton; Minto; Old Cambus; St Boswells; Simprin; Smailholm; Southdean; Stobo; Yetholm.

*(other related structures)* - **Dunfermline Abbey**, Durham Cathedral.

### Keywords

arch, foliate capital, Romanesque, parish church.

### Selected Bibliography

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