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**The bishopric of Brechin and ecclesiastical organisation
in Angus and the Mearns in the central Middle Ages**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
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Abstract

The bishopric of Brechin has long been viewed as something of an anomaly among the dioceses of medieval Scotland. Its bishops exercised authority over churches and lands in Angus and the Mearns, yet this territory was shared with the much larger diocese of St Andrews, and to a much lesser extent those of Dunkeld and Aberdeen. This complex pattern of landholding and lordship persisted right up until the Reformation and it is a situation unparalleled elsewhere in medieval Scotland. However, although its oddness has been noted by many, scholarly engagement with this area has been limited, focussing mainly on the Céli Dé community and hereditary abbatial family associated with the church at Brechin in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

This thesis examines the bishopric of Brechin in the context of wider church organisation in Angus and the Mearns in the central Middle Ages, seeking to find explanations for its seemingly unique development. The problem is approached from a number of different perspectives: by considering the context of secular lordship in Angus and the Mearns; by examining the parishes and churches which made up the bishopric of Brechin; by exploring saintly commemorations and church dedications, not only in the diocese of Brechin, but throughout Angus and the Mearns; and finally by carrying out a case-study of one of Brechin's most important churches, that of the burgh of Montrose.

This multi-faceted approach demonstrates that the bishopric of Brechin had strong links with the secular lordship of Brechin, the wider holdings of Earl David of Huntingdon in Angus and the Mearns, and indeed with kings of Scots. It also highlights connections between diocesan organisation and a particular devotion to the Virgin Mary, a veneration present in Brechin from the early Middle Ages. In addition to this, a picture emerges of the nearby church of Montrose having been an important ecclesiastical focus to rival Brechin.

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Many people have been generous with both time and materials which have helped me immensely. Thanks to Norman Shead for providing me with a copy of his *Episcopal Acta* relating to Brechin and to Simon Taylor for allowing me early access to some of his work. Thanks must also go to Pamela Thomson, Secretary of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral, who so kindly sent me a stash of past volumes of *The Book of the Society* not held by the University of Glasgow Library. I also greatly appreciate the generosity of Ragnheidur Mosesdottir and Suzanne Reitz of the University of Copenhagen, who scanned and emailed an Icelandic bishops' list to me without charge. I must also acknowledge the financial support of a doctoral scholarship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council which enabled me to pursue this work.

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My parents deserve my biggest thanks. They have supported and encouraged me in everything I have done and unwittingly sowed the seeds early on by taking me to countless castles and churches over the years. This thesis is dedicated to them.

Author's Declaration

This thesis is my own composition and is based on my own research. It was not undertaken in collaboration with any other student or researcher. It has not been, and will not be, presented for any other degree, at any other institution.

Abbreviations

- Anderson, *Early Sources* *Early Sources of Scottish History, AD 500-1286*, ed. A. O. Anderson (Edinburgh, 1922).
- Arbroath Liber* [*Arb. Lib.*] *Liber S. Thome de Aberbrothoc*, ed. P. Chalmers and C. Innes (2 vols, Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1848-56).
- Atlas of Scottish History* *An Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, ed. P. G. B. McNeill and H. L. MacQueen (Second edition, Edinburgh, 1996).
- Bagimond's Roll* A. I. Dunlop, 'Bagimond's Roll: Statement of the tenths of the kingdom of Scotland' in *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society*, vi (1939) 1-77.
- Barrow, *Chrs. David I* *The Charters of King David I: King of Scots, 1124-53 and of his son Henry Earl of Northumberland*, ed. G. W. S. Barrow (Woodbridge, 1999)
- Black, *Surnames* G. F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland; their Origin, Meaning and History* (New York, 1946).
- Brechin Registrum* [*Brech. Reg.*] *Registrum Episcopatus Brechinensis*, ed. P. Chalmers and C. Innes (2 vols, Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1856).
- Coupar Angus Chrs.* [*C. A. Chrs.*] *Charters of the Abbey of Coupar Angus*, ed. D.E. Easson (2 vols, SHS, Edinburgh, 1947).
- Cowan, *Medieval Church* I. B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland*, ed. J. Kirk (Edinburgh, 1995).
- Cowan, *Parishes* I. B. Cowan, *The Parishes of Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1967).
- CPNS W. J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926).
- CSSR *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Rome, 1418-71*, 5 vols ed. A. I. Cameron and others (SHS, 1934-70, Glasgow, 1983, Edinburgh, 1997).
- ER *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, ed. J. Stuart and others (Edinburgh, 1878-1908).
- Fasti* *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ Medii Aevi Ad Annum 1638*, ed. D. E. R. Watt and A. L. Murray (SRS, Edinburgh, 2003).

- Fraser, *Southesk* *History of the Carnegies, Earls of Southesk, and of their Kindred*, ed. W. Fraser (Edinburgh, 1867).
- Groome, *Gazetteer* *The Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland; a Survey of Scottish Topography, Statistical, Biographical, and Historical*, ed. F. H. Groome (Second edition, Edinburgh, 1896).
- HE *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969).
- IR *The Innes Review* (1950-)
- Lindores Chartulary* [*Lind. Cart.*] *Chartulary of the Abbey of Lindores*, ed. J. Dowden (SHS, Edinburgh, 1903).
- Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints* *Legends of Scottish Saints. Readings, Hymns and Prayers for the Commemorations of Scottish Saints in the Aberdeen Breviary*, ed. A. Macquarrie with Rachel Butter (Dublin, 2012).
- MacKinlay, *Scriptural* J. M. MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Scriptural Dedications* (Edinburgh, 1910).
- MacKinlay, *Non-scriptural* J. M. MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Non-scriptural Dedications* (Edinburgh, 1914).
- Montrose Burgh Survey* R. Gourlay and A. Turner, *Historic Montrose: the Archaeological Implications of Development* (Scottish Burgh Survey, Glasgow, 1978).
- MRHS Cowan, I.B., and Easson, D. E., *Medieval Religious Houses, Scotland* (London, 1976).
- NRS National Records of Scotland
- NSA *The New Statistical Account of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1845).
- Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints* P. Ó Riain, *A Dictionary of Irish Saints* (Dublin, 2011).
- OSA *The [Old] Statistical Account of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1791-99).
- Panmure Registrum* [*Panm. Reg.*] *Registrum de Panmure*, ed. J. Stuart (Edinburgh, 1874).
- PSAS *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (1851-).

RCAHMS	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.
<i>Reg. Mag. Sig.</i> [RMS]	<i>Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum</i> , eds J. M. Thomson and others (Edinburgh, 1882-1914).
<i>Regesta Regum Scottorum</i> [RRS]	<i>Regesta Regum Scotorum</i> , eds G. W. S. Barrow and others, 6 vols (Edinburgh, 1960-).
RSCHS	<i>Records of the Scottish Church History Society</i> (1923-).
<i>St Andrews Liber</i> [St A. Lib.]	<i>Liber Cartarum Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia</i> , ed. C. Innes (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1841).
<i>Scot. Hist. Rev.</i> [SHR]	<i>The Scottish Historical Review</i> (1903-28, 1947-).
SHS	Scottish History Society.
<i>SHS Misc.</i>	<i>The Miscellany of the Scottish History Society</i> (SHS, 1893-).
<i>Spalding Misc.</i>	<i>Miscellany of the Spalding Club</i> (Spalding Club, 1841-52).
SRS	Scottish Record Society.
Stringer, <i>Earl David</i>	K. J. Stringer, <i>Earl David of Huntingdon 1152-1219: A Study in Anglo-Scottish History</i> (Edinburgh, 1985).
Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin'	D. E. R. Watt, 'The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin' in <i>The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral</i> No. 19 (1970).

**Map 1: Parish Churches in Angus and the Mearns
– the diocese of St Andrews**



Source: *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 348.

Key to Map 1

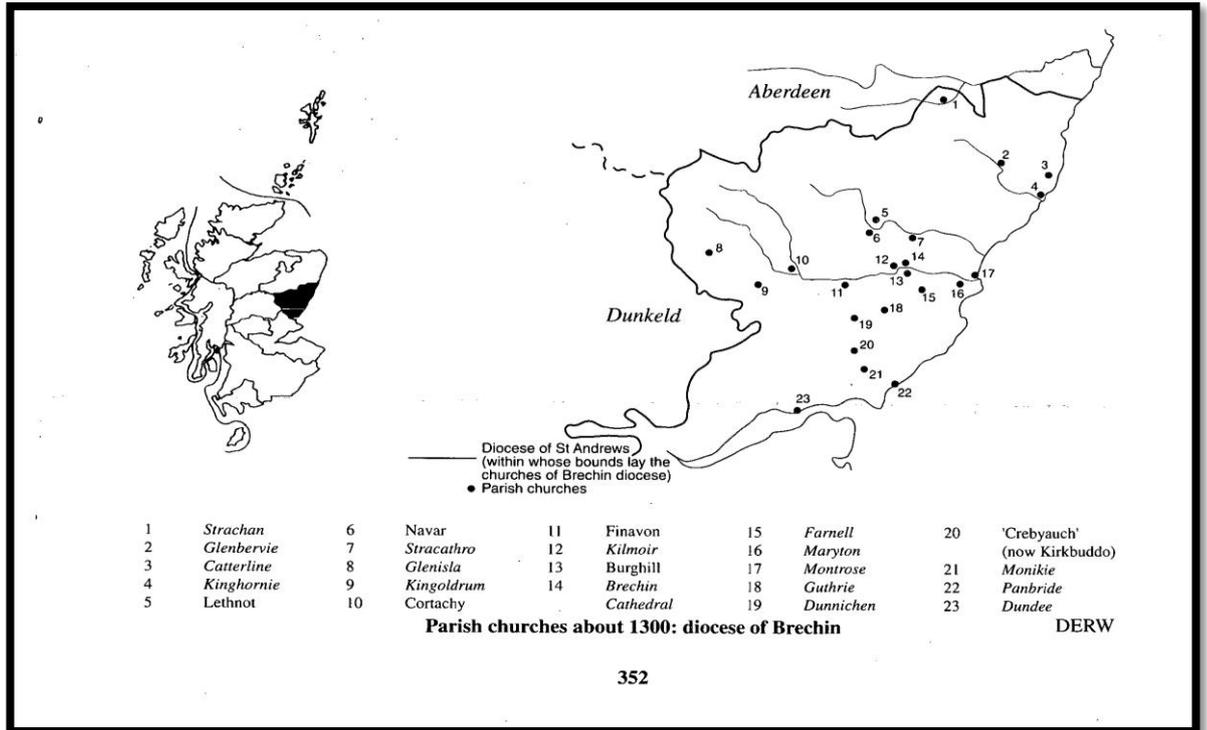
Parish churches about 1300

Archdeaconry of St Andrews

Mearns Deanery				Fife Deanery		Fothrif Deanery	
	25	Tannadice	50	<i>Murroes</i>			
	26	<i>Aberlemno</i>	51	<i>Monifieth</i>			
1	<i>Nigg</i>	27	Aldbar	52	<i>Barry</i>	73	Flisk
2	Durris	28	Kinnell			74	Creich
3	Fetteresso	29	<i>Inverkeilor</i>	Gowrie Deanery		75	Kilmany
4	Dunnottar	30	<i>Inverlunan</i>	53	Blair	76	Logie Murdoch
5	Fordoun	31	Dunninald		(now Blairgowrie)	77	<i>Forgan</i>
6	Arbuthnott	32	Inchbraoch			78	<i>Leuchars</i>
7	Kinneff		(now Craig)	54	Luncarty	79	<i>Lindores</i>
8	Newdosc	33	<i>Kettins</i>	55	<i>Cambusmichael</i>		(or <i>Abdie</i>)
9	Fettercairn	34	<i>Newtyle</i>	56	Collace	80	<i>Dunbog</i>
10	Conveth	35	Nevay	57	<i>Fowlis</i>	81	<i>Collessie</i>
	(now Laurencekirk)	36	Eassie	58	Methven	82	Monimail
11	<i>Garvock</i>	37	<i>Glamis</i>	59	<i>Scone</i>	83	<i>Auchtermoonzie</i>
12	Benholm	38	Kinnettles	60	Kinnoull		(now Moonzie)
13	<i>Aberluthnot</i>	39	Meathic Lour	61	<i>Perth</i>	84	Dairsie
	(now Marykirk)	40	Inverarity	62	Forteviot	85	<i>Cupar</i>
14	<i>Ecclesgreig</i>	41	Idvies	63	Pottie	86	<i>Tarvit</i>
	(now St Cyrus)		(now Kirkden)		(now Dunbarney)	87	<i>Ceres</i>
		42	<i>Arbirlot</i>	64	<i>Rhynd</i>	88	Kemback
Angus Deanery		43	<i>Arbroath and</i>	65	<i>Kinfauns</i>	89	<i>St Andrews</i>
			<i>Ethie</i>	66	<i>Kilspindie</i>	90	Dunino
15	Dalbog	44	Lundie	67	<i>Rait</i>	91	<i>Kennoway</i>
16	Edzell	45	<i>Liff</i>	68	Errol	92	<i>Scoonie</i>
17	Dunlappie	46	<i>Invergowrie</i>	69	<i>Inchture</i>	93	<i>Largo</i>
18	Logie	47	Logie Dundee	70	<i>Rossinlerach</i>	94	<i>Newburn</i>
19	<i>Dun</i>		(now Lochee)		(now Rossie)	95	<i>Kilconquhar</i>
20	Lintrathen	48	<i>Strathdighty</i>	71	<i>Forgan</i>	96	<i>Abercrombie</i>
21	<i>Airlie</i>		<i>Martin</i>		(now Longforan)		(now St Monance)
22	<i>Kirriemuir</i>		(now	72	Benvie	97	<i>Kellie</i>
23	<i>Restenneth</i>		Strathmartine)				(now <i>Carnbee</i>)
	<i>and Forfar</i>	49	Strathdighty			98	<i>Anstruther</i>
24	Rescobie		Comitis			99	<i>Kilrenny</i>
			(now Mains)			100	<i>Crail</i>

Map 2: Parish Churches in Angus and the Mearns

- **the diocese of Brechin.**



Source: *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352.

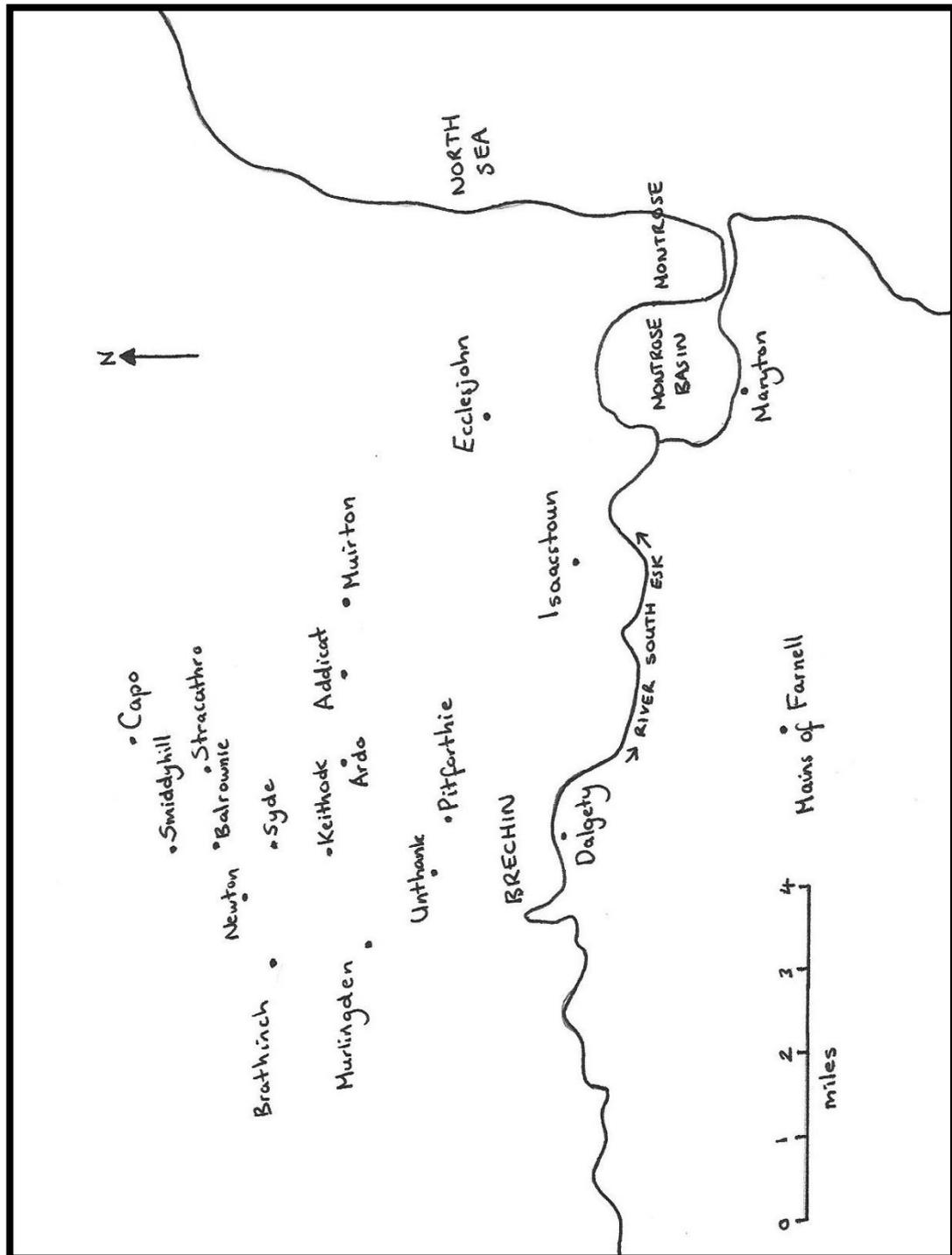
Map 3: The Medieval Bishopric of Brechin



Source: Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 2.

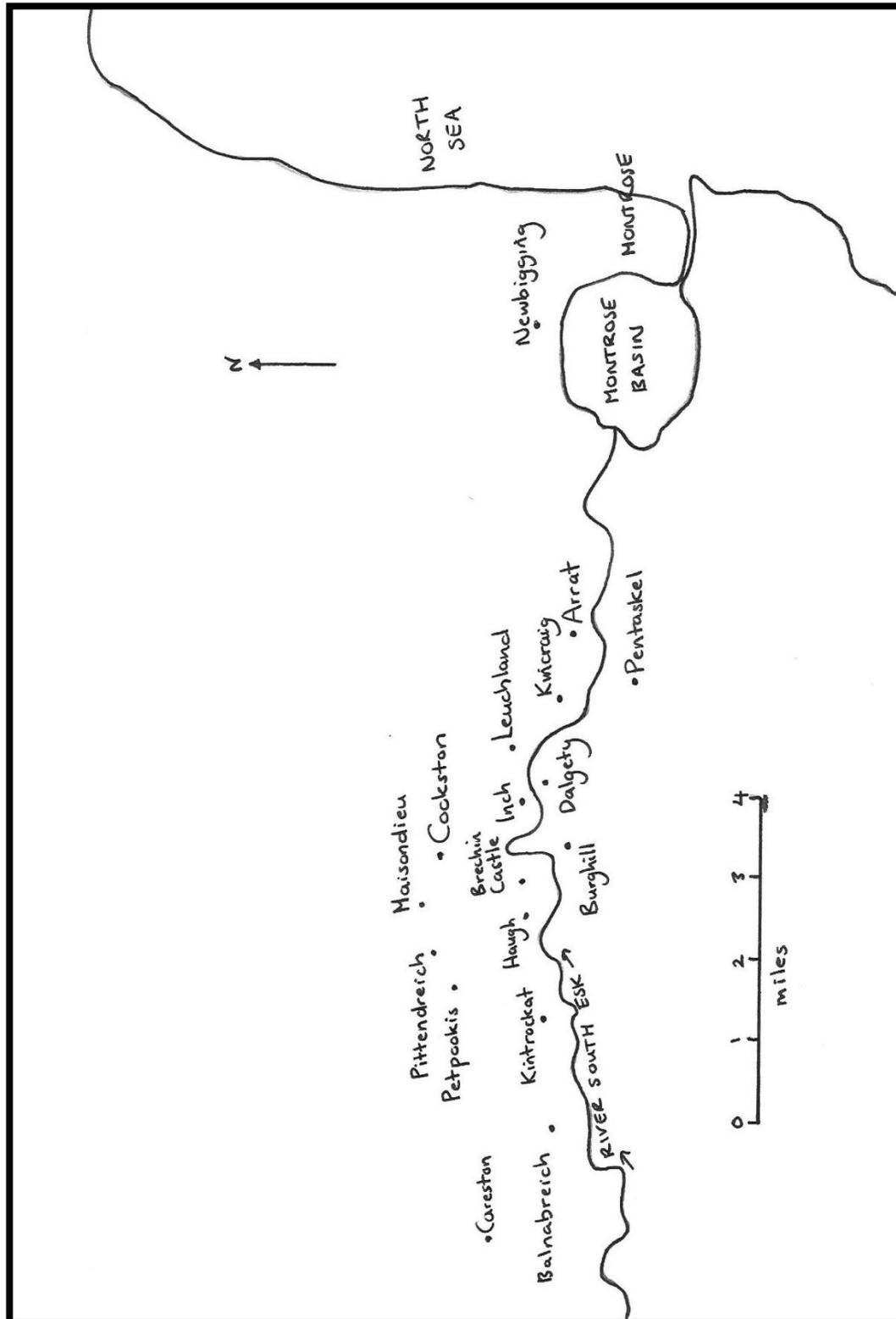
Map 4: Temporal Lands of the Bishopric of Brechin

This map shows the temporal lands of the bishopric recorded shortly after the Reformation, as detailed in Appendix 5: Temporal lands in the bishopric of Brechin – *The Books of Assumption of Thirds of Benefices*, pp. 163-4. These are also discussed in Chapter 2, below, pp. 75-9.



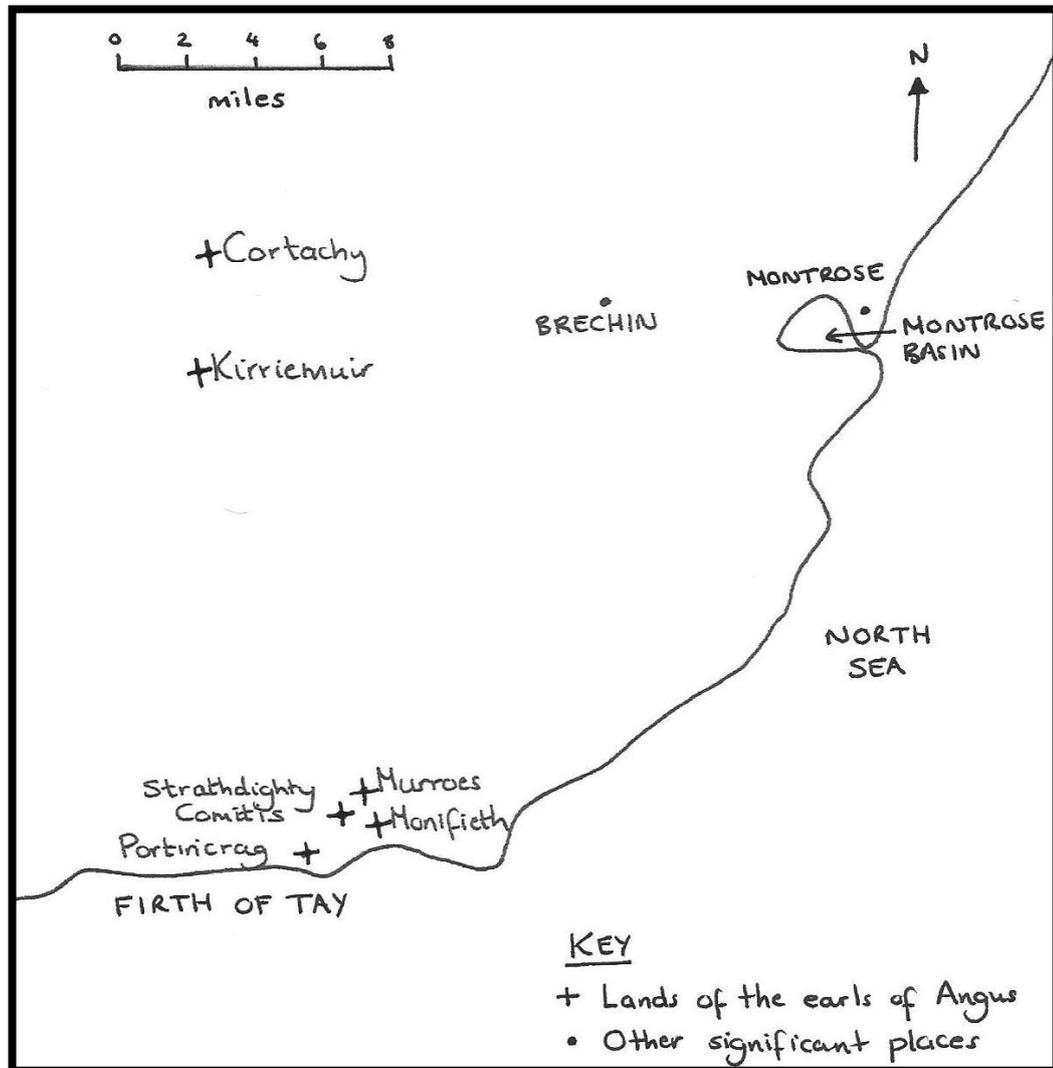
Map 5: The Lands of the Lordship of Brechin

This map shows the lands of the lay lordship of Brechin, as detailed in Appendix 6: The lands of the lordship of Brechin, pp. 165-6. These are also discussed in Chapter 2, pp. 45-8.



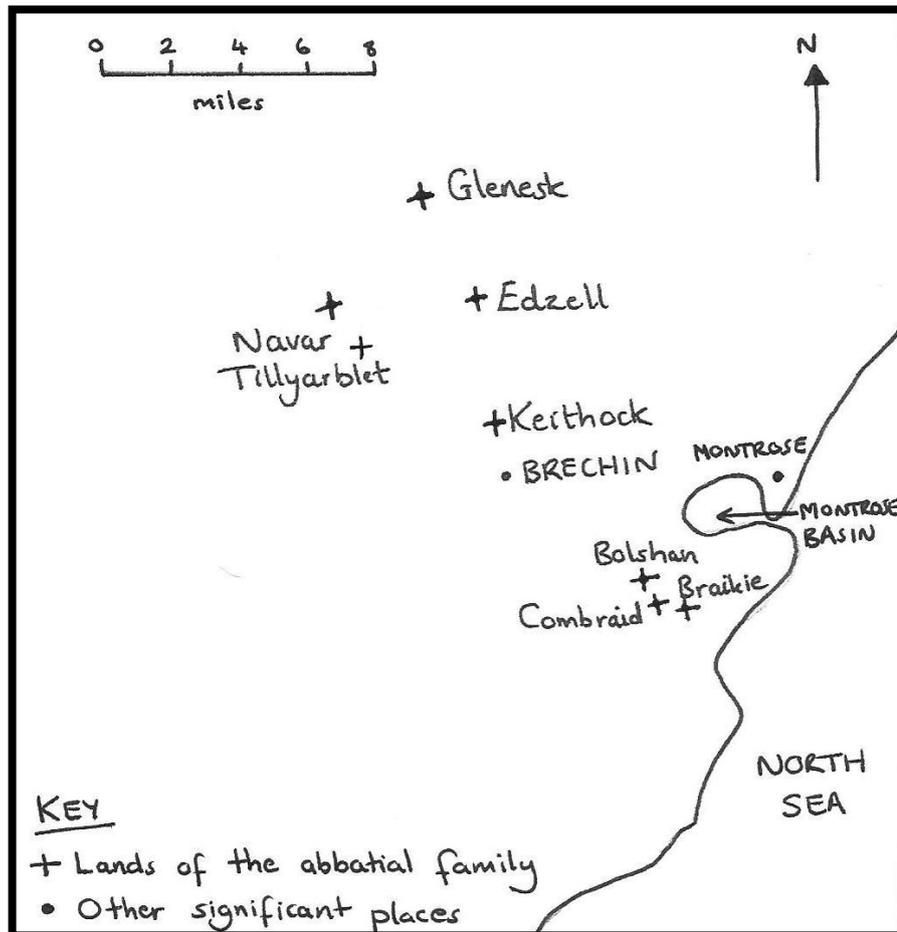
Map 6: The Lands of the Earls of Angus

This map shows the lands of the earls of Angus. See Chapter 2, pp. 66-71, for a discussion of the earls of Angus and their landholding.



Map 7: The Lands of the Abbatial Family of Brechin

This map shows the lands of the abbatial family of Brechin. See Chapter 2, pp. 71-75, for a discussion of the MacLeods and MacNabs and their lands. Also see Appendix 2: Charter of Alexander II to Gillandres MacLeod, pp. 158-9.



Chapter 1: Introduction

The medieval bishopric of Brechin: an ‘illogical scattering of churches’¹?

In a talk to the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral on Trinity Sunday 1970, Donald Watt described the medieval diocese of Brechin as an ‘illogical scattering of churches’.² He was by no means the first person to speak of it in such terms. Andrew Jervise, the nineteenth-century Brechin antiquarian and scholar, described the bishopric as a ‘patchwork’ in his *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns*, published in 1861.³ This sentiment was echoed by Watt more than a century later when he likened it to an incomprehensible one at that: ‘a bewildering patchwork of parishes’.⁴ This judgement of Brechin as being somewhat peculiar is a key theme that runs through scholarly attention to the diocese.

The medieval bishopric of Brechin held churches together with lands in both Angus and to a lesser extent the Mearns, two distinct areas which had strong connections throughout history. Yet in the zone between the rivers Tay and Dee, comprising the old counties of Forfarshire and Kincardineshire, the diocese of Brechin shared the territory with the bishopric of St Andrews and to a much lesser extent those of Dunkeld and Aberdeen. This complex pattern of ecclesiastical organisation persisted right up until the Reformation, when the bishopric of Brechin was reorganised along strictly territorial lines, eventually becoming a coherent territorial entity only after several attempts at reform.⁵ It is a situation unparalleled elsewhere in medieval Scotland, hence Brechin’s present-day reputation as something of an anomaly amongst Scottish dioceses in the Middle Ages.

Examination of some of the various attempts that have been made to map the medieval bishopric of Brechin make clear the reasons for the perceived oddity of ecclesiastical organisation in medieval Angus and the Mearns. The complexity of the situation is

¹ D.E.R. Watt, ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’ in *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 19 (1970) p. 10.

² Loc. cit.

³ A. Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns: Being an Account, Historical, Antiquarian and Traditionary, of the Castles and Towns Visited by Edward I and of the Barons, Clergy, and Others, who Swore Fealty to England in 1291-6; also, of the Abbey of Coupar, and the Priory of Rostinoth. To Which are Added an Appendix of Original Documents.* (Edinburgh, 1861), p. 115.

⁴ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 10.

⁵ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 382-91. The diocese of Brechin survives as a structure in the Scottish Episcopal Church to the present day, although the cathedral church is now in the city of Dundee. See www.thedioceseofbrechin.org [accessed 10 august 2013].

particularly obvious. Each map is different, although two broad approaches have been adopted by historians. In the mid-nineteenth century scholars such as William Forbes Skene and Cosmo Innes tried to give an impression of at least some kind of territorial dimension to the diocese in the maps in their respective histories.⁶ This approach has continued into modern scholarship: Marinell Ash also mapped the dioceses of Brechin and St Andrews territorially in her thesis on ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews’⁷ and Alan Macquarrie gave Brechin a territorial dimension in his map of the dioceses in Scotland before c. 1180.⁸ Ian Cowan and David Easson did likewise in their *Medieval Religious Houses Scotland*.⁹ These maps mark out the dioceses according to later known boundaries of parishes, joining them up to make some form of coherent ‘whole’. This approach is particularly effective at emphasising how much the ecclesiastical map of Angus and the Mearns in the later Middle Ages looks like a half-assembled jigsaw puzzle. As Jervise remarked in his discussion of Brechin, ‘in every corner of the bishoprick – even to the very ports of the burgh – parts of other dioceses intervene’.¹⁰ Unfortunately, it is questionable how valid this approach is for the central Middle Ages, since detailed evidence for the vast majority of parish boundaries does not exist before the modern period.¹¹ Donald Watt has argued that ‘if accurate evidence happened to be available of parish boundaries during the medieval centuries it would be possible to draw a map indicating the consequent boundaries of the diocese. As it is, we do not have sufficient information at hand to do this, and so must be content with something less precise.’¹² Therefore Watt in his article on ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’ simply mapped church sites in the bishopric,¹³ thereby avoiding the necessity of making judgements about boundaries. Subsequently, in *The Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, Watt dealt with the territorial muddle by avoiding any attempt to map the dioceses territorially

⁶ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii, frontispiece. C. Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages: Sketches of Early Scotch History and Social Progress* (Edinburgh, 1860) plate III.

⁷ M. Ash, ‘The Administration of the Diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Newcastle, 1972, p. 127.

⁸ A. Macquarrie, ‘Early Christian religious houses in Scotland: Foundation and Function’ in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992) pp. 110-33, p. 124.

⁹ *MRHS*, endpiece map ‘The cathedrals, collegiate churches and hospitals, in Scotland, before the Reformation’.

¹⁰ Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns*, p. 115.

¹¹ H. Shennan, *Boundaries of Counties and Parishes in Scotland. As Settled by the Boundary Commissioners under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889* (Edinburgh, 1892).

¹² Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 12.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 2.

and simply amalgamating the dioceses of St Andrews and Brechin,¹⁴ then mapping their individual churches on two separate (yet frustratingly slightly different) maps.¹⁵ A. D. M. Barrell, in *The Papacy, Scotland and Northern England, 1342-1378*, wrote that ‘The diocese of Brechin comprised a number of scattered parishes, geographically (but not jurisdictionally) within the boundaries of the diocese of St Andrews. It is, therefore, impracticable to show its borders on the map.’¹⁶ Accordingly, only the cathedral of Brechin is marked on his map. Looking at all of these different maps it is apparent why Watt, and Jervise a century earlier, described Brechin as a ‘patchwork’ and why scholars have viewed the diocese as something of an anomaly in medieval Scotland. Other bishoprics in Scotland, such as Dunkeld and St Andrews, had a number of dislocated ‘peculiar’ parishes;¹⁷ however, in these mapping attempts Brechin appears to be made up almost entirely of detached parishes.¹⁸

Just as medieval Angus and the Mearns were a hotchpotch of territories and allegiances, so too are the sources relating to the medieval bishopric of Brechin many and varied. From the earliest mentions in documentary sources such as the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*¹⁹ and the *Book of Deer*,²⁰ to the more detailed written records preserved in later ecclesiastical cartularies, as well as early medieval sculptural remains and place-names, the area is rich in different sources of evidence which may potentially shed light on ecclesiastical organisation in the Middle Ages and beyond. Brechin’s initial entry into the documentary record in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* has ensured its notice by generations of scholars, while its first known bishop Samson and abbot Leod’s appearances in witness lists in the Gaelic property records in the *Book of Deer* have

¹⁴ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 337-8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 348-9, p. 352.

¹⁶ A. D. M. Barrell, *The Papacy, Scotland and Northern England, 1342-1378* (Cambridge, 1995) p. xxiv.

¹⁷ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 348-9, p. 353. *MRHS*, endpiece map ‘The cathedrals, collegiate churches and hospitals, in Scotland, before the Reformation’.

¹⁸ A peculiar parish (or church) is one which does not come under the jurisdiction of the diocesan in whose territory it is located. The parishes of Brechin diocese were not strictly speaking peculiar, as they were technically within the territory of the bishopric; however, many could appear so, as they were scattered through the territory of the diocese of St Andrews (this is particularly the case with the Mearns parishes of Catterline, Glenbervie, Kinghornie and Strachan). For a legal overview of peculiar parishes in England from medieval to modern times, see P. A. Barber, ‘What is a Peculiar?’ *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* Vol. 3 Issue 16 (1995) pp. 299-312. For a more detailed study of peculiar parishes within a bishopric see F. Barlow, *Durham Jurisdictional Peculiars* (Oxford, 1950).

¹⁹ B. T. Hudson., ‘The Scottish Chronicle’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol 87, 2: No. 204: October 1998, pp. 129-161, p. 151 and p. 161.

²⁰ K. Jackson, *The Gaelic notes in the book of Deer* (Cambridge, 1972). K. Forsyth (ed.), *Studies on the Book of Deer* (Dublin, 2008).

generated interest in its personnel. However, it is the twelfth- and thirteenth-century charters preserved in ecclesiastical cartularies such as the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber* that provide the most detailed evidence about the workings of the bishopric. Brechin is fortunate in that the cartulary of the bishopric itself survives from the mid-fifteenth century,²¹ unlike that of the diocese of St Andrews. Further evidence is provided by fourteenth-century papal correspondence,²² and later still immediate post-Reformation record-keeping generated a rich seam of resources for the historian to mine.²³

Nineteenth- century publication of primary sources

Scholarship surrounding the history of the bishopric of Brechin really took off in the mid-nineteenth century with the preparation and publication of ecclesiastical cartularies such as the *Arbroath Liber* and the *Brechin Register*.²⁴ These volumes, along with others such as the *St Andrews Liber* and the family documents published in the *Panmure Register*,²⁵ enabled interested parties to study primary sources with relative ease, and they remain the first port of call for our documentary evidence to this day. Yet while these works have proved invaluable to generations of scholars, they come with their own set of problems. At first glance these publications seem to be relatively straightforward; they appear to be neat and tidy printed versions of the contents of medieval chartularies. However, recent work by Alastair Ross has demonstrated that this is far from the case.²⁶ Indeed, they are as much a creation of their nineteenth-century scholarly compilers as they are representations of medieval sources. Understanding these sources is crucial, since they have shaped scholarship ever since their publication.

Examination of the printed version of the *Brechin Register*, produced under the auspices of the Bannatyne Club, itself illustrates some of the issues. It is true that the first of the two volumes of the *Register* comprises material solely derived from one manuscript source: the actual medieval cartulary of the cathedral which survives in the National Archives as

²¹ NRS GD45/13/301.

²² Some of which has been edited in the various volumes of *CSSR*.

²³ The most prominent example is J. Kirk (ed.) *The Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices: Scottish Ecclesiastical Rentals at the Reformation* (Oxford, 1995).

²⁴ *Arb. Lib.; Brech. Reg.*

²⁵ *St. A. Lib.; Panmure Registrum.*

²⁶ A. Ross, 'The Bannatyne Club and the Publication of Scottish Ecclesiastical Cartularies', *Scottish Historical Review*, 85 (2006) pp. 202-29.

manuscript GD45/13/301.²⁷ However the printed *Register* is by no means simply a transcription of the original. This is made clear in the table of contents in volume one. According to the preference of the time, items are ordered by date, but the original layout of the medieval register is recoverable due to the presence of folio numbers in brackets beside each entry.²⁸ Therefore, although the printed register is a compilation, anyone wishing to do so could get an idea of the original, where documents are grouped thematically according to subject, rather than by date.

The material in the *Brechin Register* has been edited and arranged by a nineteenth-century hand, and in fact not just one hand but several: three is the minimum possible number of people involved in its production – Patrick Chalmers, his brother John Inglis Chalmers and Cosmo Innes. To these may be added the possibility of unknown copyists, such as those used by Innes in the production of other printed editions of cartularies, and we have no way of knowing how many people had an input into the final shape of the book we see today.²⁹ Complex circumstances surrounded the production of the *Brechin Register*, making it a far more complicated compilation than it may appear at first glance. It was ostensibly co-edited by Cosmo Innes and Patrick Chalmers, but it was primarily the pet project of the latter, an Angus landowner who devoted much of his life to studying the history of his local area. Sadly, he died before he could see it completed, leaving very few notes, and it fell to his brother John to complete his work.³⁰ Although Patrick and subsequently John Chalmers compiled the actual *Register*, Cosmo Innes wrote the preface to the printed edition, and this has dictated to a great extent how this resource has been used and viewed. Indeed, most of the themes and points of interest picked up by later scholars were first highlighted in Innes' preface, or in his preface to the *Arbroath Liber*. In a sense he set the agenda for more than a century, drawing attention to such matters as the hereditary abbatial family of Brechin, discussing the bishops and Céli Dé of Brechin, and highlighting the importance of the various landholding families in Angus and the Mearns.³¹

²⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i. Volume ii has material from a variety of different sources, including the *Arb. Lib.*, Brechin burgh records, Dundee burgh records, papal letters, ecclesiastical rentals, and the papers of various local landowning families.

²⁸ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, 'Tabula' pp. iii-x.

²⁹ Ross, 'The Bannatyne Club and the Publication of Scottish Ecclesiastical Cartularies', pp. 202-29.

³⁰ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. i.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. iv-v.

In theory at least the editorial methods are transparent. Indeed, Cosmo Innes took pains to describe the different sources used and the aim to collect as much documentary evidence pertaining to the diocese as could be found. This was then arranged chronologically. Innes himself drew attention to the issue of editorial methods in his preface to the *Brechin Register*, stating that:

Even the method and guiding principle of the present ample collection are only to be gathered from the materials themselves, which must go forth without that explanation of the author's design which would have covered these dead bones with a living light and interest.³²

From this it is clear that Patrick Chalmers was the principal editor of the *Brechin Register*, and his early death resulted in a loss of information about his methods. The *Arbroath Liber* was also a combined effort of Cosmo Innes and Patrick Chalmers: it was produced 'under the joint superintendence of Mr Innes, and Mr Chalmers of Auldbar'.³³ The problems with the editorial methods of Chalmers and Innes have implications not only for dealing with the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber* themselves: they are much further-reaching because the vast majority of succeeding scholars have used these compilations very much as primary sources.³⁴ An example of this is Bishop William Reeves' *Culdees of the British Islands*,³⁵ an especially invaluable research tool with its collation of primary sources. However, in the case of Brechin at least, these primary sources are drawn largely from the Bannatyne Club editions of the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber*.³⁶ Therefore any errors or discrepancies in these documents have been perpetuated and affirmed in the succeeding book. It is not only Reeves who derives his source material from the printed registers; other key reference works such as Cowan and Easson's *Medieval Religious Houses Scotland*³⁷ have also drawn on these a great deal. Of course it would have been totally unfeasible for every succeeding scholar to consult the original source documents (and would have negated the very purpose of their production) – indeed many reference works could not have been produced without these tools. It is essential however for researchers to be aware of how they came into being and to treat them accordingly.

³² Ibid., pp. i-ii.

³³ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, preliminary material.

³⁴ Ross, 'The Bannatyne Club and the Publication of Scottish Ecclesiastical Cartularies', pp. 202-29.

³⁵ W. Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands, as they Appear in History: with an Appendix of Evidences* (Dublin, 1864).

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 118-23.

³⁷ *MRHS*.

It would not do to be too harsh in judgement of these printed sources; they represent a significant amount of scholarship, commitment and indeed passion. They have undoubtedly been useful, and no doubt will continue to be so, as source material and a resource for researchers. What is vital however is to understand them: what they are good for and what they are bad for, when they are reliable and when they can be misleading. If this is understood, they are still a valuable tool. The difficulties of these printed sources notwithstanding, there can be no doubt that their publication enabled the development and pursuit of scholarship in Angus and the Mearns.

At the same time as enabling study, these publications set the agenda for subsequent generations of scholars, and continue to have implications to the present day. These printed works are not just sources; their prefaces are often the main comment on features of history of the area. Significantly, the vast majority of modern scholarship has followed on from points noted in the nineteenth century, most particularly in the prefaces to the *Brechin Register* and *Arbroath Liber*. Understandably, both these volumes seek to illuminate the history of the establishments to which they relate, attempting to establish reliable lists of personnel, for example. The presence of ‘lay’ abbots to which Cosmo Innes drew attention in both prefaces³⁸ has been followed up by Geoffrey Barrow.³⁹ The Céli Dé, or ‘Culdees’ are also a prominent feature, discussed by bishop William Reeves in his *Culdees of the British Islands*; he uses the *Brechin Register* and *Arbroath Liber* as sources in his appendix of evidences.⁴⁰ Innes shows great interest in the prominent families of Angus and beyond, something which has been developed recently by Matthew Hammond in his ‘Prosopographical Analysis of Society in East Central Scotland’.⁴¹ Innes also highlighted evidence of the commemoration of saints, such as at Inchbrayock.⁴²

Networks of scholarship

It is very evident from comments made in many of the works, both printed primary sources and synthesised narrative histories, that a great network of scholarship was at work in

³⁸ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. v; *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, p. xxv.

³⁹ G. W. S. Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland’, in W. Gillies (ed) *Gaelic and Scotland: Alba agus a’ Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989) pp. 67-88 and pp. 71-2.

⁴⁰ Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands*, pp. 118-23.

⁴¹ M. H. Hammond, ‘A Prosopographical Analysis of Society in East Central Scotland, circa 1100 to 1260, with special reference to ethnicity’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2005).

⁴² *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. xxviii.

producing the mid-Victorian sources that are still consulted to the present day. The printing of primary source material was followed by a flurry of works of local history, such as David Dakers Black's *History of Brechin to 1864*.⁴³ Black explicitly refers to his use of the *Brechin Register*, crediting the work of Patrick Chalmers of Auldbar, and acknowledging that, 'we have availed ourselves of his labours by using freely his "Registrum Episcopatus Brechinensis," two quarto volumes published by him, containing the charters of the burgh found in the charter room, and gathered from other sources.'⁴⁴ Indeed, the impact is made more striking by the fact that Black acknowledges that, 'When this book was originally written in 1838, the Author was immersed in business, and could not bestow time on verifying all the statements in it by reference to authorities. He has now more leisure, and has employed it in examining every authority he could find bearing on the statements made.'⁴⁵ James G. Low also highlighted his use of both the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber* in his history of the church of Montrose.⁴⁶ Low made less successful use of these works, citing material from these compilations in confirmation of his identification of the dedication of the church of Montrose. Unfortunately his dedicatory identification is wrong and appears to be based on a misreading of the sources.⁴⁷

The men involved did not only make use of one another's sources; thoughts and ideas were also exchanged. Cosmo Innes was in correspondence with the town clerk (and later provost) of Montrose, James Burns, concerning the authenticity of Montrose's burgh charter.⁴⁸ Innes also refers to both David Dakers Black and Andrew Jervise in his preface to the *Brechin Register*, stating that, 'it is fortunate that such antiquaries are to be found, where their service can be so usefully applied. It is no unworthy object to endeavour to throw round their city, which has almost forgotten its history, some of the interest of antiquity and historical association.'⁴⁹ He also thanked 'my old friend and fellow labourer'

⁴³ D. D. Black, *History of Brechin, to 1864* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 1867).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁴⁵ Black, *History of Brechin*, p. v. He is referring to his previous volume on *The History of Brechin* (Brechin, 1839), of which the work of 1867 is an update.

⁴⁶ J. C. Low, *Memorials of the Church of St. John the Evangelist: Being an Account Biographical, Historical, Antiquarian, and Traditionary of the Parish Church of Montrose and Clergy Thereof* (Montrose, 1891) p. xi.

⁴⁷ Low, *Memorials of the Church of St. John the Evangelist*, p. 22, referencing *Brech. Reg.* vol ii, p. 261. Low also incorrectly references the *Arb. Lib.* on p.23 of his book.

⁴⁸ Correspondence between Cosmo Innes and James Burns, as quoted in W. A. McNeill, *Montrose Before 1700: from Original Documents* (Dundee, 1961) p. 8.

⁴⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. xix.

Joseph Robertson, as well as W. Reeves, and W. F. Skene in the preface to *Scotland in the Middle Ages*.⁵⁰

Andrew Jervise, in the preface to his *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns*, thanked John Inglis Chalmers for access to sources in his possession, while lamenting the death of his brother Patrick Chalmers, ‘by whose death the science of Scottish Archaeology lost one of its best patrons and its students one of the warmest friends.’⁵¹ He also thanks Joseph Robertson, ‘not only for the trouble which Mr Robertson has so kindly taken in revising the sheets before going to press, but for many valuable suggestions and additions, for which his extensive acquaintance with the literary and antiquarian history of Scotland renders him so well qualified.’⁵² David Mitchell expressed how he was ‘indebted to Mr Jervise’s elaborate work.’⁵³ James G. Low thanked John Inglis Chalmers in the preface to his book on the history of the church of Montrose.⁵⁴ The mid-nineteenth century production of primary sources and the subsequent issue of a number of secondary works was a product of a close and well-developed network of scholarly friends.

The legacy of friends

The pattern established in the nineteenth century of local enthusiasts and eminent historians complementing one another’s work to illuminate the history of Brechin was also a feature of the second half of the twentieth century. The Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral has made the most prolific and sustained contribution to scholarship on the ecclesiastical history of the area. This builds on a long tradition of local scholarship begun in the nineteenth century by the likes of Patrick Chalmers and David Dakers Black. Although essentially a local concern, the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral has generated some of the most significant studies of the church in Angus and the Mearns. Crucially, many of the contributors to the annual Book of the Society, such as Frank Bardgett, Annie Dunlop, Ian Fisher, W. Douglas Simpson and Donald Watt, have been

⁵⁰ C. Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages: Sketches of Early Scotch History and Social Progress* (Edinburgh, 1860) pp. viii-ix.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

⁵² A. Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns: Being an Account, Historical, Antiquarian and Traditionary, of the Castles and Towns Visited by Edward I and of the Barons, Clergy, and Others, who Swore Fealty to England in 1291-6; also, of the Abbey of Coupar, and the Priory of Rostinoth. To which are Added an Appendix of Original Documents*. (Edinburgh, 1861) p. ix.

⁵³ D. Mitchell, *The History of Montrose; Containing Important Particulars in Relation to its Trade, Manufactures, Commerce, Shipping, Antiquities, Eminent Men, Town Houses of the Neighbouring Country Gentry in Former Years &c, &c* (Montrose, 1866) p. v.

⁵⁴ Low, *Memorials of the Church of St. John the Evangelist*, p. viii.

fully part of the academic discourse.⁵⁵ Others, such as D. B. Thoms and D. G. Adams, were local historians following in the tradition of the likes of Andrew Jervise.⁵⁶ The Society was founded in 1947, and the first annual Book of the Society was issued the following year. One of its five objectives, as stated in the first volumes of *The Book of the Society*, is the ‘encouragement of research into the history of the Cathedral’,⁵⁷ although a broad range of local ecclesiastical topics have been considered over the years. The cathedral church itself and the chanonry have naturally received a great deal of attention, as have the various bishops and other personnel. So too has the early medieval sculpture of the area, and the Mary Stone in particular. The Maisondieu, or hospital, has also been considered, along with the likelihood of its lands coming out of the lordship of Brechin.⁵⁸ Most significantly for the purposes of this study, the Society of Friends has engendered the only really major consideration of church organisation in the area: D. E. R. Watt’s article on ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’.⁵⁹ In this study of Brechin from 1150 to 1560 Watt emphasised the peculiarity of the bishopric, arguing that ‘the church of Brechin was the headquarters of a particular kind of diocese not found before or after.’⁶⁰

Establishing the ‘facts’ about the bishopric of Brechin

A great deal of work has gone into establishing the known ‘facts’ about church organisation in medieval Angus and the Mearns. Much of the scholarship has focussed on practical matters such as establishing a reliable succession of bishops of Brechin. This task began even before the publication of the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber*, and has continued right up to the present day. It began with Keith’s *Bishops* in 1755⁶¹ and

⁵⁵ F. Bardgett, ‘Erskinies from Dun and the Chapter of Brechin’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 39 (1990); A. I. Dunlop, ‘John Crannach, Bishop of Brechin 1426-1454’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 6 (1953); I. Fisher, ‘The Saint Mary Stone and early Christian Art’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 44 (1997); W. Douglas Simpson, ‘Brechin Cathedral’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 1 (1948); D. E. R. Watt, ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 19 (1970).

⁵⁶ D. B. Thoms gave an impressive sixteen out of a total of fifty-two addresses to the society.

⁵⁷ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 1 (1948) p. 1.

⁵⁸ D. B. Thoms, ‘Maisondieu’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 14 (1962) pp. 11-23.

⁵⁹ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶¹ R. Keith, *A Large New Catalogue of the Bishops of the Several Sees Within the Kingdom of Scotland, Down to the Year 1688. Instructed by Proper and Authentic Vouchers: Together With Some Other Things Necessary to the Better Knowledge of the Ecclesiastical State of the Kingdom in Former Times: as Also, a*

subsequent works have built on this. Indeed, Patrick Chalmers noted his own amendments and thoughts in the margin of his personal copy of Keith's *Bishops*, and it is these notes which went on to form the list of bishops included in Cosmo Innes's preface to the *Brechin Register*.⁶² The beginning of the twentieth century saw another update, with Dowden's *Bishops of Scotland*,⁶³ whose author like Chalmers died with his work nearly completed.⁶⁴ This was followed in the 1950s by a list compiled for the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral by David Boath Thoms.⁶⁵ D. E. R. Watt and A. L. Murray's *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Medii Aevi Ad Annum 1638* is the latest statement on the matter, and benefits from all the newest developments in scholarship.⁶⁶ While all existing lists disagree, these disagreements are not fundamental, rather they represent amendments in dating as progress has been made with increased cross-referencing of sources as scholarship has progressed. Determining the dates of bishops has provided a vital timeline on which to hang events from 1150 onwards.

Crucially, although the bishops of Brechin have been given some attention, at least as far as dates are concerned, their role and interactions have not really been explored in any depth. There has been a reasonable amount of interest in the first bishop to appear in the documentary record, Samson, primarily due to his membership of the abbatial family associated with the church at Brechin, the MacLeods.⁶⁷ At the other end of the spectrum, the last pre-Reformation bishop of Brechin, Alexander Campbell, has been notorious for his appropriation of church property and its transfer to his kin.⁶⁸ Other than this, discussion has been restricted to anecdotes such as the bishop of Brechin being attacked in his own cathedral by his archdeacon in 1438.⁶⁹ As for other ecclesiastical personnel at Brechin and in the surrounding areas of Angus and the Mearns, Watt and Murray's *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Medii Aevi Ad Annum 1638* contains the names of medieval Scottish secular clergy from the late eleventh to the early seventeenth centuries and so lists the cathedral

Brief Preface Concerning the First Planting of Christianity in Scotland, and the State of That Church in the Earlier Ages (Edinburgh, 1755).

⁶² *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, pp. vi-xvi.

⁶³ J. Dowden, *The Bishops of Scotland: Being Notes on the Lives of all the Bishops, Under Each of the Sees Prior to the Reformation* (Glasgow, 1912).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, prefatory note, p. v.

⁶⁵ D. B. Thoms, 'Bishops of Brechin' *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* no. 12 (1959).

⁶⁶ D. E. R. Watt and A. L. Murray, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Medii Aevi Ad Annum 1638* Revised Edition (Edinburgh, 2003).

⁶⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, pp. v-vi.

⁶⁸ *Fasti*, p. 56; *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. xviii.

⁶⁹ I. B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995) p. 171.

personnel of Brechin.⁷⁰ Watt and Shead's *Heads of Religious Houses*, another reference book listing facts, does not include Brechin as it deals strictly with reformed monastic houses; however, it lists the personnel of local monasteries at Arbroath, Coupar Angus and Restenneth.⁷¹

The area of Angus and the Mearns is not badly served by modern reference works, largely thanks to the opportunities opened up by the printed sources already mentioned. Brechin takes its place amongst the other medieval Scottish bishoprics in the standard reference works produced during the course of the twentieth century. The area's parishes are detailed in Cowan's *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*;⁷² its sculpture is recorded in Allan and Anderson's *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*. Cowan and Easson's *Medieval Religious Houses Scotland* is an invaluable starting point for any student of church history in Scotland. This work is essentially comprised of lists of the main pieces of information about all known religious houses in Scotland in the Middle Ages. Two sections of this work are particularly relevant for Brechin: those devoted to 'Early religious foundations' and 'Cathedrals'. Brechin gets a relatively large paragraph in the section on 'Early Religious Foundations'.⁷³ All the standard main points about Brechin are mentioned: the early mention in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, the round tower, and the Céli Dé community. Overall, the medieval bishopric of Brechin is well-served by reference works.

Further scholarship

Although Brechin takes its place amongst the other dioceses of medieval Scotland in reference works, its appearance in the wider secondary literature is rather ephemeral to say the least, aside from the productions of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral. Very few works have been devoted solely to Brechin as their main focus. In fact, apart from the *Brechin Register* and the various volumes of *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral*, the only three are Black's *History of Brechin*, a small volume by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland on the *Early Medieval Carved Stones at Brechin Cathedral* and the Scottish Burgh Survey volume on *Historic*

⁷⁰ *Fasti*, pp. 53-77.

⁷¹ D. E. R. Watt and N. F. Shead, *The Heads of Religious Houses in Scotland from Twelfth to Sixteenth Centuries* (Edinburgh, 2001).

⁷² Cowan, *Parishes*.

⁷³ *MRHS*, pp. 46-7.

Brechin.⁷⁴ The first is over one hundred and fifty years old; the second is only twelve pages in length (six of which are taken up with illustrations) and, although it provides a useful synthesis of material, does not actually say anything that is new or unmentioned elsewhere; the third comments on the lack of archaeological work carried out in Brechin while again synthesising historical arguments advanced elsewhere.

Even in pieces which engage with the church of Brechin in any deeper way, often it is not the primary, or even secondary, focus of the piece. Geoffrey Barrow's article on 'The lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland' is one of the few relatively modern articles to deal with Brechin in any significant way. In it Barrow considers the hereditary abbatial kin-group associated with the church at Brechin; yet even this study amounts to little more than two pages, heavily footnoted, within the article.⁷⁵ Other similar examples include considerations of the sculptured stone known as the Mary Stone, found near Brechin cathedral. For instance, Elizabeth Okasha's article on 'The Non-Ogam Inscriptions of Pictland' contains a brief section on Brechin's inscribed stone, including an art-historical comment by Isabel Henderson.⁷⁶ Likewise, Ross Trench-Jellicoe's consideration of Marian iconography contains mentions of Brechin but it is not the main focus of the piece.⁷⁷ Only Ian Fisher's piece on 'The Saint Mary Stone and Early Christian Art' has Brechin as its main focus, and it was produced under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral.⁷⁸

Unfortunately, when it comes to considerations of the material, rather than collections of the material itself, scholarship is thin on the ground. Glance through the index of virtually any book about Scottish history, and references to Brechin are scanty to say the least, if it is mentioned at all; carry on to the relevant pages and you are likely to find one of two things: firstly Brechin taking its place in a list of the bishoprics of medieval Scotland, with no further detail; or a reference to David Brechin's execution following the Soules

⁷⁴ Black, *History of Brechin*; N. Cameron, I. Fraser and S. Halliday, *Early Medieval Carved Stones at Brechin Cathedral* (Edinburgh, 2007); R. Gourlay and A. Turner, *Historic Brechin: the Archaeological Implications of Development* (Scottish Burgh Survey, Glasgow, 1977).

⁷⁵ G. W. S. Barrow, 'The Lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland', in W. Gillies (ed) *Gaelic and Scotland: Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989) pp. 67-88, pp. 71-2.

⁷⁶ E. Okasha, 'The Non-Ogam Inscriptions of Pictland' *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* no. 9 (Summer 1985) pp. 43-70, p. 50.

⁷⁷ R. Trench-Jellicoe, 'A missing figure on the slab fragment no. 2 from Monifieth, Angus, the a'Chill Cross, Canna and some implications of the development of a variant form of the Virgin's hairstyle and dress in early medieval Scotland', *PSAS* 129 (1999) pp. 597-647.

⁷⁸ Fisher, 'The Saint Mary Stone'.

conspiracy of 1320. These make up the main bulk of references to the place; overwhelmingly Brechin is mentioned in passing. For example, in *Warlords and Holy Men*, there is one mention of Brechin, and that is confined to a brief reference to the Mary Stone, while considering the significance of images of Mary, rather than discussing the church or bishopric of Brechin.⁷⁹ When Brechin is mentioned with regard to the church, it is usually simply taking its place in a list of the bishoprics of Scotland, with no further mention or discussion.⁸⁰ This is understandable given the lack of much detailed study upon which more general works must draw. In Geoffrey Barrow's *Kingship and Unity*, the diocese of Brechin is mentioned, but only in a general discussion of the bishoprics of Scotland, listed amongst the others, and categorised in one of two groups with no further specific discussion.⁸¹

If we turn from the documentary to the physical remains of Brechin, a similar picture emerges. The Mary Stone has already been discussed. Another fruitful topic for scholars has been the round tower at Brechin, where once again Brechin is not the main focus, but rather takes a small place in wider discussions. Eric Fernie has discussed the tower at Brechin alongside other early ecclesiastical structures in Scotland, including amongst others those at Abernethy, Restennet and St Andrews.⁸² Neil Cameron has also considered Brechin in the context of a selection of other early church buildings.⁸³ While these men have studied similar bodies of evidence, they have reached different conclusions. Fernie has argued that all of the structures belong to the short period between c. 1090 and c. 1130.⁸⁴ Cameron has argued that the evidence would suggest a pre-twelfth-century, and possibly even a late tenth-century, date for the round tower at Brechin.⁸⁵ Dating disputes have been a prominent feature of discussion of the physical remains associated with Brechin. Through the years the round tower has been assigned varying dates from the eighth century to the early twelfth century. Although consideration of Brechin's round tower may have been in the context of architectural history, one of the primary concerns seems to have been to tie it in with some known historical event to provide a context and a

⁷⁹ A. Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men: Scotland, A.D. 80-1000* (London, 1984) p. 126.

⁸⁰ Although see A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* (Edinburgh, 2007) pp. 211-12.

⁸¹ G.W.S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1000-1306* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 2003) pp. 75-6.

⁸² E. Fernie, 'Early church architecture in Scotland' *PSAS* 116 (1986) pp. 393-411.

⁸³ N. Cameron, 'St Rule's Church, St Andrews, and early stone-built churches in Scotland' *PSAS* 124 (1994) pp. 367-378.

⁸⁴ Fernie, 'Early church architecture in Scotland', p. 393.

⁸⁵ Cameron, 'St Rule's Church, St Andrews, and early stone-built churches in Scotland', p. 375.

narrative framework for its construction. Several different contexts for the construction of the tower have been considered in the past. One context for the construction of the tower has been identified in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* reference; others have claimed it as specifically twelfth-century, tying it in to the first documentary mention of a bishop at Brechin. For example, Fernie ties the erection of the round tower to the ‘establishing of a see at Brechin, which probably took place in the reign of David I.’⁸⁶ A different viewpoint has been put forward by Neil Cameron, who points out that Brechin was an important ecclesiastical centre as early as the late tenth century, highlighting the reference in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*.

Some themes in the scholarship

Although it is the case that explicit discussions of Brechin are relatively rare except in works of local history, there are a number of common threads which run consistently through the existing scholarship. For example, one of the most frequently discussed, and certainly the most regularly quoted, statements about Brechin is the final sentence in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*: ‘*Hic est tribuit magnam civitatem Brechne Domino.*’ In W. Douglas Simpson’s address to The Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral, as printed in first *Book of the Society*, this was the first matter to which he drew attention.⁸⁷ The statement has proved of particular interest because it has also been viewed as a possible indicator of the *Chronicle*’s provenance, and so it has drawn the notice of generations of scholars. Indeed, it led Skene to argue that the *Chronicle* appears to have been compiled in the reign of Cinaed mac Mael Coluim at Brechin.⁸⁸

The twelfth-century ‘foundation’ of the bishopric is another matter which has received some attention from a number of scholars.⁸⁹ For a long time there seems to be something

⁸⁶ Fernie, ‘Early church architecture in Scotland’, p. 394.

⁸⁷ W. Douglas Simpson, ‘Brechin Cathedral’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 1 (1948) pp. 4-5.

⁸⁸ Skene, *Celtic Scotland* vol. i, p. 369. Hudson, ‘The Scottish Chronicle’, p. 135, argues for a different compositional location: central Scotland and then Fife. Also see D. Broun, ‘The birth of Scottish history’ *SHR* 76 (1997) pp. 4-22. D. N. Dumville, ‘The Chronicle of the Kings of Alba’ in S. Taylor (ed.) *Kings, Clerics and Chronicles in Scotland, 500-1297. Essays in Honour of Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson on the Occasion of her Ninetieth Birthday* (Dublin, 2000) pp. 73-86. A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* (Edinburgh, 2007) pp. 88-93.

⁸⁹ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii, pp. 395-7.

of a consensus that it seems to have been founded around 1150.⁹⁰ This is based on the appearance of the first documentary record of bishop Samson only a few years later in 1153, as well as the longstanding association of the reign of King David I with the establishment of so many of medieval Scotland's bishoprics, thanks to the writings of Ailred of Rievaulx.⁹¹ However, although there is consensus for 1150 as the establishment of the bishopric, this is by no means necessarily the first instance of a bishop being based in Brechin. Samson may be the first we have any record of, but as Donald Watt has pointed out, there may very well have been bishops present at times before this.⁹²

For the vast majority of modern scholarship, Brechin has been viewed through the distorting lens of the paradigm of the 'Celtic Church'⁹³ which has beyond a shadow of a doubt highly influenced thinking and scholarship about the early history of the bishopric. This conceptual framework pervades the literature, and the complex organisational pattern of churches in Angus and the Mearns has been seen very much as a relic of Celtic monasticism. It is to be expected in books such as Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, where the author's views are very much in evidence in the title of his work. Indeed, Skene discussed the 'Failure of the Celtic Church of Brechin' in his consideration of the medieval bishopric.⁹⁴ W. Douglas Simpson discussed the 'Celtic monastery at Brechin' in his address to The Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral in 1947.⁹⁵ D. E. R. Watt conceptualised the history of the church at Brechin in three periods – Celtic, Medieval and Modern - in his article on 'The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin'.⁹⁶ Indeed, through this paradigm, people like Skene, Douglas Simpson and Watt seem to have felt that only a monastic model of church organisation was compatible with the medieval diocese of Brechin. In his consideration of the medieval bishoprics of Scotland, G. W. S. Barrow divided the ten dioceses in existence in Scotland in 1155 into two distinct categories; he firmly assigned Brechin to the group 'based on ancient churches of a Celtic

⁹⁰ For example Cowan and Easson *MRHS*, p. 201, Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii, pp. 395-7.

⁹¹ A. O. Anderson, *Scottish Annals from English Chroniclers: A. D. 500 to 1286* (London, 1908) p. 233.

⁹² Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 9.

⁹³ T. O. Clancy, 'Celtic or 'Catholic'? Writing the history of Scottish Christianity, A. D. 664-1093' *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 32 (2002) pp. 5-40.

⁹⁴ Skene, *Celtic Scotland* vol. ii, p. 400.

⁹⁵ Douglas Simpson, 'Brechin Cathedral', pp. 4-5.

⁹⁶ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 8.

monastic type'.⁹⁷ This model has contributed to the perceived complexity of the medieval diocese of Brechin, as evidenced by Barrow's description:

These dioceses are characterized by an extraordinary intermingling of territories and a profusion of detached portions often remote from the mother church. Had the twelfth-century kings been starting from scratch it is inconceivable that they would have produced such complexity.⁹⁸

Conclusion

The overall impression of the existing scholarship surrounding Brechin mirrors the image of the medieval diocese itself; it is overwhelmingly local and fragmentary. Locally much has been done: Patrick Chalmers prepared the *Brechin Register* and the *Arbroath Liber* for publication, albeit with the involvement of Cosmo Innes; David Dakers Black, town clerk of Brechin, wrote the history of his own home town; The Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral has published the vast majority of the material relating to its own church. That said, study of various aspects of the history of the church of Brechin has been fully part of wider academic discourse since the mid-nineteenth century, and features such as the hereditary abbatial family, the Céli Dé community, and the church's mention in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* have all been of particular interest to scholars from W. F. Skene to Donald Watt. Study of Brechin has been dominated to a great extent by societies and by networks of friends. Organisations such as the Bannatyne Club and the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral have provided printed primary sources, reference works and articles considering specific problems. However, although the complex pattern of church organisation in Angus and Mearns has long been recognised by scholars, studies have tended to be small-scale and, Watt's article excepted, have not considered the diocese of Brechin as a whole, instead tending to focus on particular aspects of the cathedral church. Consequently, a coherent picture has yet to emerge. Valuable work has been done, particularly in the development of availability of sources, and in small-scale studies of various aspects of ecclesiastical history. However, it is now time for Brechin to be considered more fully in an academic context, to engage with modern scholarly discourse, and hopefully broaden understanding not only of the early medieval bishopric itself, but its immediate context of ecclesiastical organisation in medieval Angus and the Mearns, and of the wider Scottish church in general.

⁹⁷ Barrow, *Kingship and Unity*, p. 76.

⁹⁸ Loc. cit.

Research questions, methodology and approaches

This thesis seeks to study the medieval bishopric of Brechin in the context of ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns. More specifically, it explores the puzzle of why Brechin developed and survived as a bishopric in the Middle Ages when it was ostensibly so different from the norm of a strictly territorial diocese. While Brechin has been a subject of interest for many years, to date the only detailed consideration of the diocese as a whole is Donald Watt's article on 'The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin', which amounts to only fourteen pages. Its value notwithstanding, more in-depth investigation is long overdue. Moreover, Watt's article, in common with so much of the scholarship surrounding Brechin, emphasises the bishopric's peculiarity. Another aim of this study is to question this very perception of oddness and to find explanations for Brechin's seemingly unique development.

In order to properly explore these questions a multi-faceted, inter-disciplinary approach is needed; this allows the examination and synthesis of a broad range of evidence in order to arrive at as complete a picture as possible of the diocese of Brechin in the central Middle Ages. In order to do this, it is essential to consider a variety of sources, ranging from charters, papal letters and maps, to sculpture, place-names and hagiography. It is also necessary to explore this evidence from a number of different perspectives: by considering the bishopric in its immediate social context of secular lordship in Angus and the Mearns; by examining the parishes and churches which made up the diocese; and by exploring clues to patterns of ecclesiastical organisation fossilised in saintly commemorations and church dedications, not only in the diocese of Brechin, but throughout Angus and the Mearns. Finally, an alternative viewpoint on the diocese of Brechin may be gained by close examination of one of her most important churches, that of the burgh of Montrose. It is only through the assembling of these diverse pieces of evidence that there is hope of piecing together the fragments of the medieval diocese of Brechin.

Chapter 2: Landholding and Lordship in Angus and the Mearns

Introduction: patterns of secular and ecclesiastical organisation

This chapter will examine lordship and landholding in Angus and the Mearns with a view to exploring how they relate to the medieval bishopric of Brechin. Power was exercised by a number of different people in these two areas, ranging from kings, earls and lords, to bishops, abbots and priors. As the documentary record begins to provide a more detailed picture of the activities of individuals in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we see kings of Scots, earls of Angus, abbots and lords of Brechin, bishops of Brechin and St Andrews, abbots of Arbroath and Coupar Angus, and priors of Restenneth involved in a range of spiritual and secular transactions. These help us to reconstruct a model of the social and geographical framework within which the medieval bishopric of Brechin operated; it is impossible to understand one without the other.

There was a range of sizes and shapes of landholding in Angus and the Mearns, some contiguous, some not. On a local level, there were people like Moses Carver/Tailor and Walter Cook who held small plots of land in Brechin.⁹⁹ There was Nicholas son of Brice, priest of Kirriemuir, who held the land of the *apdaine* of Monifieth from Matilda Countess of Angus.¹⁰⁰ The lords of Brechin themselves held land concentrated in and around Brechin, while the earls of Angus held lands in discrete pockets, yet presumably exercised authority over the wider area of their home region. The MacNabs and MacLeods, descendants of the hereditary abbots of Brechin, possessed territory in two distinct blocks, concentrated in Glenesk and around Kinnell respectively. In contrast, the bishop of Brechin himself exercised lordship over smaller pockets of land dotted throughout his diocese; the bishop of St Andrews too held land widely distributed through his own bishopric. In the

⁹⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 3. Also see Appendix 1: Maisondieu foundation charter, pp. 55-7. These men are referred to as *Moisy scissoris* and *Walterus Coquus/Cocus* respectively in the 1267 Brechin Maisondieu foundation charter and their occupational bynames may equally well be interpreted as Moses the carver or tailor and Walter the cook. George F. Black identifies Moses as a tailor in *The Surnames of Scotland: Their Origin, Meaning, and History* (New York, 1946) p. 616. However, the *People of Medieval Scotland* (PoMS) database identifies him as a carver: see his person record at: <http://poms.cch.kcl.ac.uk/db/record/person/10505> [accessed 23 February 2014]. The Latin noun *scissor* may have either meaning. See D. R. Howlett and R. K. Ashdowne (eds) *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources: Fascicule XV Sal-Sol* (Oxford, 2012) p. 2972. As Moses appears only once in the documentary record it is impossible to tell which of these applies to him.

¹⁰⁰ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, appendix no. 5.

position of supreme authority was the king, granting to church and laymen alike and exercising ultimate lordship.

Susan Reynolds has bemoaned ‘The untidy overlaps of secular and ecclesiastical units, combined with the apparent indifference of medieval people about the particular unit in which to act at any moment’ which ‘often make it difficult to separate parish activity from the activity of villages or units of lordship.’¹⁰¹ In order to understand ecclesiastical organisation, it is necessary to consider the wider world in which the church operated. It has long been recognised by scholars that there is a significant relationship between secular and ecclesiastical units of administration. In the case of Brechin, speculation has been made in particular about the relationship of the bishopric with the lands of the earls of Angus, the holdings of the hereditary abbatial family, represented by their descendants the MacLeods and MacNabs, and the lordship of Brechin itself. With regard to the first example, it has been postulated that the bishopric of Brechin benefitted from land confiscated from the earls.¹⁰² Conversely, in the case of the two latter examples, it has been suggested that some of the lands held by secular powers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries may previously have belonged to the church.¹⁰³ However, these premises have been taken no further than informed speculation, and no thorough study has hitherto been made of the relationship between ecclesiastical and secular power in Angus and the Mearns.

Research carried out in recent years has supported the theory that ecclesiastical and secular units are linked, and indicates that many medieval parishes correspond with secular units of organisation which may be shown or proposed to be antecedent to them. This has been demonstrated particularly clearly in two major studies by Alasdair Ross and John Rogers, who examined Moray and Perthshire in their respective PhD theses.¹⁰⁴ Ross presents a

¹⁰¹ S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300* (Second Edition, Oxford, 1997) p. 90.

¹⁰² A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* (Edinburgh, 2007) p. 212.

¹⁰³ G. W. S. Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd of Medieval Scotland’, in W. Gillies (ed.) *Alba agus a’ Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989) pp. 67-88, p. 71. D.B. Thoms, ‘Maison Dieu’ in *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 14 (Brechin, 1962) pp. 11-23, pp. 11-12. Thomas Owen Clancy, ‘Reformers to conservatives: Céli Dé communities in the north east’ in James Porter (ed.) *After Columba, After Calvin: Religious Community in North-East Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1999) pp. 19-29, p. 24. *Brech. Reg.* vol. i ‘Preface’, p. iv. W. Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands* (Dublin, 1864) p. 43. Also see I. B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995) pp. 6-7 for other examples of church lands being acquired by laymen, particularly in the diocese of Glasgow.

¹⁰⁴ A. Ross, ‘The Province of Moray, 1000-1230’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2003). J. M. Rogers, ‘The formation of the Parish Unit and Community in Perthshire’ (unpublished PhD thesis,

compelling case for the relationship of parishes to the davoch, an existing secular unit of organisation.¹⁰⁵ He argues that:

In Scotland, research demonstrates that all of the medieval parishes in Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness were superimposed onto a pre-existing davoch pattern of secular land division and assessment. In fact, it is probably correct to state that the only reason why some medieval parishes in Moray and elsewhere in north Scotland had detached portions was because some of the davochs in those newly created parishes already possessed detached portions. ... Accordingly, rather than break up pre-existing units of land during the period of parish formation, most commonly thought to have been during the early twelfth century, the detached portions of any davochs in a particular parish were also included in that parish. The pattern of medieval parishes in Moray reflects an older system of land division and it also helps to explain why davochs remained in use as viable units of land for so long. What is still unknown about this process, however, is the decision-making process by which it was determined to group specific davochs together to form a parish. It is unlikely to have been an arbitrary decision in such an organised landscape.¹⁰⁶

The relationship between the secular and the ecclesiastical is clear, although the process by which this symbiosis developed is more opaque, and the patterns are not uniform across Scotland. For instance, Ross warns that there appears to be a different impression of davochs south of the Mounth compared to the north.¹⁰⁷ He also points out that ‘none of the other small units of land assessment in Scotland have yet been investigated in the same detail as the davoch, although preliminary studies suggest that multiples of arachors also form parishes and the officary in Perthshire has some relationship to the medieval parish too.’¹⁰⁸ This notwithstanding, research undertaken on medieval Perthshire indicates that the principle of secular units relating closely to parishes remains sound. As early as 1972 Marinell Ash noted that parishes mapped on to secular territorial units; she cited Glamis in Angus as an example, highlighting that the parish and the thanage corresponded to one

University of Edinburgh, 1992). Also see J. M. Rogers, ‘The formation of parishes in twelfth-century Perthshire’ *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 27 (1997) pp. 68-96.

¹⁰⁵ See S. Taylor with G. Markús, *The Place-names of Fife Vol V* (Donington, 2012) p. 348: ‘dabhach G f., gen. sng. *dabhaich*, nom. pl. *dabhcha* or *dabhaichean*, ‘tub, vat; davoch, unit of land’, and borrowed into Scots as *davoch*, *davach*, *doch*, *daugh*, etc.’ Also see A. Ross, ‘The Dabhach in Moray: a new look at an old tub’, in A. Woolf (ed.) *Landscape and Environment in Dark Age Scotland* (St Andrews, 2006) pp. 57-74.

¹⁰⁶ A. Ross, *The Kings of Alba c.1000 – c.1130* (Edinburgh, 2011) p. 27. For more detail see also A. Ross, ‘The Province of Moray, 1000-1230’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2003).

¹⁰⁷ Ross, *Kings of Alba*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33. An ‘officiary’ is a unit of land assessment evident in records from eighteenth-century Perthshire, which is tracable to at least pre-reformation times and perhaps earlier than the thirteenth century. It represents a division of a larger estate, reflecting an area administered by a local official who in turn reported to one central authority; in the case of the Breadalbane estate, this was the earl’s chamberlain. See M. J. H. Robson, ‘Territorial Continuity and the Administrative Division of Lochtayside, 1769’, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. 106, issue 3 (1990) pp. 174-85.

another.¹⁰⁹ John Rogers has investigated this phenomenon more thoroughly in his PhD thesis. He found a significant correlation between secular estates and parishes, particularly in the earldoms of Gowrie and Strathearn. Of the seventy-two parishes in Rogers's study, twenty-eight corresponded directly to the territories of secular estates and a further twenty-seven appeared to do so, albeit slightly less securely: 'In other words, over two-thirds of the Perthshire parishes shared their territorial forms with pre-existing local secular estates.'¹¹⁰ Rogers states that:

It is clear that the patterns of secular territorial organisation and of local church provision which existed at the beginning of the twelfth century and, indeed, which had been in place for some centuries before that, exercised a profound influence on the formation of parishes. It is not an overstatement of the situation to say that the parishes of twelfth-century Perthshire were to a very great extent simply the well-established local territorial communities and their churches in a new ecclesiastical guise. Each multiple estate was a defined territory the boundaries and internal relationships of which would have been known and clearly comprehended both by the members of its community and by the lord, whether royal, comital or ecclesiastical, who governed it and who depended on its effective operation. The prominence of these traditional lords in establishing parishes in Perthshire goes a long way towards explaining why the multiple estates so readily adapted to a parochial function.¹¹¹

To turn northwards once more, G. W. S. Barrow examined the structure of the medieval church in his study of Badenoch and Strathspey. He argued a link between earlier units of secular lordship and medieval parishes.¹¹² Crucially, he opens the article by pointing out that 'Much the same mixture of innovation and survival is to be seen in the ecclesiastical development ... as was shown ... to have characterized secular and political developments.'¹¹³ Barrow points out that parishes such as Cromdale, Aberlour, Cawdor, Aberchirder and Rothiemurchus correspond to shires or thanages.¹¹⁴ A relationship between parishes and secular units of land has also been found in the recent study of Donside by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). Piers Dixon and Iain Fraser, in discussing the medieval landscape in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, assert that 'In the earliest stages at least, the pattern of

¹⁰⁹ M. Ash, 'The administration of the diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Newcastle, 1972) pp. 275-6.

¹¹⁰ Rogers, 'The formation of parishes', p. 92.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹¹² G.W.S. Barrow, 'Badenoch and Strathspey, 1130-1312: 2 The Church', *Northern Scotland*, 9, 1989, pp. 1-16.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8 and also see p. 13, note 38.

lordship and the organisation of the church were indivisible.’¹¹⁵ They argued that ‘many of the medieval estates granted throughout the Garioch and Mar were ... coterminous with parishes’.¹¹⁶ One example of this is Clatt: the shire and parish were coextensive.¹¹⁷ Another instance is the parish of Kinkell, which appears to have covered the whole of the thanage of Kintore.¹¹⁸

These more recent studies represent a shift away from the more traditional view that it is the role of Anglo-Norman incomers which was most crucial in parish formation in medieval Scotland. Ian Cowan for example placed most emphasis on the relationship between Europeanisation, the advent of Anglo-Norman lords and the establishment of parish churches in his assessment of ‘The Development of the Parochial System’.¹¹⁹ Rogers has argued that ‘the extent to which the formation of parishes was the work of newly settled Anglo-Norman lords has never been properly or fully examined in detail and their role in parochial establishment has been assumed rather than proven by historians.’¹²⁰ Rogers’s study of Perthshire has demonstrated that, in that area at least, only a small proportion of parishes owe their formation directly to incoming Anglo-Norman lords. Examples of this are restricted to Errol, Foulis Easter, and possibly Findogask and Methven.¹²¹

The role of Anglo-Norman settlers in parish formation has been studied and recognised by historians of medieval Ireland, who have noted the correspondence between manorial estates and parishes.¹²² However, recognition of the importance of earlier secular territorial units has also been coming to the fore, particularly since the revolution in thinking about medieval Irish church organisation brought about by the work of Richard Sharpe and

¹¹⁵ Piers Dixon and Iain Fraser, ‘Chapter 8: The Medieval and Later Landscape’ in RCAHMS, *In the Shadow of Bennachie: A Field Archaeology of Donside, Aberdeenshire* (Edinburgh, 2007) pp. 137-214, p. 138.

¹¹⁶ Dixon and Fraser, ‘The Medieval and Later Landscape’, p. 142.

¹¹⁷ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 144.

¹¹⁹ I.B. Cowan, ‘The Development of the Parochial System in Medieval Scotland’, in *Scottish Historical Review* 40 (1961); this is reprinted in I.B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995) pp. 1-11.

¹²⁰ Rogers, ‘The formation of parishes’, p. 70.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 82.

¹²² M. Hennessy, ‘Parochial organisation in medieval Tipperary’ in W. Nolan and T. G. McGrath (eds) *Tipperary History and Society: Nineteen Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County* (Dublin, 1985) pp. 60-70. A. J. Otway-Ruthven, ‘Parochial Development in the Rural Deanery of Skreen’ *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 94 (1964) pp. 112-122.

Colmán Etchingham.¹²³ Patrick Duffy has pointed out that ‘parishes were never initiated as independent territorial entities, but developed in tandem with local political and landholding interests supporting the local church.’¹²⁴ Indeed, ‘The parish slotted itself into this landholding-chiefdom-lordship structure. So secular exigencies of landholding or lordship and the wealth or support provided by its population were the important determining influences on geographies of parishes.’¹²⁵ In essence each *túath*, the basic unit of lordship in medieval Irish society, appears to have had a parish church.¹²⁶ Ongoing work by Paul MacCotter continues to emphasise the strong links between ecclesiastical and temporal territorial units.¹²⁷

A similar picture has emerged in studies of medieval England. John Blair has stated that ‘Local parishes took their shape from secular forms of organisation’.¹²⁸ The ‘minster model’ of church organisation has undergone a number of changes since its initial emergence in the 1980s, but at its heart is the recognition that much older organisational patterns were fossilised in later territorial boundaries. This hypothesis developed from the findings of a number of local studies which indicated that the parishes of many major early churches were based on secular territorial units. Dawn Hadley, in her study of the northern Danelaw, has discovered correspondence between parishes and Domesday estates.¹²⁹

It seems then, that at a parish level units of secular and ecclesiastical organisation are intimately linked. However, this is not necessarily the case at the diocesan level: the evidence for this is somewhat mixed, in Scotland at least. Marinell Ash pointed out the correspondence between the deaneries of St Andrews diocese and secular territorial divisions in her 1972 PhD thesis.¹³⁰ In the diocese of Aberdeen, the lordship of the Garioch

¹²³ R. Sharpe, ‘Some problems concerning the organization of the church in early medieval Ireland’, *Peritia* 3 (1984) pp. 230-70. R. Sharpe, ‘Churches and communities in early medieval Ireland: towards a pastoral model’ in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992) pp. 81-109. C. Etchingham, ‘The early Irish church: some observations on pastoral care and dues’, *Ériu* 42, pp. 99-118. C. Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, 1999).

¹²⁴ P. J. Duffy, ‘The shape of the parish’ in E. Fitzpatrick and R. Gillespie (eds) *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building* (Dublin, 2006) pp. 33-61, p. 60.

¹²⁵ Duffy, ‘The shape of the parish’, p. 60.

¹²⁶ P. Nugent, ‘The Dynamics of Parish Formation in High Medieval and Late Medieval Clare’, in E. FitzPatrick and R. Gillespie (eds) *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building* (Dublin, 2006) pp. 186-210.

¹²⁷ P. MacCotter, *Medieval Ireland: territorial, political and economic divisions* (Dublin, 2008).

¹²⁸ J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005) p. 503.

¹²⁹ D. M. Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw: its Social Structure, c800-1100* (London, 2000) p. 225.

¹³⁰ M. Ash, ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews’, p. 271.

and the deanery of the same name corresponded.¹³¹ Gordon Donaldson explored the idea of ‘secular’ versus ‘monastic’ dioceses in his discussion of ‘Bishops’ Sees Before the Reign of David I’.¹³² Although he considered Brechin a firmly ‘monastic’ bishopric, Donaldson made clear links between some secular units and dioceses: Glasgow and the kingdom of Strathclyde; the lordship and bishopric of Galloway; the earldom and bishopric of Orkney.¹³³ However, Alasdair Ross has noted that ‘unlike some other earldoms, lordships and dioceses in Scotland, the fourteenth-century diocese and earldom of Moray were not wholly coterminous.’¹³⁴ As shall be demonstrated, this also appears to be the case with regard to the diocese of Brechin; indeed, to a much greater extreme because the extent of Brechin diocese does not correspond neatly with any one secular unit. That said, studying a range of secular authorities in Angus and the Mearns does help to explain some of its more infamous peculiarities.

The Lordship of Brechin and the legacy of Earl David of Huntingdon

In considering the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical powers in Angus, the lordship of Brechin itself is particularly significant. Examination of the various members, connections and activities of the élite family based alongside the cathedral provides a conduit through which may be explored the twin themes of royal patronage and church activity which run throughout the history of Brechin. Lords of Brechin first appear in the documentary record from the early decades of the thirteenth century. The first recorded of these, Henry of Brechin,¹³⁵ witnessed a charter of his brother, John earl of Huntingdon,¹³⁶ dated 25 April 1227.¹³⁷ In this charter two of the witnesses are described as ‘Henry of Stirling and Henry of Brechin my brothers’. ‘My brother Henry of Brechin’ witnessed another charter in which John earl of Huntingdon granted a ploughgate in Kennethmont in

¹³¹ Piers Dixon and Iain Fraser, ‘Chapter 8: The Medieval and Later Landscape’ in RCAHMS, *In the Shadow of Bennachie: A Field Archaeology of Donside, Aberdeenshire* (Edinburgh, 2007) pp. 137-214, p. 140.

¹³² G. Donaldson, ‘Bishops’ Sees Before the Reign of David I’ in *Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh, 1985) pp. 11-24.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

¹³⁴ Ross, *Kings of Alba*, p. 67.

¹³⁵ Henry of Brechin was born before 1207 and began using the designation Henry of Brechin before 1219. See Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 82.

¹³⁶ John also succeeded to the earldom of Chester in 1231. See Stringer, *Earl David*, pp. 182-3.

¹³⁷ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i., no. 137. This charter confirmed the grant of a toft in John’s burgh of Dundee.

Aberdeenshire to Arbroath Abbey. This is again dated 25 April 1227.¹³⁸ In these charters a picture begins to emerge of the three surviving sons, one legitimate and two illegitimate, of Earl David of Huntingdon, grandson of David I king of Scots. It is the lordship exercised by the eldest illegitimate son, Henry, and his father Earl David, which seems to have borne a significant relationship to the medieval diocese of Brechin.

It is not until the establishment of the Maisondieu at Brechin that any detailed picture of the local élite family emerges. The foundation charter is a mine of information about both the descendants of Earl David centred on Brechin and their secular lordship. The actual lordship of Brechin (as opposed to just the lord himself) is first mentioned in this charter, dated c. 1267.¹³⁹ A hospital¹⁴⁰ and associated chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary were founded by William, lord of Brechin, and provided for with lands out of his own lordship. Thus the foundation charter gives some idea of the extent of his patrimony. David Boath Thoms has discussed this in some detail and argued that the secular lordship of Brechin was put together from what had originally been church land, which was then appropriated by the abbatial family associated with the church at Brechin, before being appropriated by the crown and granted to an illegitimate branch of the royal house.¹⁴¹ This hypothesis is based more on speculation than on evidence, and as shall be demonstrated below, the lands of the lay abbots of Brechin are distinct from those of the lay lordship. This notwithstanding, Thoms did establish that the lands granted to the Maisondieu out of the lordship of Brechin fall into two recognisable zones: a relatively small area which was the actual location of the hospital and chapel, and a larger area of land whose produce was used to support it.¹⁴²

Although the Maisondieu hospital itself no longer exists, its location is preserved both physically and onomastically. Indeed, Derek Hall has described it as the ‘best surviving example of a maisondieu’ in Scotland.¹⁴³ Part of the south wall of the thirteenth-century

¹³⁸ *Arb. Lib.*, vol i, no. 84.

¹³⁹ *Brech. Reg.*, vol. i, no. 3. See Appendix 1: Maisondieu foundation charter, pp. 155-7.

¹⁴⁰ D. B. Thoms interprets this as an ‘almshouse’, see ‘Maisondieu’, p. 12. In the same vein, more recently Derek Hall has analysed the Maisondieu at Brechin as a ‘poorhouse’: see ‘‘Unto yone hospitall at the tounis end’: the Scottish medieval hospital’ in *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal* Vol 12 (2006) pp. 89-105, see p. 90 for general assessment of medieval poorhouses, and p. 94, p. 98, and p. 101 specifically for Brechin. Also see D. Hall, *Scottish Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud, 2006) p. 210. Also see Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, p. 172 for a brief summary of the history of the house.

¹⁴¹ Thoms, ‘Maisondieu’, pp. 11-12.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴³ Hall, *Scottish Monastic Landscapes*, p. 52 and also see p. 53.

chapel survives, along with a fragment of the east wall; these remains are located on present-day Maisondieu Lane, close to Maisondieu Primary School.¹⁴⁴ Looking further afield than the site of the Maisondieu itself, it is possible to reconstruct the lordship of Brechin to a certain extent. As Thoms points out, ‘the boundaries of the lands are defined, but they are not easy to follow to-day and the few place-names present great difficulties.’¹⁴⁵ Yet, although the exact boundaries have been obscured by the passing of time, the vast majority of the places themselves are identifiable and correspond with modern place-names. The land of Moses Carver may have left little or no trace on the landscape, but the land of Walter Cook has left its legacy in Cookston,¹⁴⁶ which became a parish as well as a key temporal holding of the bishops of Brechin. *Heychaume* is lost yet all the other place-names mentioned in the text are either in Brechin itself or identifiable with modern farms in its immediate hinterland: *Buthyrkil* is modern Burghill (see further exploration of this name in chapter 3); *Lwichlande* is Leuchland on the outskirts of Brechin; *Pettindreich* survives as Pittendriech (which adjoins modern-day Maisondieu farm). Indeed, even the mill mentioned in the charter survives into the nineteenth-century place-name record: Meikle Mill is on the 1862 Ordnance Survey town plan of Brechin.

The castle of Brechin, the hub of secular power, is first mentioned in another charter related to the Maisondieu, also dated c. 1267, in which William of Brechin granted his foundation free entry and exit from the southern side of the church towards the *villa* of Brechin.¹⁴⁷ The place-date of the document is ‘*castro de Brechine*’.¹⁴⁸ Brechin castle makes perhaps its most famous appearance in the historical record a mere three decades later, when King John Balliol gave up his kingdom to Edward I on 10 July 1296 at Brechin castle.¹⁴⁹ The original castle now no longer exists, but a seventeenth-century building is on the same site.¹⁵⁰ The castle’s association with the Brechin family is highlighted in Barbour’s *Bruce*, in which it is written that ‘... Schyr David off Brechyne/ Fled till Brechyne his awine castell/ And warnyst it bath fayr and weill’.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ R. Gourlay and A. Turner, *Historic Brechin: the Archaeological Implications of Development* (Scottish Burgh Survey, Glasgow, 1977) p. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Thoms, ‘Maisondieu’, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Known as *Baldouegathy* in the charter.

¹⁴⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 4. This document is dated 4 July 1267.

¹⁴⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁴⁹ A. Beam, *The Balliol Dynasty 1210-1364* (Edinburgh, 2008) p. 158.

¹⁵⁰ RCAHMS Canmore database, ID 34782: www.canmore.rcahms.gov.uk [accessed 23February 2014].

¹⁵¹ John Barbour (Ed. A. A. M. Duncan) *The Bruce*, (Edinburgh, 1997) book 9, lines 286-88 (p. 333): ‘... Sir David Brechin fled to his own castle of Brechin, and provisioned it favourably and well.’

Later medieval evidence about the Maisondieu also provides some information regarding the extent of the lordship from which it was endowed. On 31 January 1477 James III confirmed the hospital's original endowments, and made the additional grant of a piece of land called 'la inche', described as being between the mill of Brechin and the river Esk, near Brechin castle.¹⁵² While this land was described as 'king's land' in this grant, this status was a fairly recent innovation: the lordship of Brechin was annexed to the crown in 1455.¹⁵³ The Inch still existed in the 1862 Ordnance Survey town plan of Brechin, and survives as Inch Park on the modern map. Further details emerge in a new charter of erection granted by the Crown in 1517.¹⁵⁴ Crucially, this charter gives more detailed information about lands granted to the Maisondieu on its foundation: in addition to those already identified in the original endowment, now explicitly named rather than simply described are Maisondieu, Auchnacaret and Easter Dalgety.¹⁵⁵

It is possible to further add to the picture of the lordship of Brechin presented in the Maisondieu endowments.¹⁵⁶ Two late medieval rentals of the lordship of Brechin and Navar give a more comprehensive picture of its lands; however, they also present some problems. It is unclear when the lordship of Navar became attached to the lordship of Brechin; it is evident, however, that the two were not originally linked. Alexander II granted Navar and Tillyarblet to Gillandres MacLeod in a charter dated 19 April 1232.¹⁵⁷ Therefore at a time when the lordship of Brechin was firmly in the hands of the descendants of Earl David, the lands of Navar were held by a MacLeod, descendant of the ecclesiastical family of Brechin (more on which below). The two sets of lands are clearly demarcated in the rentals. Unfortunately, even if we automatically exclude the Navar lands because of this, the problem remains of knowing which lands were originally associated with the lordship of Brechin and which lands were later acquisitions.

The lands in the 1459-62 rental include: *Errot, Pentoscal, Kyncrag, Burghirgill, Balnabrech, Kyndrochett, Pettyndrech, Petpoulkis, Halch de Brechyn, ville of Brechin, Carretstoune, Neuburgh/Neubiggin*, and added to this is the right of fishing in Montrose.

¹⁵² *RMS* ii, no. 1358.

¹⁵³ *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, ed. K.M. Brown and others (St Andrews, 2007-2013), 1455/8/2. [accessed 1 December 2012].

¹⁵⁴ Thoms, 'Maisondieu', p. 15.

¹⁵⁵ NRS GD45/16/958. This does not appear in *RMS*. Thoms, 'Maisondieu', p. 16.

¹⁵⁶ See Appendix 6: The Lands of the Lordship of Brechin, pp. 165-6.

¹⁵⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 2. See Appendix 2: Charter of Alexander II to Gillandres MacLeod, pp. 158-9.

The lands in the 1484 rental are: *Pettintoskell, Petpookis, Bouterkill, Pettindreich, Kincrag* and mill, *Le Hauch de Brechin, Piscaria de le Hauch, Balnabreich, Kyndrochate, Arrote*, and also tenements in Montrose etc. The majority of the lands in these two lists correspond; they are simply listed in a different order. However, the *ville of Brechin, Carretstoune*, and *Neuburgh/Neubiggin* are absent from the later rental, while the fishing in Montrose is replaced by tenements. Some of these lands correspond with lands known from earlier documents to belong to the lordship of Brechin; namely Burghill, Pittendreich and Newbigging.

Of the lands belonging to the lordship of Brechin, the vast majority are within the immediate vicinity of Brechin itself; this is quite logical and understandable. The only exception to this is some land and some rights around Montrose. The 1459-62 rental includes Newbigging. This is identifiable with Newbigging just to the north of the Montrose Basin. Given the Brechin focus of the other holdings, it would be unwise to accept this identification without further evidence; after all, there can be many newbiggings. Fortunately, there is evidence from the thirteenth century of Sir David of Brechin holding the Wester Davoch of Newbigging. The charter very helpfully describes the Easter Davoch of Newbigging as being ‘the closest part to Lord Michael’s manor of Hedderwick’, thereby confirming the Montrose Basin location.¹⁵⁸ In addition to this the lords of Brechin had tenements in Montrose (according to the 1484 rental) and rights to fishing in Montrose (1459-62 rental). This ties in with the evidence of close links between Brechin and Montrose which manifest at almost every turn.

The Lords of Brechin: family, forfeiture and illegitimacy

Alongside details of the various lands and dues in the Maisondieu foundation charter, there is a great deal of information about the Brechin family. One of the functions of the institution, to be carried out by the master, chaplains and paupers alike, was to pray for the souls of the donor’s family; therefore the grant provides something of a potted genealogy, naming members of the immediate Brechin family itself, as well as their royal relations.¹⁵⁹ As patron, William of Brechin’s own immediate ancestors are named: his father and mother Sir Henry of Brechin and his wife Lady Juliana; William’s grandfather and Henry’s

¹⁵⁸ NRS, GD 4/224/2.

¹⁵⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 3.

father, Earl David of Huntingdon, grandson of King David I. William's uncle John earl of Huntingdon and Chester¹⁶⁰ is also explicitly mentioned, as are kings William and Alexander: Henry of Brechin's uncle and cousin respectively.

The history of the lords and lordship of Brechin is intimately tied up with the crown. There is no surviving record of the original grant of the lordship of Brechin to Earl David's illegitimate son, Henry; instead the family must be traced back through documents such as the Maisondieu foundation charter and other written records in which they appear. The reference to the souls of these family members is no token gesture; documentary evidence shows the Brechin family interacting regularly with their wider kin, for example Henry of Brechin witnessing charters of his brother John.¹⁶¹ The family also follows the naming patterns of their royal relations: Henry, William and David are regular features of the Scottish royal family tree in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Indeed, it seems likely that Henry of Brechin named his son and heir after his own uncle, King William I.¹⁶²

There is some indication of particularly strong connections between the bishopric and the lordship in the thirteenth century. It is unsurprising to envisage a close relationship between the secular and ecclesiastical powers coexisting in such near proximity; however an even closer bond has been suggested. D. E. R. Watt has put forward the theory that Albin bishop of Brechin (1246-1269)¹⁶³ may have been an illegitimate son of Lord Henry of Brechin, son of Earl David of Huntingdon.¹⁶⁴ There is evidence of Albin's illegitimacy: he had to obtain papal dispensation to hold the office of bishop owing to the irregularity of his birth.¹⁶⁵ Unfortunately, there is no record of his parents; indeed, there is no mention of any family name associated with him; he is simply *Magister Albinus* in the papal documentation.¹⁶⁶ As Watt states, 'possibly he is given no surname at time of his postulation (the only surviving document where it would be expected to appear, for in all others he is bp.) because he is the bastard elder brother of the local lord, the academically-qualified grandson of Earl David, born before his father had himself adopted a territorial

¹⁶⁰ John earl of Chester was son of Earl David, who succeeded to his uncle's earldom of Chester in 1231. He was earl of Huntingdon and Chester.

¹⁶¹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 137. This charter confirmed the grant of a toft in John's burgh of Dundee.

¹⁶² Hammond, 'A Prosopographical Analysis of Society in East Central Scotland', p. 90.

¹⁶³ *Fasti*, p. 53 and p. 61.

¹⁶⁴ D. E. R. Watt, *A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410* (Oxford, 1977) p. 6.

¹⁶⁵ *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum Historiam Illustrantia*, ed. A. Theiner (Rome, 1864) no. CXVI.

¹⁶⁶ *Loc. cit.*

designation'.¹⁶⁷ Several pieces of evidence do point to a familial relationship between Albin and the lords of Brechin. Firstly, Albin was associated with William of Brechin, most notably in the foundation of the Maisondieu in 1267. Watt has also pointed out that both men were supporters of the Durward faction at the Scottish court.¹⁶⁸ Of course neither of these points are proof that the pair were brothers, simply evidence of interaction and sympathy between the two men. However there is rather compelling evidence to support Watt's hypothesis, albeit unknown to him and therefore not introduced as part of his argument. Albin's episcopal seal bore the arms of Earl David,¹⁶⁹ an honour unshared by any preceding or subsequent bishop of Brechin. Furthermore, 'Or, three piles conjoined in base gules' were the very same arms used by the lords of Brechin themselves.¹⁷⁰

The case for a blood relationship is further strengthened by the probable lineage of Albin's nephew Adam, who seems to be identifiable with Adam de Brekyn, who is listed in Bagimond's Roll in 1274-5.¹⁷¹ Watt has suggested that Adam may have been a son of William of Brechin.¹⁷² Indeed, the use of the Brechin name seems significant, and exclusive to the family associated with the lordship in this period. Therefore even if Albin was not in fact an illegitimate son of Lord Henry, it seems fairly certain that he was related quite closely to the family in one way or another. We only hear of Adam's connection with Albin through a scandal which made its way to the ears of the pope. In a document dated 23 January 1264:

Pope Urban IV writes to the prior of Lindores and Master William Wishart, archdeacon of St Andrews, papal chaplain, noting that he has heard that since the archdeaconry of Brechin is vacant, the bishop of Brechin intended to confer the office upon Adam, canon of Brechin, his *nepos*. But, hesitating because this collation might bring scandal, since it was understood that Adam had been accused of homicide and other crimes, he entrusted the archdeaconry to the abbot of Arbroath. The same abbot, considering the intentions of the bishop, bestowed the archdeaconry upon the above Adam *de facto*. Thus, Adam detains the archdeaconry much to the grave scandal of the clergy and people of Scotland. He thus commands

¹⁶⁷ Watt, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁶⁹ See *The Priory of Finchale* (Surtees Soc., 1837) pp. 175-6; H. Laing, *Supplemental Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Scottish Seals* (Edinburgh, 1866) p. 178; J. H. Stevenson and M. Wood, *Scottish Heraldic Seals* (Glasgow, 1940) p. 130.

¹⁷⁰ B. A. McAndrew, *Scotland's Historic Heraldry* (Woodbridge, 2006) p. 72 (for image and family tree of heirs of Earl David) and p. 75 (for discussion of the Brechin family).

¹⁷¹ A. Dunlop, 'Bagimond's Roll: statement of the tenths of the kingdom of Scotland', *SHS Misc VI*, p. 53.

¹⁷² Watt, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 6.

them to investigate the charge, and if it is substantiated, to remove the said Adam from office and to place a fit candidate in the archdeaconry.¹⁷³

Frustratingly, there is no record of the outcome of the case. However, Adam of Brechin is listed as vicar of Brechin in 1274-5; it seems entirely plausible that this could be the same Adam, in a demoted clerical position.

Watt noted yet another potential member of the Brechin family involved with the church. Hugh of Brechin is found described as Master when witnessing several charters relating to the Borders, dating between 1238 and 1250.¹⁷⁴ Watt argues that ‘He may have been a son of Henry of Brechin, illegitimate son of Earl David of Huntingdon.’¹⁷⁵ This possibility is supported by the identity of two of the men whose charters Hugh witnessed; one is Roger de Mowbray who made a grant to Jedburgh Abbey¹⁷⁶ and another is David Olifard who donated land to Soutra Hospital.¹⁷⁷ Both Roger de Mowbray and David Olifard belonged to families associated with Earl David of Huntingdon, both in England and north of the border.¹⁷⁸ Unfortunately there is no further evidence to support this theory.

Arguably the most famous scion of the house of Brechin was Sir David Brechin, son of William, and holder of the lordship during the first Scottish wars of independence. Described as ‘gud Schyr David off Brechyne’¹⁷⁹ by Barbour in his *Bruce*, his activities on both the patriotic and the English sides of the conflict have left evidence about his lordship, unfortunately for him and his family, in the form of records of confiscation. The English patent rolls give some information about David Brechin’s lands, describing:

... the Scottish lands of the following rebels, that is, Nicholas de Soules’ land of Tulk and Cluny, Roger the marischal’s in ‘la Halle del Mire’ of Rowmannok, David of Brechin’s in Lyiardwode ...¹⁸⁰

¹⁷³ *Les registres d’Urbain IV (1261-1264)* ed. J. Guiraud (Paris, 1901) no. 1269.

¹⁷⁴ Watt, *Graduates*, p. 63.

¹⁷⁵ Loc. cit.

¹⁷⁶ NRS, RH 1/2/44.

¹⁷⁷ *Registrum Domus de Soltre*, etc, ed. D. Laing (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1861) no. 2.

¹⁷⁸ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 84 and p. 292, note 31 for the Mowbrays, pp. 129-30 and pp. 158-9 for the Olifards.

¹⁷⁹ Barbour, *The Bruce*, book 8, line 402 (p. 311).

¹⁸⁰ *CDS* iii no. 258 dated 20 March 1312. *Lyiardwode* may be Legerwood in Berwickshire; *Rowmannock* is Romanno in Peeblesshire; Tulk and Cluny may be Tough and Cluny in Aberdeenshire. My thanks to Simon Taylor for help identifying these place-names.

Sir David's involvement in the Soules conspiracy of 1320 had devastating consequences for himself and his family. He was executed for his role in the affair, and his lordship of Brechin was forfeited. It is this forfeiture which provides some further insights into the extent of his lordship. Although the original charters themselves are now lost, records are preserved of lands which once belonged to David Brechin in the indices of lost charters compiled in the early modern period, when these documents were still extant.¹⁸¹ Two of these lost charters identify lands given to Sir David Barclay, who received David Brechin's lands from Robert I, and married Brechin's only known child Margaret.¹⁸² Both charters date from the reign of Robert I, and naturally after the execution of David Brechin at Perth in 1320, although no closer dating is possible. The first is a charter giving David Barclay the lands of *Knokquhy/Knocqy* in Glenesk which, according to index B, 'David de Brechin forisfecit.'¹⁸³ The second is a charter recording the gift of the lands of Brechin and Kyndelaue/Kinloche (and Rothmay and various others according to index B) 'quhilk David de Brechin erga nos forisfecit.'¹⁸⁴ Some of David Brechin's lands appear to have gone further afield. The indices record a charter granting the lands of Kinkell/Kingkell in Brechin to Maria of Strathearn, wife of Malise of Strathearn.¹⁸⁵ Again, index B records these lands as having previously belonged to David Brechin although in this case the reference to forfeiture is absent.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ See *RMS* i, 'Preface', pp. viii-xii for explanation of the indices of lost charters and the rationale behind their arrangement.

¹⁸² A. A. M. Duncan, 'Brechin, Sir David *b.* before 1278, *d.* 1320', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3306>, accessed 5 March 2013]. Margaret was a child of David's first marriage.

¹⁸³ *RMS* i, Appendix ii no. 455 (79). Index A 'Carta David Barclay de terries de Knokquhy' Index B 'To David Barclay of the lands of Knocqy in Glenesk, quas David de Brechin forisfecit.' West Knock survives to the present day in Glenesk at NO 473 757.

¹⁸⁴ *RMS* i, Appendix ii no. 663 (34). Index A 'Carta Willielmi de Barclay de terries de Brechine et Kyndelaue.' Index B 'To David de Barclay, of the lands of Rothmay, the lands of Brechine and Kinloche and sundry others, quhilk David de Brechin erga nos forisfecit.' *Kyndelaue/Kinloche* is Kinloch in the parish of Collessie in Fife; see S. Taylor with G. Markús, *The Place-Names of Fife Volume 4* (Donington, 2010) pp. 221-3. *Rothmay* seems to be identifiable with modern Rothiemay (a village and parish) in Banffshire NJ 54 48.

¹⁸⁵ David Earl of Huntingdon's illegitimate daughter Ada married Malise, son of Earl Ferteth of Strathearn.

¹⁸⁶ *RMS* i, Appendix ii no. 481 (103). Index A 'Carta Mar[ie] de Stratherne de terris de Kinkell Brechin.' Index B 'To Maria de Stratherne spouse to Malis of Stratherne, of the lands of Kingkell Brechin, whilk were David de Brechin.' This may in fact refer to Kinkell in Strathearn (NS 63 75) rather than to lands in the immediate vicinity of Brechin itself.

Earl David of Huntingdon and the bishopric of Brechin

The possessions of the lords of Brechin are only part of what were widespread holdings of Earl David of Huntingdon. These have been discussed thoroughly by Keith Stringer in his work *Earl David of Huntingdon 1152-1219: A Study in Anglo-Scottish History*.¹⁸⁷ Earl David not only exercised extensive lordship in England, but also in east-coast Scotland: chiefly in the Garioch, in Dundee and the area around the Tay estuary, and in Brechin.¹⁸⁸ The influence of Earl David and his descendants seems to be significant in attempting to understand some of the allegiances and relationships between the bishopric of Brechin and its dependent churches. Of course the most obvious connection between the bishopric and Earl David is Brechin itself, as discussed above. There is broad scholarly consensus that the Brechin lands had been in the possession of Earl David before being granted to his illegitimate son Henry and continuing through their descendants.¹⁸⁹ However, the relationship of the interests of Earl David to the bishopric of Brechin seems to have more than this one dimension and study of Earl David and his wider interests in Angus and the Mearns opens up some suggestive possibilities.

Earl David's connection with Dundee is particularly striking. He was given the *villa* of Dundee by his brother King William in 1178 x 1182.¹⁹⁰ Thereafter the earl himself was responsible for founding the burgh of Dundee, described in his charters as '*burgo meo de Dundee*'.¹⁹¹ Earl David also appears to have founded the castle of Dundee.¹⁹² He was the

¹⁸⁷ Stringer, *Earl David*, see chapters 4 and 5 'The estates in Scotland' parts I and II (pp. 56-79 and pp. 80-103).

¹⁸⁸ Stringer has interpreted the Garioch and Dundee as the two major centres of power, with the lands in north Angus and the Mearns operating as staging posts between the two main territories. See Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 69. Stringer has also highlighted the fragmentary nature of Earl David's holdings between the Tay and the Dee, in contrast to more cohesive territories such as his lordship of the Garioch. Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 58. This is very much in line with the emphasis on disunity and fragmentation found in association with much of the lordship in Angus and the Mearns, particularly anything considered in relation to the bishopric of Brechin.

¹⁸⁹ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 58, p. 82. This builds on the arguments of scholars since the nineteenth century. See, for example, Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns*, p. 185.

¹⁹⁰ Pryde, *Burghs*, no. 94. Also see *Lind. Cart.* no. 1.

¹⁹¹ Stringer, *Earl David*, pp. 264-5, *St A. Lib.*, pp. 238-9. In this charter Earl David granted one full toft in his burgh of Dundee to St Andrews priory (1190 x 1204). Also see *Lind. Cart.* no. ii in which Earl David granted Lindores a toft in his burgh of Dundee. Dundee was certainly a burgh by 1191 x 1195; see Pryde, *Burghs*, no. 29, also see no. 94. There is archaeological evidence of settlement there since prehistoric times. C. A. Whatley, D. B. Swinfen and A. M. Smith, *The Life and Times of Dundee* (Edinburgh, 1993) pp. 6-7. S. J. Stevenson and E. P. D. Torrie, *Historic Dundee: the Archaeological Implications of Development* (Scottish Burgh Survey, 1988) p. 27, p. 40.

¹⁹² Stringer, *Earl David*, pp. 264-5.

patron of the parish church of his burgh¹⁹³ and gave this church to his abbey of Lindores in 1195, along with every other benefice he held in Scotland.¹⁹⁴ A further dimension of the connection between Brechin and Dundee is hinted at by the presence of one Donald of Brechin, governor of Dundee, to whom Edward II sent a command concerning the defence of the town dated 21 March 1312.¹⁹⁵ This connection between Dundee and Earl David, and between Brechin and Earl David's descendants, sheds new light on Dundee's place in the diocese. Often seeming like an outlier, the puzzle of the church of Dundee slips neatly into place when considered alongside the interests of Earl David, the Scottish royal house, and the bishopric of Brechin.

Earl David also exercised lordship at Inverbervie in the Mearns.¹⁹⁶ Although there is no record of his acquisition of this land, he granted one toft in Inverbervie to Lindores abbey in 1199 x 1219.¹⁹⁷ Stringer has asserted that 'A castle certainly existed at Inverbervie by the second decade following Earl David's death and was probably a creation of his lordship'.¹⁹⁸ Earl David's son and heir, John of Scotland, earl of Chester and Huntingdon, gave a toft in the *villa* of Inverbervie (*Inverbervyn*) to the monks of Lindores in 1232 x 1237.¹⁹⁹ The affiliation of the church at Inverbervie in the Middle Ages is something of a puzzle. However, the most likely scenario appears to be that this church took over from one previously attested at Kinghornie, immediately across the mouth of the Bervie Water from Inverbervie itself. That church was a parish church in Brechin diocese in 1275 before disappearing from the written record never to return. Given the growth of Inverbervie as a burgh, the church's dedication to Mary, and its predecessor Kinghornie's association with the diocese of Brechin, the most likely scenario is that the church of the Virgin Mary in Inverbervie had some relationship with Brechin diocese.

Members of Earl David's circle also spent time in Scotland as well as in England, and a number of these men held land north of the Forth from their lord. King William granted Guthrie to Walter de la Carneille in 1205 x 1207.²⁰⁰ This appears to have been due to the

¹⁹³ The church of St Mary, as opposed to the church of St Clement.

¹⁹⁴ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 98, also p. 240, and see *Lind. Cart.* no. 4, also pp. 251-2 and *Lind. Cart.* no. 3.

¹⁹⁵ *Dundee Burgh Charters*, no. 10b.

¹⁹⁶ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 58.

¹⁹⁷ *Lind. Cart.* no. 18.

¹⁹⁸ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 69.

¹⁹⁹ *Loc. cit.*

²⁰⁰ *RRS* ii no. 473.

de la Carneille family's connection with his younger brother; Stringer judged Robert de la Carneille to be one of Earl David's 'inner circle'.²⁰¹ Indeed, Henry son of Earl David (it is not clear whether of Stirling or Brechin, although the location of Guthrie favours Brechin) was one of the witnesses to the grant of Guthrie. Walter appears to have succeeded his father Roger, and himself been succeeded by his son William.²⁰² This family remained at Guthrie and went on to adopt the toponym as their family name.²⁰³ The church at Guthrie was in Brechin diocese and the family maintained its links with that church. At around the same time as the de la Carneilles were being granted land in Guthrie, they also seem to have been enjoying the ecclesiastical patronage of Earl David. William de Carneille (*fl.* 1202-07), *persona* of Dundee, appears as a witness to two charters relating to tenants of Earl David and his abbey of Lindores.²⁰⁴

Although there does appear to be some kind of link between Earl David's interests and those of Brechin diocese, his lands and interests do not directly correspond with its sphere of influence. For example, Earl David had an estate at Ecclesgreig in the Mearns.²⁰⁵ He granted to the abbey of Lindores 'the land of Pethergus and the land between the burn of Mathers and the burn of Ecclesgreig as they fall into the sea, with two oxgangs in Pethannot.'²⁰⁶ He also granted to St Andrews priory all the cain and conveth owed by the canons for the land of Ecclesgreig and grants and quitclaims the service owed by their men of *Egleskirch* (1189 x 1219).²⁰⁷ The church of St Cyrus appears to have had longstanding links with St Andrews and certainly there is no evidence for a connection with Brechin.

Earl David also had interests in Newtyle in Angus. He confirmed a grant by William Wascelin, a member of his 'inner circle',²⁰⁸ of one oxgang beside the glebe of Newtyle, with common pasture with William's men in Newtyle for ten work animals, thirty sheep

²⁰¹ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 156. Robert's precise relationship to Walter is not entirely clear, although it is certainly a familial one.

²⁰² *Lind. Cart.* no. 39.

²⁰³ See Black, *Surnames*, p. 333 for more on the Guthrie name and family. Also see G. W. S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 2003) pp. 293-4 and Hammond, 'A Prosopographical Analysis of Society in East Central Scotland', p. 154.

²⁰⁴ *Lind. Cart.* no. 37 and no. 81. William also witnessed one other act, an agreement between the bishop of Brechin and the abbot of Arbroath, *Scottish Episcopal Acta*, i, no. 26.

²⁰⁵ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 58.

²⁰⁶ *Lind. Cart.* no. 8.

²⁰⁷ *St A. Lib.*, p. 238.

²⁰⁸ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 156.

and one horse (1199 x 1219).²⁰⁹ Earl David's daughter Ada married Máel Ísu, son of Earl Ferteth of Strathearn and brother of Earl Gilbert. Ada held land at Balmaw in Newtyle, probably from her father.²¹⁰ Again, Newtyle was under the authority of the bishop of St Andrews, not Brechin.

These examples notwithstanding, there does appear to be a significant relationship between the interests of Earl David and the diocese of Brechin, even if it was not a comprehensive one. This surely has a great deal to do with the lordship of Brechin inherited by his illegitimate descendants, who (as explored above) enjoyed a close relationship with personnel of the cathedral church of Brechin. However, some of the earl's wider holdings appear to shed light on other of the diocese's more 'peculiar' possessions. The church of Dundee in particular, which has always seemed something of an outlier amongst the diocesan family, can thus be made sense of and brought back into the fold. However, the pattern is not uniform, and a connection to Earl David by no means equates automatically with a link to Brechin. Moreover, the vast majority of the lands discussed so far, whether belonging to Earl David or his descendants, may ultimately be associated with the crown. Consequently it is necessary to consider these through two layers of patronage – the king direct and Earl David and his descendants.

Royal patronage of Brechin

The lordship of Brechin and the interests of Earl David of Huntingdon reflect two significant and interlinked aspects of royal involvement in Angus and the Mearns, and with the bishopric of Brechin in particular. However, the association between the church at Brechin and kings of Scots has far deeper roots. From the initial tenth-century documentary reference to king Cinaed mac Mael Coluim (971-95) giving the *civitas* of Brechin to the Lord in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*,²¹¹ to the lordship of that place coming into the hands of the descendants of Earl David, Brechin seems to have had a close relationship with kings and their kin. There appears to have been great continuity, with this connection being maintained for several hundred years at least. The first king that it is possible to identify as having an explicit connection with Brechin is king Cinaed mac Mael

²⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 248-9, also *Lind. Cart.* no. 10.

²¹⁰ *Lind. Cart.* no. 36.

²¹¹ See Benjamin T. Hudson, 'The Scottish Chronicle', *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol 87, 2: No. 204: October 1998, pp. 129-161, p. 151 and p. 161.

Coluim (971-95); according to the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, it is he who gave the *civitas* of Brechin to the Lord: ‘*Hic est tribuit magnam civitatem Brechne Domino*’.²¹² There have been differing views amongst scholars about what this entry actually means, although current opinion favours a refoundation with freedom from secular exactions, rather than the foundation of a religious establishment from scratch.²¹³ What is without doubt, however, is that in the late tenth century Brechin was enjoying substantial royal patronage.

Sculptural evidence supports the documentary evidence; in particular Isabel Henderson cites the Brechin hogback as evidence of significant patronage of sculpture in the late tenth century.²¹⁴ Physical evidence also indicates that there was an ecclesiastical centre at Brechin earlier even than the tenth century, lending weight to the view that king Cinaed mac Mael Coluim was supporting and further endowing an existing establishment rather than creating a new one *ab initio*. Anna Ritchie has bemoaned the ‘paucity of stones at Brechin’²¹⁵ and it is undeniable that the surviving assemblage is meagre in comparison to that at other sites in Angus such as St Vigean, Meigle and Kirriemuir. Indeed, it is comprised of a fragment of a cross slab known as the Mary Stone, a recumbent grave-marker or hogback stone, another much smaller and nameless fragment of a cross slab, and the architectural sculpture around the doorway of the round tower,²¹⁶ although there is also some related material further of Brechin itself. This notwithstanding, what does survive is of great significance, and has much to tell of the early history of Brechin and indeed of the wider bishopric. The Mary Stone, a substantial fragment of a cross-slab which has received a reasonable amount of scholarly attention, has been identified as ‘One of the most important pieces of evidence that a significant religious centre existed at an earlier

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 151.

²¹³ See Macquarrie, ‘Foundation and function’, p. 128. Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, pp. 46-7.

²¹⁴ Isabel Henderson, ‘Towards defining the function of sculpture in Alba: the evidence of St Andrews, Brechin and Rosemarkie’ in S. Taylor (ed), *Kings, Clerics and Chronicles in Scotland, 500-1297: Essays in Honour of Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson on the Occasion of her Ninetieth Birthday* (Dublin, 2000) pp. 35-46, p. 40. E. Okasha, ‘The Non-Ogam Inscriptions of Pictland’ *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* no. 9 (Summer 1985) pp. 43-70, p. 50.

²¹⁵ A. Ritchie, ‘Meigle and lay patronage in Tayside in the 9th and 10th centuries AD’, *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal*, vol. i (1995) pp. 1-10, p. 7.

²¹⁶ There has been much debate about the date of the round tower and its sculpture and dates from the tenth to the twelfth century have been suggested. Most recent suggestions favour a tenth or eleventh-century date. See R. Paxton and J. Shipway, *Civil Engineering Heritage: Scotland – Highlands and Islands* (London, 2007) pp. 61-2. Also N. Cameron, ‘St Rule’s Church, St Andrews, and early stone-built churches in Scotland’, *PSAS* 124 (1994), pp. 367-378, p. 375.

period'.²¹⁷ This stone has been dated to the late ninth century²¹⁸ and has been described as preserving 'the most complex theological iconographic programme surviving in early medieval eastern Scotland'.²¹⁹ Therefore not only is it evidence of a church site existing in Brechin in the ninth century, it is also an indication that its inhabitants were participants in high-end theological and artistic culture.

The very presence of this sculpture raises the question of patronage. Isabel Henderson highlighted Brechin's early royal associations when discussing the sculpture connected with the site.²²⁰ Anna Ritchie has highlighted the 'considerable degree of lay and even royal patronage in Tayside during the 9th and 10th centuries'.²²¹ Although Ritchie's main focus was on Meikle, her thoughts and findings have implications for understanding Brechin, and she briefly mentioned the site and its associated sculpture. Ritchie has viewed overtly biblical imagery as being more consistent with monastic than royal centres. In studying Meikle, Ritchie provides for two possibilities, although favouring the latter: 'either that this was the site of a monastery, or that there was a major centre of lay power and patronage nearby, which was responsible for the church'.²²² The sculptured stones at Meikle, for example, have a great deal of secular imagery, leading Ritchie to favour a more secular role for the site.²²³ In contrast, Brechin would seem to tally firmly with the monastic dimension of Ritchie's analysis. However, small as the assemblage associated with Brechin is, it does hint at both ecclesiastical function and royal connections, exemplified both in the imagery and in the physical location of the monuments themselves. The Mary Stone is rich in complex biblical imagery, while the hogback features two pairs of clerics, each man carrying a book, a crozier or a bell – all symbols of their ecclesiastical vocation. Further afield from Brechin itself, the Camuston Cross²²⁴ has a number of similarities to the Brechin hogback: enough, indeed for it to be considered part of the same school of sculpture.²²⁵ This cross is in the parish of Monikie, which was in the medieval diocese of Brechin. This ecclesiastical administrative link further supports the connection

²¹⁷ I. Fisher, 'The Saint Mary stone and early Christian art', *The Book of the Society of the Friends of Brechin Cathedral*, no. 44 (1997) p. 1.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²¹⁹ Henderson, 'Defining the function of sculpture in Alba', p. 41.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²²¹ Ritchie, 'Meikle and lay patronage in Tayside', p. 8.

²²² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²²⁴ Also known as the Camus Cross.

²²⁵ J. T. Lang, 'Hogback monuments in Scotland' *PSAS* 105 (1974) pp. 206-35, p. 216.

inherent in the sculpture itself. In addition to this, there is documentary evidence for associating Monikie with kings of Scots; King William I gave the church of Monikie with common pasture to his abbey of Arbroath.²²⁶ Here we have an explicit connection between sculpture associated with Brechin and lands of the king and his family.

The royal presence in Angus and the Mearns: burghs, monasteries and the bishopric of Brechin

The early connection between Brechin and kings, as evidenced by sculpture and the concluding statement of the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, continued and flourished into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In this period far more detail is available about the lands held by the kings of Scots. In addition to the lordship of Brechin itself and the wider patrimony of Earl David, kings such as William I (1165-1214) and Alexander II (1214-1249) maintained a regular personal presence in Angus and the Mearns. William I in particular seems to have had a preference for Angus; twenty of his charters have Montrose as their place-date with another forty-six at Forfar and a further two at Charleton by Montrose.²²⁷ Moreover William founded the great Tironensian abbey of Arbroath in Angus. This has led G. W. S. Barrow to assert that ‘for William, Gowrie, Angus and Mearns seem almost to have formed a miniature kingdom within a kingdom.’²²⁸ The royal engagement with and lordship over Angus and the Mearns is particularly visible in the various burghs, monasteries and lands over which the king held sway.

As G.W.S. Barrow has emphasised, ‘Most of the earliest burghs of Scotland, those in existence before c. 1200, were on land belonging to the Crown, enjoyed royal protection and had certainly or probably been founded by kings.’²²⁹ The burghs scattered through Angus represent a significant component of royal power. Like reformed monastic foundations such as Arbroath and Coupar Angus, these were developments of the twelfth century. In Angus, there were five early burghs: two royal, two ecclesiastical and one lordly, although the three latter also had strong links with kings. The two royal burghs were Forfar and Montrose: the former in the diocese of St Andrews, the latter in that of Brechin. Although the original burgh charter is no longer extant, Montrose seems to have

²²⁶ *RRS* ii, no. 328.

²²⁷ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 161.

²²⁸ *RRS* ii, introduction, p. 5.

²²⁹ G. W. S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity Scotland 1000 – 1306* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 2003) p. 107.

been Scotland's earliest royal burgh. Forfar, also the site of a royal residence, was a royal burgh by 1153 x 1162.²³⁰ Of the two ecclesiastical burghs, one was also the centre of a bishopric while the other was associated with medieval Scotland's wealthiest religious house. Brechin was a bishop's burgh,²³¹ and as A. A. M. Duncan has pointed out, 'holds an anomalous and apparently unique position'²³² in that it was a bishop's burgh but had the rights and privileges of a royal burgh. Arbroath was an abbot's burgh dating from the twelfth century 1178 x 1182.²³³ Dundee is something different again; as already discussed above, Dundee was a burgh by 1191 x 1195, founded by David, earl of Huntingdon.²³⁴ In stark contrast to Angus, the Mearns had only two early burghs, both seemingly royal. Kincardine, the now vanished town from which Kincardineshire takes its name, was 'probably an ancient but undocumented burgh'²³⁵ and it was only erected *in liberum burgum* 27 January 1531-2. However, Kincardine is a known royal centre.²³⁶ Inverbervie, on the other hand, is documented as being a burgh by 1341.²³⁷ Although a royal burgh, the town initially had associations with Earl David, the founder of Dundee. Crucially, whatever their official status, be it royal, ecclesiastical or lordly, these burghs all had royal associations of some kind: Forfar, Montrose, Inverbervie and Kincardine directly with kings as royal burghs; Dundee, Brechin and Inverbervie through Earl David, although only Dundee is confirmed as his own burgh; and Arbroath through its royal founder William I.

Table 1: Burghs in Angus and the Mearns

	Bishopric of Brechin	Bishopric of St Andrews
Royal burghs	Montrose	Forfar
		Kincardine
	Inverbervie	
Ecclesiastical burghs	Brechin	Arbroath
Lordly burghs	Dundee	

²³⁰ Pryde, *Burghs*, no. 23.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, no. 33 and no. 87.

²³² A. A. M. Duncan's comment in Pryde, *Burghs*, no. 87 (Duncan contributed section II to the compilation of Pryde's work on Scottish burghs).

²³³ *Ibid.*, no. 69 and no. 91.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 29 and no. 94.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 213.

²³⁶ *Loc. cit.*

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 44.

The burghs of Angus and the Mearns appear to be fairly evenly distributed between the dioceses of Brechin and St Andrews: three in St Andrews diocese and three in Brechin, with the affiliation of Inverbervie being unclear (although perhaps more likely connected in some way with Brechin). However, the bishopric of Brechin with its 27 parishes is comparatively better served by burghs than the bishopric of St Andrews with its 52 parishes in the deaneries of Angus and Mearns. It is clear that the burghs associated with Brechin are not unique in their royal associations. However, examination of the burghs associated with the diocese of Brechin highlights an instance of correspondence between areas of quite significant royal involvement with territory also associated with the bishopric. Furthermore, this examination of burghs emphasises, yet again, the significant correspondence between the interests of Earl David and those of the diocese of Brechin.

Some of the most visible manifestations of the royal presence are the religious houses which are to be found in Angus, now in ruins but once prominent features of the landscape. These are also the establishments which have left the most detailed written historical records. While reformed religious houses are completely absent from the Mearns, the Angus monasteries of Arbroath, Coupar Angus and Restenneth were founded by kings of Scots, built on royal land, and provided for and sustained by grants from their founders as well as other patrons. Each of these three houses had some form of relationship with, and impact on, the bishopric of Brechin, in spite of the fact that none was within its territorial bounds or its ecclesiastical jurisdiction. A number of lands and churches given to these houses by kings were within the bishopric of Brechin.

There is evidence of the existence of a priory at Restenneth from the early thirteenth century. Berengar prior of Restenneth appeared in the famous court case between William, bishop of St Andrews and Duncan of Arbutnott.²³⁸ A charter of Malcolm IV dated 6 January 1161 x 24 January 1162 renewed the grants of his predecessors to the church of St Peter of Restenneth and confirmed it to Jedburgh Abbey.²³⁹ Although by the thirteenth century Restenneth was an Augustinian priory dependent on Jedburgh,²⁴⁰ it seems to have had pre-twelfth-century origins²⁴¹ and has long been viewed by some scholars as something of a precursor to Brechin as the dominant religious house in Angus. One of the

²³⁸ *Spalding Misc.*, v, pp. 207-13.

²³⁹ *RRS*, i, no. 195.

²⁴⁰ *MRHS*, pp. 95-6.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

few tangible links between the two is the parish of Dysart, in Brechin diocese, which appears to be identifiable with the lands of *Dyserth* mentioned in Malcolm IV's charter. In addition to this there is a probable link between another place mentioned in this charter, *Egglespether*, seemingly in the immediate vicinity of Montrose, a royal burgh dating from the reign of David I. There is evidence for royal involvement with Restenneth from the reign of David I; letters of Patrick bishop of Brechin testify to a now lost charter of David I relating grants to the church of Restenneth.²⁴² Therefore, the church and Restenneth and its associated lands and rights appear to have had a long-standing association with kings. In turn some of this land was within the jurisdiction of the bishopric of Brechin.

Another house with a relationship to Brechin, yet also outside the bishopric, is the Cistercian abbey of Coupar Angus. This was founded in 1159 by Malcolm IV, although it may initially have been planned by David I.²⁴³ The abbey was founded on a royal *manerium*, and likewise endowed from royal lands. While Coupar Angus Abbey itself is firmly outwith the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the bishopric of Brechin, it possessed the right of patronage of the church of Glenisla within that diocese. At first the patronage of Glenisla was granted by William the Lion to Cambuskenneth in 1165 x 95.²⁴⁴ In 1311 the right of patronage was transferred by Robert I to Coupar Angus Abbey.²⁴⁵ However, there is earlier evidence for a link between Coupar Angus and Glenisla; in 1233 King Alexander II gave lands in Glenisla to Coupar Angus Abbey.²⁴⁶ As with Restenneth, lands and churches associated with Brechin have an ultimate connection with kings of Scots and their land.

The foundation and record keeping of these two religious houses has preserved links between royal lands and patronage and the bishopric of Brechin. However, the house which had the most significant impact on and relationship with Brechin was Arbroath. The Tironensian abbey of Arbroath was founded by King William the Lion in 1178.²⁴⁷ It became one of the great landholders of medieval Scotland, and as Stringer has pointed out,

²⁴² *MRHS*, p. 95.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁴⁴ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 76.

²⁴⁵ *Loc. cit.*

²⁴⁶ *RRS*, iii, no. 196.

²⁴⁷ *MRHS*, pp. 66-7.

‘Its possessions peppered the countryside of Angus and Mearns’.²⁴⁸ The foundation of Arbroath gives great insight into the holdings of the king.²⁴⁹ Amongst other donations of land, king William I granted the shires of Dunnichen and Kingoldrum to Arbroath Abbey. Both of these were parishes in the diocese of Brechin. He also granted the ferry of Montrose and its land; Montrose was another Brechin parish. He also granted the *apdaine* land of Old Montrose; later known as Maryton, this was yet another Brechin parish. In addition to the grants of land, William also gave a number of churches to Arbroath; granting parish churches to religious houses implies lordship in these areas. As well as the churches associated with the above-mentioned lands (Montrose, Old Montrose/Maryton, Dunnichen and Kingoldrum) William granted the churches of Monikie and Guthrie to Arbroath. Both of these are Brechin parishes. The ultimate association of Guthrie with Earl David has been discussed above, while Monikie has early medieval sculptural links with Brechin. In addition to these donations in Angus, William also granted Catterline in the Mearns to Arbroath; yet again a Brechin parish. These grants make up only a small part of the holdings of Arbroath, yet they represent a significant proportion of the sphere of influence of Brechin, and emphasise the connection between royal lands and Brechin parishes.

Royal lands and the bishopric of Brechin

In addition to those lands and churches granted to Arbroath, Coupar Angus and Restenneth, it is clear that kings of Scots held lands throughout Brechin diocese. Indeed, the correspondence between areas of royal demesne and the sphere of influence of the bishops of Brechin is striking. This is not to say that all royal lands were in the territory of the bishopric of Brechin; kings of Scots held land throughout Angus and the Mearns, within the bishoprics of St Andrews and Dunkeld as well as that of Brechin. However, it does seem to be the case that there was some royal land, or land that had originally been in royal hands, in most of Brechin’s parishes. Thus, there seems to be heavy correspondence between Brechin’s sphere of influence and that of the kings of Scots.

It has already been demonstrated that kings of Scots had links with a great deal of Brechin territory: Catterline, Dysart, Glenisla, Monikie, Kingoldrum, Dunnichen, Guthrie,

²⁴⁸ K. Stringer, ‘Arbroath Abbey in context, 1178 – 1320’ in Geoffrey Barrow (ed), *The Declaration of Arbroath History, Significance, Setting* (Edinburgh, 2003) p. 125.

²⁴⁹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 1.

Inverbervie (Kinghornie), Maryton (Old Montrose) and Montrose. Moreover, it has also been shown that, through Earl David, there were links with Brechin, Burghill and Dundee. But what of the remaining parishes in the diocese of Brechin? In addition to the places already mentioned above, kings of Scots held land in the parish of Farnell, a place closely associated with bishops of Brechin. Within this parish, the king held a portion of Montreathmont Moor, another segment of which was held by the bishops of Brechin.²⁵⁰ The name Montreathmont itself is potentially significant, and may also indicate an early royal association. W. J. Watson has discussed the name in his *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, arguing that the earliest form we have of the name, 'Munreimond',²⁵¹ dating from 1325, indicates *rígmonad*, 'royal mount'.²⁵² In the Mearns, an area famous for its royal links, Brechin's influence was limited. However, here, as in Angus, there is a royal presence in most Brechin parishes. The king held Strachan,²⁵³ which was a parish in Brechin diocese. As already mentioned, King William granted Catterline to Arbroath Abbey.²⁵⁴ Kinghornie seems to be linked to Bervie, which was within the ambit of Earl David's lordship.

Turning back to Angus, another Brechin parish with a royal connection is Kirkbuddo. In this case, the link between place and king is to be found in a twelfth-century saint's life, rather than in charters. The saint commemorated at Kirkbuddo is Buite or Boethius, the founder of Monasterboice in Ireland. His *Life* contains a number of adventures and miracles, and one of these sees Buite bringing Nechtan, king of the Picts, back to life.²⁵⁵ The foundation account for Kirkbuddo contained in this *Life*, seems likely to have travelled via the nearby Cistercian house of Coupar Angus, itself founded by king Malcolm IV (1141-65). The neighbouring parish of Dunnichen (Nechtán's dun/fort) also has a long-standing tradition of association with kings, although the picture has changed somewhat now that Alex Woolf has so compellingly argued for the reidentification of the site of the battle of Nechtansmere, and also the Pictish kingdom of Fortriu from south to north of the

²⁵⁰ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 49. Robert III appointed hereditary keepers of the king's portion of the Moor of Montreathmont in a charter dated 14 November 1390. See W. Fraser, *History of the Carnegies, Earls of Southesk* (Edinburgh, 1867) vol ii, no. 50.

²⁵¹ *RMS* i, Appendix i, no. 80.

²⁵² *CPNS*, p. 404, full discussion pp. 403-4, quote at p. 404.

²⁵³ M. H. Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland, circa 1100 to 1260, with special reference to ethnicity,' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2005) p. 179.

²⁵⁴ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i., no 1.

²⁵⁵ *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1910) vol. i, pp. xxxiv-vi.

Mounth.²⁵⁶ As mentioned above, this link with kings is explicitly documented in the donation of both the shire and church of Dunnichen to the abbey of Arbroath. The surviving evidence indicates strong links between the bishopric of Brechin and the interests of the Scottish royal house.

The Earls of Angus

The earldom of Angus, like the bishopric of Brechin, has long been viewed as somewhat perplexing. Incoherence was seemingly combined with paucity: Keith Stringer has highlighted the ‘especially striking case of Angus, whose territory was from early on fragmented and limited’²⁵⁷ and Alexander Grant has described the ‘meagre holdings of the later twelfth-century earls’.²⁵⁸ Matthew Hammond supports these views, stating that the ‘estates held by the earls were fairly small and patchwork in nature.’²⁵⁹ This dislocation and scarcity is most obvious in the various attempts made at mapping the earldom.²⁶⁰ On the map, the earldom of Angus appears to be the most fragmented, and smallest in terms of territory, of all the Scottish earldoms. However, it must be borne in mind that the lands held by an earl need not necessarily cover the whole territorial expanse of his earldom, but rather could comprise personal holdings within that wider sphere of influence. That said, Angus appears more restricted and fragmented than usual for medieval Scotland. This is particularly striking given the notoriously fragmentary nature of the bishopric of Brechin. Both are fragmentary, yet as far as it is possible to tell from the surviving documentary evidence, the two entities appear to have been mutually exclusive.

Much of the information which has survived about the earls of Angus and their lordship comes from the records left by their dealings with the church, and with the abbey of Arbroath in particular. An idea of the patrimony of the earls of Angus is provided by the churches and lands which earl Gilchrist and his successors granted to Arbroath upon and shortly following its foundation by William I in 1178. Indeed, the records of these

²⁵⁶ A. Woolf, ‘Dún Nechtain, Fortriu and the Geography of the Picts’ *SHR* vol 85 no 2, no 220 (October 2006) pp. 182-201.

²⁵⁷ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 183.

²⁵⁸ A. Grant, ‘Thanes and Thanages’, in A. Grant and K. J. Stringer (eds) *Medieval Scotland: Crown, Lordship and Community* (Edinburgh, 1993) pp. 39-81, p. 46.

²⁵⁹ Hammond, ‘A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland’, p. 171.

²⁶⁰ For example see *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 184. Also see Cynthia Neville, *Land, Law and People in Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2010) p. viii. Also see above, Map 6: The Lands of the Earls of Angus, p. 19.

donations have been used by scholars to divine and reconstruct the lands of the earls of Angus in the absence of other contemporary evidence.²⁶¹ This approach seems to have begun in the time of the publication of the *Arbroath Liber* and continues to the present day, with historians such as Matthew Hammond and Cynthia Neville using these church grants to illuminate and map the holdings of the earls.²⁶² While the earls presumably held sway over a much larger area, their own core territory seems to have been restricted to areas near the Tay at Monifieth and inland around Kirriemuir, as evidenced by lands and churches held by the earls and given to Arbroath. There is further evidence of a particularly strong connection with Kirriemuir in the form of the chaplain Brice who is a witness in so many charters of the family, and who was a clergyman associated particularly with Kirriemuir itself.²⁶³ Other grants of land support the picture provided by the church donations of another key focal point on the Tay, for example the land of Portincrag and of the *apdaine* of Monifieth, and the onomastically explicit relationship between the earls and the lands and parish of Earl's Strathdighty, or Strathdighty Comitis.

Gilchrist, earl of Angus, granted a total of four churches to Arbroath Abbey: Monifieth, Murroes, Strathdighty Comitis and Kirriemuir.²⁶⁴ These donations were confirmed successively by his son Duncan,²⁶⁵ his grandson Malcolm,²⁶⁶ and finally countess Matilda of Angus.²⁶⁷ As mentioned above, these churches have been used to reassemble the patrimony of the earls of Angus. Alongside the churches, earl Gilchrist also donated the land of *portincrag*,²⁶⁸ which is in modern Broughty Ferry.²⁶⁹ While the churches and land granted to Arbroath reveal a great deal about the patrimony of the earls of Angus, the charters in which these transactions are recorded reveal yet more about the family and its influence. The witness lists of these charters highlight a significant relationship between the earls and their own closest confessors, and in turn this relationship further confirms the sphere of influence of the earls signified by these gifts, indicating Kirriemuir's supremacy among the Angus possessions and also confirming the significance of Monifieth.

²⁶¹ Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland', p. 171.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 174.

²⁶³ See below, pp. 68-9.

²⁶⁴ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i no. 46.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* no. 47.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.* no. 48.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.* no. 49.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.* no. 50. This donation was confirmed by earl Duncan in no. 52 and by earl Malcolm in no. 53.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.* preface, p. xvii.

All of earl Gilchrist of Angus's charters to Arbroath Abbey 1199 x 1205 were witnessed by a man called Brice, identified in all the witness lists as the chaplain of the earl of Angus, and described either as '*Bricio capellano meo*' or '*Bricio capellano Comititis*'.²⁷⁰ Brice's connection with the earls of Angus continued after the death of earl Gilchrist, indeed it flourished for the rest of his life, and was subsequently maintained in the person of his son Nicholas. In the time of earl Duncan, Brice is described as '*Bricio capellano*'.²⁷¹ By the time of earl Malcolm he is described as '*Bricio Capellano de kerimor*'.²⁷² In the time of countess Matilda (1242 x 1243) Brice is being referred to as '*Bricio persona de Kerimor*'.²⁷³ However, in the grant of the *apdaine* land of Monifieth to Brice's son Nicholas, Brice is firmly described as a priest: '*Nicholao filio Bricii Sacerdotis de Kerimure*'.²⁷⁴ Brice seems to have been the closest churchman to the Angus family for four decades, his service spanning four generations: three earls and one countess. His close association with the family and his particular connection with Kirriemuir support the indication given in his patrons' grants of lands and churches of the importance of that place as a comital centre. Moreover, Earl Malcolm granted lands in Kirriemuir to Arbroath Abbey.²⁷⁵ An indication of its much earlier importance as a site is to be found in the sculptured stones associated with Kirriemuir.²⁷⁶

Brice and his son Nicholas seem to be members of an hereditary ecclesiastical family closely associated with the earls of Angus. Nicholas was granted the *apdaine* land of Monifieth (another church in the patronage of the family) by Malcolm earl of Angus, and this gift was later confirmed by his daughter countess Matilda.²⁷⁷ Following this grant, Nicholas appears in witness lists described as '*Abbate de monifod*': abbot of Monifeith.²⁷⁸ Interestingly, Nicholas only appears in charters alongside his father (with father among the clerics and son among the laymen); both men drop out of the documentary record sometime in the lifetime of countess Matilda. The association of Monifieth with the Angus

²⁷⁰ Ibid. no. 39, no. 41, no. 43, no. 44, no. 46 and no. 50: *Bricio capellano meo* in no. 39, *Bricio Capellano meo* in no. 41, *Bricio Capellano meo* in no. 43, *Bricio capellano meo* in no. 44, *Bricio Capellano meo* in no. 46, *Bricio capellano Comititis* in no. 50.

²⁷¹ Ibid. no. 52, dated 1204 x 1206.

²⁷² Ibid. no. 53, *Bricio Capellano de Kerimor*; no. 48 *Bricio capellano de kerimor* no. 112.

²⁷³ Ibid. no. 49, also no. 114.

²⁷⁴ *Arb. Lib.*, vol. i, Appendix no. iv and no. v. Nicholas is described as son of the priest in *Arb. Lib.* no. 112.

²⁷⁵ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 112.

²⁷⁶ *ECMS*, pp. 258-61.

²⁷⁷ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, Appendix no. iv and Appendix no. v.

²⁷⁸ *Arb. Lib.*, vol. i, no. 49, also no. 114.

family, already indicated by the grant of the church to Arbroath and of the *apdaine* land to Nicholas, is further confirmed by the grant made by Matilda of the land on the south side of the church, which the *céli Dé* held in the time of her father.²⁷⁹ We later hear of a Michael of Monifeith, lord of the *apdaine*.²⁸⁰ This may be firmly dated to 25 July 1310. In Michael it is possible, although impossible to prove, that we may be seeing a descendant of Brice and Nicholas. As is the case with Kirriemuir, an indication of Monifieth's early importance is to be found in the sculptured stones associated with the church site.²⁸¹ Indeed, Matthew Hammond has identified Monifieth as 'the centre of the coastal portion of their demesne'.²⁸²

An abbot of Arbirlot is also to be found in charters associated with the earls of Angus. Although there is no indication in the documentary record of the church of Arbirlot being under the patronage of the earls of Angus (indeed it was in the patronage of the bishop of St Andrews)²⁸³ its associated abbot seems to have operated firmly within the circle of the earls of Angus. In four early thirteenth-century charters issued by Gilchrist earl of Angus, Maurice, abbot of Arbirlot, is to be found among the witnesses. In all but one of these charters he is described as Maurice, abbot of Arbirlot: '*Mauricio abbate de Aberloth*'.²⁸⁴ In one other charter he is simply referred to as '*mauricio abba*',²⁸⁵ however this charter is not a charter of the earls of Angus, rather of John de Montfort. Matthew Hammond has questioned whether Abbot Maurice may be identified as appearing in another of earl Gilchrist's charters, this time described as '*M. capellano de Aberloth*'.²⁸⁶ However, this is clearly an entirely different man, albeit sharing an association with Arbirlot and an initial. '*M. Capellano*', M the chaplain, appears alongside Maurice in two charters of earl Gilchrist.²⁸⁷ Hammond has also raised the possibility that he could be 'Maurice the priest' from the 1206 Arbuthnott case.²⁸⁸

²⁷⁹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no, 115.

²⁸⁰ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 323.

²⁸¹ *ECMS*, pp. 228-30.

²⁸² Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland', p. 126.

²⁸³ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 7.

²⁸⁴ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 39, no. 41, no. 43, no. 44 and no. 46.

²⁸⁵ *Arb. Lib.*, vol. i, no. 70.

²⁸⁶ Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland', 126, note 75. *Arb. Lib.* 44. They are identified as the same man in the POMS database: see his person record at db.poms.ac.uk/record/person/5494/# [accessed 10 February 2014].

²⁸⁷ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 43 and no. 46.

²⁸⁸ Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland', p. 127, note 85.

What is clear from the documentary evidence is that the spheres of influence of the earls of Angus and the bishops of Brechin did not overlap. One possible exception to this is Cortachy. This was a church in Brechin diocese. Matthew Hammond has argued that ‘it is also clear from a charter of 1257 of Máel Ísu II earl of Strathern, whose wife was a descendant of the earls of Angus, that Cortachy had been part of the earls’ patrimony.’²⁸⁹ This is one possible clear exception to the mutual exclusivity of the earldom and the bishopric.

The picture that has emerged of the earldom of Angus and the bishopric of Brechin being mutually exclusive is particularly interesting given the theory that Alex Woolf has put forward, albeit briefly and in passing, that Brechin was at one time a comital centre for Angus.²⁹⁰ This would seem to go against the evidence of both church patronage and landholding; Brechin seems to have been associated with kings and their kin rather than with local magnates. However, Woolf has argued that ‘Since Brechin went on to become the chief church of Angus it is possible that it originated as a comital centre for the region and that it came into royal hands as a result of confiscation in the course of some dispute between Cinaed and the comital family.’²⁹¹ This could go some way towards explaining the mutual exclusivity of the churches. As context, Woolf has posited the theory that the foundation/refoundation of Brechin could be connected to the death of king Cinaed mac Mael Coluim in 995 (the last entry in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*), which later tradition in twelfth-century king-lists describes as murder by Finella, a daughter of Connchar, mormaer of Angus, whose only son the king has killed.²⁹² Here we would have an explanation both for the limited extent of the earldom and the mutual exclusivity of the diocese and the earldom.

However, tempting as this theory may be, it does not fit happily with some of the evidence. For example it is at odds with the very good physical evidence for Kirriemuir being an important early site, as demonstrated by the impressive sculpture there, and for continued use of this site by the leading family in Angus. Certainly, later evidence about the earldom of Angus places emphasis on Kirriemuir not Brechin. The mutual exclusivity of the earldom of Angus and the bishopric of Brechin support the picture of the bishopric being

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 171, also see *Inchaffray Charters* no. 86.

²⁹⁰ A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* (Edinburgh, 2007) pp. 211-12.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p. 212.

²⁹² Ibid., pp. 211-2.

very much a royal creation and dependant, from its earliest history, while the earldom and the earls appear to have supported and patronised their own church at Kirriemuir. They kept up this relationship with their home church as well as going on to support that great house of Angus, patronised by so many of the Scots nobility, the Tironensian abbey of Arbroath.

MacLeods and MacNabs: descendants of the hereditary clerical family of Brechin

Yet another group long believed to have some kind of relationship with the lands of the church of Brechin are the local abbots, commonly referred to as ‘lay abbots’ by modern scholars.²⁹³ This extended kin-group maintained close links with the church of Brechin, provided a number of its personnel and held significant portions of land in northern Angus. Yet, the lands of this family do not neatly correspond with the bishopric of Brechin; indeed, it has long been believed that they appropriated many of the church lands for themselves.²⁹⁴ A hereditary ecclesiastical family associated with Brechin was first identified by Cosmo Innes and Patrick Chalmers in their work editing the *Arbroath Liber* and the *Brechin Register*.²⁹⁵ It was then discussed by William Forbes Skene in the second volume of *Celtic Scotland*, before receiving rather fuller consideration by Bishop William Reeves in his *Culdees of the British Islands*.²⁹⁶ The most comprehensive study to date has been by Geoffrey Barrow in his article on the ‘Lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland’, although this amounts to just under two pages of the overall work.²⁹⁷ A further dimension has been added by Thomas Owen Clancy’s brief discussion of the kin-group in his study of Céli Dé communities in the north-east of Scotland.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ Matthew Hammond has described these as a ‘quasi-ecclesiastical aristocracy’ in ‘A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland’, p. 171.

²⁹⁴ For these lands see above, Map 7: The Lands of the Abbatial Family of Brechin, p. 20.

²⁹⁵ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. v; *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, p. xxv.

²⁹⁶ W. Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands, as they Appear in History: with an Appendix of Evidences*. (Dublin, 1864) p. 43, pp. 119-20.

²⁹⁷ G.W.S. Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland’, in W. Gillies (ed) *Gaelic and Scotland: Alba agus a’ Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989) pp. 67-88, pp. 71-2.

²⁹⁸ Thomas Owen Clancy, ‘Reformers to conservatives: Céli Dé communities in the north east’ in James Porter (ed.) *After Columba, After Calvin: Religious Community in North-East Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1999) pp. 19-29, p. 24. Also see D. G. Adams, ‘From Samson to Gregory: the Bishops and Clergy of Brechin’ *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 34 (1985).

The abbatial dynasty began with abbot Leod in the early twelfth century,²⁹⁹ descending into two important landowning families, the MacLeods and MacNabs.³⁰⁰ Crucially, these families seem to have inherited some of the lands associated with the church at Brechin - those lands which would have supported their office. Thomas Clancy has argued that 'these men inherited the temporal estates which Brechin undoubtedly possessed, and in the past such abbots would also have been responsible for administering the affairs of the monastery at a more intimate level.'³⁰¹ This echoes the sentiment expressed by Cosmo Innes 150 years earlier in his preface to the Brechin Register, that '... the head of this Culdee convent, the Abbot of Brechin, had already become secularised, and had appropriated to himself, and transmitted to his family, the territories which his predecessors had administered for the church.'³⁰²

As with so much of the territory associated with Brechin, the landholding of the lay abbots is fragmentary; it is divided between the two branches of the family, the MacLeods and the MacNabs, and their various holdings are scattered through several parishes and through both the bishoprics of St Andrews and of Brechin. Indeed, several nineteenth-century scholars did not see these families as belonging to the same kin-group, rather as representing two separate abbasies, one of Brechin, the other of Glenesk (known for its connection with St Drostan). This is somewhat understandable given that the kin-group did hold land in two distinct territories. However, Geoffrey Barrow has demonstrated that these families descended from a common ancestor, Leod. Nonetheless, the perception of a distinction between the two is by no means misguided: one appears to have taken its name from the office of abbot; the other took its name from the common ancestor Leod. Matthew Hammond has asserted that 'Occasionally kinship groups identified themselves by an important progenitor rather than by a place or occupation or office. This seems to have been the case with the descendants of Leod, *ab* of Brechin, who called themselves MacLeod.'³⁰³ Indeed, he emphasised that 'It is likely that the descendants of Domnall *ab* of Brechin called themselves MacLeod to differentiate themselves from the other branch

²⁹⁹ In the documentary record at least.

³⁰⁰ The patronymic MacNab is not actually explicitly used in the primary sources. Cosmo Innes argued that Morgund filius Abbe 'derived his surname from the family office' *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, preface, p. v. Geoffrey Barrow argued for the name in his 'Lost Gàidhealtachd' article, stating that, 'Morgund's style 'filius Abbe' points to a vernacular Mac an Aba, 'son of the abbot'.' p. 83, note 43.

³⁰¹ Thomas Owen Clancy, 'Reformers to conservatives', p. 24.

³⁰² *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, preface p. iv. Also Reeves, *Culdees*, p. 43.

³⁰³ Hammond, 'A prosopographical analysis of society in East Central Scotland', p. 102.

of the family, the progeny of John *ab* of Brechin.³⁰⁴ Although MacLeods provided abbots too.

The MacLeods held a number of lands, all of which are near Brechin geographically, though not all within the bounds of the diocese itself. Our understanding of the holdings of the MacLeods come from two main sources; these are two thirteenth-century charters, one a grant of land by a MacLeod, the other a grant to the family by the king. The first of these is a charter dated 1202 x 7 September 1206, probably x 7 September 1205, in which Donald Abbe of Brechin gave to Arbroath Abbey a *davoch* called *Balegillegrand*.³⁰⁵ This has been identified by Barrow as modern Bolshan in Kinnell.³⁰⁶ Further detail of the holdings of the MacLeods emerges with a charter of Alexander II (1214-1249), dated 19 April 1232, in which the king granted Donald's son Gillandres MacLeod a number of lands: *Neuethbarr, Tulacmaccarbaloch, Balehergrossyn, Katech'e* and *Kennebred*.³⁰⁷ These have been identified, again by Barrow, as Navar, Tillyarblet, Balargus, Keithock and Combraid.³⁰⁸ Combraid is identifiable with Mainsbank in Kinnell.³⁰⁹ Kinnell was a parish in St Andrews diocese, but seems to have been an area of real significance for the MacLeods. The very same charter of Alexander II also confirms lands granted to Gillandres in marriage with Forthelach, daughter of Brice the *judex*; these are Braikie in Kinnell, as well as Cardean in Airlie. An explicit link between the lands of the MacLeods and the church at Brechin is the mention in the charter of the rights (which are unfortunately not specified) of Brechin personnel to some of the revenue of the land, and of the abbot of Brechin in particular. The charter refers to the rights of the clergy of Brechin 'reserving rights of clergy of Brechin and 10 shillings yearly from Combraid to abbot of Brechin': '*saluis Clericis de Breythin' rectitudinibus suis . et saluis abbati de Breythin' annuatim Decem solidis de Kennebred'*'. This clause raises a number of significant points. Firstly, it indicates that there was still an abbot of Brechin at this point, although this person is otherwise unknown and does not appear in any other surviving documentary sources. Secondly, it confirms the link between lands in Kinnell and abbots of Brechin, not simply in terms of the MacLeod family, but also in terms of the office of abbot itself. Thirdly, it emphasises a link between MacLeod lands and the wider personnel

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102 note 209.

³⁰⁵ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 74. Also see *RRS* ii no. 466.

³⁰⁶ Barrow, 'The Lost Gàidhealtachd', p. 82, note 37.

³⁰⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 2. Also see below, Appendix 2: Charter of Alexander II to Gillandres MacLeod, pp. 158-9.

³⁰⁸ Barrow, 'The Lost Gàidhealtachd', p. 82, note 38.

³⁰⁹ *Loc. cit.*

of Brechin: the ‘*clericis de Breychin*’ mentioned in the charter. Indeed, this charter seems to confirm the thoughts of people like Cosmo Innes and Patrick Chalmers, followed by others such as Clancy and Barrow, that some of the lands of the MacLeods were ‘part of the patrimony of the church of Brechin’.³¹⁰ This is in spite of the fact that Kinnell was a parish in the diocese of St Andrews by the thirteenth century (Bagimond’s roll). In addition to a picture of the lands of the MacLeods, this charter also hints at earlier rights and responsibilities.

Of the other lands granted to Gillandres MacLeod, *Balehergrossyn* or Balargus, is now lost but has been identified by Barrow as being in Kirriemuir or near Strathmartine.³¹¹ Both of these parishes are in St Andrews diocese and in the core territory of the earls of Angus. *Neuethbarr* and *Tulacmaccarbaloch*, identifiable as Navar and Tillyarblet, are both in the bishopric of Brechin, while *Katech’e* is Keithock in Brechin parish itself. *Tuliarblet* appears in the 1484 rental of Brechin and Navar. The church of Navar was a Brechin possession. It is evident that the picture presented by the lands of the MacLeods is not a clear one: lands are distributed over territory from both dioceses of St Andrews and Brechin; a clear link with the church of Brechin is indicated in the charter evidence, but it is not a comprehensive one. We do not get a straightforward impression of Brechin landholdings being ‘lost’ to its hereditary abbots. There could be several explanations for this. Brechin could have held more influence/lands in the past, or we could be seeing a family’s wide-ranging interest and influence, including lands in the area that did not come from church officedom.

A similar picture is presented by the holdings of the MacNabs, the other branch of the abbatial kin-group. The MacNabs seem to have inherited a more coherent, contiguous, set of land than their cousins the MacLeods. In a charter of 24 August 1198 x 5 July 1210, John Abbe son of Malise granted to Arbroath Abbey the right to take charcoal from his wood of Edzell.³¹² Edzell itself was in St Andrews diocese. Indeed, the patronage of the church of Edzell appears to have belonged to the archbishop of St Andrews by the late fifteenth century.³¹³ However, the wider holdings of the MacNabs hint at physical links with Brechin. Geoffrey Barrow has made an excellent case for the MacNabs also being

³¹⁰ Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd’, p. 71.

³¹¹ Loc. cit.

³¹² *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 72 and no. 74.

³¹³ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 60.

lords of Glenesk, and indeed going on to take the name ‘de Glenesk’.³¹⁴ The lands of Glenesk include Edzell, Lethnot, Navar and Lochlee. Lochlee in Glenesk was in Brechin diocese. Furthermore, the Lindsays of Glenesk, descendants of the MacNabs, were patrons of both the parish church of Lethnot and the parish church of Finavon, both in Brechin diocese. When the parsonage and vicarage of Lethnot were erected into a prebend of Brechin cathedral by Stephen, bishop of Brechin in 1384/5, it was stated explicitly that patronage was to remain with David Lindsay, lord of Glenesk, and his descendants.³¹⁵ Similarly, when the parsonage and vicarage of the church of Finavon were erected into a prebend of Brechin cathedral by bishop John Balfour in 1474, the patronage remained with David earl of Crawford and lord of Lindsay and his descendants.³¹⁶

In his preface to the *Brechin Register* Cosmo Innes expressed the opinion that the lordship of Brechin was ‘probably identical with the old lay Abbacy’.³¹⁷ There is no evidence for this. Instead, there is clear evidence for two sets of land associated with the abbacy of Brechin and its hereditary office holders, and this does not map on to the known holdings of the lordship of Brechin. However, examination of the lands and lordship associated with the descendants of Leod of Brechin once again highlights the complexity of both temporal and spiritual organisation in Angus. Moreover, this seems to support the theory, long held by scholars, that some of the lands of the church of Brechin became disconnected from the church and joined with the families themselves.

The temporalities of the bishopric of Brechin

In a work exploring the medieval bishopric of Brechin, a discussion of secular landholding and lordship in Angus and the Mearns would be incomplete without consideration of the holdings of that bishopric itself. The temporal lands associated with the church and its officials at Brechin can appear scanty, not only in comparison to those held by the secular powers already discussed, but most particularly with those of the bishopric of St Andrews. However, Donald Watt cautioned that ‘rather too much emphasis is put on the idea that Brechin diocese was both small and poor’,³¹⁸ highlighting the wealth of the parish of Brechin itself as evidence for extensive endowments in land, which of course generated

³¹⁴ Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd’, p. 72.

³¹⁵ *Brech Reg.*, vol. i, no. 17 and no. 47. Also see Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 131.

³¹⁶ *Brech. Reg.*, vol. i., no. 94. Also Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 66.

³¹⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, Preface p. v.

³¹⁸ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 15.

revenue.³¹⁹ This warning has proven sound, as close examination of the temporal lands of the bishopric reveals a significant and systematic presence throughout the diocese, not only in the form of churches and chapels, but also in the form of lands held by the bishop.

The bishopric of Brechin has long been viewed as something of a poor relation to neighbouring St Andrews. The bishops of St Andrews had extensive landholdings in Angus and the Mearns, with lands at Arbuthnott, Benholm and Aberluthnot, as well as Inchbraoch, Aldbar, Rescobie, Dalbog, Meathie, Idvies, Kinnettles, Strathmartin, Balmuir and Pourie.³²⁰ As is to be expected, these lands are all in parishes in the diocese of St Andrews and, as Marinell Ash has pointed out, ‘A number of these lands appear to have been attached to the church of St. Andrews from a very early period’.³²¹ As with so many of the other components of landholding in Angus and the Mearns, the fragmentation of St Andrews holdings in these areas is obvious and the ‘widely scattered lands’³²² have been remarked upon. While there is no denying that the bishop of St Andrews held significant territory throughout Angus and the Mearns, so too did the bishop of Brechin, albeit in a rather different way. Indeed, bishops of Brechin had a more comprehensive system of landholding in Angus and the Mearns than did those of St Andrews, holding land in virtually every parish in their diocese. This is in contrast to the bishops of St Andrews holding lands in just thirteen of their fifty-two Angus and Mearns parishes.

The temporal landholding and lordship of the bishops of Brechin very much mirrors their spiritual jurisdiction: they held a core of land in Brechin itself, with further holdings in the immediate hinterland, and more dispersed territory further afield. The physical centre of the bishopric was the cathedral itself. The personnel of the cathedral each had their own places in the chanonry,³²³ while the bishop himself had his own residence in the town.³²⁴ In addition to the cathedral itself and its precinct, the bishops of Brechin had extensive rights, lands and privileges in their own burgh. As mentioned, Brechin was a bishop’s burgh, yet was in the unique position of enjoying the privileges of a royal burgh. Bishops

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³²⁰ Ash, ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews’, p. 199 and *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 361.

³²¹ Ash, ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews’, p. 200.

³²² *Ibid.*, p. 206.

³²³ D. B. Thoms, ‘The Chanonry of Brechin’, *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* no. 27 (1978) pp. 12-23.

³²⁴ See *APS* i, 754, a letter of 1365 from David II to the bailies of Forfar regarding the bishop of Brechin’s (Patrick de Leuchars) resignation, which mentions his ‘*manerium*’ of Brechin. This document also indicates other residences, mentioning ‘any other habitation of his’.

of Brechin held extensive lands in the parish of Brechin itself. Much of the evidence for this is immediately post-reformation, when a great deal of detailed information about church landholding was recorded in the *Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices*. Indeed, it is from this period that we can glean the most detailed picture of the temporalities of the diocese of Brechin.³²⁵

This notwithstanding, there is some earlier evidence for Brechin possessions. The earliest of this is associated with the abbey of Arbroath, and preserved in its cartulary: Turpin bishop of Brechin granted land in Stracathro to Arbroath Abbey upon its foundation in 1178.³²⁶ In the episcopate of bishop Albin, there is evidence of landholding flowing in the opposite direction. As is so often the case, this evidence has been preserved as the result of a dispute. In 1248 the bishop and chapter of Brechin acquired the land of Maryton with its fishery and mill, as well as the garbal teinds of the vill of *Bondington* (Bonnyton) in that parish, in the resolution of a dispute with the abbey of Arbroath over a number of churches in Brechin diocese. In exchange for giving up their claim to the six churches of Maryton, Dunnichen, Panbride, Monikie, Kingoldrum and Catterline, the bishop and cathedral chapter received these lands.³²⁷ In a further acquisition of land, in 1219 x 1225 Randulf of Strachan granted all right that he had in the land of *Brectulach* (Bractullo)³²⁸ to Brechin Cathedral.³²⁹

This is the extent of early evidence for the temporal possessions of Brechin cathedral. However, more detail is revealed in records of the mid-fifteenth century, when the bishop of Brechin procured transumps of all the royal grants in favour of the town and the cathedral. These were ratified by James II in 1451.³³⁰ This seems to be the context for the compilation of the *Brechin Register*. While these documents date from the fifteenth century (and indeed entries to the register continued up until the Reformation) many of

³²⁵ See below Appendix 5: Temporal lands in the bishopric of Brechin, pp. 163-4. Also see above Map 4: Temporal Lands of the Bishopric of Brechin, p. 17.

³²⁶ *RRS* ii no. 513.

³²⁷ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 243.

³²⁸ Bractullo (NO 524 472) is in the parish of Kirkden, formerly Idvies, in the diocese of St Andrews. For an alternative possibility see M. H. Hammond, 'A Prosopographical Analysis of Society in East Central Scotland, circa 1100 to 1260, with special reference to ethnicity' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2005), p. 173. Here Hammond draws attention to another place called Bractullo (NO 477 403) in this case located in the parish of Inverarity, (another St Andrews parish) just on the parish boundary with Monikie.

³²⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. 1.

³³⁰ Black, *History of Brechin*, p. 26.

these reflect earlier arrangements.³³¹ The various charters preserved in the *Brechin Register* record lands held throughout the bishopric of Brechin. They include the lands of Ecclesjohn, given to the church of Brechin by John Erskine of Dun, confirmed by Robert duke of Albany 1410 x 11.³³² Lands in Cortachy were granted by the earl of Atholl in a charter dated 22 September 1409.³³³ The church was also granted the land of Drumcarne in Glenesk.³³⁴ The bishops also held land in Farnell, part of the moor of Montreathmont.³³⁵ Here too was an episcopal residence, described variously as a *castrum*, *manerium* and finally by the sixteenth century, a *palatium*.³³⁶ Bishops of Brechin also held land in Keithock.³³⁷ These lands are all within the bounds of the bishopric of Brechin, and all also appear in post-reformation records. However, the bishops of Brechin also seem to have held some lands outwith their diocese. The first example of this is somewhat ambiguous. The bishop of Brechin also held land in Cookston.³³⁸ This parish seems to have changed hands between Brechin and St Andrews, so may be said to be within the bounds of the diocese at one time. However the bishop of Brechin also seems to have had land in Menmuir.³³⁹ This was a parish in the diocese of Dunkeld.³⁴⁰ Furthermore, as previously mentioned, Randulf of Strachan granted the land of Bractullo to the bishopric of Brechin; this was in a St Andrews parish.

The vast majority of the lands mentioned above appear in the most detailed information available about the lands of the bishopric of Brechin. It is during the Reformation period and the years immediately following that much information about the lands held by the bishopric of Brechin is revealed. The rentals produced for the *Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices* confirm and deepen the picture already apparent in the earlier sources

³³¹ With later records of the lands of the bishop of St Andrews, Ash stated that ‘It seems likely, however, that the situation revealed in these later records is one which had been substantially the same for two centuries or more.’ ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews’, p. 200.

³³² *Brech. Reg.* vol. i no. 24 app I xii.

³³³ *Ibid.* no. 19, also see no. 30, no. 32, no. 33, no. 37 Appendix I xi.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 105.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 49.

³³⁶ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii p. 169; *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. xix. Cosmo Innes states that there were bishops’ palaces at Brechin, Ferne and Farnell. The second must be a mistake for Farnell. Ferne was a parish in the diocese of Dunkeld. Early forms of Farnell seem to be responsible for the confusion.

³³⁷ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 52, no. 55, no. 57, no. 70 and vol. ii appendix I no. xiii.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 49.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 72, no. 75, no. 76, no. 79.

³⁴⁰ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 146.

of a bishopric with temporal lands throughout the territory of its spiritual authority. Alongside a slightly later rental of the bishopric of Brechin, dated 28 January 1573, they give a detailed picture of the bishopric.³⁴¹ The rentals of the temporal lands include properties in: Barony of Brechin, Newton, Smiddyhill, Murlingden, *Bothers*, Syde, Pitforthie, Ardo, Addicat, *Ecclesjohn*, Capo, Maryton, *Mylne of Auchdowry*, Unthank, Dalgety, Muirton, Keithock, Kinghornie, *Kirkdauche*, *Croftreddis*, *Wver Petforthie*, Little mill of Brechin, Balrownie, *Drummy*, Brathinch, *Walk Mylne of Stracathro*, East Drums, Brewhouse of Stracathro, *Isaacstoun*, Stracathro and Mains of Farnell.³⁴² For the modern forms and locations of these lands, see Appendix 5, below. It is crucial to bear in mind that not all of the lands recorded as belonging to Brechin at various points from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries will always have had an association with that church. However, the pattern of landholding associated with the bishop and chapter of Brechin cathedral indicates strong temporal ties between mother church and diocese.

Conclusion

In his exploration of the organisation of the medieval diocese of Brechin, Donald Watt highlighted the importance of landholding in understanding the bishopric. Indeed he went so far as to argue that Brechin's rights to certain lands and dues were largely responsible for its very existence and continuance as an episcopal centre, asserting that, 'Such a nexus could not easily be unravelled, and its existence provided understandable justification for the emergence and continuing existence of a diocese so wholly divergent from the accepted norm.'³⁴³ While his emphasis on the significance of landholding is justified, there appear to be more factors at work in the development of the shape of the bishopric of Brechin than an unwillingness or inability to dissolve ancient connections. Landholding and lordship throughout Angus and the Mearns was multi-faceted; indeed, when viewed alongside the holdings of kings and their kin, the earls of Angus, the abbots of Brechin and other local families, the pattern of landholding of the bishopric of Brechin does not appear odd at all. In fact, it seems perfectly normal; landholding throughout Angus was a web of complex ties.

³⁴¹ *The Books of the Assumption of Thirds of Benefices: Scottish Ecclesiastical Rentals at the Reformation*, ed. J. Kirk (Oxford, 1995) pp. 383-9; *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. CCCCXLI.

³⁴² Loc. cit.

³⁴³ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 11.

The bishopric cannot be understood simply from an examination of episcopal lands alone. Research into patterns of social organisation in medieval Scotland and further afield indicates that secular and ecclesiastical units are intimately linked. This certainly seems to hold true for the bishopric of Brechin; the parish of Brechin itself finds its counterpart in the secular lordship, while the wider diocese has a strong relationship to the holdings of Earl David of Huntingdon. Indeed, it is the grandsons of David I, the sons of Earl Henry, that we see making a huge impact: Malcolm IV, William I and David, earl of Huntingdon were all heavily involved with Angus and the Mearns. In stark contrast to this, the patrimony of the earls of Angus appears to bear only a negative relationship to the bishopric of Brechin and their territory was mutually exclusive. Scholars have long thought that the abbatial family associated with Brechin likely acquired some of the church lands for themselves. Examination of the holdings of the MacNabs and MacLeods, combined with their continued association with their mother church and dues payable from their lands to this church, confirms this hypothesis.

In spite of received wisdom, Brechin's temporal holdings were by no means lean when viewed alongside the size and shape of the diocese in general. The bishop and cathedral chapter of Brechin held land in the majority of parishes in the diocese. There appears to have been a core territory of lands in and around Brechin itself, with more dispersed territory scattered through the wider diocese, echoing the pattern of spiritual provision.

Chapter 3: Parishes and Churches in the Bishopric of Brechin

Introduction

The parish is the basic unit of pastoral care, ‘the bricks of which much of the Scottish Church was built’.³⁴⁴ This chapter will consider the fundamental building blocks of the medieval bishopric of Brechin: the churches and parishes of which it was composed. Within the diocesan boundaries was a range of churches, large and small, rich and poor, and of varying statuses.³⁴⁵ The bishops of Brechin exercised spiritual authority over all of these: the cathedral church itself, the large, well-endowed burgh churches of Dundee and Montrose, and the local parish churches, as well as smaller non-parochial churches and chapels. Yet these churches were not part of one contiguous territorial ‘whole’; instead, they shared the landscape of Angus and the Mearns with churches belonging to the diocese of St Andrews and, to a much lesser degree, those of Dunkeld and of Aberdeen.³⁴⁶ In fact, St Andrews churches outnumbered Brechin churches at a ratio of almost two to one, in spite of the fact that Brechin was the only episcopal centre located within the area itself.

It is this very pattern of scattered church sites that has been largely responsible for Brechin’s reputation as an oddity of a diocese. Even establishing a coherent corpus of the parishes of Brechin diocese is by no means straightforward, in spite of the relatively small size of the bishopric. Some churches are better documented than others, and understandably the picture changes over the course of time, as churches were constructed or fell out of use. There is a great deal of variation within the diocese; while the church at Brechin itself is mentioned as early as the late tenth century, other churches such as Dysart do not appear in the documentary record until the sixteenth century.

³⁴⁴ J. M. Rogers, ‘The formation of parishes in twelfth-century Perthshire’ *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 27, pp. 68-96. On the development of parishes, see I. B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995) pp. 1-11. For a reassessment of this, see Rogers, ‘The formation of parishes’, pp. 68-72.

³⁴⁵ The wealthiest church in the diocese was Brechin cathedral itself: Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 14.

³⁴⁶ The Dunkeld presence in Angus and the Mearns was minimal, restricted to the three parishes of Fern, Menmuir and Tealing. See Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 65, p. 146 and p. 196 respectively. In fact Brechin parish itself sat on one of the boundaries, bordering the parish of Menmuir (*Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 72). Black, *History of Brechin*, p. 26 discusses the possibilities for reconstructing the boundaries. Cosmo Innes stated in his preface to the *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. xix, that the bishop of Brechin had a palace at Fern; this must be a confusion with Farnell (*Fernewell*) as it would be very peculiar indeed for a bishop to have a residence within a parish belonging to another diocese. On a similarly small scale, the Aberdeen diocesan presence in the Mearns was confined to the parishes of Banchory Devinick, Banchory Ternan and Maryculter. See Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 14 and p. 143.

Brechin: *civitas*, community and cathedral church

Brechin itself is understandably the most-researched and most-discussed church of its diocese; it is also the church for which we have the earliest and most detailed documentary evidence. But what sort of place was the centre of the bishopric? A cathedral from at least the mid-twelfth century, it served as a parish church as well as the seat of a bishop.³⁴⁷ That Brechin was an important early religious centre has long been recognised by scholars.³⁴⁸ This is due to the final entry in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, which provides the most frequently quoted statement about Brechin: ‘*Hic est tribuit magnam civitatem Brechne Domino.*’ This can be translated as ‘It is he who gave the great *civitas* of Brechin to the Lord,’ the ‘he’ in question being king Cinaed mac Mael Coluim (971-95).³⁴⁹ Much has been made of these seven words, the concluding sentence of the *Chronicle*, which herald Brechin’s entry into the historical record. W.F. Skene regarded this as a straightforward church foundation account.³⁵⁰ Alex Woolf appears to agree, stating that this ‘is simply the story of the foundation of a major church-settlement.’³⁵¹ However, other scholars such as Cowan and Easson, and subsequently Macquarrie, have considered that it is unlikely to represent a new foundation of a religious community, rather a re-foundation of an existing establishment, probably exempting it from dues.³⁵² What the entry in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* does tell us, even if we cannot be sure whether it records a foundation or a re-foundation exempting from dues, is that in the latter half of the tenth century, Brechin was enjoying royal favour and patronage. Sculptural evidence in particular, such as the Mary Stone and the Brechin hogback (see Chapter 2), seems to indicate a pre-existing religious community in the area.³⁵³ Furthermore, an earlier reference in the *Chronicle of*

³⁴⁷ Cowan, *Parishes*, pp. 22-3.

³⁴⁸ It is listed as an early religious foundation in Cowan and Easson’s *Medieval Religious Houses Scotland* (Second Edition, London, 1976) pp. 46-7. Also see A. Macquarrie, ‘Early Christian religious houses in Scotland: foundation and function’ in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992) pp. 110-33. Likewise W. Douglas Simpson, ‘Brechin Cathedral’ in *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 1 (1948) pp. 4-5. Nineteenth-century scholars such as Innes and Skene also expressed this view; see for example Innes’s Preface to *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, p. iv.

³⁴⁹ Benjamin T. Hudson., ‘The Scottish Chronicle’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol 77, 2: No. 204: October 1998, pp. 129-161, p. 151 and p. 161.

³⁵⁰ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii p. 400. He also felt that the Holy Trinity dedication indicated this. He also argued that the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* was compiled in the reign of Cinaed mac Mael Coluim, at Brechin. vol. ii, p. 369.

³⁵¹ Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, p. 211. Although see argument about Brechin being a comital centre for Angus, above.

³⁵² A. Macquarrie, ‘Early Christian religious houses in Scotland: foundation and function’ in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992) pp. 110-33, p. 128. Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, pp. 46-7.

³⁵³ N. Cameron, I. Fraser and S. Halliday, *Early Medieval Carved Stones at Brechin Cathedral* (Edinburgh, 2007).

the Kings of Alba, this time recording that ‘Leot and Sluagadach went to Rome’³⁵⁴ in the reign of Cuilén (966-71),³⁵⁵ when considered alongside the later significance and association of the name Leot with the church of Brechin in the family of MacLeod, hints at a significant religious community here prior to the reign of Cinaed mac Mael Coluim.³⁵⁶

The word *civitas* can provide clues as to the nature of the church at Brechin. This has been translated by scholars variously as ‘city’ or ‘town’.³⁵⁷ However, the word can have a much more specifically ecclesiastical meaning. W. Douglas Simpson chose to translate it as ‘monastery’, stating that in relation to Brechin, ‘The word *civitas* is here to be understood in its ancient ecclesiastical sense, signifying the capital of a diocese; or in the Celtic Church, a head monastery having outlying chapels or preaching-stations under it.’³⁵⁸ As discussed in Chapter 1, Douglas Simpson’s thoughts on the matter are heavily influenced by the paradigm of the Celtic Church. The term *civitas* is often used in Ireland to mean a major ecclesiastical settlement. Thomas Charles-Edwards has provided a definition:

A *civitas* was not any church, but one served by a variety of offices, principally a priest (or, in some cases, a bishop), a scribe (roughly a combination of exegete and ecclesiastical judge) and a steward. A *civitas* might be a male or female monastery, or it might be mixed; the major *civitates* had bishops, for whose pastoral work a monastery might provide a base, although the monks or nuns themselves probably did not engage in pastoral work outside their monasteries; prayer for the dead, a central demand of the laity, is, however, likely to have been a concern of monks and nuns. The grander *civitates* exhibited symptoms of urban status: for example, an unusual density of population associated with a variety of crafts, transcending the agricultural sphere; an area delimited by a boundary and enjoying a special legal status.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁴ Hudson, ‘The Scottish Chronicle’, p. 151, p. 160.

³⁵⁵ Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, pp. 198-205.

³⁵⁶ D.G. Adams went rather further with this evidence, speculating that ‘Leot was undoubtedly the bishop of Brechin and the ancestor of lay abbot Leot recorded around 1131-53. Sluagadach may have been the prior of the Céili Dé of Brechin.’ *Brechin Round Tower. An illustrated guide* (Brechin, no date). This is more than the evidence would safely support.

³⁵⁷ David Dakers Black translates this as ‘town’ in *The History of Brechin to 1864* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 1867); This is translated as ‘city’ by A. Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns* (Edinburgh, 1861) p. 129. W. Douglas Simpson translated the entry as ‘monastery’ in ‘Brechin Cathedral’, p. 4. Cowan and Easson in *MRHS* wisely avoid translating the term, thereby avoiding any connotations a choice of word such as ‘city’ or ‘monastery’ may bring.

³⁵⁸ W. Douglas Simpson, ‘Brechin Cathedral.’ in *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 1, p. 4.

³⁵⁹ T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000) pp. 119-20. Also see C. Etchingam, *Church Organisation in Ireland, A. D. 650-1000* (Maynooth, 1999) p. 94.

This definition would certainly tie in with what we know of the later situation at Brechin, with its community of Céli Dé, hereditary abbatial family, bishops, and the special privileges granted by various kings of Scots.

Between the tenth-century reference to Brechin in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* and its next appearance in the documentary record there is a gap of over one hundred and fifty years. When next we hear of Brechin, it is as the centre of a bishopric. The foundation of this diocese is a matter which has received some attention from a number of scholars. There seems to have been something of a consensus that it was ‘founded’ during the reign of David I, probably around 1150.³⁶⁰ This is based on the appearance of the first documentary record of bishop Samson in the Gaelic property records in the *Book of Deer*³⁶¹ around that time, combined with the longstanding association of the reign of King David I with church reform and the establishment of so many of medieval Scotland’s bishoprics. For many years Ailred of Rievaulx’s statement about David I held sway: ‘he found three or four bishops in the whole Scottish kingdom [north of the Forth], and the others wavering without a pastor to the loss of both morals and property; when he died, he left nine, both of ancient bishoprics which he himself restored, and new ones which he erected.’³⁶² Indeed, Gordon Donaldson has pointed out that ‘The attribution to David I of the establishment of most of the Scottish episcopal sees has, if only through repetition, become a convention.’³⁶³ However, although there is consensus for the years around 1150 as the establishment of the bishopric in its classic medieval form (c1150-1560), this is by no means necessarily the first instance of a bishop in Brechin.³⁶⁴ Bishop William Reeves at least felt that,

His [King David’s] part in the matter, however, seems to have been little more than that of giving endowment and perpetuity to an office which had existed in this church, at intervals, during many ages before his day. Possibly his royal authority was exercised in assigning or defining a diocese for an ecclesiastic who had hitherto been rather an adjunct to, than the principal in, the monastic establishment of the place; and thus giving to the bishop that local supremacy which outside the Celtic Church was generally enjoyed by the highest order of the ministry.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁰ For example, see Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, p. 201. Dowden, *Bishops*, p. 173, Innes, Preface to *Brech. Reg.* vol. i., p. 21. Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii, pp. 395-7.

³⁶¹ Samson bishop of Brechin appears as a witness to a grant of King David I in the Gaelic property records in the *Book of Deer*: K. Jackson, *The Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer* (Cambridge, 1972) p. 32.

³⁶² Anderson, *Scottish Annals*, p. 233.

³⁶³ G. Donaldson, ‘Bishops’ Sees Before the Reign of David I’ *PSAS* lxxxvii (1955) pp. 106-17, p. 106.

³⁶⁴ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 9.

³⁶⁵ Reeves, *Culdees of the British Islands*, p. 118.

Therefore, although tradition credits Brechin's episcopal status as being established by David I, it has long been thought that Brechin was not a 'new' creation. Moreover, Brechin could easily have been the seat of one of the three or four bishops which Ailred says David did find. The episcopal figure carved on one of the side panels of the round tower doorway certainly highlights the pastoral role of the church.³⁶⁶ Unfortunately dating of the tower has been mired in controversy; if an earlier date is given credence then this would lend weight to the presence of bishops in Brechin before c. 1150. However, dates as late as the twelfth century have been suggested.³⁶⁷

This idea of ancientness surrounding Brechin provides one quite widely accepted explanation for the 'illogical' nature of the diocese: it was very old, or at least based on a much older entity, therefore the remains of older organisational patterns and allegiances remain fossilised in the ecclesiastical landscape.³⁶⁸ The sheer size of the parish of Brechin hints at its early importance, a situation comparable with other early medieval centres such as Fordoun in the Mearns and St Machar's in Aberdeen. Within the parish itself the concentration of church sites also indicates something significant was going on there. Alan Macquarrie, in considering the *parochia* of an early church, suggested that we should expect to see 'a group of churches or chapels within easy reach of a major religious centre'.³⁶⁹ This is certainly the case with Brechin. Adjoining, and at certain times incorporated within, Brechin parish were the churches of Burghill and Kilmoir.³⁷⁰ The site of Kilmoir church no longer exists, but its location is well-attested; it was on the site of Brechin castle outhouses.³⁷¹ Burghill was also close by, just across the burn from Brechin cathedral. Some scholars have argued the existence of yet another church site within Brechin itself. This is a church dedicated to St Michael. This is based on rather ephemeral evidence - a low hillock called St Michael's Mount and a corresponding spring. D. G. Adams associates this with a church of Michael recorded in the *Chronicle of the Kings of*

³⁶⁶ N. Cameron, I. Fraser and S. Halliday, *Early Medieval Carved Stones at Brechin Cathedral* (Edinburgh, 2007).

³⁶⁷ E. Fernie, 'Early church architecture in Scotland' *PSAS* 116 (1986) pp. 393-411; N. Cameron, 'St Rule's Church, St Andrews, and early stone-built churches in Scotland' *PSAS* 124 (1994) pp. 367-378.

³⁶⁸ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', pp. 10-11.

³⁶⁹ Macquarrie, 'Foundation and Function', p. 118.

³⁷⁰ Both Buttergill and Kilmoir were parishes in their own right at certain times. See Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 24 and pp. 105-6. They were later linked under one minister: see *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. CCLXVIII for the record of a gift to Mr Johne Hepburne minister at Brechin, Kilmoir, Cuikistoun and Buttergill.

³⁷¹ Ordnance Survey Name Book 11, 116 (1861), A Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and Mearns* (1861) p. 470.

Alba but which he says belonged later to the diocese of Dunkeld.³⁷² This seems unlikely however and Marjorie Anderson has suggested that it may have been in St Andrews.³⁷³

Around the same time that there is evidence for bishops at Brechin, there is also evidence of the presence of abbots. Indeed, Watt argued that bishops replaced abbots as the main authority over the church of Brechin and its associates.³⁷⁴ In Brechin, abbots and bishops seem to have co-existed for some time. The abbots have been the subject of study for years, and their landholding has been discussed in Chapter 2. A hereditary ecclesiastical family at Brechin was first identified by Cosmo Innes and Patrick Chalmers³⁷⁵ and was discussed by W.F. Skene in the second volume of *Celtic Scotland*, before receiving rather fuller consideration by William Reeves in his *Culdees of the British Islands*. The most recent and most comprehensive study has been by G.W.S. Barrow.³⁷⁶ The abbatial dynasty began with abbot Leod in the early twelfth century (in the documentary record at least), descending into two important landowning families, the MacNabs and MacLeods. These families seem to have inherited some of the estates of the church at Brechin.

In addition to bishops and abbots, we have evidence of priors at Brechin. These acted as heads of the Céli Dé community, which appears in documents of the second half of the twelfth and first half of the thirteenth century.³⁷⁷ At first the prior and Céli Dé of Brechin formed the chapter of the cathedral of Brechin. This body was then formalised into a chapter of secular canons evidently completed by 18 February 1249/50 when a bull of Pope Innocent IV referred to fact that ‘the brethren who have been wont to be in the church of Brechin were called Keledei and now by change of name are styled canons.’³⁷⁸

³⁷² D.G. Adams, *Brechin Round Tower* (Brechin, no date).

³⁷³ S. Taylor with G. Markús, *The Place-names of Fife* Volume 3 (Donington, 2009) p. 598. M. O. Anderson, ‘St Andrews before Alexander I’, in G. W. S. Barrow (ed.) *The Scottish Tradition* (Edinburgh, 1974) pp. 1-13, p. 3.

³⁷⁴ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 9.

³⁷⁵ *Brech. Reg. and Arb. Lib.* prefaces.

³⁷⁶ G.W.S. Barrow, ‘The Lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland’ pp. 67-88.

³⁷⁷ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 49, no. 52, 122, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132-4.

³⁷⁸ *Lind. Cart.* no. 99. For more see T. O. Clancy, ‘Reformers to Conservatives’ pp. 19-29. A Céli Dé community survived into the thirteenth century at St Andrews. See G. W. S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots* (Second Edition, 2003) pp. 187-202. The Céli Dé community at Abernethy had also been transformed into regular canons by the mid-thirteenth century: see Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, p. 46. See Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, pp. 46-51 for other communities of Céli Dé in evidence in records of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

R.G. Cant has discussed the cathedral chapter of Brechin, post Céili Dé.³⁷⁹ The 1372 constitution of the chapter is the first real detail of the personnel.³⁸⁰ This document mentions a chapter made up of eleven personnel altogether: a dean, a precentor, a chancellor, a treasurer, an archdeacon and six other canons. The Canons were the vicar of Brechin, the Pensioner and Sub-Dean, and the Prebendaries of Kilmoir, Buttergill and Guthrie. The bishop also had a seat in the chapter, making a total of twelve. Later the number of members of the chapter rose to fifteen.³⁸¹

The ecclesiastical landscape in Angus and the Mearns: ‘a bewildering patchwork of parishes’?³⁸²

Outside Brechin itself, detailed evidence becomes more sparse, and the extent of the diocese becomes more difficult to determine. As discussed in Chapter 1, mapping the medieval bishopric of Brechin has proven problematic owing to its fragmentary nature. Scholars have struggled to find a way to represent the diocese effectively on paper. W. F. Skene, Cosmo Innes, Marinell Ash and Alan Macquarrie mapped the diocese territorially; these maps mark out the dioceses according to later known boundaries of parishes, joining them up to make some form of coherent ‘whole’.³⁸³ Unfortunately, it is questionable how valid this is for much of the medieval period, since our evidence for parish boundaries is often very late indeed.³⁸⁴ Moreover, the ecclesiastical landscape was not static; churches and parishes came into being at different points in time and, as shall be shown, boundaries and affiliations changed too. Thus Watt in his article on ‘The Organisation of The Medieval Diocese of Brechin’ simply mapped church sites in the diocese of Brechin,³⁸⁵ thereby avoiding the necessity of making judgements about boundaries. He subsequently adopted a similar approach in *The Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, and dealt with the

³⁷⁹ R. G. Cant, ‘Cathedral Life in Medieval Scotland with special reference to the Cathedral Kirk and Chanonry of Brechin’, *The Book of the Friends of the Society of Brechin Cathedral* No. 2 (1949).

³⁸⁰ *Brech. Reg* vol. i, no. 15.

³⁸¹ *Fasti*, pp. 53-77.

³⁸² Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 10.

³⁸³ Skene, *Celtic Scotland* vol. ii, frontispiece; C. Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1860) plate III; M. Ash, ‘The administration of the diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328’, Unpublished PhD Thesis (Newcastle University, 1972) p. 127; A. Macquarrie, ‘Early Christian religious houses in Scotland: Foundation and Function’, p. 124. Macquarrie has left Dundee out of his map, presumably because he regarded this as a later addition to the possessions of Brechin, his map having a cut-off point c.1180.

³⁸⁴ Although see J.M. Rogers, ‘The formation of parishes in twelfth-century Perthshire’, *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 27 (1997) pp. 68-96 for parishes being based on earlier secular units.

³⁸⁵ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 2. Also see above, Map 3: The Medieval Bishopric of Brechin, p. 16.

territorial muddle by avoiding any attempt to map the dioceses territorially and simply amalgamating the dioceses of St Andrews and Brechin,³⁸⁶ then mapping their individual churches on two separate maps.³⁸⁷ Watt's two mapping attempts constitute a significant proportion of the work to date on establishing the extent and impression of the medieval diocese of Brechin, and of wider ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns.

In spite of modern confusion surrounding the ecclesiastical landscape, there is evidence that in the fifteenth century at least, there was a clear concept of diocesan boundaries. In a supplication dated 6 February 1441 John bishop of Brechin asked the Pope to grant him commend of the parish church of Kilmany in north-east Fife in the diocese of St Andrews, 'considering that one could easily travel to the said par.[ish] church within eight hours from the church of Brechin and within four hours from the boundary of the diocese of Brechin.'³⁸⁸ This piece of evidence highlights two significant points: firstly, that the diocese had well-defined boundaries, at least by the mid-fifteenth century, no matter how disjointed the bishopric of Brechin may appear to the modern eye; secondly that the bishopric of Brechin was a very manageable entity (if it may be described as such) whose officials could traverse its territory well within the hours of one day, indeed apparently in the course of a morning or afternoon.³⁸⁹ This document presents an image of a relatively compact unit of ecclesiastical organisation; yet this appears in sharp contrast to the picture painted by the fragmentary looking maps. To unpick this further it is necessary to examine what made up the diocese: the core territory centring on the seat of the bishop at Brechin and its immediate hinterland, and the more dispersed territories on the fringes of the diocese.

Establishing the extent of the diocese of Brechin

Modern historians have attempted to establish the shape and composition of the medieval bishopric of Brechin. In the only major consideration of church organisation in medieval Angus and the Mearns, Donald Watt asserted that, 'the church of Brechin was the

³⁸⁶ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 337-8.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 348-9, p. 352. Also see above, Map 1: Parish Churches in Angus and the Mearns – the diocese of St Andrews, p. 13 and Map 2: Parish Churches in Angus and the Mearns – the diocese of Brechin, p. 15.

³⁸⁸ *CSSR* iv 1433-1447, no. 742.

³⁸⁹ Further information about the extent of the diocese is to be found in another papal letter, this time to Pope Clement VII of Avignon, which deals with John de Lychon, 'who is born of the nobility of the diocese of Brechin, two leagues from the city of Brechin': *Calendar of Papal Letters to Scotland of Clement VII of Avignon 1378-1394*, ed. C. Burns (Edinburgh, 1976) 1.

headquarters of a particular kind of diocese not found before or after.³⁹⁰ This sense of otherness pervades most scholarly considerations of Brechin. The norm was ostensibly a ‘territorial’ diocese, a bishop’s seat with territory attached, albeit with associated ‘peculiar’. Yet most of the dioceses of medieval Scotland were complicated: St Andrews had churches and lands ranging from the borders to the north-east; Dunkeld had scattered parishes, as did Dunblane.³⁹¹ Brechin has been viewed differently, as a diocese comprised of almost nothing but ‘peculiar’. This has led to the view that the diocese of Brechin reflects the remnants of much earlier church organisation and that it was a bishopric born of a mother church.

The development of parishes has generally been seen as a rationalising process, yet the diocese of Brechin was ‘an illogical scattering of churches from Glenisla to Catterline, and from Strachan to Dundee.’³⁹² Brechin was certainly Scotland’s smallest medieval diocese in terms of physical area.³⁹³ However, in terms of parishes and parish churches it was not alone; the diocese of Caithness is comparable in terms of its number of parishes, and both it and Brechin are recorded as having twenty-three parish churches around the year 1300.³⁹⁴ The contrast becomes striking when we compare Brechin with its territorial bedfellow in Angus and Mearns, St Andrews. This diocese had one hundred and twenty-four churches just in the archdeaconry of St Andrews, with another one hundred and eleven in the archdeaconry of Lothian.³⁹⁵ For the most meaningful comparison with Brechin, we look to the deaneries of Angus and Mearns: in the deanery of Angus there were thirty-eight churches; in the deanery of Mearns there were fourteen. The Mearns in particular contrasts strongly – Brechin had only four churches in this area – Strachan, Glenbervie, Catterline and Kinghornie - and one of these (Strachan) seems to have had some kind of connection with St Andrews. Indeed I would argue that there is a real difference here, with the Mearns being strongly affiliated with St Andrews, while Angus is far more of a mix. This conflicts somewhat with the idea of Brechin being a mother church for Angus and the Mearns.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁰ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 8.

³⁹¹ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 348-9, pp. 352- 3, p. 361. Also see I.B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1995).

³⁹² Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 10.

³⁹³ Dunblane is similar in terms of extent, but is less fragmentary in nature than Brechin.

³⁹⁴ R.G. Cant, ‘Parish churches about 1300: diocese of Caithness’ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 356.

³⁹⁵ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 348-9.

³⁹⁶ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 10.

Even establishing a definitive list of parishes, and indeed of lesser churches and chapels, associated with the bishopric of Brechin is by no means straightforward. In all there have been three attempts, by two scholars, to identify the churches belonging to the medieval bishopric of Brechin. The results are contained in one reference work and two mapping attempts.³⁹⁷ Ian Cowan included the parishes he identified as belonging to the diocese of Brechin in his reference work on the *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*, and Donald Watt produced a map of the diocese of Brechin c1300 for the *Atlas of Scottish History*, and a map for his article on ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’.³⁹⁸ As with the various mapping attempts, these parish/church identifications, such as they are, disagree. These disagreements are not fundamental, rather they represent modifications in understanding as time has gone on and scholarship has progressed. Furthermore, they are a product of scholars coming at the problem with different objectives; for example, Watt was starting from a thirteenth-century perspective, while Cowan was looking back from the Reformation.

It is possible to compile a list of all the churches that have been mentioned in association with Brechin in the documentary record.³⁹⁹ However, the task is complicated by the reality that the ecclesiastical landscape changed over the course of time and by the fact that not all parish churches necessarily existed or had parochial status throughout the Middle Ages. As discussed above, Brechin itself was mentioned as early as the late tenth century in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*. However, the vast majority of the churches in the diocese first enter the documentary record in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, coinciding with the increase in documentation at this time. We get glimpses at certain stages and it is possible to build up a picture at key points in time, such as the mid-thirteenth century, with taxation lists, and the Reformation, with the *Books of Assumption of Thirds of Benefices*. For some churches it is necessary to rely entirely on post-Reformation evidence, in spite of the likelihood that the churches themselves existed earlier.

³⁹⁷ A. Jervise, in the introduction to his *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns* (Edinburgh, 1861) identified 81 churches in Angus and the Mearns from the reign of David I to the Reformation: ‘Of these, fifty-two belonged to the diocese of St Andrews, twenty-three to that of Brechin, four to that of Dunkeld, and two to that of Aberdeen.’ *Memorials* pp. *26-7. Jervise did not name these churches, but his reckoning tallies exactly with Watt’s entries in the *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, themselves based upon the thirteenth-century valuation lists in the *Arbroath Liber*, ostensibly Jervise’s own source.

³⁹⁸ Cowan, *Parishes; Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352; Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 2.

³⁹⁹ See Appendix 4: Churches in the bishopric of Brechin, p. 162.

Cowan, in his definitive reference work the *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*, identified twenty-seven churches under the jurisdiction of the bishops of Brechin.⁴⁰⁰ Of these, he was doubtful of two – Ecclesjohn and Lochlee⁴⁰¹ - being of parochial status, at least before the Reformation. So based on Cowan the total number of parishes in the medieval diocese of Brechin could be twenty-five, twenty-six or twenty-seven. One of Cowan’s identifications has since proven unsound. He identified ‘Unthiekil’ as a parish in Brechin diocese in his *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*.⁴⁰² This is based on a single piece of evidence, a papal document, which identifies a parish church of ‘St Tevanary of Unthiekil’ as a prebend of the church of Brechin in 1446.⁴⁰³ Cowan considered this to be a church that was otherwise unidentified, although it was ‘possibly to be associated with the vill of Unthank, the lands of which lay within the parish of Brechin in the 16th century.’⁴⁰⁴ This is tempting to accept, if only to augment the rather meagre number of Brechin’s churches, particularly within the core area around the cathedral. However, Cowan himself changed his mind on this point, later considering Unthiekill to be a mistaken form of the better-attested Burghill.⁴⁰⁵ This view has been supported by subsequent scholars including Donald Watt⁴⁰⁶ and most recently Simon Taylor.⁴⁰⁷ In dismissing Unthiekil, we are left with twenty-four, twenty-five or twenty-six parishes associated with Brechin, according to Cowan at least.

Donald Watt identified Brechin’s parishes both for the *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*⁴⁰⁸ and for an article for the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral on ‘The Organisation of The Medieval Diocese of Brechin’.⁴⁰⁹ Although sharing the same author these works differ

⁴⁰⁰ These are Brechin, Buttergill, Catterline, Cookston (Kinnaird), Cortachy, Dundee, Dunnichen, Dysart, Ecclesjohn, Farnell, Finavon (Oathlaw), Glenbervie, Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir, Kingoldrum, Kirkbuddo, Lethnot, Lochlee, Maryton, Monikie, Montrose (Salorch), Navar, Panbride, Stracathro, Strachan, Unthiekil.

⁴⁰¹ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 58 and p. 135.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴⁰³ CSSR iv, no. 1290. Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 204.

⁴⁰⁴ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 204. For Unthank see *Brech. Reg.* ii and *Books of the Assumption of Thirds of Benefices*.

⁴⁰⁵ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 2, note 2.

⁴⁰⁶ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁰⁷ Where this potentially misleading reference does help is in establishing a dedication for the church of Burghill, for which we otherwise have no information. Simon Taylor, in discussing the personal name Temne in his chapter on place-names in the Gaelic Notes in the *Book of Deer*, draws attention to Teimen of Kingarth, Bute, and also St Tevanan of Burghill. S. Taylor, ‘The toponymic landscape of the Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer’ in *Studies on the Book of Deer*, ed. K. Forsyth (Dublin, 2008) pp. 275-308, p. 289 note 61.

⁴⁰⁸ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352.

⁴⁰⁹ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 2.

somewhat in the picture that they present of the diocese. However this is explained by their rather differing purposes. The *Atlas of Scottish History* entry aimed to show all churches in Brechin diocese around the year 1300, based upon mid-thirteenth-century taxation lists in the *Arbroath Liber*.⁴¹⁰ This enabled reasonable comparison across dioceses for a very specific point in time. The map produced for the article on diocesan organisation is far more comprehensive, spanning the period 1150-1560 and reflecting a much wider range of source material. It is also the only attempt to map churches of any or uncertain status associated with Brechin, rather than only those which were known to have been parochial. This explains the discrepancy in numbers between the two works; Watt identified twenty-three churches in his map of parishes in the diocese of Brechin c. 1300 for the *Atlas of Scottish History*,⁴¹¹ while twenty-seven churches are identified on the map accompanying his article on ‘The Organisation of the Medieval Diocese of Brechin’.⁴¹² Watt has argued that Cookston, Dysart, Ecclesjohn, Kirkbuddo and Lochlee were ‘probably just chapels in or attached to some other parish for much of the time, although some of these were elevated to full parochial status before the Reformation.’⁴¹³

There are also clear discrepancies between the findings of Cowan and Watt.

Understandably, in his entry in the *Atlas of Scottish History* Watt identified fewer parishes than Cowan: Watt’s cut-off date was c. 1300, while Cowan’s was the Reformation of 1560. Cookston, Dysart, Ecclesjohn, Lochlee and Unthiekill are listed by Cowan but are not in Watt’s *Atlas* entry because the records of their existence post-date the c. 1300 cut-off point. The problem of Unthiekil has already been discussed. However, this does not explain all the variation. There is not only discrepancy in the number of churches but also in those which are included. For example, Kinghornie is identified as a parish church by Watt in the *Atlas* but it does not feature in Cowan’s *Parishes* at all. This seems to be purely a judgement call on Cowan’s part. The parish is referred to only once (in the mid-thirteenth-century taxation list in the *Arbroath Liber*), and indeed this is the church’s only appearance in the documentary record.⁴¹⁴ However, this does not mean a parish church of Kinghornie

⁴¹⁰ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352. *Arb. Lib.*, vol. i, pp. 240-1 (for Brechin diocese).

⁴¹¹ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352. These are Brechin, Burghill, Catterline, Cortachy, Dundee, Dunnichen, Farnell, Finavon, Glenbervie, Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir, Kinghornie, Kingoldrum, Kirkbuddo (Crebyauch), Lethnot, Maryton, Monikie, Montrose, Navar, Panbride, Stracathro, Strachan.

⁴¹² These are Brechin, Burghill, Catterline, Cookston, Cortachy, Dundee, Dunnichen, Dysart, Ecclesjohn, Farnell, Finavon, Glenbervie, Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir, Kinghornie, Kingoldrum, Kirkbuddo, Lethnot, Lochlee, Maryton, Monikie, Montrose, Navar, Panbride, Stracathro, Strachan.

⁴¹³ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 12.

⁴¹⁴ In taxation list in *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. 240-1.

did not exist; indeed, it is evidence that it *did*. Furthermore, the associated lands of Kinghornie occur in records of the temporalities of the bishops of Brechin right up to the Reformation and beyond.⁴¹⁵ Moreover, physical remains of some kind of church building at Kinghornie were recorded as late as the nineteenth century, although unfortunately these are now no longer visible.⁴¹⁶ Strikingly, there is evidence for the existence of a church at Inverbervie, just across the river Bervie from Kinghornie, from 1350-60.⁴¹⁷ Inverbervie is documented as being a burgh by 1341.⁴¹⁸ A burgh would usually have a parish church. There is a mention of *Enerbervy* in the diocese of Brechin in a papal supplication dated 14 June 1425.⁴¹⁹ However, this has been taken by the editors to be a mistake for Glenbervie, a church for which we have substantial evidence for its being in Brechin diocese.⁴²⁰

Cowan also expressed reservations about the status of the church of Ecclesjohn, arguing that ‘It is doubtful whether this church possessed full parochial status’.⁴²¹ It is not to be found in the earliest sources for Brechin’s parishes such the thirteenth-century taxation list and *Bagimond’s Roll*. Indeed, in a document dated 2 May 1583, it is referred to as being within the parish of Dun and is described as ‘of auld ane chappell erectit for pilgrimage’.⁴²² However, it appears in papal correspondence as a parish, and one clearly within the diocese of Brechin.⁴²³ It is also referred to as a parish in later documents.⁴²⁴ Moreover, the place-name of Ecclesjohn itself indicates the likelihood of it being an early church. There are several *eccles* place-names in the area, including the well-known Ecclesgreig (St Cyrus) and *Egglespether* associated with the lands of the priory of Restenneth. Geoffrey Barrow has considered the place-name’s significance, as has Simon Taylor.⁴²⁵ The place-name comes from **eglés*, a Brittonic loan-word from the Latin *ecclesia*, often found in place-

⁴¹⁵ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, 429.

⁴¹⁶ *NSA Bervie*, vol 11, p. 8.

⁴¹⁷ W. Angus, ‘Miscellaneous Charters, 1315-1401, from transcripts in the collection of the late Sir Wiliam Fraser, K.C.B., LL.D.’ in *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society* (Fifth Volume) (Edinburgh, 1933) pp. 3-48, at pp. 16-18.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 44.

⁴¹⁹ *CSSR* 1423-1428, pp. 92-3.

⁴²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁴²¹ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 58.

⁴²² *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. cccxxviii.

⁴²³ *CSSR* 1428-32, p. 262.

⁴²⁴ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. cccxlii; *Thirds of Benefices*, p. 9

⁴²⁵ G. W. S. Barrow, ‘The Childhood of Scottish Christianity: A Note on Some Place-Name Evidence’, *Scottish Studies*, 27 (1983) pp. 1-15. S. Taylor, ‘Place-names and the early church in Scotland’ *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 28 (1998) pp. 1-22.

names as Eccles. This element has limited distribution in Scotland. Factors, including distribution, indicate a context for these names which could be as early as the fifth century and no later than c. 650 for south-east Scotland and c. 800 for Pictland.

There is one notable omission from all three lists of parish churches. Neither Watt nor Cowan include the church of St Clement's in Dundee in their lists of Brechin's churches. Cowan's omission is understandable; he was dealing solely with churches of parochial status. However, Watt's omission makes less sense. The church is of course not included in his map of parish churches in the *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*; however its absence from his organisational map of Brechin's churches is perplexing. Other churches that he considered to have been non-parochial (such as Lochlee and Ecclesjohn) are present. Whatever the original status and affiliations of this church, it is clearly described as being in the diocese of Brechin in medieval documents.⁴²⁶ Indeed, St Clements appears to be the earliest church and saint's dedication associated with the burgh of Dundee.⁴²⁷ In contrast to the parish church of Dundee, the church of St Clement's was located right in the heart of the medieval burgh.⁴²⁸ This location, combined with the saint's dedication itself, has led to the view that this church is in fact likely to have been the original church of the settlement of Dundee.⁴²⁹

Changing affiliations in medieval Angus and the Mearns

Simply identifying churches associated with Brechin in the documentary record is not the only problem for anyone trying to build up a picture of the makeup of the medieval diocese. An additional issue is that some churches appear to have changed hands between the bishoprics of Brechin and St Andrews. Watt stated that 'it is only to be expected that once the complex parish and diocesan boundaries between St Andrews, Dunkeld and Brechin were established by the mid-twelfth century there was little chance of their being

⁴²⁶ For example *Writs and Public Documents of the Royal Burgh of Dundee 1292-1880*, ed. W. Hay (Dundee, 1880) no. H12 and no. H13.

⁴²⁷ B. Crawford, *The Churches Dedicated to St. Clement in Medieval England: a Hagio-geography of the Seafarer's Saint in 11th Century North Europe* (St Petersburg, 2008) p. 6. S. J. Stevenson, *Historic Dundee: the Archaeological Implications of Development* (Scottish Burgh Survey, Perth, 1988). Simon Taylor records the dedication of Dundee as St Clement in his Parishes database, presumably seeing this as predating the parish church, which was in fact dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

⁴²⁸ Stevenson, *Historic Dundee*, 1988) p. 5.

⁴²⁹ Crawford, *The Churches Dedicated to St. Clement in Medieval England*, p. 6.

altered in the four centuries thereafter.⁴³⁰ This may be true in its broadest sense; the diocese of Brechin was not reorganised along strictly territorial lines until after the Reformation after all.⁴³¹ However, when it comes to the matter of individual churches, this was by no means the case. Watt himself does admit to Cookston as being a possible exception to this generalisation.⁴³² He argues that this church may have started out as a chapel of Farnell (the location of the bishop of Brechin's country manor, palace, or castle) and the prebend of the deans of Brechin cathedral, thus very firmly placed in Brechin diocese. However, in the mid-fifteenth century Cookston was a parish in St Andrews diocese for a time.⁴³³ To further complicate matters, by the time of the Reformation it belonged to Brechin again.⁴³⁴ Furthermore, the lands of *Cuikstone/Quygstone* were held by the bishop of Brechin.⁴³⁵ There is no ready explanation for this perplexing situation.

A similarly confusing case is that of the church of Strachan in the Mearns, which seems to have been a key Brechin possession. The archdeacon of Brechin held the parish church of Strachan as a prebend from at least 1274.⁴³⁶ Cowan lists it as one of Brechin's parishes,⁴³⁷ as does Watt,⁴³⁸ and it appears in the record of churches in the diocese of Brechin in the thirteenth-century papal valuation list in the *Arbroath Liber*.⁴³⁹ However, something odd is indicated by the fact that this church appears to have been consecrated by the bishop of St Andrews, David de Bernham, in 1242.⁴⁴⁰ A mistake in the records seems unlikely; Strachan occurs in the list of dedications immediately before some other Mearns parishes. This is the only church in the *St Andrews Pontifical* which is outwith the diocese of St Andrews. There may have been a vacancy in the diocese of Brechin sometime between the last appearance of bishop Gregory in the documentary record in 1242⁴⁴¹ and the consecration of his successor Albin in 1246.⁴⁴² However, it is impossible to tell when in

⁴³⁰ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 13.

⁴³¹ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 382-8.

⁴³² Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 13, note 11.

⁴³³ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 72, no. 156.

⁴³⁴ *Books of Assumption of Thirds of Benefices*

⁴³⁵ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 49.

⁴³⁶ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 189.

⁴³⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁴³⁸ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352 and Watt 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 2.

⁴³⁹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. 240-1.

⁴⁴⁰ Anderson, *Early Sources*, vol. ii, p. 522.

⁴⁴¹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 272.

⁴⁴² Watt and Murray, *Fasti*, p. 51.

this four year period Gregory died; there is simply no surviving evidence. It appears then that the church of Strachan may have changed allegiance sometime in the course of the thirteenth century. Charter evidence suggests that it seems likely that Strachan started out with an affiliation with the diocese of St Andrews. In the early thirteenth century (1219 x 1240) Waltheof of Strachan gave land in Strachan to St Andrews Priory: all the land of ‘Blarkerocch extra silvam’ (outside the wood) by its right bounds, with common pasture between ‘Feyhan’ (which is modern (Water of) Feugh) for 60 pigs and 60 cows with offspring up to three years, and with 20 horses, with offspring up to four years. He also granted timber in his wood of Goauch for the fabric of their church and for the building of the new hall, and common hunting on all his land, for their men with their dogs.⁴⁴³ However, in 1219 x 1225 Randulf of Strachan, heir of Waltheof, granted all right he had in *Brectulach* (either Bractullo in Idvies or Bracktullo in Inverarity, see p. 73 above) to Brechin Cathedral.⁴⁴⁴ Although this land was not in the parish of Strachan, this grant combined with the change in affiliation of Strachan church does appear to show a shift in patronage on the part of the Strachan family from St Andrews to Brechin. It is interesting to see the Strachan family granting land in a St Andrews parish (for both possible identifications for *Brectulach* would place the land in St Andrews territory) to the bishopric of Brechin. Significantly, this indication of Strachan’s prior connection to St Andrews makes Brechin’s presence in the Mearns appear even more limited. Of the twenty-three parish churches in Brechin diocese the vast majority were in Angus; only four were in the Mearns, and Strachan’s connection dates from the thirteenth century. It is impossible to tell when and how the parishes of Glenbervie, Catterline and Kinghornie first became linked to Brechin. Kinghornie only appears once in the documentary record in stark contrast to Catterline, which is mentioned repeatedly, probably due to its status as a disputed possession between the abbots of Arbroath and the bishops of Brechin from the episcopate of bishop Albin.⁴⁴⁵ However the lands of Kinghornie appear as Brechin possessions in medieval records as well as post-Reformation sources. ‘Kingormy’ is listed amongst the temporal possessions of the bishop of Brechin in a rental of 1573.⁴⁴⁶ Intriguingly, some kind of connection with Catterline is indicated in a mention of the ‘siluer teyndis of the maynis of Kathirlein Kingormy’.⁴⁴⁷ What exactly this connection was is unclear; however perhaps we should see these units as linked in some fashion.

⁴⁴³ *St. A. Lib.*, pp. 276-7.

⁴⁴⁴ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no.1.

⁴⁴⁵ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 29.

⁴⁴⁶ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. CCCCXLI.

⁴⁴⁷ *Loc. cit.*

One way potentially to make sense of some of Brechin's 'peculiar' parishes is to think about them in relation to travel. Kinghornie is near the crossing point at the mouth of the river Bervie. The bishop of St Andrews held Arbuthnott, the fording point of the same river.⁴⁴⁸ Although Kinghornie disappears from the documentary record after its initial mention, it appears to have been replaced by a church at Bervie, on the other side of the river. Unfortunately it is impossible to tell Bervie church's affiliation, although the burgh of Inverbervie's links with Earl David combined with Bervie's appearance in the documentary record soon after Kinghornie disappears from it, make it plausible that it had some kind of connection with Brechin. If we look in the opposite direction, towards Angus, a similar function appears possible. The churches of Monikie and Panbride are on the way to Dundee and, perhaps more importantly, on the way to St Andrews. Returning to reconsider the previously mentioned supplication of 1441, it is possible to build up a picture of travel, linking the pattern of parish distribution with the impression given of an easily traversed territory with easy links to St Andrews.⁴⁴⁹

These are the documented cases, but there may well be others that have not made it into the documentary record. Crucially, there is no way of knowing if other churches for which we have less (or indeed no pre-Reformation) documentary evidence changed allegiance over the course of the Middle Ages. Moreover, this vacillation between dioceses is by no means a one-way street. The parishes of Kirriemuir and of Strathdighty Comitis (also known as Earl's Strathdighty) are listed under Brechin diocese in the first half of the second year's entries in *Bagimond's Roll*.⁴⁵⁰ Both Cowan and Watt agree that these churches belonged to the diocese of St Andrews, in Angus deanery.⁴⁵¹ All other medieval documentary sources also agree on this point. In fact even in the first year of *Bagimond's Roll* Kirriemuir and Strathdighty Comitis occur under St Andrews,⁴⁵² as they do in all other documentation.⁴⁵³ The *Bagimond's Roll* entries therefore would seem to represent a confusion of some kind: these two anomalous entries occur together and perhaps represent a mistake by the copyist, who had a number of individual receipts to transcribe.⁴⁵⁴ Cowan has interpreted the

⁴⁴⁸ *Spalding Miscellany* v, pp. 207-13. The bishop's ford can be seen to this day close by the Kirkton of Arbuthnott at NO801742.

⁴⁴⁹ CSSR iv 1433-1447 no. 742.

⁴⁵⁰ *Bagimond's Roll*, p. 69.

⁴⁵¹ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 348-9. Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 125, p. 142.

⁴⁵² *Bagimond's Roll*, pp. 36-7.

⁴⁵³ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i., pp. 238-9

⁴⁵⁴ *Bagimond's Roll*, p. 69.

Kirriemuir entry as a mistranscription of Kilmoir (Kelimore).⁴⁵⁵ This would be plausible; however, this does not explain away the presence of Strathdighty Comititis in the same list. These parishes are also both traditionally associated with the earls of Angus, in marked contrast to other Brechin parishes. Parishes affiliated with the earls of Angus appear to fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the bishopric of St Andrews. This makes it even more unlikely that they did belong to Brechin for a time, although if they did then this turns this mutual exclusivity on its head.

The diocese of Brechin in *Bagimond's Roll*

The evidence of *Bagimond's Roll* presents another question about Brechin's churches. The church of Glenesk appears in year one of *Bagimond's Roll*.⁴⁵⁶ This church has never been identified in any lists or maps of churches in the medieval diocese of Brechin. Annie Dunlop equates it with Lochlee.⁴⁵⁷ The church of Lochlee is well attested, first appearing in 1384 as a chapel in Glenesk.⁴⁵⁸ It seems unlikely that this would have been a separate church in Glenesk, rather than that the entry seems to give us an earlier provenance for the church of Lochlee itself. *Bagimond's Roll* offers up a few problems for anyone trying to unpick the medieval diocese of Brechin. However, overall it does not present too radically different a picture from our other sources. In the first year only eighteen churches are recorded,⁴⁵⁹ although payments are recorded from the abbot of Arbroath and also the abbot of Lindores, as well as various other individuals. In the first half of the second year ten churches are recorded.⁴⁶⁰ Of these, two are the problematic Kirriemuir and Strathdighty Comititis (see above). Between the two years there is some overlap; all the second year churches had already been mentioned in the first year, except Kirriemuir and Earl's Strathdighty – two interlopers (perhaps another indication that they do not really fit here). Overall, *Bagimond's Roll* presents us with a diocese made up of twenty churches: Brechin, Burghill, Catterline, Dundee, Finavon, Glenbervie, Glenesk, Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir,

⁴⁵⁵ Cowan, *Parishes*, pp. 105-6.

⁴⁵⁶ *Bagimond's Roll*, p. 52.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52, note 5.

⁴⁵⁸ *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 17, vol. ii, no. viii.

⁴⁵⁹ *Bagimond's Roll*, pp. 52-3: Brechin, Burghill, Catterline, Dundee, Finavon, Glenbervie, Glenesk (Lochlee?), Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir, Kingoldrum, Monikie, Montrose, Maryton, Navar, Panbride, Stracathro, Strachan.

⁴⁶⁰ *Bagimond's Roll*, pp. 69-70: Brechin, Catterline, Dundee, Glenisla, Kingoldrum, Kirriemuir, Monikie, Montrose, Panbride, Strathdighty.

Kingoldrum, Kirriemuir, Maryton, Monikie, Montrose, Navar, Panbride, Stracathro, Strachan, Strathdighty. So the overall picture is one of slightly fewer (three) churches than the thirteenth-century valuation list, but with two new additions – Kirriemuir and Strathdighty Comitis. We are lacking Cortachy, Farnell, Kinghornie, Kirkbuddo and Lethnot. This seems odd, given that they are already attested in documentary record by this time, and appear in mid-thirteenth-century valuation lists.⁴⁶¹ The omissions are spread fairly evenly throughout the diocese – there does not appear to be a pattern. Overall *Bagimond's Roll* presents a slightly restricted yet curiously extended picture.

Religious houses and churches in the diocese of Brechin

Although there were no reformed religious houses within the boundaries of the medieval diocese of Brechin itself⁴⁶² nine of its parish churches were associated with such institutions. Many of the churches in the bishopric of Brechin were appropriated to reformed religious houses through the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The most significant of these was the Tironensian abbey of Arbroath, founded in 1178 by William the Lion (1165-1214). The bishops of Brechin gave a toft and croft and two acres of land in the field belonging to the toun in Stracathro to Arbroath on its foundation.⁴⁶³ Furthermore, abbots of Brechin gave rights to gather charcoal in Edzell.⁴⁶⁴ However, these donations pale into insignificance when compared with the number of churches in Brechin diocese given to Arbroath. King William granted seven of Brechin's churches to Arbroath: Catterline, Dunnichen, Guthrie, Kingoldrum, Maryton/Old Montrose, Monikie and Panbride. These grants were then confirmed by successive bishops of Brechin.⁴⁶⁵ Particularly interesting is the dispute which arose between Arbroath and Brechin regarding six of these seven churches which had originally belonged to Brechin. Bishop Albin (1246-69) started a dispute with the abbey of Arbroath over the churches of Catterline, Dunnichen, Kingoldrum, Maryton/Old Montrose, Monikie and Panbride, claiming that they in fact belonged to his *mensa*. This dispute was apparently resolved in 1248 when, after an enquiry by papal judges, the bishop renounced all right in these churches and a

⁴⁶¹ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. 240-1.

⁴⁶² There was a collegiate church at Guthrie in the later Middle Ages, a Maisondieu at Brechin and a Hospital in Montrose.

⁴⁶³ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, nos 75-9.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 72 and no. 74.

⁴⁶⁵ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 185, no. 186 and no. 187.

vicarage settlement followed.⁴⁶⁶ However controversy continued until 1304, when William Lamberton, bishop of St Andrews (1298-1328), who had been appointed arbitrator between the bishop and the abbey, decided that of the six churches in dispute Catterline and Maryton should belong to the bishops of Brechin while those of Panbride, Kingoldrum, Monikie and Dunnichen should belong to Arbroath.⁴⁶⁷ The dispute was renewed in 1461, 1467 and 1517, when the bishops of Brechin attempted to regain all the churches. A papal letter dated 26 December 1461 describes the ‘long suits and controversies in past times between the bishops and chapter of Brechin on one hand, and the abbot and convent of St Thomas the Martyr of Arbroath, OSB, d. St A., on the other anent the churches of Panbride, Monikie, Dunnichen, Kingoldrum, Catterline, Maryton and others expressly named’.⁴⁶⁸ The ‘others’ here are presumably Guthrie; no other churches were named in previous disputes. As late as 14 October 1467 Brechin was still laying claim to these churches as part of the episcopal *mensa*, writing to the pope that:

The churches of Panbride, Dunnichen, Monikie [*Monyetii*], Kingoldrum [*Kyntonbracii*], Maryton and Caterline, d. Brech., are united and annexed to the episcopal *mensa* of Brechin, and the bishops have been in possession of the same.⁴⁶⁹

The claims of Brechin were ultimately unsuccessful. By the Reformation Arbroath had still held on to Dunnichen, Kingoldrum, Monikie and Panbride.⁴⁷⁰ This dispute seems to indicate two things; firstly, that before these churches were granted to Arbroath by king William the Lion, they (unsurprisingly) supported the bishop of Brechin; secondly, that by the episcopacy of bishop Albin, Brechin’s finances were in need of a boost, having deteriorated since the time of the foundation of Arbroath. Furthermore, this may indicate deep-rooted ties between Brechin and these churches. Brechin certainly viewed itself as having some rights to income from the churches other than the dues required simply from a church to its diocesan.

Aside from Arbroath, three other churches in the diocese were given to religious houses: Dundee, Glenisla and Cortachy. Dundee and Glenisla were given to Lindores and Cambuskenneth (then later Coupar Angus) respectively. Like Arbroath, these were both

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 243.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 244; RS 544, 93.

⁴⁶⁸ *CSSR* v, no. 868.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 1228.

⁴⁷⁰ See *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 368-9 for appropriations of parish churches by 1560.

royal donations given to royal foundations. David, Earl of Huntingdon, younger brother of William the Lion, founded the abbey of Lindores in 1191. His descendant William of Brechin expressed the wish that he and his wife should be buried there. Bishop Gregory confirmed the church of Glenisla to Cambuskenneth Abbey *in usus proprios* 1218 x 1242.⁴⁷¹ Gregory confirmed the confirmations of bishops Turpin, Ralph and Hugh made to Lindores Abbey regarding the church of Dundee 1218x1225.⁴⁷² The church of Cortachy was granted to Inchaffray by Malise, earl of Strathearn in 1257.⁴⁷³ This seems to be the only church in the diocese given to a religious house by someone other than a king of Scots. However, this grant was not effective in the long term.

The funds of the remaining churches in Brechin diocese became appropriated to the uses of the cathedral itself and to the various members of its chapter. The mensal churches of Brechin cathedral included the church of Brechin itself, Catterline, Dunnichen, Kingoldrum, Maryton, Monikie, Montrose and Panbride.⁴⁷⁴ It is striking that the only undisputed mensal churches were Brechin itself and Montrose. The churches of Catterline, Dunnichen, Kingoldrum, Maryton, Monikie and Panbride were all in dispute with the abbey of Arbroath, as discussed above. This is particularly striking if we compare Brechin with other dioceses. A remarkably similar situation appears to have occurred in the diocese of Aberdeen, with only two mensal churches being permanently united to Aberdeen Cathedral, all other unions being only temporary.⁴⁷⁵ However, the contrast with Dunkeld is striking; all twenty-one mensal churches remained with the cathedral.⁴⁷⁶

A hint of early patterns of ecclesiastical organisation

Some of Brechin's diocesan churches hint at much earlier patterns of ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns. An example of this is Dysart, one of Brechin diocese's more elusive parishes. The church only appears briefly in post-Reformation documentary sources before being swallowed up by neighbouring parishes and disappearing once more from the written record,⁴⁷⁷ with three secondary farm-names the

⁴⁷¹ *Coupar Angus Charters* vol. ii, no. cxxvii.

⁴⁷² *Lind. Lib.* no. 15.

⁴⁷³ *Inchaffray Charters*, no. lxxxvi.

⁴⁷⁴ Cowan provides a concise list of these in an appendix to his *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*, p. 214.

⁴⁷⁵ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 213.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

⁴⁷⁷ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 57.

only remaining onomastic traces on the modern Ordnance Survey map.⁴⁷⁸ Prior to 1891 the extent of the medieval parish of Dysart was preserved as a detached portion of Maryton parish. After 1891 Dysart became part of the parish of Lunan.⁴⁷⁹ Dysart's status in the Middle Ages is not completely clear. Cowan recorded it as a parish in his *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*; however he wrote that it was a chapel in Maryton parish before becoming a parish in its own right after the Reformation.⁴⁸⁰ Donald Watt shared this opinion, including it in his map of churches associated with Brechin,⁴⁸¹ but omitting it from his map of parish churches of Brechin diocese c. 1300.⁴⁸² Dysart is not mentioned in *Bagimond's Roll* or in other thirteenth-century ecclesiastical rentals. Nor does it occur in the pre-Reformation contents of the *Brechin Register*. However, although the church only features in post-Reformation records, an estate of the same name occurs several times in the *Register of the Great Seal*.⁴⁸³ References continued into the modern period and in the *Old and New Statistical Accounts* Dysart still existed as an estate, one of two making up Maryton parish along with Old Montrose.⁴⁸⁴ The place-name Dysart itself is an overtly ecclesiastical one, with real possibilities for illuminating something of the early organisation of the bishopric of Brechin. It is straightforwardly derived from the Gaelic place-name element *díseart*, which is from the Latin *desertum*, a desert, Old Irish *dísert*, translated 'hermitage'.⁴⁸⁵ There are five known occurrences of the place-name in Scotland. However, the name is much more widely attested in Ireland.⁴⁸⁶ Place-names incorporating this element are found distributed fairly evenly across much of Ireland.⁴⁸⁷ The strongest concentrations of *díseart* names are in Leinster and Munster and analysis of the place-

⁴⁷⁸ East Mains of Dysart NO 694 547; Nether Dysart NO 696 533; Upper Dysart NO 687 534.

⁴⁷⁹ H. Shennan, *Boundaries of Counties and Parishes in Scotland. As settled by the Boundary Commissioners under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889* (Edinburgh, 1892) p. 196.

⁴⁸⁰ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 57.

⁴⁸¹ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 2.

⁴⁸² *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 352.

⁴⁸³ *RMS* vol. i, Appendix i, no. 29 *Dissarch* is referred to in a lost charter of King Robert I confirming the lands of the priory of Restenneth. *RMS* vol. ii.: no. 3417 the lands of *Disart* are confirmed to John Melville in a charter of James IV dated 1509 x 10; no. 3855 the dues of the lands and barony of *Disart* are mentioned in another charter of James IV dated 1513; no. 3583 *Dissarth* is listed amongst a the lands confirmed to the priory of Resenneth by James IV in 1541. *RMS* vol. iii, no. 1786 a charter of James V dated 1538 confirms the barony of *Dysert* to the priory of Restenneth. John Melville of *Disert* is recorded in a dispute with Malcolm of Guthrie in 1479: *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, K.M. Brown et al eds (St Andrews, 2007-2014), 1479/10/26 [accessed: 24 February 2014].

⁴⁸⁴ *OSA* and *NSA* Maryton.

⁴⁸⁵ Watson, *CPNS*, pp. 256-7. There is also a Dysart parish in Fife – see Simon Taylor with Gilbert Markús, *Place-names of Fife Volume One* (Donington, 2006) pp. 483-4.

⁴⁸⁶ D. Flanagan and L. Flanagan, *Irish Place Names* (Dublin, 2002) p. 69.

⁴⁸⁷ *Loc. cit.*

names in these areas has indicated a connection between the spread of the element *díseart* and the Céli Dé reform movement. This has led to a putative dating of these names to the eighth and ninth centuries, in Ireland at least.⁴⁸⁸ This likely link with the Céli Dé is particularly relevant for study of Dysart's place within Brechin diocese, given the cathedral church's well-documented community of Céli Dé. In Dysart we may be seeing a relic of Brechin's pre-twelfth-century organisation.

Conclusion

In discussing the diocesan family of Brechin, Donald Watt wrote of the 'deeply entrenched tradition which already before 1150 bound these near and distant churches to Brechin in particular, as to a mother-church from whom they would not be parted.'⁴⁸⁹ While Watt's firmly monastic organisational framework may have been substantially revised of late by the work of scholars such as Colman Etchingham and Richard Sharpe,⁴⁹⁰ his statement holds some essential truth. The evidence of the recurring dispute between the abbey of Arbroath and the bishops of Brechin regarding a number of Brechin's churches demonstrates a deeply-held belief in the bishop's ancient right to the fruits of Catterline, Dunnichen, Guthrie, Kingoldrum, Maryton, Monikie and Panbride, in addition to his usual rights as diocesan superior. In these churches then, we may be seeing something of the pre-twelfth-century ecclesiastical affiliations of the church at Brechin. In addition to this, the marked case of Montrose as the only undisputed mensal church of the bishop, aside from the cathedral church of Brechin itself, seems to support the place of Montrose in the group of churches which seem to have long-standing ties with Brechin. This theme will be developed further in Chapter 5. The church of Dysart may also be added to this group, with the early monastic connotations inherent in its very name.

The above notwithstanding, examination of the surviving documentary evidence has also shown that changes in affiliation were by no means uncommon. The church of Strachan is a case in point, having belonged in the diocese of St Andrews before being reassigned to

⁴⁸⁸ D. Flanagan, 'A summary guide to the more commonly attested ecclesiastical elements in place-names', *Bulletin of the Ulster Place-Name Society* series 2, iv (1984) pp. 69-75, p. 72.

⁴⁸⁹ Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 10.

⁴⁹⁰ R. Sharpe, 'Some problems concerning the organization of the church in early medieval Ireland', *Peritia* 3 (1984) pp. 230-70. R. Sharpe, 'Churches and communities in early medieval Ireland: towards a pastoral model' in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992) pp. 81-109. C. Etchingham, 'The early Irish church: some observations on pastoral care and dues', *Ériu* 42, pp. 99-118. C. Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, 1999).

the bishopric of Brechin. Therefore later medieval patterns of organisation cannot be taken as representing earlier arrangements without careful analysis.

Chapter 4: Church Dedications and Saints' Commemorations in Angus and the Mearns

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the evidence for church dedications and commemorations of saints in Angus and the Mearns in the Middle Ages, as well as the possible relationships between these commemorations and patterns of church organisation in the area, and the shape of the medieval diocese of Brechin in particular.⁴⁹¹ If the establishment of a definitive list of parishes in the diocese of Brechin is a complex task, then the identification of church dedications is more difficult still. While sources such as the *Brechin Register*, the *Arbroath Liber*, *Bagimond's Roll* and *The Books of Assumptions of Thirds of Benefices* enable the compilation of a reasonably comprehensive list of the medieval parishes, churches and chapels which existed in Angus and the Mearns (see chapter 3), albeit with minor variations, they typically remain silent about the saints to whom the various ecclesiastical institutions were dedicated. Yet these dedications are vital; churches required relics and patron saints. The motivations for choosing such a patron could be many and varied, ranging through devotion to patronage and politics. Crucially, these dedications can give clues to church organisation which are particularly valuable when other sources of evidence are scanty or completely lacking.⁴⁹² While traditionally saints' cults have been used largely as a lens through which to look back to the earliest beginnings of Christianity in Scotland,⁴⁹³ the assorted church and chapel dedications in Angus and the Mearns span a long time period and many phases of church activity. Consequently these dedications have the potential to reveal much about ecclesiastical organisation in these areas throughout the Middle Ages and indeed beyond, as many holy men and women and their associated places had a fruitful post-Reformation afterlife.

⁴⁹¹ For saints associated with particular parishes, churches and chapels see Appendix 7: Parish Church Dedications in Angus and the Mearns, pp. 167-79.

⁴⁹² Thomas Owen Clancy has discussed this in 'The Big Man, the Footsteps, and the Fissile Saint: paradigms and problems in studies of insular saints' cults' in *The Cult of Saints and the Virgin Mary in Medieval Scotland*, ed. S. Boardman and E. Williamson (Woodbridge, 2010) pp. 1-20. Clancy discusses the 'organisational' paradigm, stating that one 'way of looking at patterns of dedications has been to think in terms of their reflecting organisational patterns of certain centres.' He goes on to warn that 'A paradigm emphasising the role of church organisation in the presence of dedications to saints needs further models to explain the mechanisms involved in creating the dedications.' p. 13.

⁴⁹³ W. Douglas Simpson, *The Celtic Church in Scotland: a Study of its Penetration Lines and Art Relationships* (Aberdeen, 1935). N. Atkinson also adopted a similar approach in 'The Coming of Christianity to Angus' *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* no. 43 (1994).

The most obvious starting place for the analysis of the cult of saints is the dedications of the various parish churches, other churches and chapels in the area. However, these are not the only locus of saintly commemoration. Devotion to holy men and women took many forms and its varying expressions left their mark on the landscape in the form of place-names, as well as on the local calendar in the form of fairs and feast-days. These differing expressions, the institutional and the popular, potentially have much to tell us about belief and ecclesiastical organisation. A number of saints are explicitly commemorated in the parishes, churches, chapels and other places of Angus and the Mearns, both in written sources recording the dedication of particular churches and in hagiotoponyms. The presence of dedications to saints such as Ternan at Arbutnott and Palladius at Fordoun has long been recognised and discussed by scholars,⁴⁹⁴ and the culting of saints such as Giric and Rule have left their legacy in place-names like *Ecclesgreig* and *Eglisreul*.⁴⁹⁵ A number of parish names themselves commemorate the patrons of their churches in various ways. Some are explicitly linked through the pairing of church and saint to create an overtly ecclesiastical parish name: for example, Mary and Laurence in Marykirk and Laurencekirk (Conveth), John in Ecclesjohn and Mary again in Kilmoir. Buite in Kirkbuddo is a similar example, although the generic element *kirk* is an assimilation from an earlier, not overtly ecclesiastical, element **cair*. Other saints are commemorated in the parish name but with the mention of the church itself having been dropped from the place-name over time: Féchín in St Vigeans, Devinick in Banchory Devenick, Ternan in Banchory Ternan, and Giric in St Cyrus. Yet more are commemorated in landscape features rather than churches themselves: Martin in Strathmartin; Brigid in Panbride and Broc/Briec in Inchbrayock.⁴⁹⁶ In addition to this, the Virgin Mary may be commemorated in Kirriemuir, this time in a place-name reflecting human organisation of the landscape rather than a topographical feature. These assorted names came into being across an extended time period and three different languages: Pictish, Gaelic and Scots.

These various commemorations may represent different things. In the case of parishes such as Marykirk and Kilmoir, it is clear that the parish-name contains the dedication and that

⁴⁹⁴ See Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, pp. 406-7 and pp. 418-20 for brief descriptions relating to each of these saints.

⁴⁹⁵ *St A. Lib.*, p. 92, p. 229. Also see G. W. S. Barrow, 'The Childhood of Scottish Christianity: a Note on Some Place-Name Evidence' in *Scottish Studies* 27 (1983) pp. 1-15.

⁴⁹⁶ The majority of parish names in Angus and the Mearns do not have ecclesiastical meanings/derivations. However, in addition to the names incorporating saints' names, can be added those parishes with ecclesiastical place-name elements: Dysart and Navar in Brechin diocese; Logie Dundee, Logie Pert (Logie Montrose), Nevay and Newtyle in St Andrews diocese.

the parish church was dedicated to Mary. However, in the case of Kirriemuir, another parish name which may be interpreted as incorporating a commemoration of Mary, the generic element *ceathramh*, a ‘quarter’,⁴⁹⁷ is not one generally associated with ecclesiastical place-names, and the resultant place-name ‘Mary’s Quarter’, does not necessarily indicate that the parish church was dedicated to the Virgin. Similarly, Panbride - ‘Brigid’s Hollow’ - indicates a commemoration of saint Brigid in the parish, but again does not mean that the parish church itself was definitely dedicated to this saint. The same could be said of Kirkbuddo, where Pictish **cair*⁴⁹⁸ is the initial generic element, which then was assimilated to the more familiar Scots element *kirk*. However, in this case there is additional hagiographical evidence for the parish church being dedicated to saint Buite (for more on which see below).⁴⁹⁹ Nevertheless, for the vast majority of parishes more digging is required to unearth the patron saint.

To date the cults of saints in medieval Angus and the Mearns have not been studied in any systematic way.⁵⁰⁰ This is not to say that no work has been done – this is far from the case. Saints’ dedications in the two areas have been recorded in the various national surveys of dedications, while several specific cults have attracted the attention of scholars. Nevertheless there is still much scope for further research. Attention has been paid to individuals such Palladius, Ternan and Laurence, as well as Giric and Rule, and speculation has been made about the location of the ‘church of Peter’ mentioned in Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*,⁵⁰¹ however there has been no wide-ranging study and analysis of patterns of church dedications in Angus and the Mearns. Yet these have much to reveal

⁴⁹⁷ Watson, *CPNS*, p. 236.

⁴⁹⁸ S. Taylor with G. Márkus, *The Place-Names of Fife*, vol five (Donington, 2012) pp. 316-8. S. Taylor, ‘Pictish Place-Names Revisited’ in *Pictish Progress: New Studies on Northern Britain in the Middle Ages*, ed. S. T. Driscoll, J. Geddes and M. A. Hall (Leiden, 2011) pp. 67-118, pp. 100-101.

⁴⁹⁹ *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1910) vol. i, pp. xxxiv-vi.

⁵⁰⁰ Marinell Ash compiled a list of St Andrews parish church dedications in Angus and the Mearns for her 1972 thesis, ‘The Administration of the Diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, Newcastle University, 1972). She largely followed MacKinlay, although there are some additional identifications for which the origins are unclear. They certainly do not correspond to MacKinlay, Forbes, or indeed the list of churches consecrated by bishop David de Bernham, for which see Anderson, *Early Sources*, vol. ii, pp. 520-6.

⁵⁰¹ *HE*, v 21. This church has been identified with Restenneth by many scholars. See for example W. F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, vol. ii (Edinburgh, 1877) p. 233; MacKinlay, *Scriptural Dedications*, p. 219; W. Douglas Simpson, ‘The early Romanesque tower at Restenneth Priory, Angus’, *The Antiquaries Journal*, vol. 43 (1963) pp. 269-83; K. Veitch, ‘The Columban Church in northern Britain, 664-717: a reassessment’ *PSAS* 127 (1997) pp. 627-647 at p. 638. However, others have been more cautious: A. P. Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men: Scotland AD 80-1000* (London, 1984) p. 78; Cowan and Easson, *MRHS*, p. 53; L. J. Dunbar and A. Maldonado, ‘A long cist cemetery near Auchterforfar Farm, Forfar, Angus – Christian or pre-Christian?’, *Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal*, 18 (2012) pp. 63-80, at pp. 76-77.

about belief, social structure and, of course, church organisation, particularly with regard to the relationship and division of territory between the dioceses of Brechin and St Andrews. The evidence points to a real distinction between Angus and the Mearns, at least in the surviving patterns of church dedications.

Interest in the history of saints in Angus and the Mearns has a long tradition. Although methodical analysis has so far been lacking, much of the necessary material has been available for some time. Indeed, it is possible to chart the collection and assemblage of cult material from the compilation of the *Aberdeen Breviary* in the early sixteenth century.⁵⁰² This interest continued through into the early modern and modern periods, with the *Old* and *New Statistical Accounts*, as well as the flourishing of antiquarian study in the mid-nineteenth century with the publication of ecclesiastical cartularies such as the *Arbroath Liber* and the *Brechin Register* as well as a facsimile edition of the *Aberdeen Breviary*.⁵⁰³ Many, indeed the vast majority, of known church dedications have been recognised for many years and appear in secondary sources such as MacKinlay's *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland* (both the *Scriptural* and *Non-Scriptural* volumes) as well as his *Influence of the Pre-Reformation Church on Scottish Place-Names*, Forbes's *Kalendars of Scottish Saints* and Watson's *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*.⁵⁰⁴ More recently the online *Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland*⁵⁰⁵ and Simon Taylor's parish database on the *Scottish Place-Name Society* website⁵⁰⁶ have made dedicatory information much more readily accessible than previously.⁵⁰⁷ These various sources come with their own quirks and issues; notably MacKinlay and Forbes do not consistently provide supporting evidence for their assertions and therefore modern scholars are more cautious in identifying dedications, requiring additional evidence to back up inferences drawn from data such as names of wells or fairs. Most recently, a new edition and translation of the material relating to Scottish saints in the *Aberdeen Breviary* by Alan Macquarrie with

⁵⁰² *Breviarium Aberdonense* (Edinburgh, 1510).

⁵⁰³ *Breviarium Aberdonense*, ed. W. J. Blew (London, 1854).

⁵⁰⁴ Forbes, *Kalendars*; J. M. MacKinlay, *The Influence of the pre-Reformation Church on Scottish Place Names* (Edinburgh, 1904); MacKinlay, *Scriptural Dedications*; MacKinlay, *Non-scriptural Dedications*.

⁵⁰⁵ Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland, <http://webdb.ucs.ed.ac.uk/saints/> [accessed 16 August 2013].

⁵⁰⁶ SPNS Parishes Database, <http://www.spns.org.uk/ParishIntro.html> [accessed 16 August 2013].

⁵⁰⁷ The Leverhulme Trust funded 'Commemorations of Saints in Scottish Place-Names' project based at the University of Glasgow will result in an online database of hagiotoponyms. Unfortunately this was not yet available during the research and writing of this thesis.

Rachel Butter has further bolstered the arsenal for those attempting to work with saints' cults.⁵⁰⁸

Thanks to the increased availability of sources, and of papal material in particular,⁵⁰⁹ it is still possible to uncover the occasional hitherto unknown dedication and thereby add to the picture that has been building up since the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that because there is such a significant number of churches for which it has remained as yet impossible to assign a dedication, there is a real need for caution in drawing conclusions from the patterns arising out of the current data. Indeed, the more cautious approach adopted in modern times has actually lessened the number of dedications available. Add to this the difficulties of dating church dedications, particularly when some attestations are as late as the sixteenth century and the fact that dedications can change over time in any case, and the problems become clear. The picture is complicated by the fact that the ecclesiastical landscape itself changed over time and not all the churches existed or indeed had parochial status throughout the Middle Ages. We get snapshots at certain points in time, for example thirteenth-century papal taxation lists⁵¹⁰ and the *Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices*⁵¹¹ created at the time of the Reformation which provide pictures of the complete diocese, neatly bookending the period for which we have documentary evidence. Of course there are references to individual and indeed groups of churches in the intervening centuries, but these are more fragmentary in nature. That said, the patterns are worth exploring and the data set of dedicatory information can be used to explore and add a further dimension to understanding of ecclesiastical organisation in medieval Angus and the Mearns.

Issues of identification

It is not possible to discover the dedication of every church which is known to have existed in Angus and the Mearns in the medieval period; there is simply not enough surviving contemporary or near-contemporary evidence. Fortunately, the situation is better than in many other areas of Scotland, for example in the eastern Borders there is no trace of most

⁵⁰⁸ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*.

⁵⁰⁹ The publication of *CSSR* volumes has been invaluable.

⁵¹⁰ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. 241-2.

⁵¹¹ *The Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices: Scottish Ecclesiastical Rentals at the Reformation*, ed. J. Kirk (Oxford, 1995).

dedications and there are fewer hagiotoponyms.⁵¹² Although some scholars such as MacKinlay and Forbes have gone further and made a greater number of identifications, it is only possible to identify secure dedications for just over half of the parish churches in medieval Angus and the Mearns: that is thirty-eight out of a total of seventy-one churches. Add to this churches of indeterminate parochial status such as St Clement's in Dundee and the variety of chapels scattered throughout the various parishes and the picture becomes even more complex. While many of the dedications to parish churches and chapels have been known for years, others remain obscure or have been incorrectly identified. Others have been overlooked. This is the case with the church at Inverbervie. A charter dated c. 1350-60 by Thomas, son of John, burgess of Inverbervie, granting land in the burgh to John of Rate shows that the church, of somewhat ambiguous status, was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.⁵¹³ In the Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland the dedication of a field to saint Martin was recorded, while the evidence for a dedication to Mary in the same charter (indeed in the same sentence) was overlooked.⁵¹⁴ Although the charter is dealing with a portion of land in the burgh, it also happens to provide evidence for a church in the burgh, and moreover for its dedication to the Virgin Mary. The document describes:

... four particates of land with pertinents lying on the south side of the Seagate of the burgh of Inverbervie, between the land of St. Martin on the west and the land of Sybilin Walker on the east, together with a certain particate of land with pertinents lying on the north side of the said Seagate, between the land of John Sterisman on the east and the vennel of the church of St. Mary on the west ...⁵¹⁵

This is clear evidence of a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary existing in the mid-fourteenth century.⁵¹⁶

The study of church dedications and saints' cults is often fraught with difficulty. Mis-identification is a key problem, often based on placing too much weight on limited evidence, or indeed caused by misinterpretation of the sources. A pertinent example of this

⁵¹² Thomas Owen Clancy, pers. comm.

⁵¹³ W. Angus, 'Miscellaneous Charters, 1315-1401, from transcripts in the collection of the late Sir William Fraser, K.C.B., LL.D.' in *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society* (Fifth Volume) (Edinburgh, 1933) pp. 3-48, at pp. 16-18.

⁵¹⁴ Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland, <http://webdb.ucl.ac.uk/saints/> [accessed 16 August 2013].

⁵¹⁵ Angus, 'Miscellaneous Charters, 1315-1401', pp. 16-18.

⁵¹⁶ A. Jervise, *Epitaphs and Inscriptions from Burial Grounds and Old Buildings in the North-East of Scotland; with Historical, Biographical, Genealogical, and Antiquarian Notes; also, an Appendix of Illustrative Papers* (Edinburgh, 1875-9) vol. i, p. 23, p. 31, suggested that Bervie church was dedicated to Mary because a fair used to be held in the town of the Nativity of Our Lady on 8 September.

is Montrose in Angus. The parish church of Montrose (which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5) was long thought to have been dedicated to saint John the Evangelist. There is an entire volume dedicated to its history: surely one could not ask for a more confident designation than that provided in James Low's *Memorials of the Church of St. John the Evangelist: Being an Account Biographical, Historical, Antiquarian, and Traditionary of the Parish Church of Montrose and Clergy Thereof*⁵¹⁷ – yet his dedicatory identification is wrong. Low asserts that his deduction of Montrose's patron is based on a charter in the *Brechin Register* which mentions a chapel dedicated to John the Evangelist.⁵¹⁸ Perplexingly there is no such charter in the *Register*, neither on the page referenced nor elsewhere in either of the two volumes of the work. This dedication to John the Evangelist is therefore insecure on grounds of lack of evidence. Yet this erroneous identification was perpetuated by J. M. MacKinlay in his *Ancient Church Dedications Scotland*⁵¹⁹ and indeed well into the late twentieth century: the *Burgh Survey of Montrose* also identifies John the Evangelist as patron of Montrose and cites Low as a source,⁵²⁰ while the RCAHMS Canmore database perpetuates this error up to the present.⁵²¹ To date only the Angus historian Norman Atkinson has challenged this dedication.⁵²²

Sometimes it is the case that there may once have existed evidence for a dedication that is no longer accessible. However, in the case of Montrose the identification is not only unsupported by evidence, the issue is resolved incontrovertibly by the presence in papal records of evidence proving the actual dedication of the parish church to saints Peter and Paul.⁵²³ The account, dated 8 April 1428, describes the 'parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul of Monross, Brechin diocese' and later goes on to confirm this by again referring to 'Sts. Peter and Paul the Apostles, patrons of the said church',⁵²⁴ leaving no room for doubt in the matter. In addition to this, the papal documentation provides further detail about the

⁵¹⁷ James G. Low, *Memorials of the Church of St. John the Evangelist: Being an Account Biographical, Historical, Antiquarian, and Traditionary of the Parish Church of Montrose and Clergy Thereof* (Montrose, 1891).

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22, referencing p. 261 of *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii. Low also incorrectly references the *Arb. Lib.* on p. 23, casting further doubt on his sources and references. N. K. Atkinson refers to his own inability to track down these references in *The Early History of Montrose* (Angus, 1997) p. 28.

⁵¹⁹ MacKinlay, *Non-scriptural Dedications*, p. 286.

⁵²⁰ *Montrose Burgh Survey*, p. 7.

⁵²¹ RCAHMS Canmore website, www.rcahms.gov.uk/canmore.html : 'Montrose, High Street, Old Parish Church' Canmore ID 36253, site number NO75NW 4 [accessed 16 August 2013].

⁵²² Atkinson, *Early History of Montrose*, pp. 26-8.

⁵²³ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5; *CSSR* iv, no. 1328 and no. 1329. Also see *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. xxvi.

⁵²⁴ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5.

veneration of saints in Montrose: there was a ‘chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary’ and according to the papal letter both this and the parish church were ‘founded by St. Boniface the Pope, whose bones rest in Rosmarky in Scotland.’⁵²⁵ This source provides more than bare facts, giving a glimpse of how ecclesiastical dedications were interpreted locally, and how patron saints were seen to relate to one another. The saint known as Boniface has a complicated identity, identified with both Pope Boniface IV (608-15) and with bishop Curetan, one of the guarantors of *Cáin Adomnáin* in 697. His dedications are focussed around the Moray Firth as well as in Angus.⁵²⁶

The dedicatory evidence in some parishes can be ambiguous and requires careful unpicking. A pertinent example of this is to be found in Dunninald, in St Andrews diocese. Forbes lists an individual called ‘Skay, Scawachie, or Skeoch’ in his *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, identifying Dunninald as one of his churches.⁵²⁷ Watson too identifies ‘Sciath’, a Munster saint, as the patron saint commemorated in Dunninald parish.⁵²⁸ Three separate accounts in the *Exchequer Rolls* refer to a chapel of saint Mary of Skeoch: ‘*capelle beate Marie de Skeoch*’.⁵²⁹ Pádraig Ó Riain, following scholars such as MacKinlay and Forbes, in his entry on Sciath of Ardskeagh in *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, states that, ‘The saint is thought to have also been the patron and eponym of St Skay’s chapel in the Scottish parish of Craig in Forfarshire.’⁵³⁰ However, the written accounts clearly refer to a chapel dedicated to Mary at a place called Skeoch. Further evidence, this time from the *Register of the Great Seal*, reveals Skeoch as an alternative name for the parish of Dunninald: the ‘*parochia S. Skaochy*’, or the parish of saint Sciath is mentioned in a charter relating to lands in Dunninald in 1539.⁵³¹ The references to the chapel of Mary of Skeoch, then, can be reinterpreted as referring to a chapel dedicated to Mary, in a parish whose principal church was dedicated to Sciath of Ardskeagh, an Irish female saint.⁵³² Parishes for which there is evidence of more than one saintly commemoration can cause confusion as well as

⁵²⁵ Loc. cit.

⁵²⁶ *Legends of Scottish Saints. Readings, Hymns and Prayers for the Commemorations of Scottish Saints in the Aberdeen Breviary*, ed. Alan Macquarrie with Rachel Butter and contributions by Simon Taylor and Gilbert Márkus (Dublin, 2012), pp. 330-2. Also see A. MacDonald, *Curadán, Boniface and the Early Church of Rosemarkie* (Rosemarkie, 1992). MacDonald does not appear to have been aware of the reference to Boniface’s connection with Montrose.

⁵²⁷ Forbes, *Kalendars*, p. 448.

⁵²⁸ Watson, *CPNS*, pp. 331-2.

⁵²⁹ *ER*, 1497-1501, XI 312-19 1501.

⁵³⁰ Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, pp. 550-1. His source is Watson, *CPNS*, p. 332.

⁵³¹ *RMS* iii no. 2074. See Forbes, *Kalendars*, p. 448 and Watson, *CPNS*, pp. 331-2.

⁵³² Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, pp. 550-1.

raising concerns about the chronology and possible implications of church dedications. The parish church of Aberluthnott was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, a fact enshrined in the parish's later name-change to Marykirk. Yet within this parish is the place-name *Eglismaldy*, a name which indicates an early church dedicated to saint Maillidh.⁵³³

A rather complex situation is to be found in the parish of Nigg in the north-easternmost corner of the Mearns, where the dedication of the parish church is mired in confusion, and saints' cults seem to have coalesced and been reinterpreted in local tradition. In contrast to many other parishes, there is a reasonable amount of evidence for commemoration of saints in Nigg; unfortunately, some of this evidence is conflicting. A number of sources indicate that the dedication of the parish church was to saint Photinus, a bishop of Lyons who was martyred in AD 177.⁵³⁴ The Martyrology of Aberdeen records '*Sancti Fotini episcopi et martyris apud Neyg Sancti Andree diocesis*' on 23 December.⁵³⁵ On the same feast-day, the reading for Photinus in the *Aberdeen Breviary* details how 'a church was built in his honour not far from the river Dee.'⁵³⁶ This seems to refer to Torry in the parish of Nigg. A charter of 11 December 1495 erecting Torry into a burgh of Barony refers to '*S. Fotino patrano ville de Torry*'.⁵³⁷ Moreover, there is record of a St Fotin's Fair held on 2 June at Torry from this time.⁵³⁸ This evidence seems fairly compelling, although only the fair date tallies with that of the feast of the Martyrs of Lyons on 2 June;⁵³⁹ the liturgical evidence is not in line with this, instead commemorating the saint on 23 December.

However, in the post-Reformation period references to saint Photinus cease, and instead we hear of a saint called 'Fiack' being commemorated in the parish of Nigg. Early modern Kirk Session records from 28 November 1630 refer to problems arising from devotion to this saint:

... Margrat Daidson, spous to Andro Adam, wes adjudget in ane wnlaw of five punds, to be payed to the collector for directing hir nwrish with hir bairne to Sanct

⁵³³ Watson, *CPNS*, p. 290. Also see the saint's reference in the Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland: 'Nothing beyond the name is known of this saint.' ST/EW/197, webdb.ucs.ed.ac.uk/saints/ [accessed 25 February 2014].

⁵³⁴ *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, ed. D. Farmer (Fifth edition, Oxford, 2003) pp. 331-2.

⁵³⁵ Forbes, *Kalendars*, p. 137.

⁵³⁶ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 17.

⁵³⁷ *RMS* ii, no. 2292.

⁵³⁸ *RMS* ii, no. 2292. J. Balfour Paul, 'Saints' Names in Relation to Scottish Fairs', *PSAS*, lii (1917) pp. 159-70.

⁵³⁹ *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, pp. 331-2.

Fiackes well, and washing the bairne thairin for recoverie of hir health, and the said Margrat and hir nwrish wer ordanit to acknowlege thair offence befor the sessioun for thair fault, and for leaving ane offering in the well.

The samen day, it wes ordanit be the hail session in ane voce, that quhatsumever inhabitant within this burgh beis fund going to Sanct Fiackes well in ane superstitious manner, for seiking health to thame selffis or bairnes, shall be censured in penaltie and repentance in such degrie as fornicators ar efter tryall and conviction.⁵⁴⁰

People from the burgh of Aberdeen were coming to the saint's well in search of cure. The identity of Fiack is a complicated puzzle. A clue may be found in the *Aberdeen Breviary*, which contains an office on 30 August for saint Fiacre of Meaux, a saint of Irish origin who founded a monastery in France.⁵⁴¹ Unlike the material relating to Photinus, no mention is made of any local churches attributed to him. The Martyrology of Aberdeen also includes 'Sancti Fiacri'. However, the *Old Statistical Account* for Nigg refers to 'The church, anciently called St. Fiacer Church.'⁵⁴² This is the same church which in the medieval period was clearly identified as being dedicated to Photinus. There is also a reference to 'St Fiacre's Bay' in Macfarlane's *Geographical Collections*.⁵⁴³ MacKinlay and Forbes both identified Fiacre of Meaux as the saint commemorated in Nigg.⁵⁴⁴ However, as Pdraig Ó Riain has highlighted in *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, there are a number of saints of similar name Fiachna/Fiachra, Fiacre, deriving from Irish *fiach*, 'raven'.⁵⁴⁵ In addition to these there is also a saint Fiac of Sleaty, whose name may better correspond with the early medieval Kirk Session evidence.⁵⁴⁶

To further complicate matters, another name – Fittick – also appears from the early modern period. The *Old Statistical Account* for Nigg refers to 'The Bay, from the corruption probably of his name, [ie 'some saint'] was formerly called San Fittick's Bay.'⁵⁴⁷ The *New Statistical Account* echoes this, stating that 'The bay of Nigg was formerly called San Fittick's (Sanctus Fitticus) and the church St Fittick's Church. He was perhaps some

⁵⁴⁰ *Selections from the records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery and Synod of Aberdeen*, ed. J. Stuart (Aberdeen, 1846) pp. 110-111.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-8. Also see discussion pp. 359-60.

⁵⁴² *OSA*, County of Kincardine, Vol 17, 194-217, p. 211.

⁵⁴³ *Geographical Collections relating to Scotland made by Walter Macfarlane*, ed. A. Mitchell and J. Toshach (Edinburgh, 1906-8) vol. iii, p. 232.

⁵⁴⁴ Forbes, *Kalendars*, pp. xlvii-xlix, MacKinlay, *Non-Scriptural Dedications*, p. 334.

⁵⁴⁵ Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, pp. 316-7.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 315-6.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

reputed saint or hermit, who had fixed his solitary retreat in a retired place in the neighbourhood of the bay, the probable site of which is still to be traced.⁵⁴⁸ Indeed, this assertion is backed up by late sixteenth-century evidence. Pont's map of Lower Deeside shows 'S. Mafytaesness',⁵⁴⁹ which seems to be a hypocoristic form of the saint's name. There is still a church of St Fittick's today in Torry. However, this church was only erected in the 1898,⁵⁵⁰ and it is difficult to tell whether the dedication reflects an earlier dedication in the parish, or whether it is a result of antiquarian interest in Fittick.

Alan Macquarrie and Rachel Butter have recently questioned both the dedication to Photinus and that to Fiacre in their examination of Scottish saints in the *Aberdeen Breviary*. They state that 'It is likely that the original commemoration of St Fittick's church was to neither Photinus nor Fiacre.'⁵⁵¹ Instead, they propose that 'Possibly the original St Fittick was a local Pictish saint who has been misidentified with a continental saint and 'depictified'.⁵⁵² There is a saint Futtach in the Dunkeld Litany.⁵⁵³ So here in this one parish we have a jumble of saints: Fiacre, Photinus and Fittick. Are they three different saints or are they one and the same? It is hard to tell. The pre-Reformation evidence points unambiguously to Photinus as the patron saint in Nigg parish, with his church being located at Torry. By the early modern period Photinus has disappeared entirely, to be replaced by both Fiacre and Fittick, with Fittick being the strongest presence, onomastically at least, into the modern period. At some point in the early modern-modern period the two cults seem to have conflated in the minds of locals and antiquarians, and now Fittick and Fiacre have been viewed as one and the same for many years.

Differing patterns of church dedication

One of the most striking patterns that emerges from the data concerning saints' cults in Angus and the Mearns is a definite distinction between these two areas; there are clear differences between their respective patterns of church dedications. This is perhaps unsurprising; these two areas had separate identities in the Middle Ages, each having its

⁵⁴⁸ NSA, 200.

⁵⁴⁹ Pont's map of Scotland: see the National Library of Scotland website at maps.nls.uk/pont/ [accessed 10 February 2014].

⁵⁵⁰ E. Norton, *100 Years On 1898-1998 Torry St. Fittick's* (Aberdeen, 1998).

⁵⁵¹ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 410.

⁵⁵² Loc. cit.

⁵⁵³ Loc. cit.

own sherrifffdom - Angus at Forfar and the Mearns at Kincardine.⁵⁵⁴ As has already been demonstrated in Chapter 3, ecclesiastically the picture is complex. Although Angus and the Mearns both have parishes belonging to Brechin and St Andrews, there are some real differences that must be highlighted.

As we have seen in chapter 3, of a total of twenty-seven Brechin parishes (to take the largest possible number of parishes over the course of the Middle Ages), only four of these are in the Mearns. As far as saints' dedications are concerned, the picture is simple: there is no surviving evidence. It has proved impossible to identify church dedications for the parishes of Catterline, Glenbervie, Kinghornie and Strachan.⁵⁵⁵ In some cases this is understandable; the parish church of Kinghornie appears only once in the documentary record and then vanishes into obscurity, now no more than a chapel site on an Ordnance Survey map.⁵⁵⁶ However Catterline, Glenbervie and Strachan also remain silent. These Mearns churches seem to be outliers – Brechin's very own 'peculiar', albeit in a diocese seemingly made up almost entirely of 'peculiar' parishes. Instead, the churches in this area belonged for the most part to the diocese of St Andrews: that is fourteen of the total of eighteen parishes to be found in the Mearns. In stark contrast to the Brechin churches, of these fourteen churches in the Mearns deanery of St Andrews diocese, there is secure evidence for dedications for nine of them (almost two-thirds).

One feature of saintly commemoration in the Mearns that really stands out is the presence of saints with links to Ireland, and also with traditional links to one another. Ternan is commemorated at Banchory Ternan and also at Arbuthnott. He is very much a native saint of the Mearns; the *Aberdeen Breviary* describes him as being 'born of noble parents of the Scots in the province called Mearns.'⁵⁵⁷ Yet he also boasts an Irish connection; in an eleventh-century source, a fragment from a Scottish *vita* of St Laurence of Canterbury, Ternan is described as '*archipontifex Hiberniae*'.⁵⁵⁸ Ternan is linked in tradition with another saint with Irish connections, Palladius. According to the lessons for Ternan in the

⁵⁵⁴ *Atlas of Scottish History*, pp. 192-4.

⁵⁵⁵ MacKinlay, *Non-scriptural Dedications*, p. 416, identifies Catherine as the saint of Catterline (presumably based on extremely spurious place-name analysis in the *Old and New Statistical Accounts* of the parish) and the Virgin Mary as the patron of Strachan. He does not cite his evidence for this.

⁵⁵⁶ NO 840 727.

⁵⁵⁷ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 143.

⁵⁵⁸ A. Macquarrie, 'An eleventh-century account of the foundation legend of Laurencekirk, and of Queen Margaret's pilgrimage there', *IR*, xlvii (1996) pp. 95-109.

Aberdeen Breviary Palladius ‘baptised and fully instructed’ Ternan.⁵⁵⁹ The lessons for Palladius himself give even more detail:

...when Ternan the bishop was born, he was judged by the midwives to be so frail in body that they greatly despaired of his life, so that they greatly feared (for him) to be taken to the church to receive the sacrament of baptism. St Palladius was also present at that time, and did not have water with which to baptise the child; when he made the sign of the cross upon the ground, when a sod was turned over, an unfailing spring of rushing water poured forth in the presence of all. And there he baptised the blessed child, having invoked the name of the Holy Spirit, giving him the name Ternan; and thereafter he followed him as teacher and father in all his way of life.⁵⁶⁰

Palladius himself is famous as a bishop to the Irish, but his traditional connection with the Mearns is also strong. The *Historia Brittonum* 829/30 says he died ‘*in terra pictorum*’.⁵⁶¹ The Tripartite Life of Patrick of c. 900 tells that Palladius died ‘in the lands of the Picts’, while the c. 1100 *Leabhar na hUidhri* associates Palladius with Fordoun.⁵⁶²

There also seems to have been some kind of relationship between St Ternan and St Laurence, in some later medieval minds at least. This is described in the *Vita* of St Laurence of Canterbury:

Meanwhile his [St Laurence’s] flame flew across the sea, for ‘a light upon a lamp-stand and a city upon a hill cannot be hid’. St Ternan, Archbishop of Ireland, came to him, a man of such great sanctity that he is said to have resuscitated three dead men. He heard St Laurence discoursing on the observation of Easter and other apostolic institutions, which they discussed together, and gave his assent to the truth. [Ternan’s] disciples were indignant that such a holy man should be subject to this foreigner; but he brought them into the way of truth by his example, together with his whole people.⁵⁶³

This tale implies some subjugation of Ternan to Laurence. However, Thomas Clancy has argued that this is a misappropriation of a legend of the meeting of Palladius and Ternan.⁵⁶⁴ This would make sense given the master-pupil relationship between those two saints, and would also raise interesting possibilities about the respective statuses of their two churches. With the two parishes being so close, and the one of such a superior size and significance

⁵⁵⁹ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 143.

⁵⁶⁰ Loc. cit.

⁵⁶¹ T. O. Clancy, ‘The cults of Saints Patrick and Palladius in early medieval Scotland’ in *Saints’ Cults in the Celtic World*, ed. S. Boardman, J. Reuben Davies and E. Williamson (Woodbridge, 2009) pp. 18-41, p. 20.

⁵⁶² Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 406.

⁵⁶³ Macquarrie, ‘An eleventh-century account of the foundation legend of Laurencekirk, and of Queen Margaret’s pilgrimage there’, p. 108.

⁵⁶⁴ T. O. Clancy, ‘The Foundation of Laurencekirk Revisited’, *IR* 50 (1999) pp. 83-8.

compared to the other, it is tempting to read into this some concept of the relationship between the churches, with Arbuthnott being of some sort of dependent status.

The three parishes of Arbuthnott, Fordoun and Laurencekirk form a significant core component of the historic region of the Mearns, and their respective saints Ternan, Palladius and Laurence are linked with one another in tradition, as well as with Ireland. Thomas Clancy has discussed the significance of the dedications of these three Mearns parishes. He has made a good case for Irish clerical scholarly influence in this area of what would then have been Pictland – from Armagh in particular. Although Laurence is not Irish, there is evidence that Armagh had relics of the saint from the mid-seventh century and portions of these were occasionally given out to subordinate churches and promoted his cult. Clancy has argued that the cults of Palladius and Laurence came to north-east Pictland from Armagh, raising the possibility that Ternan was in some way involved in bringing the cults of these saints to the Mearns, perhaps with their relics.⁵⁶⁵ A well-developed link between eastern Scotland and Armagh is also supported by the fact that chroniclers there changed ‘from Pictish to *Alba*-based’ terminology at the same time as it happened in Pictland itself, in the late ninth century.⁵⁶⁶

Clancy identified the Laurence in question as Laurence the Martyr of Rome rather than Laurence of Canterbury, and the saint’s identity has long been a matter of debate.⁵⁶⁷ What is evident is that there was a cult of St Laurence operating in medieval Angus and the Mearns. While the most well-known dedication to Laurence in the area is that at Laurencekirk (formerly Conveth) in the Mearns, the parish church of Edzell, spanning the boundary between Angus and the Mearns, was also dedicated to the saint. There was also a chapel dedicated to Laurence at Kinblethmont (Inverkeillor parish) in Angus. This is indicated by a grant of Richard de Melville in 1189 x 1199 to Arbroath Abbey and the

⁵⁶⁵ Clancy, ‘The cults of Saints Patrick and Palladius’, p. 25.

⁵⁶⁶ D. Broun, ‘Dunkeld and the Origin of Scottish Identity’, in *Spes Scotorum, Hope of Scots. Saint Columba, Iona and Scotland*, ed. D. Broun and T. O. Clancy (Edinburgh, 1999) pp. 95-111, p. 107.

⁵⁶⁷ There has been debate about Laurence’s identity since the nineteenth century. MacKinlay acknowledges debate about the identity of Laurence, while preferring Laurence of Laurencekirk as Laurence of Rome. However, he writes that ‘Bishop Forbes and Dr. Joseph Robertson have attributed it to St. Lawrence of Canterbury.’ *Non-Scriptural Dedications*, p. 393. MacKinlay himself is persuaded by the gridiron sculpture found when the old church was dismantled. Forbes, *Kalendars*, pp. 377-8, identifies the saint of Laurencekirk as being Laurence of Canterbury. Macquarrie certainly views this Laurence as a Canterbury saint, based on the embedding of a foundation account for Laurencekirk in the life of St Laurence of Canterbury; see *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 407. The Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland prefers Laurence of Rome [accessed 10 December 2012].

chapel of St Laurence in Kinblethmont of ten acres of field in Kinblethmont.⁵⁶⁸ Both these churches dedicated to Laurence, and the churches dedicated to Ternan and Palladius, were in the diocese of St Andrews. However, the cult of Ternan at least was also present in the bishopric of Brechin. In the early thirteenth century Ralph of Strachan made a gift to 'God and St Tarranan and the bishopric of Brechin'.⁵⁶⁹ What we have here is a pattern of dedications which evidently in some manner or another influenced church organisation in Angus and the Mearns for some time period.

While Laurence, Palladius and Ternan are linked in tradition, there may be a similar scenario going on further north in the Mearns, with yet another trio of related saints. The parish of Durriss appears to have been dedicated to Comgall. As Pádraig Ó Riain's *Dictionary of Irish Saints* shows, there were many saints called Comgall.⁵⁷⁰ The most likely candidate however, is Comgall of Bangor (516-602), a sixth-century Irish saint who was founder and abbot of a monastery at Bangor.⁵⁷¹ His feast day was 10 May, and St Comgall's Fair was celebrated at Durriss on 9 May.⁵⁷² The neighbouring parish church of Fetteresso was dedicated to a saint Ciarán. Comghall of Bangor is said to have studied with Ciarán of Clonmacnoise.⁵⁷³ The saint features in the Tripartite Life of Patrick,⁵⁷⁴ and it is tempting to see this dedication as another manifestation of the Armagh links evident elsewhere in the Mearns. As discussed above, in nearby Nigg there is some indication of the commemoration of a saint called Fiacre or Fiachra. A saint Fiachra administered the last rights to Comgall of Bangor.⁵⁷⁵ Fiac of Sleaty, whose son was called Fiachra, was the subject of much Armagh interest, and features in Tirechán's Life of Patrick.⁵⁷⁶ What we may be seeing here is further evidence of an Irish, and in particular Armagh-based, link in the Mearns. If so, then the Mearns preserves some very early church dedications and saints commemorations.

⁵⁶⁸ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 143.

⁵⁶⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii Appendix no. 1; Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 419; Matthew H. Hammond, 'Royal and aristocratic attitudes to saints and the Virgin Mary in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scotland' in *The Cult of Saints and the Virgin Mary in Medieval Scotland*, pp. 70-1..

⁵⁷⁰ Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, p. 217.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 217-9.

⁵⁷² J. Balfour Paul, 'Saints' Names in Relation to Scottish Fairs' *PSAS* 52 (1917-18) pp. 159-70, p. 166.

⁵⁷³ Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, p. 218.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 218

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

Patterns of devotion in medieval Angus

In Angus the distribution of interests and territory of the bishoprics of Brechin and St Andrews seems to have been more evenly distributed than in the Mearns. St Andrews might have had four more parish churches overall, but northern Angus in particular was key home territory for the diocese of Brechin. It has been possible to identify secure dedications for fifteen of the twenty-three churches in the bishopric of Brechin – just over sixty-five per cent. This is a greater proportion than for the diocese of St Andrews. In the Angus Deanery of St Andrews it has been possible to identify the dedications of fourteen out of thirty churches – slightly under fifty per cent. Some scholars, such as MacKinlay in particular, have happily identified more dedications than this; however, it has proven impossible to find supporting evidence for many of their assertions. In some respects the discrepancy between the surviving dedicatory evidence for Brechin and St Andrews churches is only to be expected. After all, the *Brechin Register*, the medieval cartulary of the bishopric, survives from the fifteenth century; this is in contrast to St Andrews where only the register of the priory is extant while the records of the bishopric are lost to us. Therefore to some degree this survival rate must reflect source survival. That said, the St Andrews Pontifical, which records the dedication of churches by bishop David de Bernham in the 1240s, provides some additional information for this diocese.⁵⁷⁷ What is evident is that this picture is so different to that in the Mearns.

In Angus there is not the same striking incidence of Irish saints. We do have Féichín commemorated at St Vigean,⁵⁷⁸ while saint Maiden ‘a very chaste virgin of God originating from the land of Ireland.’ is commemorated in Lintrathen.⁵⁷⁹ Sciath is commemorated in Dunninald parish, while Fergus, who ‘enjoyed episcopal dignity in Ireland for many years’ was commemorated at Glamis.⁵⁸⁰ These are all parishes in the diocese of St Andrews. Yet the St Andrews dedications in Angus are different from those in the Mearns, with saints of many different antecedents. There is Broc/Brieuc, a British saint culted in Cornwall and Brittany, commemorated at Inchbrayock, an island beside Montrose now called Rossie Island.⁵⁸¹ Kinnell is dedicated to Constantine the king.

⁵⁷⁷ Anderson, *Early Sources*, vol. ii, pp. 520-6.

⁵⁷⁸ Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, pp. 309-11.

⁵⁷⁹ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, pp. 294-7, pp. 385-6. This saint has a strong Galloway association although there is also evidence of her cult in Angus. Her origins are not entirely clear although Watson, *CPNS*, p. 163 identifies her with Mo-Etáin.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-5.

⁵⁸¹ G. Márkus, *The Place-Names of Bute* (Donington, 2012) pp. 98-102.

Universal saints are also a feature of Angus. Dun is dedicated to Andrew - indicating links with the bishopric of St Andrews itself. Forfar/Restenneth is dedicated to Peter. Ecclesjohn is dedicated to John the Evangelist.⁵⁸²

In terms of Irish saints we have two known in Brechin diocese: Brigit at Panbride and Buite at Kirkbuddo. The foundation of the church associated with Buite is an interesting case to examine. The place-name Kirkbuddo is an ecclesiastical one, albeit not in the way it may seem at first glance. Although now assimilated as *kirk*, Scots 'church', the first generic element in the place-name is in fact Pictish **caer* 'fortification',⁵⁸³ as evidenced by early forms such as *Kerbutho*.⁵⁸⁴ The element *caer* occurs frequently in Pictland and there is correlation with the place-name and sites of Roman forts.⁵⁸⁵ In the case of Kirkbuddo, there is archaeological evidence of a temporary Roman fort here.⁵⁸⁶ W.F. Skene seems to have been the first scholar to suggest that the personal name Buite was to be found in Kirkbuddo, although he incorrectly accepted the first element as the Scots *kirk*.⁵⁸⁷ The second element is a personal name. Although it could conceivably represent something else, such as lay foundation or patronage for example, it does most likely reflect a saint's name. The evidence for this is quite compelling. A saint of this name is well-attested in medieval evidence. Buite, son of Brónach, is recognised as the founder of Monasterboice. In addition to founding this monastery, he is most famous for foretelling the birth of Columba, according to the *Martyrology of Donegal*.⁵⁸⁸ He is said to have died on the day of Columba's birth, which is said to be 7 December. His *Life* contains a number of adventures and miracles.⁵⁸⁹ However, one episode is of particular relevance to those interested in the church in Angus; this is Buite bringing Nechtan, king of the Picts, back to

⁵⁸² CSSR 1428-32, p. 262.

⁵⁸³ For the most recent comment on this element see S. Taylor, 'Pictish Place-names Revisited' in *Pictish Progress: New Studies on Northern Britain in the Middle Ages*, ed. S. T. Driscoll, J. Geddes and M. A. Hall (Leiden, 2011) pp. 67-118, p. 77, pp. 100-101. Also see W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-names: their Study and Significance* (London, 1976) pp. 160-4.

⁵⁸⁴ Early forms include *Kirkbuddo*, *Carbuddo*, *Kirkboutho* (1463), *Kerbutho* (1471), *Kyrkbotho* (1474), *Kirkbuddo* (1511) as cited in Watson, *CPNS*, p. 313. A similar thing happens with Kirkcaldy. S. Taylor, 'Some early Scottish place-names and Queen Margaret' *Scottish Language*, 13, pp. 1-17, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁸⁵ Taylor, 'Pictish Place-names Revisited', p. 77.

⁵⁸⁶ Canmore site number NO44SE 15, Canmore ID 33612 <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk> [accessed 12 December 2012].

⁵⁸⁷ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i, p. 134. Although he wrongly interprets the name as 'Buite's church', accepting the more modern forms at face value as representing Scots *kirk*, subsequent scholars accepting the Buite element, recognise the first element as *caer*, for example Anderson, *Early Sources*, vol. i, p. cxx.

⁵⁸⁸ *The Martyrology of Donegal: a Calendar of the Saints of Ireland*, ed. J. H. Todd and W. Reeves (Dublin, 1864) p. 329.

⁵⁸⁹ *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1910) vol. i, pp. xxxiv-vi.

life. To summarise: Buite and his companions came to Pictland. Nechtan, the king of the Picts, had just died. Buite and his companions were invited to watch over the dead king and pray for him. When they came to the house where the dead body lay, Buite shut out the others and began to pray. When the prayer was finished the dead man rose again. Finally the king gave ‘the castle in which the miracle had been done with all that pertained to it’ to Buite and he consecrated it as a church, and left one of his companions to keep it.⁵⁹⁰

This legend ties in remarkably with the place-name and location of Kirkbuddo, as well as its proximity to the neighbouring parish of Dunnichen (Nechtán’s dun/fort). It is this resurrection miracle which gives us a foundation account for the church of Kirkbuddo. Of course there are other place-names associated with men of the name of Nechtán and as Alex Woolf has demonstrated in his relocation of the site of the battle of Nechtansmere and also the Pictish kingdom of Fortriu from south to north of the Mounth, even the most widely accepted identifications can be overturned.⁵⁹¹ However, Buite dedications are not common and the proximity of the parishes seems to support the veracity behind it.

Whatever the actual etymology, in the twelfth century the saint was believed to be Buite. The Latin *Life* of Buíte is post-Norman, seeking to associate Buite with Mellifont, the Cistercian monastery founded close to Monasterboice in 1142. This opens up possibilities for a potential provenance for the foundation account for Kirkbuddo contained in the Latin *Life* of Buite. Close to Kirkbuddo lay Coupar Angus Abbey, a Cistercian house founded in 1164,⁵⁹² with close links to churches in Brechin diocese. This may very well be where we have our origin for the tale, passed along Cistercian lines of communication.⁵⁹³ It seems that the foundation account in the life of Buite must have come from some source local to Kirkbuddo.

The Virgin Mary and the bishopric of Brechin

A glimpse into the devotional life of Brechin Cathedral is preserved in a thirteenth-century liturgical fragment known as the *Brechin Breviary*, now held in the Angus Archives.⁵⁹⁴ This single piece of parchment contains material for celebrating the feast of the Blessed

⁵⁹⁰ See translation in Anderson, *Early Sources*, vol. i, p. cxx, note 2.

⁵⁹¹ A. Woolf, ‘Dún Nechtain, Fortriu and the Geography of the Picts’ *SHR* vol 85 no 2, no 220 (October 2006) pp. 182-201.

⁵⁹² *MRHS*, pp. 73-4.

⁵⁹³ T. O. Clancy, ‘Magpie hagiography in twelfth-century Scotland: the case of Libellus de nativitate Sancti Cuthberti’ in J. Cartwright (ed.) *Celtic Hagiography and Saints’ Cults* (Cardiff, 2003) pp. 216-31.

⁵⁹⁴ Angus Archives MS 782.

Virgin Mary.⁵⁹⁵ It was preserved by chance, used to bind the Brechin Tailors' Incorporation Book of 1660. Its link with Brechin Cathedral is supported by the fact that a number of other documents from the cathedral library have been found in the bindings of other Brechin Guildry documents.⁵⁹⁶ The survival of this particular office is apposite; the most widespread cult in Angus and the Mearns was that of the Virgin Mary. It is the most significant both in terms of sheer number of dedications, and also in terms of its potential in illuminating the development of the medieval diocese of Brechin; veneration of the Virgin appears to have been very important.

In the Mearns there is evidence of just three churches dedicated to Mary. Two of these are in parishes belonging to the diocese of St Andrews: at Aberlethnott/Marykirk⁵⁹⁷ and the Garvock. The other is at Inverbervie, where the affiliation of the church is unclear, although the most likely scenario is that it acted as a successor to the church of Kinghornie, which was in Brechin diocese. In common with other patterns of organisation and dedication, there is a distinct difference in the appearance of Marian devotion between Angus and the Mearns. Dedications to Mary are much more prevalent in Angus than in the Mearns, and while the Mearns dedications are mainly associated with the diocese of St Andrews, those in Angus are largely associated with the bishopric of Brechin. Only one parish church in the deanery of Angus in the diocese of St Andrews was dedicated to Mary; this is at Carmyllie. Another commemoration of Mary is to be found in a chapel in the parish of Dunninald (as mentioned above). J. M. MacKinlay also identified Dun as a Mary dedication,⁵⁹⁸ however this is incorrect; there was an altar to the Virgin Mary in the church at Dun, however the church itself was dedicated to St Andrew.⁵⁹⁹ It may be argued that Kirriemuir was some sort of focus for Marian devotion (for more on which see below) however there is no evidence for the dedication of the parish church itself.

The overwhelming majority of Marian dedications in Angus were associated with the bishopric of Brechin; the parish churches of Dundee, Glenisla, Guthrie, Kilmoir and

⁵⁹⁵ This is not included in S. M. Holmes, 'Catalogue of liturgical books and fragments in Scotland before 1560' *Innes Review* vol 62 issue 2 (November 2011) pp. 127-212.

⁵⁹⁶ Angus Archives <http://www.angus.gov.uk/history/archives/gems/2004-12-brechinbreviary.htm> [accessed 15 August 2013].

⁵⁹⁷ The place-name Eglismaldy suggests an earlier devotion to another saint within the parish. However, this was by no means necessarily an earlier parish church dedication, particularly given that it is very rare for *egles names to become parishes north of the Forth.

⁵⁹⁸ MacKinlay, *Scriptural Dedications*, p. 103.

⁵⁹⁹ *RMS* ii, no. 2044.

Maryton were all dedicated to the Virgin Mary. These dedications represent almost a third of known church dedications in the medieval diocese of Brechin: five out of a total of sixteen. If the church of Inverbervie in the Mearns is included then the total is six out of sixteen.⁶⁰⁰ To this may be added other dedications such as the Maisondieu at Brechin, another hospital in Montrose, and an ‘ancient’ chapel within Montrose parish church. The distribution of these dedications appears to be significant, both in terms of location and patronage. They seem to be located in areas of ‘core’ territory for the bishopric of Brechin, and also in places linked with the lands of the lords of Brechin, their ancestor Earl David, and the kings of Scots. Brechin itself provides two manifestations of the link between devotion to the Virgin Mary and the lords of Brechin: the Maisondieu of Brechin and associated chapel dedicated to Mary was founded by William Brechin in c. 1267; the church of Kilmoir, with its dedication inherent in its name, was located within the bounds of Brechin Castle itself, the seat of the Brechin family, and it seems likely to have served as their own church. Earl David of Huntingdon was patron of the parish church of his burgh of Dundee.⁶⁰¹ Although the church of Guthrie was under the patronage of the de la Carneilles, this family itself had strong connections to Earl David and seem to have acquired their lands through his favour.⁶⁰² The affiliation of the church at Inverbervie is uncertain, but the burgh’s links to Earl David are clear,⁶⁰³ as is the church’s dedication to Mary. Meanwhile, the church of Maryton, the hospital dedicated to Mary and the chapel dedicated to Mary in Montrose were all firmly within the sphere of Scottish kings. This is also true of Glenisla, where both church and lands were under the patronage of Scottish kings before being granted to first Cambuskenneth and then Coupar Angus Abbey.⁶⁰⁴ The pattern is striking indeed: there is not a single known church dedication to Mary in the diocese of Brechin which cannot be linked to the lords of Brechin or their royal kin. This would seem to provide some context for the flowering of the cult of Mary in the diocese in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. That is not to say that all these dedications or indeed Brechin’s association with the cult of Mary date from that time, but that the cult seems to have been fostered and supported by the Brechin family and their kin.

⁶⁰⁰ MacKinlay identified more dedications than this but without supporting evidence it has been impossible to confirm his assertions.

⁶⁰¹ Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 98, also p. 240, and see *Lind. Cart.* no. 4, also 251-2 and *Lind. Cart.* no. 3.

⁶⁰² Stringer, *Earl David*, p. 156.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁰⁴ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 76. *RRS*, iii, no. 196.

This proliferation of Mary dedications in Angus has not hitherto been noted or commented upon by scholars. This may be due to the fact that they are often seen as a distinctive feature of the later Middle Ages, as dedications replacing old allegiances and earlier dedications to other, ‘native’, saints, whose cults scholars were interested in using to uncover the earliest phases of Scottish Christianity. MacKinlay, who dedicated a chapter of his *Influence of the Pre-Reformation Church on Scottish Place-Names* to ‘The Virgin’,⁶⁰⁵ asserted that ‘There is no doubt that most, if not all, of her dedications date from a comparatively late period.’⁶⁰⁶ This is based on the perception of his time that devotion to the Virgin Mary was not a feature of the ‘Celtic Church’, but was rather a characteristic of the ‘Roman’ church, introduced with twelfth-century reforms. Certainly some of the places dedicated to Mary appear to have had prior allegiances which were superseded by her cult. For example, although the parish church of the burgh of Dundee was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the earliest church in the burgh appears to have been dedicated to Clement.⁶⁰⁷

There is solid evidence for regarding the cult of Mary as having an earlier origin and greater lifespan in Angus than has previously been thought. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence, and literally the most solid, is the piece of sculpture called the Mary Stone. This fragment of a cross-slab depicts the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus surrounded by angels, and also features an inscription which, when expanded, reads ‘*SANCTA MARIA MATER CHRISTI*’: ‘St Mary, the mother of Christ’.⁶⁰⁸ Dating from the late ninth century,⁶⁰⁹ it is a rare example of a Latin inscription in Pictland, as well as being ‘the most complex theological iconographic programme surviving in early medieval eastern Scotland’.⁶¹⁰ Like the twelfth- and thirteenth-century evidence, it supports a link between Marian devotion and Brechin, having been found in the grounds of the cathedral

⁶⁰⁵ J. M. MacKinlay, *The Influence of the Pre-reformation Church on Scottish Place Names* (Edinburgh, 1904) pp. 193-211.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁶⁰⁷ B. Crawford, *The Churches Dedicated to St. Clement in Medieval England: a Hagio-geography of the Seafarer’s Saint in 11th Century North Europe* (St Petersburg, 2008) p. 6.

⁶⁰⁸ E. Okasha, ‘The Non-Ogam Inscriptions of Pictland’ *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* no 9 (Summer 1985) pp. 43-70, p. 50.

⁶⁰⁹ See I. B. Henderson’s ‘Art Historical Comment’ in E. Okasha, ‘The Non-Ogam Inscriptions of Pictland’ *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* no 9 (Summer 1985) pp. 43-70, pp. 50-1.

⁶¹⁰ I. B. Henderson, ‘Towards defining the function of sculpture in Alba: the evidence of St Andrews, Brechin and Rosemarkie’ in S. Taylor (ed.), *Kings, Clerics and Chronicles in Scotland, 500-1297: Essays in Honour of Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson on the Occasion of her Ninetieth Birthday* (Dublin, 2000) pp. 35-46, p. 41.

itself. Henderson has argued that ‘The prominence given to the Virgin and Child may reflect a special veneration of the Virgin’.⁶¹¹

In addition to the stone at Brechin, Ross Trench-Jellicoe has identified a number of pieces of sculpture which he interprets as representing the Virgin Mary and the infant Christ. These include Monifieth 2 and Kirriemuir 1C. He identified Aberlemno as the centre of this phenomenon.⁶¹² If these identifications are correct (and they are not undisputed) then these would extend the evidence for the cult of Mary firmly into the territory of St Andrews diocese. He, along with others, has tended to view this as indicating a Columban link in the area, given the sculpture’s iconographical similarity to sculpture on Iona.⁶¹³

An early layer of Marian devotion is also indicated in later medieval written records. A chapel at Montrose is credited with having been founded by saint Boniface and is described in a papal supplication of 8 April 1428 as ‘the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary ... of much antiquity ... ‘founded by St. Boniface the Pope, whose bones rest in Rosmarky in Scotland’.⁶¹⁴ The fact that Brechin was already enjoying royal patronage by the tenth century, as indicated by its mention in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, and the evidence of devotion to Mary already present at this time in the form of the Mary Stone, opens up the possibility that the link between the bishopric of Brechin and a special devotion to the Virgin may go back much further than the twelfth- and thirteenth-century involvement so evident in the sources.

The link between Kirriemuir and the Virgin Mary is worth exploring further. The place-name of Kirriemuir itself is significant. The first element is *ceathramh*, a fourth part or quarter, ‘is probably the fourth part of a davoch, or it may be of a half-davoch’⁶¹⁵ according to Watson. Watson identified Kirriemuir as containing this element.⁶¹⁶ The second element is more problematic. Watson does not discuss it in his *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, but does consider the name further in ‘Some Place-Names of the North’.⁶¹⁷ He

⁶¹¹ Loc. cit.

⁶¹² R. Trench-Jellicoe, ‘A missing figure on the slab fragment no. 2 from Monifieth, Angus, the a’Chill Cross, Canna and some implications of the development of a variant form of the Virgin’s hairstyle and dress in early medieval Scotland’, *PSAS* 129 (1999) pp. 597-647.

⁶¹³ Ibid. Also see Henderson, ‘Towards defining the function of sculpture in Alba’, p. 41.

⁶¹⁴ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5.

⁶¹⁵ Watson, *CPNS*, p. 236.

⁶¹⁶ Loc. cit.

⁶¹⁷ W. J. Watson, *Scottish Place-Name Papers* (Edinburgh, 2002 [1930]) pp. 211-35, p. 227.

argues that ‘Kirriemuir in Angus may be for *Ceathramh Muire*, the Virgin Mary’s quarter – churchland; but *Cill Mhoire*, ‘Mary’s Church’, is also possible.’⁶¹⁸ So Watson appears to identify this as an ecclesiastical place-name, one way or another, and in both cases containing a dedication to the Virgin Mary. J. M. MacKinlay identified the church of Kirriemuir as a Mary dedication.⁶¹⁹ However, an alternative (albeit less likely) interpretation is that the second element may reflect Gaelic *mòr*, ‘big’, thus giving a place-name which could be interpreted as ‘the big quarter’.

Yet Kirriemuir was closely associated with the earls of Angus in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Chapter 2). Gilchrist earl of Angus gave chapels and lands of the church of Kirriemuir to Arbroath Abbey.⁶²⁰ The connection of the earls of Angus with Kirriemuir, combined with the possibility of its participation in the cult of Mary, may indicate the possibility that the earls of Angus were associated with the patronage and promotion of this cult in their heartlands. As discussed in previous chapters, the spheres of the earls of Angus and the bishopric of Brechin appear to have been virtually mutually exclusive (although the parish of Kirriemuir is listed under Brechin diocese in the first half of the second year’s entries in *Bagimond’s Roll* – see Chapter 3).⁶²¹ However, the onomastic possibilities combined with the earlier sculptural evidence may indicate comital patronage of the cult of Mary.

Although Mary dedications appear to be a feature of Angus (and to a lesser extent the Mearns) from the early Middle Ages, it appears that this patronage and devotion was continued and supported by Earl David and his descendants, in common with other members of the Scottish royal house. There is strong evidence for the kings of Scots fostering devotion to the Virgin Mary. Matthew Hammond has discussed this, arguing that:

Above all, the monastic foundations of King David I reveal a move towards the Virgin, rather than the Trinity or St Andrew, as his principal intercessor. Professor Duncan has noted that while David’s 1113 foundation of Selkirk Abbey was made ‘in honour of St Mary and St John the Evangelist’, the figure of St John was dropped after the 1128 move to Kelso. As Duncan has pointed out, with the exception of May Priory, whose initial endowment is unrecorded, all houses founded by David after Holyrood in 1128 were dedicated to the Virgin: this included houses of canons regular at Jedburgh and Cambuskenneth as well as four

⁶¹⁸ Watson, *Place-name Papers*, p. 227.

⁶¹⁹ MacKinlay, *Scriptural Dedications*, p. 103.

⁶²⁰ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 46.

⁶²¹ *Bagimond’s Roll*, p. 69.

Cistercian houses, and even Holyrood's foundation mentioned 'Christ, the holy cross, the Virgin Mary and all the saints.'⁶²²

Hammond has emphasised the devotion to the Virgin Mary displayed by David I. Indeed this would chime with the trend of the times, with its great flowering of Marian devotion. David I's support and patronage of the cult of the Virgin Mary would tally with supporting and re-establishing a bishopric which had a strong and deep-rooted Marian cult. We find a parallel for this in continental Europe. The French bishopric of Le Puy survived as an independent diocese directly answerable to the pope, seemingly because of its status as a centre of Marian devotion.⁶²³ In Brechin too we have a centre already devoted to Mary, ripe to be reshaped into a modern bishopric. It is possible that in all this Marian devotion we find the reason (or at least one of the reasons) for the survival of such an atypical bishopric. We have a scenario where David either founded a bishopric centred around a cult of Mary, or supported an existing bishopric centred on the same. Perhaps Brechin would not have been a viable survival if it were not for the Mary cult, among other factors. David promoted Mary, therefore Brechin may have appeared attractive or special to promote. This is of course in addition to its ancient ties with Scottish kings and the continuing links with the Scottish royals and their kin which there is evidence of in the area in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. While most would see Marian dedication as a product and outcome of twelfth-century reform, here the case is more complex and we would be best to think of a palimpsest, layers of Marian devotion overlapping and perhaps going some way towards explaining the survival of Scotland's smallest diocese.

The Holy Trinity

How, then, to account for a bishopric seemingly revolving around a special association with the Virgin Mary, yet having its cathedral church dedicated to the Holy Trinity? One explanation, already considered by scholars, is that the Holy Trinity dedication is a relatively late development in the history of the church at Brechin. There have been varying opinions regarding the origins of this dedication, yet all agree that it reflects a replacement of an earlier veneration. J. M. MacKinlay stated that,

⁶²² M. H. Hammond, 'Royal and aristocratic attitudes to saints and the Virgin Mary in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scotland' in *The Cult of Saints and the Virgin Mary in Medieval Scotland*, ed. S. Boardman and E. Williamson (Woodbridge, 2010) pp. 61-85, pp. 72-3.

⁶²³ D. E. R. Watt, 'The Provincial Council of the Scottish Church 1215-1472' in *Medieval Scotland: Crown, Lordship and Community. Essays presented to G. W. S. Barrow*, ed. A. Grant and K. J. Stringer (Edinburgh, 1993) pp. 140-55, p. 140.

Scottish dedications to the Holy Trinity did not rank numerically with those in England, but the former have an interest of their own, due to their special ecclesiastical environment. They were connected, indeed, with the period of Latin Christianity, which originated during the reign of St. Margaret. They did not, however, begin then, but formed a link between the Christianity of the Celtic Church and the Christianity of Rome.⁶²⁴

W.F. Skene had a different opinion, arguing that,

The church of Brechin, which became the seat of the bishopric founded by King David, has no claim to represent an old Columban monastery; for its origin as a church is clearly recorded in the Pictish Chronicle, which tells us that King Kenneth, son of Malcolm, who reigned from 971 to 995, immolated the great town of Brechin to the Lord; and its dedication likewise indicates a later foundation, for it was dedicated to the Holy Trinity.⁶²⁵

Matthew Hammond has discussed dedications to the Holy Trinity and their relationship with the royal house, starting with Queen Margaret.⁶²⁶ Examples include the dedication of Dunfermline to the Holy Trinity, of Urquhart, of the cathedral church of Moray, of the new parish church of the Holy Trinity at Dunkeld, and the church of the Holy Trinity at St Andrews. Hammond argues that ‘One ulterior motive for making a dedication directly to God, in the form of Christ or the Holy Trinity, was precisely that one was not making a donation to an established local saint.’⁶²⁷ In the case of St Andrews he points to the number of interested people involved, such as the bishop and the céli Dé. Queen Margaret, wife of Malcolm III, was known for her veneration of Christ and the Trinity. We also have evidence for Margaret’s presence and interest in churches in the Mearns, as evidenced by the foundation account of the church at Laurencekirk:

After he [Laurence] had passed in triumph to the heavens, the affectionate residents founded in the town of Fordoun a church in honour of St Laurence, which among other evidences of its power was distinguished with this sacred privilege: that no woman might ever enter into it. Margaret queen of Scotland, however, most honourable descendent of the kings of England and beloved of God, filled with religious piety, brought thither wax candles and other holy offerings, desiring to enter. The canons met her at the entrance to the enclosure and begged her not to transgress this holy law and custom, lest she should incur the wrath of the patron ruling there. But she replied rather that she would honour and exalt this sacred place, and pressed ahead. Accordingly, she had barely entered the enclosure when suddenly she was seized by severe pains in her whole body, and she said to her retainers, ‘Quick, get me out of here! I’m dying!’ Quickly they brought her outside,

⁶²⁴ MacKinlay, *Scriptural Dedications*, p. 11.

⁶²⁵ Skene, *Celtic Scotland* vol. ii p. 400.

⁶²⁶ Hammond, ‘Royal and aristocratic attitudes to saints and the Virgin Mary’, pp. 68-71.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

and she begged the clerics to intercede for her, and blamed herself for not having heeded them when they had warned her.⁶²⁸

What, then, of the Brechin dedication? Hammond has certainly seen the Holy Trinity dedication there as one replacing the commemoration of a different saint, in this case Ternan/Torannan. Hammond refers to Brechin:

In other instances, cathedrals with local saints' cults of less prominent renown were overshadowed by new dedications. Brechin, which was served by a chapter of *céli Dé* in the second half of the twelfth century, seems to have been dedicated to a Saint Tarranan; Ralph of Strachan made a gift to 'God and St Terranan and the bishop [*sic*] of Brechin'. It seems very likely that this is the Saint Torannán or Ternan whom Thomas Clancy has discussed as having dedications in Kincardineshire. Charters to the church of Brechin are rare, and the remaining thirteenth-century examples refer only to the bishop and canons, with no mention of a saint. By the early fourteenth-century, however, Ternan was gone and it was the church of the Holy Trinity.⁶²⁹

This certainly seems to be compelling evidence for commemoration of Ternan. However, it is by no means necessary to see the Holy Trinity dedication at Brechin as a replacement of Ternan, or indeed as a later medieval development. The Boniface legend in the *Aberdeen Breviary* (published in 1510) offers a compelling possible alternative. After describing the saint's plethora of travelling companions, the account goes on to describe the saint's journey to Pictland and his encounter with king Nechtan, telling how

When they were all set in order by the man of God Boniface, they came all together to Pictland, by a prosperous journey by land and sea. But when a sign had been sent divinely from heaven, they journeyed by the Scottish sea almost as far as Restenneth; and as they humbly arrived in that place they glorified God, singing the greater Litany.

It happened meanwhile that Nechtan king of the Picts, having seen the sign, coming to the place with his army, was greatly struck with amazement at the sight of such a multitude of pilgrims. But suddenly inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit, he at the same time received baptism in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from St Boniface and his bishops, together with all his commanders and officers. [At the request] of these God-fearing men the king gave and granted the place of his baptism to St Boniface in the name of the Holy Trinity; and there an almost infinite (number of) people were signed by him in the Christian faith with holy chrism. In order to imbue them in that faith, he busied himself with the building of churches and other devout places, with all holiness and example of life, until his old age.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁸ A. Macquarrie, *The Saints of Scotland: Essays in Scottish Church History AD 450-1093* (Edinburgh, 1997) p. 218.

⁶²⁹ Hammond, 'Royal and aristocratic attitudes to saints and the Virgin Mary', pp. 70-1.

⁶³⁰ Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 87. Also see Chapter 5, below, for further discussion of the Boniface legend and its relationship to the medieval bishopric of Brechin.

It is this place of baptism that I wish to examine. Macdonald has pointed out that ‘the place of King Nechtán’s baptism is said to be Restenneth in Angus, near Forfar.’⁶³¹ However, this does not exactly fit the tale as it is presented; Restenneth is not explicitly identified as the place of baptism but rather has simply been inferred as such. The *Breviary* legend states that Boniface and his companions came ‘almost as far as Restenneth’; it is the ‘almost’ (‘*pene*’)⁶³² that is crucial here. Surely if Restenneth were the place itself, the ‘almost’ would be redundant. Furthermore, the church at Restenneth itself was dedicated to saint Peter,⁶³³ and has no known association with the Holy Trinity. So really we should be looking for somewhere near Restenneth and its hinterland, but not quite there. The fact that they came ‘by the Scottish Sea’ fits with an arrival at Montrose Basin (a significant natural harbour, although the Tay is another possibility). This is supported by the evidence of the Boniface legend associated with Montrose evident in fifteenth-century papal documents (see chapter 5). From Montrose just eight miles upstream to Brechin, where we have a church that became a cathedral, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and with early evidence of patronage by kings in the form of the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*. Do we have here the remains of the foundation account of Brechin cathedral? This would tie in with thinking that the reference to Brechin in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba* represents a re-foundation rather than a foundation *ab initio*. It is worth bearing in mind that this account could be a product of the later Middle Ages attempting to explain and interpret the contemporary situation and relationships between churches, rather than a legacy from the earlier Middle Ages. However, it seems more plausible to identify the place of Nechtan’s baptism with a church actually known to have been dedicated to the Holy Trinity in the Middle Ages, than to accept Restenneth, so well known as a Petrine dedication. The hagiographical material seems to support the links between Montrose, Brechin and Restenneth that are hinted at in other sources, such as the 1161 x 1162 charter of Malcolm IV confirming the church of Restenneth to Jedburgh Abbey which connects Montrose with Restenneth,⁶³⁴ as well as the landholding ties between Montrose and both the bishopric and lordship of Brechin.

⁶³¹ A. MacDonald, *Curadán, Boniface and the Early Church of Rosemarkie* (Rosemarkie, 1992) p. 14.

⁶³² Macquarrie with Butter, *Legends of Scottish Saints*, p. 86.

⁶³³ *RRS* i, no. 195.

⁶³⁴ *Loc. cit.*

Conclusion

Notwithstanding their problems, both evidential and methodological, church dedications and saints' commemorations in Angus and the Mearns have the potential to provide real insight into medieval church organisation, as well as into contemporary perceptions of relationships between saints and their churches. Examination of local cults indicates a real distinction between the two areas, with differences both in survival of evidence and also in the patterns of devotion present. The Mearns has a number of significant dedications to saints with Irish connections. The cults of Palladius, Ternan and Laurence have long been of interest to scholars. Their cults seem to indicate strong links with Irish learning in the area, and with Armagh in particular. The presence of dedications to another group of linked Irish saints nearby, at Durris, Fetteresso and Nigg, may be related to this phenomenon. A rather different picture emerges from Angus. The dedications here appear more varied, with a far greater number of universal saints commemorated; these include Andrew at Dun, Thomas at Lethnot and Peter and Paul at Montrose. However, by far the most significant saint's cult in Angus is that of the Virgin Mary. This veneration appears to be deeply connected with the bishopric of Brechin, as well as with the lords of Brechin and kings of Scots. It has deep roots, with evidence of devotion to Mary in the area dating back to as early as the ninth century. Moreover, a special relationship between the diocese of Brechin and the cult of Mary may go some way towards explaining the development of what has always been considered a very peculiar bishopric.

Chapter 5: Montrose and the medieval bishopric of Brechin

Introduction: a place ‘of much antiquity and abundantly populous’⁶³⁵

Aside from the cathedral church itself, Montrose was long thought to have been the earliest church documented in the medieval diocese of Brechin,⁶³⁶ thus lending it a special place among the members of the diocesan family, to modern eyes at least. However, this belief is based on a mistaken interpretation of a twelfth-century charter referring to the settlement at Montrose (then known by the name of Salorch) and the church at Restenneth, rather than to any church at Montrose itself.⁶³⁷ Nevertheless, even deprived of this misguidedly bestowed position of precedence, there is a range of evidence to show that the medieval church at Montrose was viewed by contemporaries in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a place of great antiquity, of cult significance and indeed potentially the seat of a bishop. This chapter considers the physical and documentary evidence for the character and importance of the church at Montrose, while exploring its place in the diocese of Brechin and its special relationship with its mother house.

Montrose offers both a physical and metaphorical gateway to the medieval bishopric of Brechin, providing an alternative viewpoint from which to approach the diocese. While Brechin occupied the lowest bridging point of the South Esk, Montrose sat on its huge tidal estuary eight miles downstream. This natural harbour provided Montrose with a vast array of natural resources,⁶³⁸ and there is evidence of human settlement here from prehistoric times.⁶³⁹ The parish of Montrose was bounded by two rivers: the North and the South Esk.⁶⁴⁰ Its focal point was a royal burgh, founded by David I,⁶⁴¹ with a royal castle where William I in particular spent a great deal of time.⁶⁴² It is the site of one of Scotland’s oldest

⁶³⁵ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5.

⁶³⁶ This appears to stem from the time of J. C. Low, *The Church of St John the Evangelist: being an Account Biographical, Historical, Antiquarian, and Traditionary of the Parish Church of Montrose and Clergy Thereof* (Montrose, 1891) p. 23.

⁶³⁷ See below, pp. 139-41.

⁶³⁸ See for example D. Macdonald, ‘The Pursuit of the Redfish: A History of Salmon Fishing in Montrose Basin’ in *Ebb and Flow*, pp. 103-118. Also see in the same volume, D. Macdonald, ‘By Far the Most Extensive Mussel Beds in Scotland’: A History of Mussel Cultivation in Montrose Basin’, pp. 119-130.

⁶³⁹ H. White, ‘Montrose Basin in Prehistory’ in *Ebb and Flow*, pp. 50-62.

⁶⁴⁰ *The Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland; a survey of Scottish topography, statistical, biographical, and historical* ed. Francis H. Groome, 6 vols (Second Edition, London, 1882-85), v, p. 51.

⁶⁴¹ *Charters of David I*, p. 159.

⁶⁴² *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 161.

royal burghs, and is the possessor of Scotland's oldest extant royal burgh charter.⁶⁴³ Like a microcosm of Angus, by the twelfth century the area around the Montrose Basin was a hotch-potch of territories and allegiances. Kings of Scots exercised lordship in their royal burgh of Montrose, as well as at nearby Maryton (formerly Old Montrose); bishops of St Andrews maintained authority over churches at Dun and Inchbrayoch; abbots of Arbroath held land in Maryton; priors of Restenneth too held lands both in Montrose and around the Basin. The relationship with Brechin was particularly developed on both a spiritual and a temporal level: bishops of Brechin held lands in Montrose as well as exercising spiritual authority over the burgh's parish church, while the lay lords of Brechin also held lands and rights in the burgh. However, the relationship was not always an easy one, and the king's burgh of Montrose and the bishop's burgh of Brechin regularly fought over trading rights and privileges.⁶⁴⁴

The area around Montrose Basin appears to have been a focal point for both economic and religious activity. The importance of Montrose as a place of trade and settlement has been fairly well-recognised by generations of scholars, although detailed study tends to have been left to local enthusiasts.⁶⁴⁵ However, attention to the ecclesiastical significance of the place has been largely confined to the Reformation and immediate post-Reformation period. Montrose's importance in the Reformation period is well-documented and discussed, most particularly by Frank Bardgett in his study of *The Reformation in Angus and the Mearns*.⁶⁴⁶ Although Montrose has long been recognised as an important early royal burgh, its pre-Reformation ecclesiastical status has not received the same amount of attention as its economic position. This is understandable given the absence of documentary references to a church in the burgh prior to the thirteenth century, the complete lack of early medieval sculptured stones and the apparent dearth of relevant hagiographical material. Montrose seemingly lacked the points on the checklist for identifying an important medieval church site. Strikingly, the town is surrounded (and mentally overshadowed) by a number of other sites that have drawn greater attention, and this is most likely another reason for the comparative neglect of the church of Montrose itself. All around the Montrose Basin are church sites considered to be of some

⁶⁴³ *RRS* i, p. 92. *RRS* i no. 19, printed also as *David I Chrs*, no. 216, and reproduced in Appendix 3, below.

⁶⁴⁴ *Montrose Burgh Survey*, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁴⁵ These range from nineteenth-century works such as D. Mitchell, *The History of Montrose* (Montrose, 1866), to the more recent efforts of the Montrose Basin Heritage Society, for example *Ebb and Flow: Aspects of the History of Montrose Basin* and *Vikings to Victorians: Eye-witnesses to Montrose History*.

⁶⁴⁶ F. Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed: the Reformation in Angus and the Mearns* (Edinburgh, 1989).

significance to historians of the medieval Scottish church: there is Inchbrayoch, with its Pictish sculptured stones and ecclesiastical place-name incorporating a dedication to saint Broc/Brieuc;⁶⁴⁷ there is Maryton (or Old Montrose) with its *apdaine* land and church dedicated to the Virgin Mary;⁶⁴⁸ there is Ecclesjohn with its *eglēs* place-name, evangelical dedication, and later medieval identification as a pilgrimage chapel;⁶⁴⁹ there is Dysart with its connection to the church of Restenneth and the monastic connotations inherent in its place-name *díseart*, derived from the Latin *desertum*.⁶⁵⁰ Only slightly further afield are St Cyrus (formerly Ecclesgreig), described as a *matrix ecclesia* or ‘mother church’ in a document of 1283,⁶⁵¹ and of course Montrose’s own mother church, the cathedral at Brechin itself. No wonder then that the church of Montrose has faded into the background in this intricate pattern of churches surrounding the burgh itself.

Yet the sheer amount of activity around the Basin hints at something special which is worth exploring. A range of evidence hints at the importance of Montrose itself as an ecclesiastical centre. Documentary, physical and cartographic evidence all point in the same direction: Montrose was a site of real significance, most probably from the early Middle Ages, but certainly from the thirteenth century to the Reformation and beyond. The view from outside, in this case from Iceland and England, indicates a church of some size and potential importance, perhaps once the seat of a bishop. This picture is fleshed out by material emanating from more local sources such as petitions to the papal curia and related legendary material in the *Aberdeen Breviary*, which emphasise the antiquity of the church at Montrose and link it to the cult of Boniface, thereby symbolically confirming spiritual ties with both Brechin and Restenneth. On the ground in Montrose itself, early modern accounts of the town describe the classic early features of a large, curvilinear churchyard, supporting the picture presented in the documentary record of an ancient church of some significance.

The view from Iceland: the seat of a bishop

One of the most potentially significant yet enigmatic mentions of Montrose is to be found in a somewhat unexpected source. In a seventeenth-century manuscript now held in the

⁶⁴⁷ See G. Markús, *The Place-names of Bute* (Donington, 2012) pp. 98-102 for more about Broc/Brieuc.

⁶⁴⁸ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, no. 1.

⁶⁴⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. cccxxviii.

⁶⁵⁰ Watson, *CPNS*, pp. 256-7. D. Flanagan and L. Flanagan, *Irish Place Names* (Dublin, 2002) pp. 69-70.

⁶⁵¹ *St. A. Lib.*, p. 280.

University of Copenhagen library are preserved notes from *Hauksbók*, an early fourteenth-century Icelandic manuscript containing a number of Old Icelandic texts.⁶⁵² Amongst these notes is a list of bishops' seats in Scotland.⁶⁵³ Alongside the usual suspects such as St Andrews, Glasgow, Brechin and Aberdeen, are a handful of surprising entries, amongst them Montrose. The list names the bishops' seats of Scotland as follows:

Pessir eru biskupsstólar í Skotlandi. Ad Andreas stofu, j Glerskógum, j Brechin, j Monros, j Apardion, a Moreide, j Rós, j Vijk, j Katanesi, i Mon, i Sudur Eyum og Báreijum.

These are the bishops' seats in Scotland. St. Andrews, Glasgow, Brechin, Montrose, Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, Wick, Caithness, Man, the Hebrides and Barra.

Marteinn Sigurðsson drew attention to this hitherto neglected list in a conference paper on the 'Norse names of three episcopal seats in medieval Scotland'.⁶⁵⁴ He subsequently published some of this material in a short article in Icelandic.⁶⁵⁵ Although Sigurðsson's main focus was St Andrews, the prime bishopric of the Scots, his paper and its ultimate source pose a number of questions for any scholar of medieval Scottish church organisation. The most pressing of these is the enigma of the appearance of Montrose, Wick and Barra as bishops' seats, for which there is no other evidence, either contemporary or later.

How then to make sense of this list? Certainly it is not in step with other sources on medieval Scottish bishoprics. There are several possible explanations for this rather unexpected and unexplained list of bishoprics.⁶⁵⁶ Possibly the most straightforward

⁶⁵² E. Munksgaard (ed.) *Hauksbók: the Arna-Magnaean Manuscripts 371, 4to, 544, 4to, and 675, 4to* (Copenhagen, 1960).

⁶⁵³ University of Copenhagen, Department of Scandinavian Research, Arnamagnæan manuscript collection, AM 597b 4to, folio 43r.

⁶⁵⁴ This was delivered to the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland (SNSBI) held in Carmarthen 12-15 March 2010. www.snsbi.org.uk/legacy_webpages/2010Carmarthen.html [accessed 16 June 2013].

⁶⁵⁵ M. H. Sigurðsson, 'At Andreas stofu: Um norræna heitið á St. Andrews á Skotlandi' in *Wawnarstræti (alla Leið til Íslands) lagt til heiðurs Andrew Wawn 65 ára 27. október 2009*, ed. R. Cook, T. Gunnell, M. Eggertsdóttir and Þ. Sigurðardóttir (Reykjavík, 2009) pp. 59-60. My thanks to Grégory Cattaneo for obtaining a copy of this article for me, and also particularly to Elín Ingibjörg Eyyolfsdóttir for providing me with an English translation of this article 'On the Norse name of St. Andrews in Scotland.'

⁶⁵⁶ Gordon Donaldson, 'Bishops' Sees Before the Reign of David I' *PSAS* lxxxvii (1955), 106-17. For detailed information about Scottish bishoprics and their personnel, see *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ Medii Aevi Ad Annum 1638*, ed. D. E. R. Watt and A. L. Murray (Edinburgh, 2003). Also see *Series Episcoporum Ecclesiae Catholicae Occidentalis ab initio usque ad annum MCXCVIII. Series VI: Britannia, Scotia et Hibernia, Scandinavia*. Tomus 1, *Ecclesia Scoticana*, ed. D. E. R. Watt (Stuttgart, 1991).

explanation is that this Norse source is simply badly informed and inaccurate and therefore, for our purposes, ‘worthless’. However, this would be out of character with the other source material to be found in *Hauksbók* and its copyings, which is well-informed and accurate. Sverrir Jakobsson has argued that ‘An interest in the world’s geographical structure and its history is manifest in *Hauksbók*, and, more importantly, Scandinavia, Iceland and Greenland are placed in a specific context within the universal or Catholic world.’⁶⁵⁷

Work on the wider surviving contents of *Hauksbók* has highlighted the encyclopaedic nature of the work.⁶⁵⁸ The codex contains a wide range of material: historical narratives such as *Landnámabók*, genealogies of Scandinavian kings, theological works including translations of Bede, geographical collections, philosophical and mathematical treatises, and miscellanea.⁶⁵⁹ Unfortunately, aside from Sigurðsson’s efforts, to date no work has been undertaken on the context or possible provenance of the list itself, or indeed the surrounding material, much of which is made up of similar lists of bishoprics in other countries such as England and Norway. Although preserved in a seventeenth-century copy, Sigurðsson dates the original list of bishops’ seats to 1306-1308.⁶⁶⁰ This opens up the possibility that it is a product of the uncertainty and tumult of the Wars of Independence. However, without further investigation it is not possible to say at present. It may equally reflect an earlier phase of church organisation, before the bishoprics of Scotland were fixed.

Overall, the list is problematic as a source, and requires further detailed investigation to make sense of it. This notwithstanding, as a piece of evidence it raises the question of the ecclesiastical status of Montrose in the early fourteenth century. It demonstrates that, from Iceland or from a source which made its way to Iceland at least, Montrose was viewed as a place of ecclesiastical significance. As Sverrir Jakobsson has pointed out, ‘*Hauksbók* manifests a world view that Haukr and his contemporaries regarded as a faithful and true

⁶⁵⁷ S. Jakobsson, ‘*Hauksbók* and the construction of an Icelandic World View’ in *Saga-Book* vol xxxi (2007), pp. 22-38, p. 29.

⁶⁵⁸ M. Clunies Ross and R. Simek ‘Encyclopedic Literature’ in P. Pulsiano and K. Wolf et al (eds) *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* (New York, 1993) pp. 164-66.

⁶⁵⁹ S. Jakobsson, ‘*Hauksbók* and the construction of an Icelandic World View’ in *Saga-Book* vol xxxi (2007), pp. 22-38, p. 26.

⁶⁶⁰ Sigurðsson, ‘*At Andreas stofu*’, p. 59. Stefán Karlsson, ‘Aldur *Hauksbókar*’ *Fróðskaparrit* 13 (1964) pp. 114-21. He dated the manuscript to 1302-1310, based on comparison with datable letters written by Haukr Erlendsson.

description of the world.⁶⁶¹ Crucially, the Icelandic bishops' list is not the only indication that Montrose was a place of some importance, both economically and ecclesiastically. There are a number of indications of importance, both in terms of settlement and in terms of church activity.

The view from England: the Gough Map

Another view of Montrose from outwith Scotland comes from the Gough Map. This is a fourteenth-century map, now held in the Bodleian Library, which has taken its name from the antiquarian Richard Gough who acquired it in 1774.⁶⁶² The map 'depicts the geography of medieval Britain in unparalleled detail.'⁶⁶³ The map itself dates from 1355-1366, though it is probably based on an earlier map created in the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).⁶⁶⁴ Recently the map has been the focus of new research and discussion in the *Linguistic Geographies* project, one result of which has been the digitisation of the map itself.⁶⁶⁵

The potential importance of the Gough Map for historians of Scotland is reflected in the inclusion of places in Scotland mentioned in the Gough Map in the *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*.⁶⁶⁶ Millea has noted that very few towns in Scotland are identified on the map.⁶⁶⁷ The places recorded are places of significance; these are places such as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling. Places of ecclesiastical significance are indicated on the map by a church-symbol detail. Across Scotland these include the centres of bishoprics such as St Andrews, as well as important monastic sites like Iona and Cambuskenneth.⁶⁶⁸ In Angus and the Mearns, five places are marked out as being of ecclesiastical significance: these are Arbroath, Brechin, Cowie, Inverbervie and Montrose. Arbroath is the great Tironensian monastery founded by William the Lion (1165-1214) in 1178, Brechin the centre of a bishopric, Cowie a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St Nathalan (Nechtan).⁶⁶⁹ The medieval church at Inverbervie remains something of an enigma. The symbols used to

⁶⁶¹ S. Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the construction of an Icelandic World View' in *Saga-Book* vol xxxi (2007), pp. 22-38, p. 29.

⁶⁶² N. Millea, *The Gough Map: The Earliest Road Map of Great Britain?* (Oxford, 2007) p. 24.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶⁶⁵ See www.goughmap.org

⁶⁶⁶ 'Scotland according to the Gough Map', *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 26.

⁶⁶⁷ Millea, *Gough Map*, p. 14.

⁶⁶⁸ *Atlas of Scottish History*, p. 26.

⁶⁶⁹ *RMS*, ii, no. 2681.

mark the five churches provide further clues to their roles and significance: the abbey of Arbroath is depicted with a spired church and convent buildings; Cowie and Inverbervie are indicated by spired churches; Brechin is depicted with a spired church with a symbol atop it. Montrose alone in Angus and Mearns appears to be demarked with a church with a spire and a cross – a symbol used to indicate churches at Dunblane, Dunkeld and Whithorn – episcopal centres.⁶⁷⁰

It would therefore seem that the evidence of the Gough Map supports that of the Icelandic bishops' list, identifying Montrose as a site of ecclesiastical significance while using symbolism associated with known episcopal centres. To further explore the medieval church at Montrose, it is necessary to turn away from outside sources, and look to evidence from closer to home.

The royal burgh, the 'spurious' charter and the trading limits of Montrose

The economic history of Montrose has long been a subject of interest, and understanding the burghal sphere of influence has potential implications for interpreting its ecclesiastical function. Montrose's status as a royal burgh has never been in question; however the date of its foundation and the authenticity of its earliest royal charter have caused doubt and discussion over the years. After more than a century and a half of dispute, it seems to be generally accepted that Montrose was a foundation of David I. Moreover, its charter is the earliest extant royal charter for a Scottish burgh.⁶⁷¹

The earliest burgh charter of Montrose was for many years thought a forgery by scholars, although this viewpoint was disputed energetically by men of the town itself. From the mid-nineteenth century the debate has raged on.⁶⁷² Highlighting its status as a matter of concern at the time, the charter in question even features as the first item mentioned in the *New Statistical Account* of Montrose, printed in full therein and described as 'a curiosity in itself'.⁶⁷³ The authors of this account, the Reverends Robert Smith and Joseph Paterson,

⁶⁷⁰ Millea, *Gough Map*, p. 33.

⁶⁷¹ *RRS* i, p. 92. While at this stage Barrow did not accept the charter as genuine, he did emphasise that were it genuine, it would be the earliest royal burgh charter. See below Appendix 3: Montrose burgh charter, pp. 160-1.

⁶⁷² As Pryde, *Burghs*, no. 15, has pointed out, there was no such dispute in the medieval period. In 1361 Patrick, bishop of Brechin and chancellor of Scotland, testified that he had seen the original charter of David I.

⁶⁷³ *NSA*, vol. 11, p. 271.

fully supported the authenticity of the document. Others were more circumspect. Cosmo Innes, in correspondence with the town clerk (and later provost) of Montrose, James Burns, wrote that:

I look on the ancient charter as most curious in the constitutional view and you will understand how anxious I am for your elucidations or argument in support of it when I say that though probably founded on a real genuine charter it appears to me to have been so cobbled in its successive copyings that I must not put it forth in my prolegomena to the Acts of Parliament as a genuine charter of David I, but if you can devote some leisure to the support of the charter of David I, I shall be greatly indebted to you and the public will, I hope, benefit.⁶⁷⁴

Following on from Innes, most scholars seem to have accepted that while the charter as it survives has been altered somewhat, in essence it appears to be authentic. Pryde listed Montrose as ‘a doubtful but probable burgh of David I.’⁶⁷⁵ In his introduction to the first volume of *Regesta Regum Scottorum*, Geoffrey Barrow devoted no less than four pages to a discussion of the Montrose burgh charter,⁶⁷⁶ ultimately describing it as ‘spurious’.⁶⁷⁷ However, more recently, he has argued convincingly for a fourteenth-century copyist working with a genuine but damaged charter of David I, consequently producing a copy with some anomalous features.⁶⁷⁸ Barrow has argued that ‘The apparently genuine features seem too numerous and significant to form part of a fourteenth-century forgery.’⁶⁷⁹ The most significant of these are: the royal style used; the racial address to French, Scots and English; the use of the first person singular; and the use of the place-name ‘Sallork’ (which became obsolete before the fourteenth century) instead of ‘Montrose’.⁶⁸⁰

Barrow has dated the David I charter to 1141 x 50.⁶⁸¹ Although the charter is a fourteenth-century copy with some changes to the original, the essentials such as boundaries and place-names seem to be accurately preserved.⁶⁸² Taking the substance of the charter as genuine, then, the sphere of influence of Montrose is impressive; the trading bounds, as demarcated in the charter, make up an area from just south of Aberdeen (at Findon), to just

⁶⁷⁴ Correspondence between Cosmo Innes and James Burns, as quoted in W. A. McNeill, *Montrose Before 1700: from original documents* (Dundee, 1961) p. 8.

⁶⁷⁵ Pryde, *Burghs*, no.15.

⁶⁷⁶ *RRS* i, pp. 92-5.

⁶⁷⁷ *RRS* i, p. 95.

⁶⁷⁸ *Charters of David I*, p. 159, no. 216 (reproduced in Appendix 3, below).

⁶⁷⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁸⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁸¹ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁸² *Loc. cit.*

north of Dundee (the Dighty Water). This effectively granted Montrose rights throughout the territories of Angus and the Mearns.

There is a significant overlap between the trading limits of Montrose and the sphere of influence of the bishopric of Brechin; both could be argued to basically cover Angus and the Mearns. The potential territorial extent of Montrose indicates some interesting possibilities. The burgh's charter emanates from a time which has been viewed as key in shaping the medieval diocese of Brechin. Whether interpreted as the establishment of a bishopric from scratch or, which seems more likely, the reworking of an existing entity, the royal conception of a burgh exercising rights across Angus and the Mearns would fit well alongside a bishopric intended to cover that same area. There are two possibilities here: one would involve a diocese of Brechin that had originally been envisioned as covering the whole of Angus and the Mearns; the other is a very similar prospect, but simply shifts the centre of gravity – what if there had been a plan to centre the bishopric of Angus and the Mearns at Montrose? The situation is not without precedent. A bishopric was established at Aberdeen alongside the royal burgh, the original seat having moved from Mortlach.⁶⁸³

Aberdeen provides a useful point of comparison. In a papal bull dated 10 August 1157, Pope Adrian IV confirmed the rights and possessions of Edward, bishop of Aberdeen.⁶⁸⁴ The papal bull broadly defines the limits of the diocese of Aberdeen. These basic bounds are quite straightforward and marked by natural features; put simply, the bishopric ranged from the River Dee just south of Aberdeen, covering much of the north-east as far as the River Spey. In fact, it is by no means clear that this extent was more than theoretical, a broad-brushstroke general statement. By the time it is possible to reconstruct the bounds with any greater degree of certainty, there are an added number of complexities. It seems likely that in these early days of the bishopric, of which the bull is a product, the bounds were still being decided and firmed up, and no doubt arrangements and compromises had to be made, of which we have no record.

Unfortunately, given the small amount of surviving evidence, and without further analysis of the Icelandic material and its context, it is difficult to unpick both the real and planned

⁶⁸³ A. Woolf, 'The Cult of Moluag, the See of Mortlach and Church Organisation in Scotland in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries' in *Fil súil nglais = A Grey Eye Looks Back: a Festschrift in Honour of Colm Ó Baoill*, ed. K. Hollo and S. Arbuthnot (Brig o' Turk, 2007) pp. 311-322.

⁶⁸⁴ The original of this document is no longer extant. Two copies are to be found in the *Aberdeen Register* pp. 5-7 and pp. 84-6. For a discussion of the document see A.S. Ferguson, 'The Bull of Hadrian IV and the Northern Marches I' in *Scottish Gaelic Studies* VI pt1 (1949) pp. 58-88.

status of Montrose. Nevertheless, there is a good amount of additional evidence for its importance as a church site.

The parish church of Montrose

The church of Montrose's first appearance in the documentary record was long believed to be under the name of Salorch and in a charter associated with the priory of Restenneth.⁶⁸⁵ However, this is based on a misreading of the charter, interpreting what was in fact a grant of an annual rent of twenty shillings from Salorch for the lighting of the church of Restenneth, as a grant for the lighting of the church of Salorch.⁶⁸⁶ This mistaken belief influenced Cowan when compiling his *Parishes of Medieval Scotland*. He composed an entry for the parish of 'Salorch' in the diocese of Brechin, writing that 'The church referred to as Salorch in the mid-twelfth century appears to be identifiable with the church of Montrose'.⁶⁸⁷ This was perpetuated in the 1978 Scottish Burgh Survey volume on Montrose, in which Anne Turner wrote that 'The first mention of the church at Montrose (Salorch) is in 1161 x 1162'.⁶⁸⁸ In fact there was no mid-twelfth-century reference to a church of Salorch, simply a reference to a place of that name generating revenue for a church elsewhere. Salorch itself seems to have been the earlier name of the burgh of Montrose, the onomastic shift occurring at some point in the twelfth century. Old Montrose, across the Basin, became Maryton.⁶⁸⁹

In fact the church of Montrose first appears in the written record a century later than previously thought, in a mid-thirteenth-century taxation list,⁶⁹⁰ alongside the majority of the churches in Brechin diocese. Although it cannot lay claim to being one of the earliest documented churches in the diocese, as has been claimed in the past, the church of Montrose does appear to have been an early one. While the earliest written record of a parish church at Montrose is now a century later than previously thought, there is good

⁶⁸⁵ See Low, *Church of St John the Evangelist*, p. 23. Also see Fraser, *Southesk*, pp. 475-6, Warden, *Angus, the Land and People*, vol. iv, pp. 430-1.

⁶⁸⁶ *RRS* i, no. 195, also p. 93, note 3. For mistaken interpretation see W. Fraser, *History of the Carnegies, Earls of Southesk, and of their Kindred* (Edinburgh, 1867) vol. i, p. xi.

⁶⁸⁷ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 179.

⁶⁸⁸ *Montrose Burgh Survey*, p. 7. This is in spite of the fact that Turner's reference for this is Barrow, *RRS* i, no. 195. On p. 93 of the same volume Barrow draws attention to the mistaken identification.

⁶⁸⁹ Barrow, *RRS* i, p. 93.

⁶⁹⁰ *Arb. Lib.* vol. i, pp. 241-2. It is here recorded as *Munros*. Atkinson, *Montrose*, p. 26. Clerics associated with Montrose are mentioned before this. See, for example, the entry on Henry of Montrose in Watt, *Graduates*, pp. 401-2.

evidence for the antiquity of the church there. Accounts of the town prior to the construction of the Town House in 1763 describe a churchyard which was slightly raised and curvilinear in form and extended out into the main street, which had to accommodate it.⁶⁹¹ Furthermore, burial remains and gravestones are preserved underneath the Town House, which was built on top of part of the old churchyard.⁶⁹² The *Old Statistical Account* for Montrose records that:

The old church of Montrose was a Gothic structure, rendered very gloomy and irregular, by large additions to the galleries and to the building itself. It was originally, however, venerable and well proportioned.⁶⁹³

After various attempts to repair and improve the church in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a new parish church was constructed on the site of the old church in 1791.⁶⁹⁴ This church has been in use continuously down to the present day, simply known as ‘Montrose Old’. However, the Episcopal Church at Montrose appears to preserve the traditions of the old church – it is dedicated to St Peter,⁶⁹⁵ the patron saint of the medieval church of Montrose.

The church of St Peter and St Paul

For many years, the dedication of the parish church at Montrose was thought to have been to St John the Evangelist.⁶⁹⁶ However, this identification was mistaken, based on a misinterpretation of Latin sources by the local historian James G. Low.⁶⁹⁷ Norman Keir Atkinson seems to have been the first to draw attention to Low’s mistake, titling the fifth chapter of his *Early History of Montrose* ‘The Church of St. Peter’,⁶⁹⁸ leaving no room for doubt on his views of the subject. He was half right; medieval evidence indicates that the church of Montrose was dually dedicated to saints Peter and Paul, although Peter seems to have enjoyed the greater level of local devotion. While the church at Montrose was

⁶⁹¹ Norman Keir Atkinson, *The Early History of Montrose*, Abertay Historical Society Publication No. 8 (Forfar, 1997) p. 27.

⁶⁹² Ibid. Also D. Mitchell, *The History of Montrose; Containing Important Particulars in Relation to its Trade, Manufactures, Commerce, Shipping, Antiquities, Eminent Men, Town Houses of the Neighbouring Gentry in Former Years, &c, &c* (Montrose, 1866) pp. 20-1.

⁶⁹³ OSA, vol. 5, p. 32.

⁶⁹⁴ *Montrose Burgh Survey*, p. 7.

⁶⁹⁵ Atkinson, *Early History of Montrose*, p. 29.

⁶⁹⁶ Low, *Church of St. John the Evangelist*.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

⁶⁹⁸ Atkinson, *Early History of Montrose*, pp. 26-35.

dedicated to Peter and Paul, it is Peter who takes the place of prime importance. The two are often mentioned together (and always so in papal correspondence), but when only one saint is named, it is Peter who is invoked.⁶⁹⁹ A number of fifteenth-century papal documents record the dedication of the church of Montrose to Peter and Paul.⁷⁰⁰ Supporting evidence is provided by more local charters, dating from the early sixteenth century.⁷⁰¹ In addition to this, the arms of the burgh of Montrose feature St Peter and his keys.⁷⁰²

Correspondence with the papacy not only confirms the dedication of the church, but also indicates the importance of Montrose as a church site. The vast majority of papal correspondence relating to the diocese of Brechin deals with requests for provision to benefices and for dispensation from impediments to holding office, such as illegitimacy. This is a similar picture to that which has been noted by Iain MacDonald in his study of the clergy of Argyll.⁷⁰³ Montrose stands out compared to all the churches in the diocese, both in terms of volume of correspondence generated, and also particularly in the emphasis placed on the antiquity and importance of the site as a pilgrimage centre. The papal supplications are particularly detailed, and the indulgences are a mine of information. The first records that:

Although the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul of Monross, Brechin diocese, and the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary within the same, are of much antiquity and abundantly populous, nevertheless for some years on account of wars and other pests which have unfortunately afflicted those parts for a long time they are so much collapsed in their edifices, books, ornaments and other ecclesiastical things that without the alms of other Christian faithful they can by no means be repaired, and unless provision is speedily made by the Pope they will fall into almost total ruin; that, therefore, Christ's faithful may be allured thereto by spiritual rewards, may the Pope grant and relax to all, truly penitent and confessed, who devoutly visit the said church and chapel on the Feasts of All Saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Sts. Peter and Paul the Apostles, patrons of the said church, and on other solemn feasts and octaves of the same, wont to be given by Chancery, and who hold out helping hands to the reparation of the same, for each time they do so, seven years and as many quarantines of true indulgence, to remain in perpetuity.⁷⁰⁴

⁶⁹⁹ For example, *Brech. Reg.* ii, no. xxvi 'ecclesiam beati Petri'.

⁷⁰⁰ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5; *CSSR* iv, no. 1328; *CSSR* iv, no. 1329.

⁷⁰¹ NAS B51/15/7. This charter dated 6 June 1518 mentions the choir of the church of Peter and Paul the Apostles of Montrose.

⁷⁰² J. H. Stevenson and M. Wood, *Scottish Heraldic Seals: Royal, Official, Ecclesiastical, Collegiate, Burghal, Personal*, vol. i Public Seals (Glasgow, 1940) p. 73.

⁷⁰³ I. G. MacDonald, *Clerics and Clansmen: The Diocese of Argyll between the Twelfth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Leiden, 2013) p. 4.

⁷⁰⁴ *CSSR* ii, pp. 204-5.

This indulgence, of 8 April 1428, is followed by:

Another of the same: It is represented for the part of John Cristini, priest, Dunkeld diocese, that although the parish church of Monross in Scotland, Brechin diocese, founded, etc., as above, is ruinous, etc., as above, which church and chapel were founded by St. Boniface the Pope, whose bones rest in Rosmarky in Scotland. May the Pope grant indulgence, etc., as above.

Evidently the indulgence of 1428 did not suffice. In a document dated 27 October 1446 it is recorded that:

In order that the parish church of Monros, d. Brech., which is dedicated to St Peter and St Paul, and the annexed chapel (which is dedicated to the Holy Cross and is often visited by pilgrims) might be preserved and even more greatly frequented, and that help may be more willingly given by Christ's faithful, may the Pope grant to all pilgrims to the abovesaid parish church and chapel, where in early days many miracles were performed, who visit either of them in the feasts of the Nativity, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension, the feasts of Pentecost, Trinity, Corpus Christi, of the apostles Peter and Paul, of the Invention and Exaltation of the Holy Cross, also in the feasts of Michael the Archangel and of All Saints, and in the octaves of the same, and who contribute to their repair as often as they do so seven years and as many quarantines of indulgence; and may the Pope moreover give faculty to the perpetual vicar and his successors or to their deputies to hear the confessions of Christ's faithful and to absolve them *in forma ecclesie* from excommunication, interdict and other censures and from all their sins in all and sundry cases except those reserved to the Pope, and to impose salutary penance. *Concessum de indulgentia ut petitur in forma.* Rome.⁷⁰⁵

Shortly afterwards, in a document dated 7 November 1446 it is recorded:

Lately, the Pope granted indulgence of two years and as many quarantines to Christ's faithful visiting the parish church of St Peter and St Paul of Monros, d. Brech., and of one year and forty days to those visiting the chapel of the Holy Cross. But since the faithful are especially devoted to the chapel on account of the cross there honoured, from which it cannot be moved, and since it is believed moreover that miracles have been performed there, may the apostolic letters on the supplication be expedited with grant of indulgence to the church and chapel according to the supplication. *Concessum ut petitur pro parrochiali in forma.* Rome.⁷⁰⁶

The above documents provide a range of information about the church of Montrose: firstly, they confirm the dedication to saints Peter and Paul; secondly, they indicate that it was believed to be a church of great antiquity; thirdly, they identify Montrose as a place of pilgrimage; fourthly, they demonstrate that by the later Middle Ages the church was in a state of disrepair, desperately in need of additional income; finally, they provide evidence

⁷⁰⁵ CSSR iv, no. 1328.

⁷⁰⁶ CSSR iv, no. 1329.

of wider veneration in the immediate vicinity – to Boniface, the Virgin Mary and the Holy Cross in particular.

Somewhat confusingly, while a chapel is mentioned in each of the papal supplications, the chapels themselves are different, although both are located within the parish church itself. The chapel of the Holy Cross is mentioned in a number of additional documents. It is referred to in a papal letter of Pope Clement VII of Avignon, dated 27 January 1386.⁷⁰⁷ Its relationship to the parish church is highlighted in a papal letter of 24 April 1395, in which mention is made of ‘the chapel of the Holy Cross inside the parish church’.⁷⁰⁸ On 10 March 1432 John, bishop of Brechin confirmed the chaplainry founded in the chapel of the Holy Cross of Montrose by Master Thomas Bell, perpetual vicar of Montrose, and he annexed the chapel of St John the Baptist in the same town and incorporated it with the chapel of the Holy Cross.⁷⁰⁹ Patrick Elyoth, chaplain of the Holy Cross, Montrose is mentioned in a notarial instrument dated 2 October 1437.⁷¹⁰

Devotion to the Virgin Mary seems to have been particularly strong around the Montrose Basin. Not only was there an ancient chapel dedicated to Mary in the parish church itself, the church of Old Montrose was also dedicated to Mary. Moreover, a leper hospital dedicated to the Virgin was also established in Montrose parish 1246 x 1265.⁷¹¹ There was also a chapel dedicated to Mary at Skeoch in Dunninald parish.⁷¹² As with Marian dedications in the wider diocese of Brechin, these seem to be related in some way to the patronage of the Scottish royal house.

Although not present in any church dedication in the parish of Montrose, saint Boniface is linked to the place in local legend at least. Examination of the Boniface material may also further illuminate the relationship between Montrose, Brechin and Restenneth, at least as perceived by contemporaries in the later Middle Ages. Closer examination of the Boniface legendary material emphasises a long-standing connection between Montrose and Brechin.

⁷⁰⁷ *Calendar of Papal Letters 1378-1394*, p. 115.

⁷⁰⁸ *CPL* 1394-1419, p. 37. Further evidence of the location of the chapel of the Holy Cross in *RMS II/ James III/1113*.

⁷⁰⁹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. 22.

⁷¹⁰ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. 31.

⁷¹¹ D. Hall, *Scottish Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud, 2006) 212. For details of grants to the hospital see *RMS II/ James III/1113* and *RMS II/James IV/3121*. *MRHS*, 185-6. D.G. Adams, *Celtic and Mediaeval Religious Houses in Angus: Abbeys, Priors, Hermitages, Friaries, Hospitals, Colleges, Cathedrals etc* (Brechin, 1984) 31-2.

⁷¹² *Exchequer Rolls 1497-1501 XI* 312-19 1501

The papal evidence demonstrates a perception, to fifteenth-century contemporaries at least, of the church of Montrose being of great antiquity and indeed having been founded by Boniface himself. When this is considered alongside the material in the *Aberdeen Breviary*, again later medieval in date (the *Breviary* was published in 1510) the link appears close. As already discussed in chapter 4, the Boniface legend in the *Aberdeen Breviary* may include a reference to the church at Brechin, in the form of the place where Boniface baptised Nechtan, king of the Picts, which then was dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Restenneth also features in the account.

After describing the saint's numerous travelling companions, the *Breviary's* account goes on to describe how, '... they reached Pictland harmoniously after a favourable journey and a prosperous voyage; but a sign was sent forth by divine providence from heaven and they came by the Scottish Sea almost as far as the district of Restenneth.' As already discussed, the 'almost' is crucial here. It is plausible that the landing place in the legend is Montrose with its huge natural harbour, gateway to Brechin and beyond. The fact that they came 'by the Scottish Sea' fits with an arrival at Montrose Basin (a significant natural harbour, although the Tay is another possibility). This is supported by the later medieval evidence of the Boniface legend associated with Montrose evident in the papal documentation.

Montrose, Restenneth and *Egglespether*

Papal material ties Montrose strongly into the Petrine devotion associated with Boniface, and links Montrose with Restenneth, the site (rightly or wrongly) most associated with this saint outside the Rosemarkie area. The earlier documented connection between Montrose and Restenneth has already been mentioned. Between 6 Jan 1161 x 24 Jan 1162 Malcolm IV confirmed to Jedburgh Abbey the church of St Peter of Restenneth, together with everything which his predecessors granted to that church.⁷¹³ Amongst these was an annual rent of 20 shillings from Salorch for the lighting of the church of Restenneth. In this same charter which was for so long taken as the first evidence of the existence of a church at Salorch, later Montrose, is a list of the lands of Restenneth. These lands are listed as *Crachnatharach, Pethefrin, Teleth, Duninath, Dyserth* and *Egglespether*.⁷¹⁴ In the past *Egglespether* has been identified with Restenneth itself, or at least as a church very nearby.

⁷¹³ *RRS* i, no. 195.

⁷¹⁴ *Loc. cit.*

Norman Atkinson has even identified it with Aberlemno. Geoffrey Barrow argued that Restenneth itself could not be *Egglespether*:

Egglespether cannot refer to the actual church of Saint Peter as it stood in Malcolm IV's reign, for in the king's charter it is clearly distinguished from 'Rostinoth (Restenneth) where the church is built'. Nevertheless, though now lost, it is likely to have been in close proximity to Restenneth. It seems reasonable to suggest that Egglespether, obviously once an actual ecclesiastical site but no longer so in the mid-twelfth century, represented the church built (perhaps on an even older Christian site) for King Nechtan in the early eighth century.⁷¹⁵

However, re-examination of the list indicates another possibility, and one which reinforces the impression of Montrose as being a hub of ecclesiastical activity. The places are not recorded randomly; they are ordered geographically. The lands belonging to Restenneth seem to be concentrated in two clusters: one around Restenneth itself and the other around the Montrose Basin. This may be seen when the places are matched with their modern counterparts. The charter names six places: *Crachnatharach*, *Pethefrin*, *Teleth*, *Duninath*, *Dyserth* and *Egglespether*. *Crachnatharach* has been identified as Criagnathro (NO461485), the name preserved in a farm just south of Forfar in the Ordnance Survey first edition six-inch map, just two miles from Restenneth.⁷¹⁶ *Pethefrin* has been identified as Pitreuchie (NO468496), a farm to the south-east of Forfar, and one mile from Restenneth.⁷¹⁷ *Teleth* is more elusive. It has been identified as Tealing (NO403379) by a number of scholars.⁷¹⁸ This is eight miles south of Forfar. However, this identification is by no means sound. Early forms of Tealing (*Theelin*, *Thelen*) roughly contemporary with the charter and long-standing association with St Andrews Priory and the Giffard family would seem to militate against it.⁷¹⁹ *Teleth* must remain unidentified, for the moment, although it is probably near Restenneth.⁷²⁰ These first three names make up a subset of places near Forfar. Two other names on this list can be identified and correlated with places near Montrose which have survived into modern times: these are *Duninath* and *Dyserth*, which survived into Dunninald (NO704542) and Dysart (preserved in Upper Dysart NO685533 and Nether Dysart NO697533). These two places gave their names to

⁷¹⁵ G. W. S. Barrow, 'The Childhood of Scottish Christianity: A Note on Some Place-Name Evidence', *Scottish Studies*, 27 (1983) pp. 1-15, p. 8.

⁷¹⁶ N. Atkinson, 'The Coming of Christianity to Angus', *The Book of the Society of Friends of Brechin Cathedral* No. 43 (Brechin, 1994) p. 12.

⁷¹⁷ Loc. cit.

⁷¹⁸ Atkinson, 'Coming of Christianity', p. 12; Jervise, *Memorials of Angus and the Mearns*, p. 413.

⁷¹⁹ *St. A. Lib.*, p. 72 and p. 325.

⁷²⁰ *RRS* i, p. 326.

medieval parishes on the south side of the Montrose Basin, only two miles from the burgh of Montrose itself.⁷²¹ So what of *Egglespether*? It would seem sensible to conjecture that this place, listed after Dunninald and Dysart in the charter, was also nearby. In Montrose we have a church dedicated to Peter (and Paul). Furthermore this church is recorded as being of great antiquity, by the fifteenth century at least. Moreover, it is linked to the cult of Boniface, and thereby with Restenneth. Therefore it seems that *Egglespether* is the church that later developed into the burgh kirk of Montrose.

Conclusion

Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century documentary evidence describes a church at Montrose of great antiquity. This view is supported by early modern descriptions of the old church and churchyard, which bear the hallmarks of an early church site. This church was a place of pilgrimage by the later Middle Ages, with devotion to saints Peter and Paul linked to the legend of Boniface. This legendary material links Montrose into the hagiography associated with the nearby priory of Restenneth, as well as with Brechin itself. There is also evidence for devotion to the Virgin Mary in Montrose parish, as well as in its hinterland. This Marian devotion ties in with the wider devotion to the Virgin apparent in the wider diocese of Brechin, and also links with the Brechin family and their royal relations and their connection with this devotion.

While the Icelandic list of bishops' seats offers interesting possibilities for Montrose, as does the Gough Map, without further study and supporting evidence the episcopal identity of Montrose must remain ambiguous. The church may very possibly have been the seat of a bishop at one point in its history, and indeed may also have been an ultimately unsuccessful rival for Brechin as centre of the bishopric for Angus and the Mearns, but this cannot be proven on the surviving evidence. That said, Montrose seems to have been second only to the mother church of Brechin in the later medieval diocese; certainly no other church in the diocese generated such a level of papal correspondence.

⁷²¹ Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 54 and p. 57.

Chapter 6: Conclusion – looking forward, looking back

This thesis set out with the aim of trying to make some sense of a bishopric that has long perplexed scholars of Scottish church history. Central to this was the question of why Brechin developed and survived as a bishopric in the Middle Ages when it was ostensibly so different to the norm of a strictly territorial diocese. Other Scottish bishoprics such as St Andrews and Dunkeld had many detached parishes similar to those found in the diocese of Brechin, yet these episcopal sees also had extensive core territory, while Brechin's cohesive centre was tiny in comparison. No wonder then, that the medieval bishopric of Brechin has been described as 'an illogical scattering of churches'.⁷²² Words such as these have echoed down the years. However, it has been another aim of this study to question this very perception of oddness; certainly there is no evidence that contemporaries in the Middle Ages considered Brechin in any way peculiar. Indeed, in the rare instances that the extent of the diocese is mentioned in the documentary record, it appears as a very manageable entity.

This study has examined the organisational patterns recoverable from the medieval evidence to try to find explanations for the development of the bishopric along such seemingly unique lines. In order to do this, it has been necessary to explore the evidence about the diocese of Brechin from a number of different perspectives: by considering the context of secular lordship in Angus and the Mearns; by examining the parishes and churches which made up the bishopric of Brechin; by exploring the rich legacy of saintly commemorations and church dedications, not only in the diocese of Brechin, but throughout Angus and the Mearns; and finally by carrying out a case-study of one of Brechin's most important churches, that of the burgh of Montrose. These various approaches have by no means completely 'solved the problem' of the medieval diocese of Brechin; however, a number of significant patterns in the surviving evidence have gone some way to making it more understandable.

The importance of taking into account the wider social structures in Angus and the Mearns, of which Brechin was very much a part, cannot be underestimated. All too often the secular and the ecclesiastical are treated separately, yet they were intimately linked. This link has increasingly been recognised by scholars in recent years. The intertwining of church and lordship is particularly striking in the case of Brechin. In the early Middle Ages

⁷²² Watt, 'Organisation of Brechin', p. 10.

the church there enjoyed significant royal patronage, and this evidently continued into the central Middle Ages in the persons of Earl David of Huntingdon and his descendants. It is this combination of the activities of kings of Scots and their kin that appears to be key in understanding the development of the diocese of Brechin. From the early thirteenth century, there is evidence of secular lords of Brechin: illegitimate descendants of Earl David of Huntingdon, and thereby ultimately his grandfather King David I. Members of this family held ecclesiastical offices; Albin, probably the illegitimate son of Henry of Brechin, became bishop in the 1240s, and Albin's nephew Adam held the post of archdeacon in the 1260s. Moreover, examination of the holdings of the wider kin-group reveals striking correspondence between the secular landholding and lordship of Earl David and his descendants, and the ecclesiastical organisation of the bishopric of Brechin: lordship and parishes appear to be strongly connected.

Another facet of this royal and lordly association with Brechin is the diocese's manifestation of a particular reverence for the Virgin Mary. This may be traced back to the ninth century via sculptural evidence, but it is in the central Middle Ages that we see this veneration developed and supported by both kings of Scots and Earl David and his kin. Again, Marian dedications and the landholding and lordship of the royal family appear to be marching very much in step. This special relationship between the kin-group of the kings of Scots and the Virgin Mary may account somewhat for Brechin's development as a diocese in the central Middle Ages.

In stark contrast to the close relationship between the Brechin family and the diocese, the holdings of the earls of Angus and the interests of the bishopric of Brechin seem to have been almost mutually exclusive. To a great extent this may be accounted for by the Angus family's patronage of their own church at Kirriemuir and its associated clergy. However, greater exploration of this distinction between spheres of influence may lead to insights into ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns in the early Middle Ages, a period which falls outwith the main scope of this study.

Other connections have proven harder to make sense of. An explicit relationship with the church of Brechin is to be found in the case of the hereditary abbatial family associated with Brechin, which descended into two important local landholding families called the MacLeods and the MacNabs. Their connection with the church is inherent in their names: one branch derived their surname from the office of abbot and the other from the name of

an abbot of Brechin (Leod) himself. However, the lands of these families do not correspond neatly either to the bishopric of Brechin or to that of St Andrews. Instead, we see something of a mix. This may be explained by the family having acquired hereditary 'abbatial' lands through their connection with the church at Brechin, while also holding wider kin-lands that need not necessarily have been associated with that church.

Unfortunately the picture is by no means clear-cut. Further study of other 'lay abbots' in their local context in the rest of Scotland, and their associated lands and descendants in particular, may help with this in the future. It does seem plausible, however, that the MacLeods and MacNabs inherited lands which had been associated with the abbatial office, and therefore their later holdings may give some indication of Brechin's pre-twelfth-century landholding.

Essential to this thesis was the exploration of the bishopric of Brechin within the context of wider church organisation in Angus and the Mearns. Examination of both the distribution of churches and of saints' cults here has shown a distinct difference between the two areas. While the Mearns boasts commemorations of a number of saints with Irish connections, perhaps linked to the influence of Armagh in the early Middle Ages, Angus shows a noticeable preference for universal saints such as Mary, Andrew, John, Laurence and Peter. Brechin's diocesan presence in the Mearns was minimal, and may have been the result of earlier possessions which had some function connected with travel. Indeed, this may also provide a way of understanding some of Brechin's more far-flung possessions in southern Angus, outwith the north-Angus core territory of the bishopric.

During the course of studying the various parishes and churches of the diocese of Brechin, one place stands out above all others: Montrose. Although hitherto unrecognised by modern scholars as an important ecclesiastical centre, Montrose was certainly viewed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a cult centre of ancient significance. Moreover, the church here was potentially the seat of a bishop at one point in its history. Indeed, it may even have been a rival to Brechin as the diocesan capital of Angus and the Mearns. Montrose, Brechin and Restenneth all appear to have been linked locally in late medieval traditions associated with St Boniface. Reappraisal of the Boniface legend as preserved in the *Aberdeen Breviary* shows that there seems to be a foundation account of the church of the Holy Trinity at Brechin embedded within the tale of Boniface's arrival in Scotland (perhaps at Montrose). Certainly clerics in Montrose attributed the foundation of their

church to the activities of St Boniface; moreover they also link the saint with Marian devotion.

All in all, it has been possible to find a number of meaningful patterns in the surviving evidence about ecclesiastical organisation in Angus and the Mearns. Specifically, the medieval bishopric of Brechin appears to have developed along the lines it did thanks to a combination of royal and associated lordly patronage and a special connection with veneration of the Virgin Mary. That said, there are many avenues still to explore. Most particularly, pre-twelfth-century arrangements deserve more attention than it has been possible to devote to them in this work, the main focus of which has been the central Middle Ages. The tools are available to accomplish this. The evidence of commemorations of saints has the potential to shed light on this shady period of church history. So too does a systematic study of the ecclesiastical place-names in Angus and the Mearns, particularly given the incidence of names containing potentially significant generic elements such as **ēgles* and *cill*. Moreover, art-historical sources, and the many Pictish sculptured stones in particular, still have much to reveal about both social and ecclesiastical organisation in early medieval Angus.

The biggest obstacle in exploring the comparative unusualness of the medieval diocese of Brechin is the lack of detailed study of other Scottish bishoprics. Marinell Ash has examined ‘The Administration of the Diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328’⁷²³ while Alasdair Ross⁷²⁴ and Iain Macdonald⁷²⁵ have studied the dioceses of Moray and Argyll in their respective PhD theses. However, research into the organisation of other bishoprics in medieval Scotland is vital to enable valid comparisons to be made. This is particularly the case seeing that St Andrews would not necessarily be the most useful point of comparison, given that it is something of a special case, going on to become Scotland’s prime see. Brechin really cannot be fully understood without greater understanding of the other bishoprics of medieval Scotland, particularly those of comparable size such as Caithness

⁷²³ M. Ash., ‘The Administration of the Diocese of St Andrews 1202-1328’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Newcastle, 1972).

⁷²⁴ A. Ross, ‘The Province of Moray, 1000-1230’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2003).

⁷²⁵ I. G. MacDonald, ‘The secular Church and clergy in the Diocese of Argyll from circa 1189 to 1560’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2009). Now published, with additional material, in I. G. MacDonald, *Clerics and Clansmen: the Diocese of Argyll between the Twelfth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Leiden, 2013).

and Dunblane. This is the only way to finally determine whether it really was ‘a particular kind of diocese not found before or after’.⁷²⁶

⁷²⁶ Watt, ‘Organisation of Brechin’, p. 8.

Appendix 1: Maisondieu foundation charter

This charter is printed in *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 3. It is dated to 25 March x 4 July 1267. The original document does not survive, but a mid-fifteenth century copy is preserved in the *Brechin Register*.

This document records the foundation of the Maisondieu of Brechin by William of Brechin (fl. 1234 x 1286), son of Sir Henry of Brechin (fl. 1198 x 1231), illegitimate son of Earl David of Huntingdon (fl. 1159 x 1208). The hospital and associated chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary were established for the welfare of the souls of the founder's kin: kings William I (1165-1214) and Alexander II (1214-49), and William's own father Sir Henry of Brechin and his mother Lady Juliana, as well as unspecified others. The charter makes provision for a master, chaplains and paupers, not only including the land on which the house itself was built, but other lands and rights in the immediate vicinity to support it. It is a valuable piece of evidence for the lordship of Brechin in the thirteenth century.

Fundacio de Messyndew

Omnibus sancte matris ecclesie filiis ad quos presens scriptum peruenerit Willelmus de Brechine filius domini Henrici de Brechine filii comitis Daudid salutem in domino sempiternam. Noueritis me diuine caritatis intuitu et pro salute animarum illustrium regum Scocie dominorum Willelmi et Alexandri domini Johannis comitis Cestrie domini Henrici patris mei et domine Juliane matris mee necnon et pro salute anime mee et animarum omnium predecessorum et successorum meorum nec non et omnium fidelium defunctorum dedisse concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Deo et capelle Sancte Marie virginis de Brechine per me fundate et magistro ac capellanis ac pauperibus ibidem deo imperpetuum seruituris in liberam puram et perpetuam elimosinam totam terram in qua capella sita est per rectas diuisas suas viz. incipiendo a terra Moisy scissoris usque ad quamdam siketam que vocatur Garnech et ab illa siketa versus occidentem usque ad quamdam calceam per quam itur ad Petariam de Brechine et sic versus aquilonem ex occidentali parte ville de Balherquhynn per viam que ducit in moram et inde versus orientem usque ad terram que vocatur Baldouegathy cum medietate illius terre cuius aliam medietatem Walterus Coquus tenet et inde versus austrum usque ad predictam siketam Garnech et inde usque ad riuulum currentem versus orientem ad altam viam que ducit de Brechine versus Kincardine descendendo per eandem viam usque ad villam de Brechine.

Et insuper molendinum de Brechine cum multura eiusdem ville ad tercium decimum vas de blado ibidem crescente excepto blado meo dominico et heredum meorum quod ibidem libere debet moliri sicut hactenus conuenit et cum multura ville de Lwichlande ad sextum decimum vas cum multura ville de Heychame ad vicesimum vas cum multura terre de Baldougathy que est Walteri Coci ad vicesimum vas cum multura ville de Buthyrkil ad tercium decimum vas cum multura ville de Pettindreich ad tercium decimum vas cum multura terre Moysi scissoris ad vicesimum vas et cum omnibus forinsecis sectis et aliis que ad dictum molendinum pertinent et poterunt pertinere. Et si contingat quod dicte terre vel aliqua dictarum terrarum per me vel per aliquem heredum vel successorum meorum quoquo modo imperpetuum vel ad tempus alienentur quod semper multura dictarum terrarum secundum mensuras prius nominatas penes dictam domum sine aliqua diminucione permaneat. Volo eciam et concedo pro me et heredibus [meis] quod dictum molendinum et stagnum eiusdem per homines de schira sustententur et imposterum reparentur sicut hactenus dum dictum molendinum fuit in manu mea consuevit fieri. Molendinarii vero dicti molendini per magistrum dicte domus et non per alium institui et destitui debent. Volo eciam quod dicti magister et homines existentes in dicta domo et omnes homines in eorum terris habitantes a reparacione dictorum stagni et molendini sint immunes. Volo insuper quod ubi terre dicte domus sunt contigue adiacentes terris meis quod ab eorum terris habeant communem pasturam inter terram meam eisdem adiacentem. Tenendam et habendam predictae domui magistro capellanis ac pauperibus eiusdem domus imperpetuum cum omnibus asiamentis ad villam de Brechine spectantibus in moris et maresiis in pratis pascuis et communibus pasturis in petariis et in omnibus aliis libertatibus et asiamentis inter terram meam de Brechine existentibus tam pro seipsis quam pro hominibus suis habitantibus infra diuisas predictas adeo libere quiete plenarie et honorifice sicut aliqua elemosina in regno Scocie a comite vel barone in puram et perpetuam elemosinam data et concessa liberius quocius plenius et honorificencius tenetur et possidetur. Nec volo quod aliquod soluunt racione predictorum nisi tantum preces et oraciones debitas et deuotas et ego Willelmus et heredes mei predictam terram totam et predictum molendinum cum omnibus asiamentis et pertinenciis suis prout superius plenius continetur predictae domui et magistro capellanis et pauperibus contra omnes homines et feminas varantizabimus imperpetuum acquietabimus et defendemus tam in forinsecis quam in aliis. Et sciendum quod cum magister illius domus decesserit vel decesserint alius loco sui per me heredes meos et non per alium episcopo loco qui pro tempore fuerit debet presentari et ad nostram presentacionem ibidem institui. Remanente eidem episcopo tantummodo cura spiritualium et obseruato michi et heredibus meis tantum jure patronatus.

Et magister dicte domus qui ad meam presentacionem vel heredum meorum in eadem fuerit institutus habeat liberam et generalem administracionem de omnibus rebus mobilibus et immobilibus nunc et imposterum ad dictam domum spectantibus et si quod absit ego vel aliquis ex heredibus meis contra hanc donacionem et concessionem meam in aliquo nuncquam venire presumpserimus volo et concedo quod dictus dominus episcopus contrauenientem sententia excommunicacionis possit innodare et terras ecclesiastico supponere interdicto quousque ad condignam venerit satisfactionem Ut autem hec mea donacio et concessio robur obtineat perpetue firmitatis presens scriptum sigilli mei munimine roborauimus hiis testibus venerabili patre domino Albino episcopo Brechinensi domino Sabino Abbate de Abirbrothock domino Willelmo priore de Rostinoth domino Willelmo decano de Brechine domino Roberto de Montealto domino Johanne Vischarde domino Willelmo de Arrade domino Laurencio de Montealto Thoma rectore ecclesie de Kinros domini pape capellano magistro Ricardo de Logywar Brechinensi canonico Willelmo Chaunteil Duncano iudice Johanne Albo Petro de Ferne Symone clerico de Forfar Willelmo constabulario de Brechine.

Appendix 2: Charter of Alexander II to Gillandres MacLeod

This charter is printed in *Brech. Reg.* vol. i, no. 2. It will also be published in K. J. Stringer (ed.), *Regesta Regum Scottorum, iii, Acts of Alexander II*, (forthcoming). Also see J. M. Scoular, *Handlist of the Acts of Alexander II, 1214-1249* (Edinburgh, 1959) no. 158. It is dated to 19 April 1232.

The charter records the grant of lands by Alexander II (1214-49) to Gillandres MacLeod (fl. 1228 x 1232), a member of one branch of the abbatial family associated with the church at Brechin. The lands concerned are Navar, Tillyarblet, Balargus (lost), Keithock and Combraid (now Mainsbank in the parish of Kinnell). An hint of the earlier history of these lands, and of their connection with the church of Brechin and its personnel, may be indicated by the mention of certain unspecified rights which are reserved to the clergy of Brechin and the ten shillings due each year from Combraid to the abbot of Brechin. This charter also confirms lands at Cardean (Airlie parish) and Braikie (Kinnell parish) which Gillandres acquired through his marriage to Forthelech, daughter of Brice the *judex* of Angus.⁷²⁷

Alexander Dei gratia rex Scottorum omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue clericis et laycis salutem. Sciant presentes et futuri nos concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse Gylandrys Mac Lod has terras subscriptas. scilicet. Neuethbarr. Tulachmaccarbaloch. Balehergrossyne. Katech'e et Kennebred. Tenendas et habendas eidem Gylandrys et heredibus suis. de nobis et heredibus nostris. in feodo et hereditate. per rectas diuisas suas. et cum omnibus iustis pertinentiis suis. in bosco et plano. in terris et aquis. in pratis et pascuis. in moris et maresiis. in stagnis et molendinis. cum socco et sacca. cum furca et fossa. cum thol et them. et infanganethef et cum omnibus aliis ad predictas terras iuste pertinentibus. libere. quiete. plenarie. et honorifice: per seruicium unius militis. saluis clericis de Breychin rectitudinibus suis. et saluis abbati de Breychin annuatim decem solidis de Kennebred. Concessimus eciam eidem Gylandrys et heredibus suis quos habuerit de Forthelech filia Bricii iudicis uxore sua: Kerdan et Breckyn per rectas diuisas suas. et cum omnibus aliis iustis pertinenciis suis. plenarie et honorifice: infra dictum seruicium unius militis simul sum predictis terris. et faciendo forinsecum seruicium quod pertinet ad omnes predictas terras. Testibus. Willelmo de Bondingtun cancellario. Waltero Byseth.

⁷²⁷ G. W. S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots* (Second Edition, Edinburgh, 2003) pp. 59-60, p. 62 and pp. 66-7.

Dauid de Hastengys. Dauid Cumyn. Willelmo de Haya. Willelmo Byset. Mychael de Monte alto. Thoma Malherb. Apud Forfar Nonodecimo die Aprilis. Anno regni domini regis octauo decimo.

Appendix 3: Montrose burgh charter

This charter is printed in *RRS, i*, no. 19 and *Charters of David I*, no. 216. The substance of the charter has been dated by G. W. S. Barrow as probably belonging to the period c. 1141 x 50,⁷²⁸ although the document itself is a fourteenth-century copy with some changes to the original.

After more than a century and a half of dispute, it is now generally accepted that the burgh of Montrose was a foundation of King David I (1124-53). Moreover, its charter is the earliest extant royal charter for a Scottish burgh.⁷²⁹ The earliest burgh charter of Montrose was for many years thought a forgery by scholars, but while the charter as it survives has been altered somewhat, in essence it appears to be authentic. The essentials such as boundaries and place-names seem to be accurately preserved. Taking the substance of the charter as genuine, the sphere of influence of Montrose is impressive; -the trading bounds, as demarcated in the charter, make up an area from just south of Aberdeen (at Findon), to just north of Dundee (the Dighty Water). This effectively granted Montrose rights throughout the territories of Angus and the Mearns.

David rex Scocie, Episcopis, Abbatibus, comitibus, Justiciariis, baronibus, vicecomitibus, ministrisque omnibus et probis hominibus tocius regni sui, Francis, Scotis, Anglicis et aliis alienigenis, tam presentibus quam futuris, salutem. Sciant omnes me dedisse, concessisse et hac presente carta mea confirmasse dilectis burgensibus meis totam terram meam de Sallork' iacentem et situatam iuxta portum de Stromay versus aquilonem, sicut Randus de Granton' camerarius meus, Thor vicecomes et Ricardus clericus ea vice proiverunt quando eam metiti sunt pro quatuor carucatis terre cum dimidia, habendam et tenendam dictam peciam terre dictis burgensibus meis in libero burgo, cum omnibus rectitudinibus et libertatibus ad liberum burgum pertinentibus, adeo libere sicut bona villa mea de Perth de me tenetur, et cum omnibus rectitudinibus empcionis et vendicionis legitime [*sic*] pertinentibus ad opus et officium burgensium et mercatorum; de aqua de Thahoke usque Fyndoune per partes boreales usque ad aquam de Carwdy, et sic descendendo per partes australes usque ad aquam de Deychty sicut currit in Drumlay. Volo itaque et concedo ut predicti burgenses et heredes sui predictam peciam terre habeant de me et heredibus meis in perpetuum, bene et in pace in libero burgo; et quod tam ipsi heredes sui quam omnes

⁷²⁸ Barrow, *Charters of David I*, p. 159.

⁷²⁹ Barrow, *RRS* vol i, 92. While at this stage Barrow did not accept the charter as genuine, he did emphasise that were it genuine, it would be the earliest royal burgh charter.

homines sui et res eorundem sint ad meam pacem firmam et proteccionem et heredum meorum inperpetuum a calumpnia omnium hominum. Testibus, Duncano Comite, Herberto marescallo, Ricardo cancellario, Randeo camerario, Alexandro de Straton, Randulfo Soulis, Thor Vicecomite, Willelmo Bydoune. Datum apud Forfar.

Appendix 4: Churches in the bishopric of Brechin

Church	13 th century taxation (Watt, <i>Atlas of Scottish History</i>)	Bagimond's Roll	Watt, 'Organisation'	Cowan, <i>Parishes</i>
Brechin	*	*	*	p. 22
Burghill (Buttergill) (Unthiekil)	*	*	*	p. 24 p. (204)
Catterline	*	*	*	p. 29
Cookston			*	p. 35
Cortachy	*		*	p. 36
Dundee	*	*	*	p. 51
Dundee St Clements	-	-	-	-
Dunnichen	*	-	*	p. 53
Dysart	-	-	*	p. 57
Ecclesjohn	-	-	*	p. 58
Farnell	*	-	*	p. 64
Finavon	*	*	*	p. 66
Glenbervie	*	*	*	p. 74
Glenisla	*	*	*	p. 76
Guthrie	*	*	*	p. 79
Kilmoir	*	*	*	pp. 105-6
Kinghornie	*	-	*	-
Kingoldrum	*	*	*	p. 113
Kirkbuddo	*	-	*	p. 118
Lethnot	*	-	*	p. 131
Lochlee (Glenesk?)	- -	- ?Glenesk?	* -	p. 135 -
Maryton	*	*	*	p. 143
Monikie	*	*	*	p. 149
Montrose (Salorch)	*	*	*	p. 150 p. (179)
Navar	*	*	*	p. 154
Panbride	*	*	*	p. 161
Stracathro	*	*	*	p. 189
Strachan	*	*	*	p. 189

Note: Kirriemuir and Strathdighty Comitis are recorded in the diocese of Brechin in the first half of the second year of *Bagimond's Roll*.

Appendix 5: Temporal lands in the bishopric of Brechin – *The Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices*

The *Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices* are the result of a survey of ecclesiastical rentals across Scotland in the immediate aftermath of the Reformation of 1560. A council held in December 1561 ordered all clergy to produce rentals of their benefices, which were submitted from 1562 onwards. These were then recorded in the *Books of the Assumption*. The ensuing records provide a detailed picture of the lands and rights of the late medieval church. Four rentals of the bishopric of Brechin survive from the immediate post-Reformation period. Three of these are recorded in the *Books of Assumption of Thirds of Benefices*, dating from the 1560s: the first of these dates to 1562 x 1566 (prior to Alexander Campbell's succession as bishop); the second and third date to 1566 and the years immediately following.⁷³⁰ The fourth rental, dated to 1573, is a slightly later record of the holdings of the bishopric of Brechin recorded in the *Brechin Register*.⁷³¹

Modern Place-name	National Grid Reference	First Rental	Second Rental	Third Rental	1573 Rental
Barony of Brechin	NO 59 60	<i>Barrowny</i>	<i>Barony</i>	<i>Bawrony</i>	<i>Barony of Brechin</i>
Newton	NO 59 64	<i>Newtoun</i>	<i>Newtoun</i>	<i>Newtoun</i>	<i>Newtoun</i>
Smiddyhill	NO 61 65	<i>Smyddehill</i>	<i>Smiddehill</i>	<i>Smyddehill</i>	<i>Smyddiehill</i>
Murlingden	NO 59 62	<i>Myldene</i>	<i>Mylden</i>	<i>Myldene</i>	<i>Mylden</i>
<i>Bothers</i> (lost)	NO 60 62	<i>Botheris</i>	<i>Betharis</i>	<i>Bothiris</i>	<i>Botheris</i>
Syde	NO 61 64	<i>Syid</i>	<i>Syid</i>	<i>Syid</i>	<i>Syd</i>
Pitforthie	NO 60 61	<i>Nether Petforthie</i>	<i>Nether Pitforthie</i>	<i>Nether Pitforthye</i>	<i>Nether Pytforthye</i>
Ardo	NO 62 62	<i>Ardo</i>	<i>Ardo</i>	<i>Ardo</i>	<i>Ardo</i>
Addicat	NO 63 62	<i>Aidecat</i>	<i>Adecat</i>	<i>Addicat</i>	<i>Additall</i>
<i>Ecclesjohn</i> (lost)	NO 68 60	<i>Egglisjohnne</i>	<i>Ecclisjone</i>	<i>Ecglisjohnne</i>	<i>Eglisjhonne</i>

⁷³⁰ *The Books of the Assumption of Thirds of Benefices: Scottish Ecclesiastical Rentals at the Reformation*, ed. J. Kirk (Oxford, 1995) pp. 383-9.

⁷³¹ *Brech. Reg.* vol. ii, no. CCCCXLI.

Modern Place-name	National Grid Reference	First Rental	Second Rental	Third Rental	1573 Rental
Capo	NO 62 66	<i>Capo</i>	<i>Capo</i>	<i>Capo</i>	<i>Capo</i>
Maryton	NO 68 56	<i>Maritoun</i>	<i>Maritoun with the fishing</i>	<i>Maritoun with the fishing</i>	<i>Maritoun with the fishing</i>
<i>Mylne of Auchdowry (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Mylne of Auchdowry</i>	<i>Myladewy</i>	<i>Myll Audevye (Auchdowry)</i>	<i>Mylln Airdevye</i>
Unthank	NO 60 61	<i>Unthank</i>	<i>Unthank</i>	<i>Unthank</i>	<i>Unthank</i>
Dalgety	NO 60 59	<i>Litill Dalgaty</i>	<i>Littill Dalgaty</i>	<i>Litill Dagate</i>	<i>Little Dagowlthie</i>
Muirton	NO 65 62	<i>Murtoun</i>	<i>Muirtoun</i>	<i>Murtoun</i>	<i>Muretoun</i>
Keithock	NO 60 63	<i>Kethik</i>	<i>Kethik</i>	<i>Kethik</i>	<i>Kathrik</i>
Kinghornie	NO 83 72	<i>Kyngorny</i>	<i>Kingorny (out of order in list)</i>	<i>Kyngorny</i>	<i>Kingormy</i>
<i>Kirkdauche (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Kirkdauche</i>	<i>Kirkdauche</i>	<i>Kirkdawcht</i>	<i>Kirkdawcht</i>
<i>Crofheddis (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Crofheddis</i>	<i>Craftheidis</i>	<i>Croftheidis</i>	<i>Croftheidis</i>
<i>Over Petforthie (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Wver Petforthie</i>	<i>Over Pitforthie</i>	<i>Wver Pitforthie</i>	<i>Weuer Pytforthie</i>
Little mill of Brechin	NO 59 59	<i>Littill Mylne of Brechen</i>	<i>Littill Mylne of Brechen</i>	<i>Littill Mylne of Brechine</i>	<i>Little Mylne of Breichein</i>
Balrownie	NO 56 64	<i>Ballewny(Balnay)</i>	<i>Balony</i>	<i>Ballnay (Ballewny)</i>	<i>Balluny</i>
<i>Drummy (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Drummy</i>	<i>Drummy</i>	<i>Drymme</i>	<i>Drymie</i>
Brathinch	NO 58 64	<i>Brauthinche</i>	<i>Brathinis</i>	<i>Brathynsche</i>	<i>Brathynsche</i>
<i>Walk Mylne of Stracathro (lost)</i>	Unidentified, in Stracathro	<i>Walk Mylne of Stracathro</i>	-	<i>Walk Mylne of Strathcathro</i>	<i>Walk Mylne of Strethcathro</i>
East Drums	NO 59 57	<i>Ester Drummis</i>	<i>Eister Drummis</i>	<i>Ester Drummis</i>	<i>Eaister Drummis</i>
Brewhouse of Stracathro	NO 62 65	<i>Brewhouse of Stracathro</i>	-	<i>Brewhouse of Strathcathro</i>	<i>Brewhous of Strethcathro</i>
<i>Isaacstoun (lost)</i>	NO 65 59	<i>Eisauptoun</i>	<i>Isaxtoun</i>	<i>Eisauptoun</i>	<i>Esaxtoun</i>
Stracathro	NO 62 65	-	<i>Stracathro</i>	<i>Strethcathro</i>	<i>Strethcathro</i>
Mains of Farnell	NO 62 55	<i>Mainis of Fernell</i>	<i>Mains of Fernewell</i>	<i>Mainis of Fernvell etc</i>	<i>Mains of Fernievell</i>

Appendix 6: The lands of the lordship of Brechin

Land	National Grid Reference	1267 charter	Additional	1459/62 rental	1484 rental	1517 charter
Maisondieu and Mary Chapel	NO 59 60	<i>Maisondieu Mary Chapel</i>				<i>Maisondieu Mary Chapel</i>
<i>Land of Moses the carver/tailor (lost)</i>	Unidentified	<i>Land of Moses the carver/tailor</i>				<i>Land of Moses the carver/tailor</i>
Cookston	NO 59 61	<i>Land of Walter Cook/ Baldougathy</i>				<i>Land of Walter Cook/ Baldougathy</i>
<i>Heychaume (lost)</i>		<i>Heychaume</i>				<i>Heychaume</i>
Burghill	NO 59 59	<i>Buthyrkil</i>		<i>Burghirgill</i>	<i>Bouterkill</i>	<i>Buthyrkil</i>
Leuchland	NO 62 59	<i>Lwichlande</i>				<i>Lwichlande</i>
Pittendriech	NO 57 61	<i>Pettindreich</i>		<i>Pettyndrech</i>	<i>Pettindreich</i>	<i>Pettindreich</i>
Brechin castle	NO 59 59		<i>castro de Brechine</i>			
The Inch	NO 59 59		<i>Le inche</i>			
Arrat	NO 63 58			<i>Errot</i>	<i>Arrote</i>	
Pantaskel	NO 62 57			<i>Pentoscal</i>	<i>Pettintoskell</i>	
Kincraig	NO 62 58			<i>Kyncrag</i>	<i>Kincrag and mill</i>	
Balnabreich	NO 54 58			<i>Balnabrech</i>	<i>Balnabreich</i>	
Kintrockat	NO 56 59			<i>Kyndrochett</i>	<i>Kyndrochate</i>	
Pitpullox	NO 57 60			<i>Petpoulkis</i>	<i>Petpookis</i>	
Haugh of Brechin	NO 58 59			<i>Halch de Brechyn</i>	<i>Le Hauch de Brechin, Piscaria de le Hauch</i>	
Ville of Brechin	NO 59 60			<i>Ville of Brechin</i>		
Careston	NO 52 59			<i>Carrtetstoune</i>		
Newbigging	NO 69 59			<i>Neuburgh/ Neubiggin?</i>		
Fishing in Montrose	NO 71 57			<i>Fishing in Montrose</i>		

Land	National Grid Reference	1267 charter	Additional	1459/62 rental	1484 rental	1517 charter
Tenements in Montrose	NO 71 57				<i>Tenements in Montrose</i>	
Maisondieu	NO 58 61					<i>Maisondieu</i>
<i>Auchnacarret</i> (lost)	Unidentified					<i>Auchnacarret</i>
Easter Dalgety	NO 60 59					<i>Easter Dalgety</i>

Appendix 7: Parish Church Dedications in Angus and the Mearns

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database (Name?)	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Aberlemno	St Andrews (Angus)	?Peter	Place-name	-	x	?Peter	x	x	-
Aberlethnott, Marykirk	St Andrews (Mearns)	Mary	Place-name	-	x	Mary	Eglismaldy mention Vol. i p. 103	x	Crab Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Mary
Airlie	St Andrews (Angus)	-	-	-	x	x	Vol. ii p. 150 Medan	Middanus Modan p. 399	-
Arbirlot	St Andrews (Angus)	-	-	-	x	x	Vol. ii p. 30 Ninian	x	-
Arbroath and St Vigean	St Andrews (Angus)	Féichín	Place-name	1200	Féichin	Féichin		Vigean p. 456 -	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , pp. 309-11.
Arbuthnott	St Andrews (Mearns)	Ternan	<i>RMS</i> II/James IV/2867	1505	Ternan	Ternan	Vol. ii pp. 107-8 Ternan Vol. i p. 103 Mary	Ternan p. 451	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , p. 501.
Auldbar	St Andrews (Angus)	-	-	-	x	x	x	x	x

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Ballumby	St Andrews (Angus)	-	-	-	x	x	x	x	x
Banchory Devenick	Aberdeen	Devinicus	<i>Life of Machar, Aberdeen Breviary</i>		Devinicus	x	Vol. ii pp. 156-7 Devenic	Devinic pp. 323-4.	
Banchory Ternan	Aberdeen	Ternan			Ternan	Ternan	Vol. ii p. 107 Ternan	Ternan p. 451	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , p. 501
Barry (Fethmures, Fethermur)	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Vol. i pp. 299-300 Stephen and Marnoch		
Benholm	St Andrews (Mearns)				x	x	Vol. ii 75 Marnoch	Marnan, Marnoch, pp. 292-3	
Brechin	Brechin	Holy Trinity			Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity vol. i, p. 13, p. 40		
Burghill (Buttergill) (Unthiekill)	Brechin	Tevanan	<i>CSSR</i>		x	x	x	Forbes aware of this although not mentioned by name p. 451	Taylor, 2008, p. 289, fn 61. Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary</i> , p. 501

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Carmyllie	St Andrews (Angus)	Virgin Mary	<i>RMS</i> ii 3684	16 th c	x	Virgin Mary	Mary Vol. i 101-2	x	
Catterline	Brechin				x	x	Catherine Vol. ii p. 416	x	Crab Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Catherine
Conveth (Laurencekirk)	St Andrews (Mearns)	Laurence (Rome or Canterbury ?)	<i>Life of Saint Laurence</i>	12 th c	x	Laurence	Lawrence the Martyr Vol. ii p. 393	Laurence of Canterbury p. liv, pp. 377-8	Macquarrie, <i>Innes Review</i> (though see discussion) and place-name
Cookston	Brechin/ St Andrews (Angus)	-	-	-	x	x	x	x	
Cortachy	Brechin				x	x	Columba Vol. ii p. 17, p. 43	Columba p. 307	
Craig/ Inchbrayock	St Andrews (Angus)	Broc/Briouc	Place-name		x	Brioc	?	Brioc p. 291	
Dalbog	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Dun	St Andrews (Angus)	Andrew			Andrew	x	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 103	x	

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Dundee	Brechin	Virgin Mary			Virgin Mary	Clement	Virgin Mary Vol. i pp. 98-100	x	
Dunlappie	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Dunnichen	Brechin	Constantine the King			Constantine the King	x	Vol. ii, p. 203 Constantine	Constantine pp. 313-4	
Dunninald	St Andrews (Angus)	Sciath	<i>RRS iii</i> 2074	1539-40	x	Skeoch	Skeoch Vol. ii 503	Skeoch p. 448	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , Sciath, pp. 550-551.
Dunnottar	St Andrews (Mearns)				x	x	Brigit but also Ninian, Vol. ii 131 (cites Jervise)	Cowie Nathalan p. 419	M. Ash Peter Crabb Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Ninian and Brigid
Durris	St Andrews (Mearns)	Comgall				Comgall 17 c <i>PSAS</i> 52 166	Congal Vol. ii p. 64	Congal pp. 309-10	
Dysart	Brechin	-	-	-	x	x	x	X	

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Eassie	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Fergus Vol. ii p. 212	Brandan p. 287	Clancy, Deer chapter says Fergus.
Ecclesjohn	Brechin	John	Place-name	?	x	John	John Vol. i p. 282	x	
Edzell	St Andrews (Angus)	Laurence			Laurence	x	Lawrence the Martyr Vol. ii p. 393	Drostan p. 327	Which Laurence?
Ethie	St Andrews (Angus)	Murdoch	<i>Arb. Lib.</i> vol. i,105 no.152	13 th c	Murdac	Murdoch	Murdoch Vol. ii p. 498	x see 416	
Farnell	Brechin				x	x	Ninian Vol. ii p. 310	x	
Fern	Dunkeld				x	x	x	x	
Fettercairn	St Andrews (Mearns)				x	x	Holy Trinity/ Mark Vol. i p. 24, pp. 272-3.	x	
Fetteresso	St Andrews (Mearns)	Ciaran	<i>Aberdeen Breviary</i>		Caranus	x	Caran Vol ii p. 199	Caran p. 297	Crab Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Ciaran

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Finavon	Brechin	Leonard	<i>Brechin Register</i>		x	Leonard?	x	Nine Maidens p. 325	
Fordoun	St Andrews (Mearns)	Palladius					Vol. ii, pp. 105-6		Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , pp. 524-5
Forfar Restenneth	St Andrews (Angus)				Peter	Peter	X vol ii		
Garvock	St Andrews (Mearns)	Mary			x	Mary	James Vol. i, pp. 241-2	x	
Glamis	St Andrews (Angus)	Fergus			Fergus	Fergus	Fergus Vol. ii pp. 212-3		
Glenbervie	Brechin				x	x	Conan Vol. ii p. 499	Caran p. 297 also Queranus /Kyranus pp. 435-6	
Glenisla	Brechin	Virgin Mary	<i>CA CHrs</i> vol. ii no. 150	15 th c	Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 103	x	
Guthrie	Brechin	Virgin Mary			Virgin Mary	x	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 84	x	
Inverarity	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	M. Ash Monan

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Invergowrie	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Boniface/ Peter Vol. ii p. 480 Peter Vol. i p. 220	Peter/Boniface pp. 282-3	
Inverkeilor	St Andrews (Angus)	Macconoc	<i>Arb, Lib.</i> vol. i no. 56 <i>RRS</i> ii no. 186	1173 x 1178	Macconoc	x	x	x	M. Ash Conan
Kettins	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Brigit Vol. ii p. 130	x	
Kilmoir	Brechin	Virgin Mary	Place- name		Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 102	x	
Kinghornie	Brechin				x	x	x	x	
Kingoldrum	Brechin				x	x	x	x	
Kinnaird formerly Cookston	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Kinneff	St Andrews (Mearns)					x	Adomnán Vol. ii, p. 58	Adomnán p. 266	

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Kinnell	St Andrews (Angus)	Constantine			Constantine	x	Maelrubha Vol. ii p. 176	x	
Kinnettles	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Laurence Vol. ii p. 396	x	
Kirkbuddo	Brechin	Buite	Place- name		x	Buite	x	Buite p. 292	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , pp. 131-3
Kirkden, Idvies	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Maelrubha Vol. ii p. 176	x	
Kirriemuir	St Andrews (Angus)	Mary (?)	Place- name		x	x	Vol. ii pp. 93-4 ? who? Vol. i p. 103 Mary	Colmoc 305	M. Ash Mary (?)
Lethnot	Brechin	Thomas			Thomas (but this is an altar?)	x	Mary Vol. i, p. 100	x	
Liff	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 103	x	

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Lintrathen	St Andrews (Angus)				Medan	x	Vol. ii p. 150 Medan	x	
Lochlee (Glenesk?)	Brechin	Drostan	<i>Aberdeen Breviary</i>	16 th c	x	Drostan	Drostan Vol. ii p. 214	Drostan p. 327	
Logie Dundee	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	M. Ash Drostan. This seems to be based on the (incorrect) identification of Lochlee with Lochlee, which was indeed dedicated to Drostan.
Logie Pert, Logie Montrose	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Martin Vol. ii p. 313		M. Ash Martin
Lunan, Inverlunan	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	M. Ash Lonan ?

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Lundie	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Lawrence the Martyr Vol. ii p. 393	x	
Mains/ Strathdighty Comitis	St Andrews (Angus)	Ninian	Place-name		x	Ninian	Ninian Vol. ii p. 30	Ninian p. 448	
Maryculter	Aberdeen	Mary	Place-name		?Mary	Mary	Mary Vol. i p. 105	x	Crabb Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Mary
Maryton	Brechin	Virgin Mary			Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 100	x	
Meathie-Lour	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Menmuir	Dunkeld				x	x	Aidan Vol ii p. 239	Aidan p. 269	
Monifieth	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	Chapels here vol. ii	Regulus p. 440	
Monikie	Brechin				x	x	Andrew Vol. i p. 214	See Forbes p. 440	
Montrose (Salorch)	Brechin	Peter and Paul	CSSR	1428 1446	x	x	John the Evangelist Vol. i p. 286 (citing Low)	x	J.G. Low John the Evangelist – incorrect.

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
Murroes	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Navar	Brechin				x	x	x	x	Watson, <i>CPNS</i> , p. 243 Findbarr?
Nevay	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	Neveith p. 420	
Newdosk (now Kirkton in Fettercairn)	St Andrews (Mearns)				x	x	Drostan Vol. ii pp. 214-5	Drostan p. 327	
Newtyle	St Andrews (Angus)				x	x	x	x	
Nigg	St Andrews (Mearns)	Photinus	<i>Aberdeen Breviary</i>		x	x	Fiacre Vol. ii p. 334	Fiacre pp. xlvii-xlix	Crabb Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p.132, Fiachre
Panbride	Brechin	Brigit	Place-name		Brigit	Brigit	Brigit Vol. ii p. 130	x	Ó Riain, <i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i> , pp. 123-5.
Rescobie	St Andrews (Angus)						Triduana Vol. ii p. 476	x	
Ruthven	Dunkeld						x	x	

Church	Diocese (Deanery)	Dedication	Source of Evidence	Date	Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland	Simon Taylor's Parishes Database	MacKinlay	Forbes <i>Kalendars</i>	Other
St Cyrus	St Andrews (Mearns)	Giric			Giric and Rule chapel	Giric	??	Regulus p. 440	M. Ash St Curig of Llanbadarn
Stracathro	Brechin				x	x	Rule 'Jervise thinks' Vol. ii p. 475	x	
Strachan	Brechin		?		x	x	Virgin Mary Vol. i p. 105	x	Crabb Watt, <i>The Mearns of Old</i> , p. 132, Mary
Strathmartine	St Andrews (Angus)	Martin	Place- name		x	Martin	Martin Vol. ii p. 314		
Tannadice	St Andrews (Angus)				Ternan	x	Adomnán Vol. ii p. 58	Adomnán p. 266 Columba p. 307	
Tealing	Dunkeld				BVM? – chapel to BVM	Peter	Peter Vol. i p. 220	Peter, Boniface p. 282	

Table draws on:

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