THE

LOCH OF SPYNIE

IN

MORAYSHIRE

BY

A FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND
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THE LOCH OF SPYNE: AN INTRODUCTION.

Necessarily, the story of Morayland through the ages is interlaced with the great Loch of Spynie – once so vast an expanse of water that it was known as the Sea of Spynie. Because of its present, much reduced, extent it is apt to be overlooked by many social historians, yet from prehistoric times it has been a major resource providing for the well-being of the local people. Indeed, for the earliest hunter-gatherer peoples of the area, this vast expanse of relatively sheltered water must have drawn them inexorably to its salubrious shores.

In the early post-glacial period, sea-levels rose worldwide as a result of the melting of the Arctic ice sheets.\(^1\) Around 6,500 years ago, this rise was at a maximum causing flooding around the Moray Firth. Coastal peat and woodlands were drowned, and a narrow post-glacial coastal plain was formed.\(^2\)

The result was that the land to the north of the Loch of Spynie (henceforward the Loch) was all but cut off from the mainland by a huge expanse of what was then sea-water. There is, indeed, a tale told that during the Viking incursions of the 8th-century it was possible for the Northmen to travel by boat from Burghead to Spynie by this inland passage.\(^3\)

But the earliest available maps are restrictive of our understanding of the extent of the Loch because of their relative modernity, e.g.

- Pont’s map of c.1583-1596
- Gordon’s of 1640
- Blaeu’s of 1654
- Kinnaird’s of 1783

Much of what is of the greatest interest to us lies further back in history than these maps portray.

It is only with Hugh Kinnaird’s work that we have a reliably scaled map that has been produced by a professional surveyor using relatively modern techniques. But even this work has the serious drawback that, at both eastern and western extremities, the Loch is somewhat truncated. Of course, this was because Kinnaird’s commission from the Lords of Council and

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\(^1\) Gillen (1993), p.19; quoting Smith (1977)
\(^2\) Gillen (1993), p.19; quoting Smith (1977). Remnants of these peat-beds, complete with ancient tree-root systems, are uncovered from time to time along the coast west of Burghead when overlying layers of sand are stripped away by violent storms.
\(^3\) Young, R. (1871), p.50
Session only related to the extent of the Loch as it existed in 1783. This is a severe limitation since, by that date, its extent had been considerably diminished by both natural and artificial events. The Court of Session sought to resolve the ongoing dispute between the laird of Gordonstoun and the Brander brothers, who held Pitgaveny and Kinneddar, over the ownership of the Loch. The Court’s commission, therefore, instructed Kinnaird to map the Loch and its perimeter lands as it existed in 1783 paying little or no regard to the Loch as it may have existed in ancient history.

But one fundamental fact remains. Recent research has shown that there were settlements round the Loch from the very earliest of times and that they existed in some numbers. Lewis and Pringle (2002) record thirteen features from what they call “Prehistory (Period 1).” These they locate on a sketch map of the Loch which appears to be based on an outline map shown in Ross (1992), which, in turn, was based on Kinnaird’s map of 1783. Clearly, except for their Site 11, the locations of these sites have been influenced by the supposed shore-line of the Loch.

However, as is noted above, Kinnaird’s map is relatively recent, and it seems foolish to try to relate the location of prehistoric remains to modern geographical features without recourse to an investigation, even a cursory one, of the limits of the Loch in prehistory. We need a map which reflects the extent of the Loch in these times, not some 1,600 years later!

**The Loch in Pre-History.**

In Keillar (1992) there is a comment that, “5,000 years ago sea-level was some five metres higher than at present, and falling.” Gillen (1993) comments that, “Around 6,5000 years ago, this rise,” in sea-levels worldwide resulting from the melting of the Arctic ice sheets, “was at a maximum and caused flooding around the Moray Firth.” Smith (1986) also remarks that, “Sea-level has remained essentially constant for at least 3,000 years.” Here we have suggestions about how the Loch came to be formed but not how it then became separated from the sea of which it was a part for so many centuries.

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4 Lewis and Pringle 2002, 166-7  
5 Ross 1992, 35  
6 Keillar 1993, 27  
7 Gillen 1993, 19; quoting Smith 1977  
8 Smith 1986, 1-22
Along the whole length of the southern coast of the Moray Firth there flows a pronounced westerly longshore drift\(^9\) which has acted over the ages to push the river mouths of the Spey, Lossie, Findhorn and Earn (Nairn) ever westwards. Great sand or gravel spits built up acting as constrictions to the rivers’ flow and partially damming back the waters behind them. Sometimes, this damming became complete for a period, only to be punched through by the river when in spate or by the sea under storm conditions. Submerged bars still grow across these outflows and present serious obstacles to navigation as anyone who has exited Findhorn Bay either side of low-tide will know only too well! Such deposition, resulting from longshore drift, was clearly one of the causes of the eventual closure of the eastern outflow from the Loch to the sea. In addition to the extended process of longshore drift, there have been occasional catastrophic ‘events’, such as violent storms, that have had a powerful effect on the topography of the area.

THE LOCH IN MEDIEVAL TIMES.

In the reign of King Malcolm III (1058 – 1093) there occurred, “the irruption of the Goodwin Sands … and from Buchanan’s History it might be inferred that its effects were not limited to that quarter alone, but must have extended over all the eastern coast of Britain.”\(^{10}\) Shaw goes on to quote Buchanan as saying, “Among the prodigies of that period may be reckoned an inundation of the German Ocean, so extraordinary, as not only to have overspread and overwhelmed the country with sand, but to have overturned also villages, towns, and castles.”\(^{11}\)

In the thirteenth-century, another extremely violent storm occurred. In the year 1266, a great wind arose from the north, on the eve of the Feast of the 11,000 virgins (20 October); the sea broke in, and many houses and villages were overwhelmed.\(^{12}\) Clearly, these events may have closed the entrances to the Loch for a time.

But there is a second effect of longshore drift which it is important that we recognise when considering the western entrance from the sea to the Loch in later Medieval times. The westerly drift current, encountering the great prominence of Burghead,\(^{13}\) creates an area of

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\(^9\) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longshore_drift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longshore_drift)

\(^{10}\) Shaw 1882, vol. 1, 336

\(^{11}\) Shaw 1882, vol. 1, 336

\(^{12}\) Shaw 1882, vol. 1, 336

\(^{13}\) Some scholars consider Burghead to be the Torness of Viking times. [Marren 1993, 45]
slack water behind the headland. This back-eddy effect – well known to any river boatman – allows for the accelerated deposition of sediment and the vast expanse of sand along the coast west of Burghead is immediate evidence of this. The result was that, over the ages, the western entrance to the Loch of Spynie tended to silt up and eventually to close. No longer was the stretch of land between Burghead and Covesea – the Ros(s) Ey (Ros(s) Isle = ‘Roseisle’) – an island!

What we have, then, is a fluctuating pattern – at times the Loch was open to the sea by one or two routes, whilst at other times these openings were ‘closed’ and the Loch would have become at least brackish if not fresh-water. Consequently, the water-level of the Loch would also have fluctuated – higher when the waters were held back behind sand and boulder dams across the outlets; lower when the water could flow out to the sea.

As has already been noted, if we are to believe the old records then we should accept that a complete inland route for shallow-draught boats (the Viking drakkars\textsuperscript{14} being ideal examples) was available c.800. The fact that the Bishop of Moray had a ‘harbour’ beneath his castle of Spynie evidences that navigation to the open sea was still possible c.1400. Bishop Pilmuir (1326-1362) is known to have ‘enhanced’ this harbour. We are told that the bishop’s plans involved sinking a number of vessels close to the fisher-town of Spyny.\textsuperscript{15} This sounds as if he was trying to create some sort of breakwater, or perhaps even a length of wharf-side that boats could tie up alongside in order to off-load their cargoes across the decks of the sunken, but not totally submerged, vessels. The relatively steep nature of the shore below Spynie would have meant that only the very smallest vessels could have been beached. The term harbour is perhaps the wrong one to use here – at least in its modern sense. In the early days, smaller boats would have been drawn up onto the shore while larger vessels would have anchored-off, to be unloaded onto rowing-boats, and the cargo would then be ferried ashore.\textsuperscript{16}

The same sort of arrangement seems to have existed at Duffus, almost opposite Spynie Castle on the north shore of the Loch. The bishop’s actions were intelligent. The sunken vessels would have provided a more secure anchorage, with any flood-waters from the River Lossie being deflected away, whilst also providing moorings for vessels of a deeper draught which could not approach the shore so closely. Some observers have suggested that this was an attempt to deepen the channel but, since this was already the deepest part of the Loch this

\textsuperscript{14} The drakkar, or the dragon ship, was a term often used by the victims of the Northmen
\textsuperscript{15} Crammond 1903, 16
\textsuperscript{16} Mackintosh 1927, 6
idea would seem to be somewhat illogical. The draught of any boat wishing to approach the harbour at Spynie would have had to be such that it could pass through the shallower waters of the Loch and there would, therefore, be no point in deepening this area. Of course, they could also moor themselves securely to the sunken vessels.

Bishop Alexander Bur (1362-1397), is recorded defending his episcopal rights, and those of the deep-sea fishermen who were based in the village that existed round the harbour at Spynie, against the avaricious intentions of the Earl of Moray and the burgesses of Elgin. In naming Johannis de Dunbar (the then earl, d.1390), he particularly asserts the ancient episcopal rights in the lands of Spyn, Kintrae, “et terra insule” (the islands in the Loch). He underlines his rights to the Port of Lossie (alias Spynie) and the fishing and fisher-fowk, with their coblys and batells, including salmon, grilse, and “pectines” (shellfish\(^{17}\) and all other species of fish, and including the right of passage (navigation) for boats going to and from the sea.\(^{18}\)

Unfortunately for Bishop Bur, the king had previously given these rights\(^{19}\) to Thomas Randolph, then earl of Moray (c. 1278–†20 July 1332), during an interregnum in the bishopric, and the earl, with admirable cupidity, had tried to suggest that the gift had been permanent!

The Register of the diocese includes an informative account that, in 1383, whilst crossing from his castle at Kinneddar and intending to head via the ford over his water of Lossie at Krannokysford\(^{20}\) to the church {priory?} of Urquhard, Bishop Bur found a small merchant vessel (a farcost\(^{21}\)) lying in-by having come from the sea. He discovered that the burgesses of Elgin had given permission for this cargo to be landed, in clear contravention of the episcopal rights. The bishop ‘arrested’ the vessel and passed on to Urquhard. On his return that Sunday afternoon, he found two Elgin burgesses busily engaged in unloading the vessel, taking out barrels of beer, tallow and flour by horse and sled onto the bishop’s lands of Kinneddar. No doubt incensed by their actions, the bishop arrested the ship, her cargo and her anchors – “lock, stock and barrel”!

\(^{17}\) Shaw 1882, vol. 1, 338; his interpretation here is *pectines* = “finnacs”.
\(^{18}\) Reg. Mor., no. 163, p.192
\(^{19}\) During an episcopal vacancy rights temporal reverted to the Crown along with the income derived from them.
\(^{20}\) http://www.oldroadsofscotland.com/miscmedmoray.htm#krannokysford
\(^{21}\) Farcost, farcostas (pl.) – a small cargo-vessel. [ME. farcost, ferrcost (c 1300), ON. farkostr.] [Dictionary of the Scottish Language. http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/farcost (accessed 15/9/17)]
At that time, poor Bishop Bur was, facing attacks to his episcopal rights from both the Earl of Buchan (the notorious *Wolf of Badenoch*) in Strathspey and the Earl of Moray closer to home!

However, for our present purposes, we have here clear evidence that navigation to the sea from the Loch was still open c.1400.

Mackintosh speaks of there having been two small lochs at the western end of Spyny Loch – the *Loch of Roseisle* and the *Loch of Keam* – which, he says, before the Culbin Gale of 1695, both drained into Burghead Bay. But Dorret’s map (see below) clearly shows that c.1750 there was still an outlet to the sea.

Illus 1: James Dorret’s map of 1750 showing the western lochs (© National Records of Scotland)

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22 Mackintosh 1927, 15
Fifty years later, Arrowsmith shows much smaller lochs and no outlet to the sea.

![Map of 1807 showing much reduced western lochs](image)

**Illus 2: Aaron Arrowsmith’s map of 1807 showing much reduced western lochs (© National Records of Scotland)**

The point of interest here is that, as a result of the vast amount of sand blown into the area, the tidal outlet from these two lochs, which had powered the *outlet mill* owned by the laird of Duffus, was effectively dammed. This rendered the mill, which had stood there for many years, totally useless and required the poor laird to build another. The *Mille* (Mill) is shown on Dorret’s Map. This event marked the final severing of the western outlet to the sea.
Pont’s map of c.1590 shows the position of “mills” at the outlet of the larger of the two lochs, which he names as “L. of Rofsyil”.

**Mapping the Loch of Antiquity.**

Returning to more ancient times, we are left with the question of mapping the extent of the Loch in pre-history.

In previous pages several references have been made to sea-levels in the pre-historic period. Some scholars have said that the levels were some 5m above modern datum and falling. Purely as a rainy-day exercise I traced the 10m contour on a modern Ordnance Survey map and the result was most revealing (see page 10). The approach here is not the least scientific but it does point in the direction of the truth regarding the extent of the Loch in antiquity.

The surface area revealed by this simple exercise is vast, but not surprisingly so. Many well-attested features are revealed, most particularly the two islands to the north. The larger extends from Burghead eastwards to the modern lighthouse at Covesea and then there is the

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23 OS 1:50,000 Second Series, Landranger Map 28
outlier island of Stotfield. Other islands are also revealed – Salterhill (NGR NJ 20 67), Balormy-Ardivot (NGR NJ 22 67), Pitgaveny (NGR NJ 24 65), Buthill (NGR NJ 13 65).

Another feature, this time regarding the boundaries of the Loch, also becomes apparent when we look at this hypothetical map based on the 10m isoheight. Because of the relatively steep slope up to the Spynie Ridge the southern shore-line of the Loch does not alter very much as water-levels change. The same can be argued at the foot of The Tappoch, along the Bank of Roseisle (NGR NJ 15 67). This explains why, even when using Kinnaird’s more modern map, Lewis and Pringle could show on their sketch map that many of the remains of their ‘Period I’ prehistoric settlements in these areas were still positioned on the coastline of the Loch since the shore-line had changed so little regardless of changes to the water-level over the centuries.

It also goes a long way to explaining the choice of settlement sites made by these prehistoric peoples. The sites that they selected were characterised as being locations which were permanently on dry land throughout the ages.

However, where the bed of the Loch is ‘flatter’, changes in water-level have a pronounced effect on the position of the shoreline. This is particularly so in the area between Kintrae (NGR NJ 17 65) and Clarkly Hill (NGR NJ 13 68), which area was of old called Waterside and Westfield. As the first name implies, these areas were marsh (often salt-marsh) which were of little use for settlement although of great value for animals, fishing and ‘wild-fowling’, and there are numerous locations of this nature round the Loch’s shoreline. The middens at these sites often contain the remains of very large (by comparison to modern examples) of oyster which are not now found in the Moray Firth, but which were obviously plentiful in pre-historic times and would have been a major source of high-protein food.

But even a cursory inspection shows that the arbitrary choice of 10m is too high for useful purposes, certainly when moving on to consider the medieval period, since several known ‘dry’ features would be submerged if the loch-level were so high. The road from Kinneddar to Elgin, passing over the documented bridge at Caysbriggs (NGR NJ 248 666), is an outstanding example.

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Illus 4: Map of the Loch based on 10m isoheight. (OS Landranger Series, Map 28)
There is an OS ‘spot height’ of 3m marked on the map only a matter of two hundred metres south of the farm-building at Caysbriggs, whereas, on the road-side just to the east of this same building, there is a spot-height of 9m. In addition, anyone who has cycled this road knows that there is every feature of a steep shoreline at this point.

I would suggest that a map drawn along the 4m isoheight would represent a better approximation of the extent of the Loch. Tidal variations would influence the extent of the saltmarsh in its liminal regions.

Of course, it would have only required a modest rise in water levels (up to about 8m OD) to allow navigation from the Loch, up the course of the River Lossie as far as the entry of the Tyock Burn at Moycroft (NGR NJ 235 627), i.e. as far as the city of Elgin itself. Admittedly, only small boats could have made such a passage, and then only at neap-tides, but it would have provided an easy and sheltered route from the ‘harbour’ at Spynie to the Chanonry and the town.

**ISLANDS IN THE LOCH**

Several islands have been identified in the Loch some of which have revealing names. Again, however, we must remember that the extent of the land which was exposed would vary with the water-levels of the Loch.

**Inshaggarty**

- “The priest’s island”
- (NGR NJ 169 655) - Sometimes known as Midhagarty, suggesting that it was part of a group.

**Inchbrock**

- “Isle of badgers”
- (NGR NJ 166 652) - Church lands up to the Reformation.
  - Kintrae church stood here.
  - Shown on Pont’s map of c.1590
  - Named in Registrum Episcopatus Moraviensis.²⁵

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²⁵ Moray Reg., no. 390, dated 16 February 1562. Carta feodfirmæ ab Episcopo cum consensus capitula concessa Alexandro Andersoune in Wester Alves et Alexandro Andersoune burgensi de Elgine ujus filio et Bessetæ Gordoune dicti filii conjugi, villæ et terrarium de Inchebrok in baronia de Spyne vic: de Elgin et Forres, quæ prius a dicto Alexandro patre occupatae fuerunt; presaluta summa 200 mercarum.
Inchkeil - “Island of the church/chapel”
(NG NJ 144 657)

Inchbroom - Presumably named after the broom bush?
(NGR NJ 254 669)

Fowl Inch - Where large numbers of wild-fowl were wont to roost and breed.
- Lay at the east end of the Loch, one-third of the way along the road/track to Muirtown.
- Marked on Kinnaird’s map (see map below).
(NGR NJ 240 668)

Illus 5: The Fowl Inch, west of Kaysbrigs
Islands off the **Findrassie** shore:  
- Long Holm  
- Lint Holm  
- Little Holm  
- Picture Holm (also known as *Pictar Holm*)  
- Smithy Holm  
- Rashy Holm  
(see map below.)

**Illus 6: Holms off the lands of Findrassie**

Islands off the **Wateryside** shore:  
- Wester Holm  
- Easter Holm  
- Tappies Holm  
- Skene’s Holm  
(see map below.)

It is of great interest that a number of these islands are called by a Scandinavian name – *Holme (Holm).*

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26 There are numerous islands containing the word *Holm*, especially in Scotland. In many cases the name is derived from the Old Norse *holmr*, meaning "a small and rounded islet".  
SCANDINAVIAN PLACE- NAMES AROUND THE LOCH.

It should not surprise us that there is a collection of place-names around the Loch that appear to have Scandinavian origins.

Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, are the Holms - the islands that are scattered mostly at the western end of the Loch. For the Northmen they would have offered a sheltered and secure place where they could draw their drakkars or skeids up onto the shore for maintenance. They would also have offered camp-sites for small parties which could be more easily defended if need arose and, perhaps in terms of longer-term habitation, a place for captured horses, cows and sheep to graze.

Most of the two-element names that were given to the Holms carry a first part that is distinctly Scottish in appearance. It would seem that either the local peoples had, themselves, adopted the ‘holm’ part into their own vocabulary, so that it continued in use after the Norse influence disappeared, or, perhaps, the holms originally bore the names of individuals – such as Bjarne’s Holm, Glimps Holm, Sweyn Holm (the last two in Orkney) – and that, after the
yolk of thrallship was lifted, the names were changed in order to erase the memory of the individuals concerned.

**PHILAXDALE** (NGR NJ 168 679). On Roy’s Map this site is called *Phillochsdale*.

**OAKENHEAD** (NGR NJ 242 685) Of old this was known as *Aikenhead* which would appear to be a use of the O.N. word *herað* in conjunction with *oak* to form the ‘the area of the oaks.’ If this is accepted, then one would not have to wonder for long to imagine how such an area would have been of interest to a maritime people. The Scandinavians, by choice, used oak for building and repairing their longships. This can be seen in excavated examples such as that known as *Skuldelev 1*, whose keel was of solid oak, although slow-growing pine (not an option in Scotland where the trees grew too fast!) was used for some of the hull strakes.27 The *Nydam Boat*, some 24m in length, was built from a single oak tree felled around AD310x320;28 *Skuldelev 2*, a warship almost 30m long, dates from c.1040-45 and required, amongst many other items, the felling of some fourteen oak trees, each of a thickness of about 1 metre.29 It is estimated to have required some 27,000 man-hours of work to complete!

**ROSEISLE** (NGR: NJ 67_13__). This name has already been touched on above, but to what has already been said may be added an alternative derivation

\[Röïs, Röiser\text{ (pl.)} ~ \text{a stone construction as in} ~ Stenröis ~ \text{a ‘burial mound’} \]

(Old Norse).

\[\ldots ay ~ \text{e.g. Ronaldsay, Eday, Sanday (all in Orkney) - meaning a ‘larger island’}. \]

\[Röisay = Ross Ey = Roseisle? \]

If we accept the suggestion put forward previously, that the name should be applied to the whole ‘island’ from Burghead to Covesea, then the *Röïs* would equate to the stone constructions at the old fort of Burghead.

**BURGHEAD** (*Byrgisherað*). This is dealt with in Appendix B.

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27 Williams (et al) 2014, 209
28 Williams (et al) 2014, 204
29 Williams (et al) 2014, 214
Surradale (NGR NJ 170 658). This is a *dall/dalr* remnant relating to meadow/farmland. This site is positioned on the southern shore of the Loch.

Furingdale. This is shown on Kinnaird’s map (just above the second ‘R’ in South Crookmuir) at a position approximating to NGR NJ 170 658.

Halliman Skerries (NGR NJ 214 723) and Covesea Skerries (NGR NJ 199 719). These are about 1km off the coast, to the north-east, of the Ros-Hy. They carry a very common Norse second part to their names. The O.S. map\(^{30}\) also shows a small ‘skerrie’ just off the north coast of Burghead (NGR NJ 110 694). Whilst *skerry* is not a very common name on the southern shores of the Moray Firth, \(^{31}\) it is found in abundance in the Northern Isles.

Writing in 1929, Dr A.W. Brøgger noted that, “there is one main point in this naming which is conclusive for our problem. The Norse newcomers very often adopted the old name, adding their own generic terms.”\(^{32}\) Taking this warning to heart it is still impossible not to be impressed by the place-name evidence around the Loch. It indicates that there must have been a strong Norse influence here for a reasonable period of time.

Ancient Church Sites Around the Loch.

To ecclesiastical historians the Loch of Spynie presents a veritable ‘treasure trove’ which echoes the enthusiasm of the ancient Christian *peregrins* to establish communities or *muinntirs* on its shores. These missionary clerics were, by the very nature of their vocation, drawn to any place where there was a concentration of tribespeople. In the main, these were not eremitical individuals seeking some *disert* in the wilderness. These were men who sought to live in common with the local people, hoping to convince them and bring them to faith by and by, usually starting with the tribal chieftain and his immediate family. That is not to say that the way of the hermit was totally unknown in the Province and, if the story can be accepted, then the rocky east face of the island of Stotfield was for long the home of hermits.

\(^{30}\) 1:50,000 scale Second Series. OS Landranger Map 28

\(^{31}\) There is an ambiguous ‘*The Skellies*’ north of the Rattray Head Light (NGR: NK 109 583) and an unambiguous ‘*The Skerry*’ off Peterhead Power Station (NGR: NK 140 432), but these are some distance from the Ros-Hy.

\(^{32}\) Brøgger 1929, 59
Kinneddar.

Continuing this theme brings us to the early days of Christianity and the story of St Gartnay, called in Latin, St Gernadius. Gartnaidh is a name encountered regularly in the list of Pictish High Kings which would point to our hermit-saint being, perhaps, a ‘local’ man, although Farmer says that he was an Irishman who came to Moray. He also says that, “Gerardin’s legend claimed for him some contact with the English soldiers sent by King Æðelstan (Athelstan) in 934, besides the providential arrival of wood for his church by a river swollen in the storm.” In Symeon of Durham’s Historia Regum Anglorum we read that in 934, “Ethelstan, the valiant king of the Angles, - because Constantine, king of the Scots, had broken the league which he had made with him, - set out for Scotland with a strong naval force and no small army of cavalry, he ravaged Scotland with his land force as far as Dunfoeder (Dunottar) and Wertermore (the mountains of Fortriu), and with his navy as far as Caithness, and in great measure depopulated it.”

If we accept Dr Woolf’s suggestion of a northern/Morayshire location for the Pictish province of Fortriu, then the story of St Gartnaidh makes a great deal of sense. The implication from HRA is that Æðelstan’s land forces penetrated as far as “the mountains of Fortriu” which we can now propose to be the southern flanks of the Mounth. His naval forces, however, pushed on as far as Caithness. Now, in these days, any sensible ship’s captain would tend to sail within sight of land, which would mean taking a course round Rattray Head and then westwards, hugging the coast, until the lands of Sutherland appeared over the horizon, allowing the fleet to then strike north towards the shores of Caithness. But what fleet would not have taken advantage of the shelter offered by the Loch of Spynie? If the story is true, then it is very probable that this is how it came about that Gartnaidh had some contact with the ‘soldiers’ sent by King Æðelstan. I would go so far as to say that this story provides an element of support for Dr Woolf’s theory regarding a more northern location of Fortriu.

Gartnaidh is said to have died in his hermitage above Kinneddar on or about 8 November 934.

In addition to the above we should stop to take note of the implications of the lineage of the ‘Scottish’ king who was subdued by this military expedition. The king was Caustantín

33 Farmer 1978, 168
34 HRA, 88
35 Woolf 2007, 161, gives Dunottar and the mountains of Fortriu here
36 Forbes A 1872, 354-5
macÁeda (son of Áed macCináeda), the first individual who scholars recognise to have borne the title *King of Alba*. But his father Áed was very much a Pict and had been, in his time, King of the Picts as his father *Cináed* had been. This *Cináed* is more commonly known as *Kenneth MacAlpin* who was called ‘King of Scots’ but who, as modern scholars point out, was actually ‘King of Picts.’

So here, in St Gartnaidh, we have a saintly hermit bearing a ‘royal’ name, founding a church first at Kinneddar before retiring to his cave amongst the east-facing cliffs of the *Coulard Hill*, a site known as *Halliman (Holyman) Head*. This site was still visible, and much venerated, up to the nineteenth-century when it fell before the spikes and hammers of quarrymen.

A final note to add here is the possibly significant similarity between the King’s name, *Cináed* (found variously as *Kinadius*, *Ciniod*), and *Kinned(ar)*. This is, perhaps, worthy of some attention from scholars. The name in its modern form is singularly awkward and the notion that it stems from *ceann + fothir* = “end of the territory/terrace” is commonly suggested - but the second element is uncertain. It is either *fothir* (Gaelic) = “terrace” or a G adaptation of a P word *uotir* = “territory”, which certain scholars suggest is perhaps some kind of administrative unit. But the matter is not clear.

It would seem, then, that a church was founded here at Kinneddar towards the beginning of the tenth century, but it was neither the first nor the only church on the site. It is also recorded that in the very early days of the diocese, when the bishops were becoming more ‘territorial’ in their outlook, they are known to have had a residence at Kinneddar. It would be wrong, perhaps, to call it a *castle* – in the same sense that a *muinntir* was not a *monastery*. We should not imagine a stone-built fortification but rather a wooden dwelling, perhaps set amongst the other buildings of the *muinntir* that most scholars now consider once existed on the site. There is a strong likelihood that St Gartnaidh’s later church was to be found here too.

The removal of the bishop’s residence from *Birnie* to *Kinneddar* is commonly dated to c.1187 which, interestingly, was within ‘living memory’ of Freskyn de Moravia’s great building project to erect the original earthwork-and-timber motte-and-baillie at nearby Duffus. This proto-castle was later replaced by one constructed of stone-and-lime, the remains of which are still to be seen. Of course, by this time, it was usual to consider the

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37 Woolf 2007, 96
church wherein a bishop had his *sedes* to be his *cathedral*. This corresponds to the episcopate of Bishop Richard of Lincoln (1187-1203). As his name implies, he used his knowledge of the organisation of the English dioceses to act as the matrix within which he moulded what was to become the diocese of Moray. Before his time the bishops in the province were still very much of a peripatetic nature - in a sort of middle-ground following the days of the Early Church when bishops wandered across the face of all Alba and Pictavia having no recognised base, no set territory and, certainly, no cathedral nor the territorial structures of the later Medieval Church. They went where they were needed, staying in one of the *muinntirs* under the authority of the local *ab*, for as long as was required. Hence, it was not unusual for a muinntir to find itself offering a home to several bishops at any one time. It was only with the reign of King Alexander I (1107-1124) that the concept of the rigorous division of the whole country into territorial diocese became an ideal to be aimed for.

Archaeological evidence for the existence of a community of the Early Church in the vicinity of Kinneddar is now abundant. Since the work carried out in 1989 as part of the *Scottish Episcopal Palaces Project*, the importance of the Kinneddar site, as a “probable Dark Age monastic site,” has been generally accepted. Many Pictish Era stones have been collected from the site since 1855. The majority of these may be assigned to Class III and they include one fragment, the *David Stone*, which is considered to be closely related to the long-panel of the *St Andrews Sarcophagus*. It depicts the Old Testament story of King David rending the jaws of the lion. This stone is of immeasurable importance when it comes to interpreting the Kinneddar site. Most scholars draw a parallel with the St Andrews Sarcophagus which clearly points to a royal association. Whatever were their original contents, it is very likely that these two sarcophagi, being of such high quality, were unlikely to have been commissioned by any other than royalty – possibly the King of Picts himself? These stones, some bearing Christian symbols, date the Kinneddar settlement to around the eighth-ninth centuries. But one of the stones certainly takes us back to a time before any major Christian presence. Bearing the dreadfully inappropriate name of *Drainie I*, we have a symbol stone of obviously early Pictish provenance. Unfortunately it was ‘lost’ before 1930.

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38 The ‘nonsense’ story of the original site of the diocese/cathedral of Aberdeen being at the muinntir of Mortlach mirrors this situation exactly. (See “When a Monastery is not a Monastery”; http://www.cushnieent.com/articles/muinntir.pdf)
39 http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/lettermear/
40 HES Canmore database, no. 16459 (NJ26NW 1), accessed 4/1/18
41 1 Samuel 17:34
42 H.E.S. Canmore database, no. 16482 (NJ26NW 3.01), accessed 22/1/18. It was dated to the seventh-century.
In total, thirteen other fragments were found with the symbol stone when the old manse of Kinneddar was removed in 1855. Who is to say how many more would be found if an extensive and thorough excavation were to be carried out?

Further exploration carried out in 2015 as part of the *Northern Picts Project*\(^43\) suggested the existence of a *monastic vallum* enclosing an area having a diameter of c.200m. This work also confirmed the presence of the stone-built castle (episcopal palace) of the Early Medieval period. The remains of this structure were still visible above ground when visited by Pococke in 1760.\(^44\)

For several reasons, the site at Kinneddar has, unfortunately, not attracted the attention of scholars which it so thoroughly deserves. One causatory factor is that a great deal which would be of significance lies within and under the cemetery (which is still used on occasion), thus precluding any systematic excavation. The same cannot be said of the site of the bishops’ residence nor much within the supposed *vallum* of the ancient muinntir.

A second factor is that many of the stones are currently housed in Elgin Museum in a far from satisfactory situation. These stones, and those found at Burghead, are of national if not international significance. When one considers the approaches employed at St Andrews, Iona

\(^43\) [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/geosciences/departments/archaeology/the-northern-picts-project-259.php](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/geosciences/departments/archaeology/the-northern-picts-project-259.php)

\(^44\) Pococke 1887, 186
and Portmahomack, then there must be a certain sense of shame owned by ‘the authorities’. What a wonderful display or visitor centre could (should?) be made of them. Perhaps this possibility will find supporters in the future. But surely, now that Dr Woolf’s hypothesis is becoming part of the mainstream of historical thought and scholarship, consideration should be given to creating a centre to celebrate the centrality of the Spynie Loch littoral to the history of the Picts in our country – the history of royal Fortriu.

Of course, Bishop Richard of Lincoln’s move to Kinneddar was not an option until the last of the Viking aggressors had passed from these shores. But his comparatively lengthy term in office (c.16 years) was to have far-reaching consequences for the future diocese and it was he who, it can be argued, laid the foundations upon which the later diocesan ‘structures’ were built by his successor, Bishop Bricius (Brice) de Douglas (1203-1222). In Bricus’ petition to the pope requesting permission to allow him to move his cathedra to the church of the Holy Trinity at Spynie, Kinneddar is described as being located, “in a certain angle of the sea” which none of his parishioners could cross without great difficulty. What was now being presented as a distinct disadvantage was the very feature which had once been of such benefit to the local community.

**Inchbroom.**

There has long been a tradition of a chapel having stood near the farm at Inchbroom (NGR NJ 254669). A survey of the area might suggest that the ‘Inch’ part of the name described a hummock surrounded by marsh rather than an island in the midst of waves! There is an ancient earthwork just to the north suggesting that this area was also dry land and that there may have been a community of some size in the vicinity. H.B Mackintosh wrote that, “Near the corner of Brigzies Wood there was a Danish camp.” It is recorded that, “An interesting example of a ‘kitchen midden’ occurs on the old margin of the Loch of Spynie on the farm of Brigzes. From the interesting description given by Dr Gordon, it is clear that the two mounds must have attained considerable dimensions; the latter measuring 80 by 60 yards, and the smaller 26 by 30 yards. Among the shells composing the

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45 “Brigzies Wood” is a local truncation of Caysbriggs (Kaysbriggs) Wood which lies between Inchbroom and the earthworks. On modern maps it is marked as Caysbriggs Quarry.

46 Mackintosh 1928, 14.
refuse heap are the periwinkle, the oyster, the mussel, the cockle, the
limpet, and of these the first is by far the most abundant.”

This is clear evidence for the presence here of a sizeable community in the prehistoric period and it is probable that the earthwork dates from these times rather than from that of the invasions of the Northmen.

Anyone with local knowledge knows that the area between Inchbroom and this earthwork was, for many years, an important source of sand and gravel to the building trade. But more than this, it was a wonderful source of round boulders – sea-worn boulders. It is a classic storm beach. There are spot heights of 9m at Caysbriggs (NGR NJ 249669) and 9m just to the north of Arthur’s Bridge (NGR NJ 259673). Therefore, in order for Inchbroom to have been an ‘island’, I believe that the old sea-level was at a modern height of approximately 4-5m above datum.

H.B. Mackintosh also recorded that “In the days of Bishop Bur (1362-97) the Chapel of our Lady at Spinet was situated on an island.” The suggested site is about 300m south of Inchbroom House in what is still known as Chapel Field. To the east of Inchbroom, between it and Leuchars and Calcots, and under what became Miltown Airfield, was a vast expanse of moss and bog known as the Bog of Dunkinty. This was what remained of the old Loch of Cotts which is found marked on the older maps.

Spynie.

Reference is first made to “the Church of the Holy Trinity of Moray” in a charter issued at Forfar by King William on 26 December 1199.

We have noted earlier that, early in the episcopate of Bishop Bricius, a petition was sent to the pope requesting permission to move the ‘cathedra’ to the church of the Holy Trinity at Spynie.

The existence of a ‘primitive’ fisher community at Spynie, which developed into a ‘harbour’ complex in the medieval era, is not doubted and we should understand that, although modest

47 OS Gazetteer 1883, III, 567, ‘Elginshire’.
48 Mackintosh 1927, 4.
49 Here, supposedly, in 1452, there was a famous battle between the forces of Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray, and Alexander, 1st Earl of Huntly.
by modern standards, this harbour would have had a major impact on the early economy of the area. This community would have acted as a magnet when decisions were being made regarding the siting of the first parishes in the province. It is most likely that a church would have existed here from very early times but, to date, no archaeological remains have been found that would indicate that there was a muinntir on the site before the early Medieval church.

**Kintrae.**

It has always been the tradition that there was a muinntir at Kintrae in the Pictish era. The physical evidence is very thin on the ground, but it is not entirely negligible. The approximate position of the site is still known. The chapel (and muinntir buildings) stood in the eastern margins of a field called Chapelfield (NGR NJ 168 651), on the Westfield estate. Sadly, this site is just off the western edge of Kinnaird’s map, but older Ordnance Survey maps show it. Of interest is what must have been two areas of raised land, (similar to the Holms), further to the north (NGR NJ 169 656 & NJ 166652) which, one might suppose, would have presented a drier site for the community. When members of the Ordnance Survey walked the Chapelfield site in December 1962, soon after it had been ploughed, a “thin scattering of rubble was noted in the area of the Chapel. At a site about 20m NE of the supposed chapel site (NGR NJ 1688 6517), a number of human bones including fragments of a skull were found in the soil.”

What is obvious is that this site must have been virtually on the shoreline of the Loch. As is evidenced very clearly on Deeside and Donside, in Aberdeenshire, churches or chapels were often built on one or both sides of a water crossing. This was a throw-back to the times of earlier primitive religions and suspicions when dangerous spirits and water-demons who dwelt in the waters were to be avoided wherever possible. But, when avoidance was impossible, then a chapel could provide a place in which to pray either for a safe crossing or in thanks after a secure crossing had been effected. The same can be seen at either end of several mountain crossings in various parts of Scotland. It is tempting to suspect that the chapels which existed at Kintrae and Unthank could have acted in this way ‘guarding’ those crossing the waters of the Loch.

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50 H.E.S. Canmore database no. 16122 (NJ16NE 19). Accessed 09/01/18
51 A chapel existed at both ends of the hill track from Pitcandlich (NGR NJ 425 164) to the Cabrach (NGR NJ 386 268), a route joining Donside and Morayshire.
A final piece of evidence has been hinted at already – Bishop Bricius’ charter of 1203-22, at which early time in the life of the bishopric Kintrae is referred to as an “ancient church” (veteri ecclesia de Kyntra). If Kintrae was already called ancient at the start of the thirteenth-century then it must, indeed, have been very old. Also, this was not some casual comment by the bishop but was an epithet included in the charter to mark what must have been a special and commonly recognised status – it was a mark of the bishop’s veneration for the site. If he, as an incomer\(^\text{52}\) to the province, wished to convey such veneration, how much more must the local people have held it as a holy place?

An interesting side-note is provided by Robert Young when he quotes an ‘unknown’ author:

> “The site of the churchyard, however, is still clearly to be seen, in the centre of a field, on the south-west corner of Westfield, and it has been remarked that it has scarcely ever grown anything to reward the agricultural enterprise that desecrated it with the ploughshare.”\(^\text{53}\)

**Inchkeil.**

We have here only the hint of a church/chapel site preserved in a place-name. It lies towards the northern end of a low-lying promontory to the south of the Bank of Roseisle across the old western outflow from the Loch. (NGR NJ 144 657)

Slightly more than 1km SSW of Inchkeil is **Standingstone** (NGR NJ 136 643). Dunbar recounts, “… a tradition of a battle between the Picts and the Vikings,” at this site.\(^\text{54}\) If this source is to be accepted then, very probably, this was the site of the important **Battle of Torfness**, in which Thorfinn, Earl of Orkney, defeated King Duncan I on 14 August 1040.

**Unthank.**

Some of the arguments regarding this site are narrated in greater detail later. My suggestion here is that, along with Kinneddar and Kintrae, we have what amounts to a triumvirate of Christian communities of the greatest antiquity.

However, an additional piece of evidence was noted by Alasdair Ross in his doctoral dissertation which lends great weight to the argument in favour of the presence of an

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\(^{52}\) Before becoming Bishop of Moray, Bricius was prior of Lesmahagow, a Tironensian house in Lanarkshire, Glasgow diocese.

\(^{53}\) Young 1871, 205.

\(^{54}\) Dunbar 1906, 13, 15
important Early Christian community here.\footnote{Ross 2003, vol. 1, 59, quoting from [Elgin Archives LDN P1; NAS, RS 29 (Elgin), viii, 447v]} He says, “… there may have been a much earlier Christian presence in Duffus. This is because there are three \textit{Andōit} place-names in this parish, stretching westwards from Duffus to Roseisle: \textit{Bonny Annot, Watery Mains of Annot} and \textit{Annot Pool Park}.”

These pieces of land, then, lie in the very location of Unthank. Ross’s conclusion was that, “There may have been a very important pre-parochial mother church in Duffus.” By this, I assume that, rather than the village itself, he meant the present parish of Duffus which, of course, incorporates Unthank.

There is another interesting detail recorded in the \textit{Registrum} of the diocese. In 1190, Bishop Richard (of Lincoln) gave to William, son of Freskyn (de Moravia), the lands of \textit{Logy} and “\textit{le Ermyt dykes}” in the barony of Duffus, in return for the payment of a stone of wax at the Feast of St Peter. In the charter, Bishop Richard also confirms the gift of the whole tithes of these lands to the church of St Peter of Duffus, which originally had been the gift of his predecessor, Bishop Simon de Toeni (1171-1184).\footnote{Reg. Mor. no. 119, p.131} Later, in 1294, Bishop Archibald (1253-1298) feus for two shillings per annum (payable at the Feast of St John the Baptist – 29 August), the lands of \textit{Logy} “\textit{juxta ecclesia de Duffhus}”, the lands of “\textit{le Hermitdykys}” and the mill of “\textit{Uchtyrspyny}”\footnote{Reg. Mor. no. 131, p.144}. These two charters immortalise the existence of a Hermitage somewhere near Duffus church which, if true, no doubt was attached to the muinntir of Unthank.

\textbf{Burghead.}

There has been a tradition of a chapel or hermitage at Burghead for many years. The evidence offered is a fragment of a \textit{corner-block} from a shrine/sarcophagus, several pieces of carved stone showing interlace and the presence of a well, supposedly dedicated to St Aethan (St Ethernan).

The corner-post\footnote{HES Canmore database, no. 318372 (NJ 11012 69094)} is of a similar type to that found at Kinneddar. It was found sometime before 1867 within the old churchyard and, subsequently, it was placed within the enclosure of St Aethan’s Well. Although traces of a rectangular building have been found in the cemetery it is far from certain that this marks the remains of a chapel. Neither is there any dating evidence except for the corner-post. However, Bruce Bishop recalls the traditional tale

\footnote{\textcopyright{} \textit{The Loch of Spynie}: Page | 25
of a disciple of St Columba, one Aidan or Aeda, having sojourned here c.563.\textsuperscript{59} This is an interesting parallel, both in name and geography, with St Aidan (d. 651) of Bamburgh in Northumbria.

It must be said, however, that there is no record of a Christian establishment at Burghead in the records of the medieval diocese of Moray. It is hard to understand this if we are to believe that there was an early church or chapel site of any consequence here. Certainly, stone fragments dated to the 8th or 9th-century do little to evidence a saint who is said to have died c. 563! It is just as possible that they were left behind by a Viking raiding party who, having visited Unthank or Kinneddar, carried off these ‘trophies’ only to be angered at finding that they contained only mortal remains rather than riches!

The final major piece of evidence put forward is the well, supposedly dedicated to St Aethan. The structure is, indeed, at once as impressive as it is mysterious, and many wonderful tales have grown up about its possible use. But the fact remains that, even in this modern age, the archaeological interpretation of this structure is ‘speculative’, to say the least!

**The Question of the “College of Roseisle.”**

Another point of interest that arises when one considers the “10m Map” is the land at the western outlet from the Loch.

It is reasonable to speculate that this western outlet was, in fact, the ancient mouth of the River Lossie in pre-historic times. The Millie Burn (Mill Burn) (NGR NJ 117 665) still flows through these lands from Mossyards (NGR NJ 159 669) marking the approximate course of the old outlet, and perhaps of the River Lossie, to the sea. The present eastern outflow of this river at Lossiemouth is considered to have been created in later times by a breach blown through the extensive low-lying dune systems east of Lossiemouth by some devastatingly powerful winter storm.

The fact is that where, on modern maps, there is marked College of Roseisle, that area was in fact salt-marsh and swamp, if not open water, at least up to the Viking age. All sorts of stories have been invented to explain away the place-name. In the extreme, we are presented with a collection of Celtic monks; a medieval collegiate foundation; a community of Celi Dé – indeed, a veritable procession of images and ideas that follow on like some Morayshire

\textsuperscript{59} Bishop 2010, 3
Semana Santa procession! But years of research by scholars has failed to turn up a reliable reference to an ecclesiastical establishment here. Even Historic Environment Scotland’s records leave the cupboard bare stating, “The site of the College is uncertain, and its history has perished.” This information, contained in the Canmore database, is largely attributed to that stalwart of Moray-abilia, Mr. H.B. Mackintosh, whose accounts can be a little on the ‘whimsical’ side. My own opinion is that such a religious community never existed on this site. The settlement that did exist nearby, certainly in Pictish times, is now labelled on modern maps Old Roseisle or Oldtown, a name that is most revealing. It lies higher up the western flank of the Tappoch (NGR NJ 139 674), some 30m above modern datum, on land that would have guaranteed dry footings for buildings and a pleasantly sheltered location to reside in and grow crops. This old community lies on the north side of what would have been a natural and eminently easily defended route leading to the important fort system at Burghead. We should not fail to note in passing the tantalising place-name to the south of the outflow channel – Bridgend (NGR NJ 149 661) – less than 1km south of Roseisle.

Another consideration is that, of old, Roseisle was not actually the name of a place but, as maps show, it is the name of the hill area to the north. This is the most prominent eminence on what was virtually an island and an area which is full of signs of pre-historic human habitation. Here, there is a concentrated collection of ancient remains – Cup-and-Ring Stones; the Camus Stone and Cairn at Inverugie; the substantial fortifications at Burghead; a jet-bead necklace found on top of the Tappoch; a wonderful spear-head found on the flanks of the same hill; a famous cist burial was also found 8m west of the round cairn on the summit of the Tappoch; crop-marks showing circular enclosures near Unthank.

A review of the numerous archaeological finds made on Clarkly Hill (NGR NJ 131 675) quickly reveals the richness of the area and a case can easily be made for a more extensive survey and detailed research. A considerable effort has been expended on the ‘fort’ at Burghead but it is my opinion that the focus of future effort should be the area at, and to the

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60 HES Canmore Database no. 1376646 (NJ16NW52) accessed 19.10.17 At College of Roseisle, “... in the 7th century there is presumed to have been a Columban chapel established from St Aetlian’s Oratory at Burghead; and in Culdee times a small settlement of monks. The site of the College is uncertain and its history has perished.”
61 The author of Elgin Past and Present.
62 For example, the famous Sculptors Cave (NGR NJ 189 711)
63 HES Canmore Database, no. 16160
64 HES Canmore Database, no. 16164
65 HES Canmore Database, no. 16208
66 HES Canmore Database, no. 107623
east of, Clarkly Hill. Surely this is where the major settlements were – close to the sheltered, south-facing, slopes and beaches. The fort was a good defensive position in time of need, but it would certainly not have afforded such comfortable dwelling sites as were offered to the immediate south.

Although I argue that there was not a Christian community at Roseisle, it is apparent from the archaeology that the Tappoch was an area of some considerable significance for ritual purposes to the ancient peoples. Given the island’s geographical prominence this is not very surprising.

But we must stop for a moment and consider again the very name Roseisle. At first sight it is a very English name. However, consider, instead, Ros(s) Eye – ‘the island of the headland.’ I would suggest that the whole of this area could, of old, have been called Ros(s) Eye (or Ros(s) Hy), with only the rocky outcrop where Lossiemouth now stands known separately as Stotfield or Coulard Hill, and it is for this reason that I use the name Ros(e) Eye or Ros Hy rather than Roseisle whenever possible.

If the above is accepted then, when one adds to the ‘mix’ the presence of very old communities at Unthank and Kinneddar, one seems to be left with an inescapable conclusion that this must have been one of the largest and most important areas of Pictish habitation in the country. If Wolf’s suggestion that the territory called Fortriu is, indeed, to be found in Morayshire, then I would suggest that the Ros-Hy is perhaps the strongest of contenders for any provincial ‘capital’ or powerbase. The alternative sites identified near Inverness present impressive fortifications. The much less advertised Dunearn (NGR NH 932 407), which commands the vital crossing of the River Findhorn at the better-known Randolph’s Leap, and the route to the south – the same route that the Old Military Road took in much later times - is also very impressive and has an early church site immediately below it. But the Inverness sites are not accompanied by Christian sites. They may well have been very important ‘military’ sites in pre-history but I would suggest that in Pictish times the power-base had moved to the Ros-Hy and that this concentration of settlement was what attracted the Christian peregrins to locate themselves at Unthank, Kinneddar and, one must not forget, also at Kintrae on the island of Inchbrock.67

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67 See above page 11; and the extract of Pont’s Map on page 7 which clearly shows Kintré (sic) on the island of Inchbrock. In 1203-1222, Bishop Bricius’s charter refers to this church as “Veteri ecclesia de Kyntra”, revealing that so early in the diocese’s history, Kintrae was recognised as an ‘ancient’ establishment. [Reg. Mor., no. 211, p.273]
I also believe that the *Ros-Hy* makes the much-vaulted and heavily-publicised site at *Portmahomac* fade into the background. The northern site was certainly a Christian community of significance, but no more so than Kinneddar, where equally impressive stoneworking of the Pictish era has been found. Sadly, Kinneddar (and the rest of the *Ros-Hy*) has not enjoyed the intensive attentions of the archaeologists’ trowels that the Portmahomac site has benefitted from, and so its importance has, in my opinion, been sadly overlooked.

In conclusion, the focus of Roseisle’s interest lies not in medieval history but much further back in the so-called Dark Age, the very earliest days of the Picts and beyond into the misty realms of pre-history. I don’t believe there was ever a college here – it is not a commonly found term (that in the Chanonry of Elgin is a ‘modern’ invention). But there are other sites of *muinthirs* nearby which may prove to be of importance when considering the presence of early Christianity in the area.

**UNTHANK.**

In Shaw’s *History of the Province of Moray* the author says that there was a College name associated both with Roseisle and Unthank (NGR NJ 172 669). In dismissing the former I believe that Shaw has recorded where a college did exist. There is a companion tradition of an early Christian *muinntir* at Unthank and it would seem reasonable to conclude that the college was situated here and not at Roseisle. It is most unlikely that there would have been two muinntirs so close together.

I believe that the existence of this ancient muinntir was recognised by Bishop Robert Hepburn in 1542. It was he who created the last of the prebends in the Cathedral at Elgin. It was formed from the chaplainry of the Blessed Virgin Mary that had been founded in the 13th-century, and consecrated by Bishop Bricius, within *Duffus Castle*. But in naming the prebend, Bishop Hepburn chose to call it Unthank, thus, I believe recognising and commemorating the ancient muinntir.

Looking at the 10m Map one is struck by the site of the old community of Unthank. It was on a promontory that extended into the Loch and, as such, it is somewhat similar to the promontory site at *Portmahomack*. In early times, and certainly in the Viking era, this area

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68 Shaw 1882, 2.81
69 *Muinntir* (Gaelic) = ‘folk, kindred, people’; (de Moravia 2017: 3)
was heavily forested. Shaw states, “remains show that the whole ‘lower ground’ and even in the stiffest clay soil, this part of the country must have once been an entire forest of different kinds of timber – oak, elder, birch, hazel and fir; and it is reported that the oppressed local inhabitants were compelled by the Danes to carry oak from the valley near Roseisle to build their ships” at the *Burgh* (Burghhead).

Shaw, writing c.1882, records that the stones of the old chapel at Unthank, “were lately taken up to repair the mill.”\(^{70}\) This may refer to repairs made to the mill that the laird of Duffus had been forced to erect to replace the *Outflow Mill*.

Looking again at the 10m Map, there is an obvious land-route from the bishop’s residence at *Kinneddar* (NGR NJ 222 696) into western Morayshire. It would have passed both Unthank and Old Roseisle, and *St Peter’s Church* at the *Kirkton of Duffus* (NGR NJ 175 687),\(^{71}\) an establishment of the greatest antiquity and one of the earliest medieval ecclesiastical foundations in the Province. Dating from the 11\(^{th}\)-century it was the burial place of the *de Moravia* family from *Freskyn* onwards. The suggestion here is that Unthank lay on what would have been a main route for travellers.

### Passages Across the Loch

There can be no doubt that the physical presence of the Loch presented a considerable obstacle to travel in all ages. For the Picts on the Ros Hy this would have been a great boon in defensive terms whilst for the medieval bishops in their ‘castle’ at Kinneddar it would have acted so as to isolate them from their diocese - although, from both sides of the fence, this may, at times, have been seen to be an advantage!

Several routes have revealed themselves as having been in regular use at various periods in history. Some came back into use, only to be abandoned again, according to the vagaries of the water-levels in the Loch. A survey of these routes is more meaningful when made by viewing the Loch from west to east.

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\(^{70}\) Shaw 1882, 2.83

\(^{71}\) The place-name Duffus itself lends to our argument about the nature of this part of the Sea of Spynie. Scholars suggest that its name is derived from *Dubh-uis* ~ “black (or stagnant) water. [Shaw 1882, 77]
Bridgend

From studying the 10m Map I believe that it is reasonable to suggest that there was a crossing-point here in very early times. Whether the crossing was made by boat/canoe, by swimming alongside animals, or perhaps by the use of stepping-stones at low tide, cannot be known since there is no extant evidence in the archaeological or historical records. However, considering the geography of the site, this this would have been a natural crossing place.

Kintrae – Unthank.

Travelling east, the next crossing encountered was that carrying the road from Causie (Covesea) to Elgin. This involved crossing the Long Steps, a causeway originally constructed from a succession of large stones set into the bed of the Loch. This was the main route from Burghead and Kinneddar to the lands of western Morayshire and Elgin.

Leals Ferry.

On Kinnaird’s map, just to the east of the Long Steps, there is marked, “Tract of Kenneth Leals boat”. Mr Leal had a house on the south side of the outflow from the Loch and, apparently, he provided an alternative to the Long Steps at times when they were impassable.

Road to Mid Holm.

Kinnaird noted a “road begun by the Messrs. Brander” running from the southern shore of the Loch, at the very eastern edge of the Findrassie lands, northwards to the island of Mid Holm. He also records that there were said to be stepping-stones here. It is not clear if this road was continued elsewhere or if the project was abandoned.

The Salterhill Ferry.

Only a little further east lay a principal ferry-boat crossing. It ran from the south shore, on Myreside lands, to the pier which had been built at the foot of the Point of Salterhill (NGR NJ 204 671). The ferry-boat station on the Myreside lands was at the foot of the sand-bank to the north of Lochside Farm and close to the ruins of an old cottage situated about 100m to the east of the Covesea Road (NGR NJ 208 659). This ferry was operated,

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72 When Priest & Co. started its brickworks in this neighbourhood, this cottage became known as Egypt – supposedly commemorating a place once famous for brick making.
latterly, by the Laird of Gordonstoun to whom the income, which would have been by no means negligible, accrued.

The Bishop’s Steps.

The Bishop’s Steps are said to have existed in early history. They are said to have been constructed with large quarry-stones running northwards from Spynie, although the exact route is not known. It is said that this crossing had been constructed by a bishop who wished to make it easier for the cleric taking the morning services in St Andrews church (NGR NJ 249 627) to then travel north to the church of Ogstoun to take afternoon services. In later years, as the water levels rose again these stepping-stones were submerged.

There is a suggestion of a causeway from the Greens of Kinneddar to the Fowl Inch marked on Kinnaird’s map. Since the island was a favoured place to graze animals such a causeway would have offered an obvious advantage to the local people, but it is only marked on the map as a ‘possibility’. It is possible that some remains of this crossing had been revealed as the result of the Brander brothers’ efforts to drain the Loch. It is thought that it went no further than the Fowl Inch.

The Kaysbrigs Road.

As we have seen, there was a major route leading from the lands of Kinneddar, south-west over the bridge at Kaysbrigs (Briggsies), and onwards through Pitgaveny estate to Elgin. Kinnaird’s map details two routes leading from Ogstoun to meet with this road - one called the Summer Bridgies Road and the other the Winter Bridgies Road. In the later history of the Loch this would have offered a dry route to Urquhard and eastwards to the River Spey. This route had the distinct advantage that, save for the ‘bridge’ itself, a traveller was not required to cross any stretches water. For travellers with animals, carts, or mounted on horses, this would have been invaluable.
HARBOURS.

From written records we know that there were ‘harbours’ or anchorages at Spynie,\(^{73}\) Duffus\(^{74}\) and, possibly, below the Hill of Kinnairdie just north of Meft (NGR NJ 269 642).\(^{75}\) But, from the accounts of Bishop Bur’s encounter with the farcost at Krannokysford, as related above,\(^{76}\) we can be sure that the liminal land in the area of the Greens of Kinneddar\(^ {77}\) would have provided adequate landing places also. To any sailor who knew these coasts, the Loch must have presented an almost unbelievable natural haven on what was otherwise a most treacherous stretch of coast. Many have come to grief on the Holyman (Halliman) and Covesea Skerries off Lossiemouth and the Boar’s Head Rock further east (NGR NJ 289 680).\(^ {78}\)

THE LOCH IN POST-MEDIEVAL TIMES.

A first attempt at draining the Loch (or at least lowering the water-level) was made 1480-1500\(^ {79}\) at the instigation of the Bishop.\(^ {80}\) The drainage system employed was well-maintained by successive bishops up to the time of the Reformation. But, the absence of ‘the personal interest’ of a bishop after this time meant that the system fell into disrepair because those now holding the lands – the secular Lords of Spynie – were often absentee landlords. Land which had been reclaimed and put to profitable use returned to marsh, swamp and open water.

One consequence of this was that the ancient causeway, known as the Bishop’s Steps, was submerged requiring the operation of a ferry-boat for the use of travellers on what was known as the Covesea Road. As detailed above, it ran from Salterhill (NGR NJ 204 671) to the lands of Myreside (NGR NJ 206 658).

\(^{73}\) Reg. Mor., no. 163, 192
\(^{74}\) Keillar 1993, 50
\(^{75}\) Morrison 1871, 251
\(^{76}\) Reg. Mor., no. 163, 192
\(^{77}\) See extract of Kinnaird’s map in Appendix C.
\(^{78}\) See Appendix D for a most entertaining story concerning the minister of Urquhart who set out to determine why his congregation had been found ‘wanting’ one Sabbath. Many very religious people, whose ‘communion’ had been supplied in merrily large quantities of wine from a wreck which had been brought ashore, were found scattered across the countryside to the north of the village!
\(^{79}\) Young 1871, 9
\(^{80}\) Andrew Stewart was bishop from 1482-1501. He was the youngest son of Queen Joan Beaufort, widow of K. James I, by her second husband, James Stewart of Lorne.
The Loch’s drainage continued to be neglected during the disastrous struggle between Episcopacy and Presbytery that resulted from the various ‘restorations’ of the post-Reformation period. The consequence was that, “it had spread out so as to extend to the length of 4 miles, and in no part of less breadth than one, covering the space of 2000 acres.”

To the local lairds this marked a significant loss of arable land and, consequently, of income.

There had been another ferryboat in the pre-Reformation period which operated from the Palace of Spynie to a place on the lands of Ardivot (NGR NJ 225 657) called the Weir. But it is said that it too passed away with the Bishops!

The islands in the Loch were of great use in the summer months as a secure pasture for cattle and the animals would be carried out to them by boat or by swimming them across. As has been noted above, a more permanent causeway had existed from the lands of the Greens to the Fowl Inch, which causeway is clearly marked on Kinnaird’s map, but its existence was only revealed when the water-level was again lowered. This Fowl Inch was greatly resorted to by water birds as a breeding place, from whence, no doubt, its name originated.

However, the splendid modern ‘incomers’ of the RSPB would be overcome with an apoplexy to read Shaw’s comment that, “it (the Loch) abounds with pikes and gidds, and is in winter haunted with swans that yield fine diversion in killing them.”

There were disastrous floods in Moray in 1637 and these would, no doubt, have had a major effect on what was left of the drainage system of the bishops’ time.

At length, a Mr David Anderson of Finzeach, an engineer and burgess of Aberdeen, was consulted with a view to lowering the water-level. Anderson, whose father was by some, known as Davie … do a’thing” (David … do everything), was a member of an astonishing Aberdeen family. His uncle Alexander Anderson (1582-1619), although he died when he was still quite young, was Professor of Mathematics at the University of Paris. For many years the family had the manse, barn and yards of the old Blackfriars monastery in Aberdeen. At

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81 Shaw 1882, 1.339
82 The principal estates surrounding the Loch at this time were Gordonstoun, in the parish of Drainie, to the north; Pitgaveny to the east; the estate of the Earl of Fife, in the parish of Spynie, including the Bishop’s Precinct which belonged to the Crown, to the south-east; the estate of Findrassie, in the parish of Spynie (formerly episcopal lands) to the south; the estate of Westfield, also in the parish of Spynie, to the west; the lands of Duffus, in the parish of Duffus, to the north-west.
83 Mackintosh 1828, 18
84 Young 1871, 22
85 Shaw 1882, 3.94-95
length, they sold the property to Robert Gordon who founded the (Gordon’s) Hospital, now College, on the site.

Anderson determined that, to be successful, the River Lossie would have to be banked up. The Loch could then be drained. “Two ditches, each varying from 6-14 ft. in width and 4-5 ft. in depth, some 300 yards or thereby in length, converged into one after passing under the Stotfield-Elgin road at Kaysbridge (Caysbriggs: NGR NJ 248 668), thus draining the waters of the Loch of Spynie into this new cut.” The bridge over these two ‘canals’ was originally of wood. It was taken down in 1748 and replaced by a stone bridge of two arches which was built at the Town’s expense.

The course of this canal is shown clearly on Kinnaird’s map flowing northwards above Inchbroom (NGR NJ 254 669) and continuing into the River Lossie at a point marked “C” on his map (NGR NJ 254 684).

About the year 1779 the Brander brothers – Alexander, of Kinneddar (1729-1794), and James, of Pitgaveny (1733-1780), came on the scene. The brothers had made their fortunes in the citrus trade in the lovely climate of the Azores. James operated from the islands, first shipping the fruit to Lisbon, for onward transportation to London where his elder brother, Alexander, took control of the marketing part of the business. It was at this time that the Royal Navy started to use citrus fruit, principally lemon juice, to prevent scurvy amongst the sailors of the fleet. There is a record of the will of Alexander Brander, Merchant, Sheriff of London, in the National Records Office at Kew. Alexander appears in office as Sheriff of London in 1792 (along with Sir Benjamin Tebbs). He had been elected Sheriff whilst Master of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights.

James is thought to have been born in Moray c.1733, so, when he started improving his estate of Pitgaveny, he was about 46 year of age. The brothers set about restoring, renovating and developing the drainage system but had not, perhaps, won over some of the neighbouring lairds to their schemes and it was this that had resulted in the matter of ‘ownership’ of the Loch being referred to the Court of Session.

The brothers were great supporters of improvement projects in Moray a major example being the new harbour at Lossiemouth (Branderburgh).

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86 Mackintosh 1828, 10. Locally, Kaysbridge was known as Brigsies.
87 Mackintosh 1828, 11
88 PROB 11/1247/98, 4 July 1794
89 Traditionally there are always two Sheriffs of London elected by the Livery Companies
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**Unpublished Thesis.**


**Illustrations.**


APPENDIX A: SOME NOTES ON HUGH KINNAIRD’S MAP OF 1783.

The original of Kinnaird’s map of the Loch and the surrounding estate lands has been traced to the National Records Office (Scotland).

It is a large 79x64 cm single sheet with details such as estate boundaries outlined in colour. It is an impressive example of the engraver’s art and was made in Edinburgh by Ainslie & Kirkwood.

Of course, it also stands as a monument to the professional skills of Hugh Kinnaird as surveyor. His practice was established in Nairn where he was a land surveyor for many years and where, in time, he was admitted a Burgess. Kinnaird would have spent a considerable amount of time on such a detailed survey and his skills must have been recognized in the capital for the Court of Session to appoint him to the task.

Kinnaird’s map of 1783 has depths marked which, presumably, were taken from measurements made from a boat. These ‘soundings’ are helpful in that they allow us to trace, in a limited way, the submerged contours of the Loch. They also bear testament to Kinnaird’s attention to detail.

Copies of the map were included in a pocket at the end of Mr. H.B. Mackintosh’s short book, The Lossie and the Loch of Spynie, which had a small publication in 1928 by W.R. Walker & Co., of Elgin. However, the considerable size of the map and the difficulty of inserting it into the pocket means that it often went missing or perhaps became a framed ‘trophy’ on various study walls! The copy of the book in the Special Collections of the Library of Aberdeen University has suffered this fate.

The map is now available in digital format and any serious student will wish to download a copy. The ‘definition’ of several extract maps reproduced in this paper is not of the highest quality. However, reference to the digital copy removes these problems and the very finest of detail is available.

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90 Nairn Burgh Records: 3 October 1774
91 Aberdeen University Library Special Collections: Shelf No. [L Mo2 B6.4 McKi1]
(Accessed 10/08/2020)
Kinnaird’s map frequently represents the presence of what he calls Star Bush. It has proved difficult to identify this plant but following recent correspondence with Mr Hardy, Serials Librarian of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh, it would appear that it could be a name for the Common Reed, (Ditch Reed, Reedgrass). He directed me to a source, Collectanea for a Flora of Moray, where there is the entry, “Arundo Phragmites. §’Streeds,’ i.e. Star reeds?” Mr Hardy added that this was the only reference to star in the work. This plant, now known as Phragmites australis (Cav.) Trin. Ex Steud, was recorded as being found in the vicinity of the Loch of Spynie.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{93} Gordon 1839, 5
APPENDIX B: THE NAME “BURGHEAD.”

The origin of this place-name is of considerable interest and I will presume to suggest a possible derivation.

It is obvious that the whole of the Ros-Hy was inhabited from the very earliest of days – the evidence, as pointed to previously, is abundant. We are also relatively certain that the Northmen constructed a fort, perhaps using a site previously established by Pictish peoples.

The chiefs of Nordic ‘tribes’ and their followers were in the habit of pegging out their claims on ‘virgin’ territory. Such a district became known as a herað. In addition, the Old Norse term byrgi was commonly applied to an entrenchment or a mound. Indeed, in Orkney there is a district called Byrgisherað – a district of the mounds/entrenchments or fortress district. The modern name in Orkney is often given as Burghead. This is the same name as the Morayshire Burghead – ramparts, mounds and fort are all present.

94 Herað (O.N.) = a “district” or “country”
95 Byrgi (O.N.) = “shut up”
96 The saga records describe the area covered by the modern parishes of Birsay and Harray as Byrgisherað - which translates roughly as, “the fortress district.” Similarly, Birsay comes from Byrgisey, meaning "fortress island", referring to the Brough of Birsay. http://www.orkneyjar.com/placenames/parish.htm Accessed 13/11/17
APPENDIX C: MAP OF THE GREENS OF KINNEDDAR.

Map 1: Greens of Kinneddar - from Kinnaird’s Map
APPENDIX D: SHIPWRECKS ON THE COAST.

January 13th, 1650: “It was reported that since by providence a ship loaden with wyne and other commodities was broken on the sands betwixt Speyslaw {NGR NJ 284 668} and the mouth of the Lossie Water that severall persones from severall quarters wer found scandalouslie drunk so that some were reallie dead therby others were drunk so as they wer not able to return home bot were necessitate either to sleep out ther riotnes and drunkenness or els to be caryed home upon the shoulders of others or on horses and carts. The elders to make inquiries.” [Crammond 1899: 29]

January 20th, 1650: “Delate for drunkenness at the broken ship – Jhone Chrystie in Finfan, Helen Geddes in Maverstone, Christen Man and Janet Grant in Meft, David Simsone in Unthank, and eight other men and two women, also three men and three women from Garmouth, Corskie, etc. Also Thomas Chrystie in Langbryde and three men and a woman in the parish of Kinedor. All these to be summoned to make their repentance in the kirk of Urquhart.” [Crammond 1899: 30]

January 8th, 1665: “Compeired James Sanders and James Rob, who sieing probatione like to goe against them, did confess that they had taken from the broken ship that had bein cast by storms of weather upon the shore at Speyes Law some iron nailles. They were ordained for this break of the Sabbath to stand on day at the pillar and be rebuked before the congregation.” [Crammond 1899: 49]

{The sin seems to have been breaking the Sabbath, not helping themselves to the nails!}

{These extracts from the Kirk Session Minutes of Urquhart are all taken from Crammond 1899?}

I believe that the ships, in both cases, may have foundered on the Boar’s Head Rock (NGR NJ 289680).
APPENDIX E: CONTRACT ANENT THE DROWNED LANDS AND MAKKING OF DYKKIS - 1599.

The following agreement or contract, between Sutherland of Duffus, and Douglas of Pittendreich, relative to the lands overflowed by the loch, dated in 1599, will be interesting to the reader. It has been referred to in the text. The family of Douglas were then proprietors of Pitgaveny, and other lands bordering on the loch, and Sutherland of Duffus was the principal owner of the property on the north and west sides. The other proprietors perhaps took little interest in the matter:-

At Elgin, the [    ] day of [    ], the zeir of God Jayvc fourscoir nyntein zeirs, It is aggreit, endit, and finallie condescendit betwix honourable perties, to wit Willa Suyrland of Duffous, on ye ane pt, and Archibald Douglas of Pettindryt on ye uyr pt, in maner, form, and effect as efter followis. That is to say, forsameikill as ye Loche of Spyne hes ourflowd ane pt of ye townis of Saltcottes, Cruickmuris, and Kirktoun of Duffus; and yt ye said loche, sua far as men can psaif, is lyke to droun mekell mair of ye landis and Barony of Duffus nor is all reddie drownit; and yat ye saids drownit landis can not be maid dry, and ye Loche of Spyne stoppit fra dowing of gretar harme to ye saids landis, except ye Lard of Pettindryt, his landis of ye Barony of Kilmalenmok be cuttit and tirrit for makking of dykkis till outhald ye watter of Lossie from ye said Loche of Spyne, and drouning of sundrie of ye saids Archd., his landis. Herefoir ye said Wm, Suyrland of Duffous for ye recompanes of ye said Archibald, his loss in to ye premisses, and for cost and expenses to be maid be the said Wm. in makking of dykkis, casting of slewcis, and makkin of yir inbankments propir for drying of ye saids drownit landis, be yir pnts, sellis, disponis, and annaleis to ye said Arch. Douglas and his aris, heratablie and irredemablie, his pt of all and haiIl ye landis befoir specefeit, lyand wtin ye boyndis befoir specefeit, and sherifdom of Elgin and Forres, and sherifdom (sic) forsaid, quhylk pertinis to him, ye said Wm., be vertew of his heritable infeftment of ye said Wm., his third pt landis of ye Barony of Duffous as Laird of Duffous, be vertew of ony richt he hes or may pretend to haif to ye Erle Merchalis third pt landis of ye said barony yt lies wtin ye boyndis following. To wit, beginand at ye sowtermast pt of ye said Barronie of Duffous at ye said Loche of Spyne, and
ascending westward as ye said landis of Duffous merchis wt ye lands of Findrassie
and ye Erle of Moray’s landis of Kintrey, till ye said merche be dereklie betwix ye
cottar housses of Findressie, standing vpon ye merche of Corriwood and
Findressie, and tua hawthorn bussis growing vpon ye syd of ye stalk of ye weit
meadow of Duffous, qlk bussis ar growand vpon ye sowtwast pt of ye orchart of
Duffous, and sua directlie northwest to ye said tua hawthorn bussis. And fra ye
saidis tua bussis ganing about ye said wite meadowis as ye stalk gangis till ze
willing tre dyk, and along ye said dyk to ye narowist pt of ye landis ptening to ye
guidman of Drany; and fra thyn, distending as ye stalk destendis, qlk dewidis ye
guidman of Drainie’s lands and ye lands of ye Barony of Duffous, till ye said
stank enter in ye Loche of Spyne. Off quhilkis landis, lyand wtin ye boundis
befoir specifeit, the said Wm. Suyrlan of Duffous binds and obleisses him, his
aires and assiyns, to transfer and mak to ye said Archibald als guid and sufficient
ryt yrof as he him self hes pntlie. And in caice he acquyre ony better ryt heirof at
ony tym, bindis and obleisses him, his airs and assiyns, to transfer ye samyn in ye
pson of ye said Archd. or his airis quhen evir he beis requirit heirto. ffor the
quhilks don and to be done be the said Wm. Suyrlan of Duffous, the said Archd.
Douglas of Pettindryt binds and obleisses him and his airs and assiyns, to transfer and mak
trawell and wair expensses vpon ye drying of ye drownit landis qlks lyes wtin ye
boyns befoir specifeit, and sail do his diligens to stope ye said Loche of Spyne
from dowing of gretar skeyt, and yat wtin ye space and tym of four zeiris. And
giff ye samyn can not be maid . . . . ye said Ard. binds and obleisses him and his
aires to bestow vpon ye drying of ye saids landis ye sowm of ane thousand pundis
vsuall mone of yis realme, wtin ye said space of four zeiris; so in athir of ye qlk
cais it is condescendit be the said Wm. Suyrlan of Duffous yt the land lyand wtin
ye boyns above wretten remains wt ye said Archd. Douglas of Pettindryt or his
aires till he negligent in drying of ye saids drownit lands wtin ye said space of
four zeires, sua yt yai nather dry ye saids landis, nor bestow ye said sowm of ane
thousand pundis money vpon ye said wark, then and in yt cais ye said Ard.
Douglas is content and contents yt ye said Wm. Suyrlan of Duffus and his airis
sail haif als fre ingres and access to ye said landis as giff ye samyn had nevyr bein
disponit nor annaleit; and binds and obleisses him, himselfff, and his airis in yt
caise to mak renunciation of ye saids landis quhan they sail happin to be requerit
heirto. And for ye mair and better sequeritie heirof, bayt ye sadis pteis ar content
yt yer pnt contract be insert and regrat in ye commissar buikis of Moray, and to
haif ye forc and effect of ane decreit, wt execun to pass heirvpon in form as
effeirs, and to yat effect ye said Wm. Suyrland of Duffous makks and constitutis
for him, as his procurators, __________, and ye said Ard. Douglas constitutis
for him __________,his prors, to compeir before ye said Commissery, for ye
effect forsaid, seyn and scrivit. In witness herof, bayt the saids pteis hes subscryvt
yiss contract at yr handis, day, yeer, and place forsaid, befor yr witnesses —
JAMES DOUGLAS, GEORGE HAY, Servants to ye said Ard. Doglas; JON LAW, and
ALEX. SUYRLAND, Servitors to ye said Wm. Seyrland; WM. MACKENZIE, in Elgin;
WM. DOUGLAS, Writer, Notar Public, writtar hereof.

W. SUYERLAND off Duffus.

ARCHIBALDE DOUGLAS.

ALLEXANDER SUTHERLAND, Witness.
JAMES DOUGLAS, Witness.
GEORGE HAY, Witness.
WM. MACKENZIE, Witness.
WM. DOUGLAS, Witness, Assr.
J. LAW, Witness

[Source: Young 1871, 206-208]
The author of this paper has published many more articles about Moray and its Early Church.

These can be seen at:

www.cushnieent.com