

Freshwater Scottish loch settlements of the
Late Medieval and Early Modern periods;
with particular reference to northern Stirlingshire, central
and northern Perthshire, northern Angus, Loch Awe and
Loch Lomond

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Declaration

The work contained within this thesis is the candidate's own and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed

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Abstract

Freshwater loch settlements were a feature of society, indeed the societies, which inhabited what we now call Scotland during the prehistoric and historic periods. Considerable research has been carried out into the prehistoric and early historic origins and role of artificial islands, commonly known as crannogs. However archaeologists and historians have paid little attention to either artificial islands, or loch settlements more generally, in the Late Medieval or Early Modern periods. This thesis attempts to open up the field by examining some of the physical, chorographic and other textual evidence for the role of settled freshwater natural, artificial and modified islands during these periods. It principally concentrates on areas of central Scotland but also considers the rest of the mainland. It also places the evidence in a broader British, Irish and European context. The results indicate that islands fulfilled a wide range of functions as secular and religious settlements. They were adopted by groups from different cultural backgrounds and provided those exercising lordship with the opportunity to exercise a degree of social detachment while providing a highly visible means of declaring their authority. This thesis also argues that loch settlements were not a lingering hangover from the past, as some have suggested, but a vibrant part of contemporary culture which remained strong until the latter half of the seventeenth century before going into final decline and disappearing as a significant social phenomenon.

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Introduction

Background to the study

Over the past 150 years antiquarians and archaeologists have shown considerable, though fluctuating, interest in Scotland's freshwater loch settlements. This has tended to concentrate on artificial islets, often called crannogs, and their Prehistoric and Early Historic origins. Less attention has been paid to their role in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. Indeed there has often been the assumption that they were no more than a lingering presence by this time. Likewise there has been little attempt to look beyond 'crannogs' and consider the use of occupied islands as a whole whether artificial, modified or natural. This study starts to address these issues by examining the role of Scottish loch settlements in these later periods¹ with a particular emphasis on northern Stirlingshire, central and northern Perthshire, northern Angus, Loch Awe and Loch Lomond. It attempts to provide a detailed understanding of their use within these areas while also considering the overall picture in Scotland, principally the mainland, in broader terms.

By putting the primary focus on particular areas it has been possible to gain insights into the function and occupancy of specific islands over an extended period of time. It has been possible to look more widely at the number and distribution of loch settlements, the sorts of people who occupied them and whether there were differences in role or perception according to type, size or location. An important aim has been to discover more about the sorts of settlements which existed on islands and how they related to the land and waters around them. This has helped generate suggestions about why people chose to live on islands during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods and why loch settlements finally went into decline.

The principal argument of this thesis is that freshwater loch settlements were a distinctive social phenomenon and should be considered as a group rather than divided up according to whether they existed on natural islands or ones that had once been manufactured. Evidence for islands being built at this time is very limited,

¹ This roughly corresponds to the centuries between 1300 and 1700, though places and events are considered either side of this.

though there is more for their repair and maintenance. Islands were often put to similar uses regardless of their origin. It is, therefore, more appropriate to regard them as existing as part of the same continuum. There is also little known use of the word ‘crannog’ until mid nineteenth-century antiquarians adopted it from colleagues in Ireland, where it has a long and demonstrable pedigree. Subsequently there has been considerable disagreement over what constitutes a crannog partly because artificiality is not an absolute with some islands created by modifying or extending existing features. For these reasons this study tends to refer to natural, modified and artificial islands – or NIs, MIs and AIs for short.²

The parameters of the study have been carefully considered but it is fully recognised that dividing lines over what sort of islands should be included or excluded, and in which areas, are to some extent pragmatic and a means to enable focused research. The geographical area on which this study mainly concentrates offered abundant opportunities for fieldwork and is well provided for in terms of the survival of a number of contemporary maps and historical texts. The broader limits of the study tend to be the Scottish mainland rather than the Northern Isles and the Hebrides. This is largely because detailed research has been, or is being, carried out on the Western Isles and Orkney. Caldwell, Ewart and others have published on the settlement of the Lords of the Isles at Loch Finlaggan, in Islay, and the full results of this research are expected in due course. Dr John Raven has carried out extensive research of the loch settlements of South Uist On³ and Dr Nick Dixon of the STUA has been involved with a project to investigate the AIs of Orkney.⁴ At the same time there is only limited evidence for the use of loch settlements in Orkney and Shetland at this time.

Mainland Scotland did not, of course, exist in isolation and cultural and political influences ebbed and flowed. For example the west and south west had a strong cultural affinity with the Western Isles and Ireland and with a maritime world

² The term crannog does have considerable value as a shorthand description and has relatively widespread currency among the general public in Scotland so remains of value.

³ Dr John Raven, formerly of the University of Glasgow, makes an important contribution to the field in his unpublished thesis *Medieval Landscapes and Lordship in South Uist* (2005).

⁴ Details of this are available from the Archaeology in Edinburgh 2004 annual report at <http://www.arcl.ed.ac.uk/arch/annrept/AR2004.htm>.

that included Scandinavia.⁵ Thus research on Irish lough settlements is considered and reference is made to settlements on the Western Isles where relevant. There is also brief discussion of wetland and insular sites in England, Wales and on the European mainland which helps provide a context and demonstrates that watery locations were used for settlements by many groups across the continent.

A distinction is made between sites in freshwater and saltwater lochs as there are important differences, most notably the effects of tide and current in saltwater locations. Some saltwater sites like Eilean Nan Craobh, Loch Eil near Fort William (NMRS NN07NE 5), are in high energy zones and exposed to swift currents. At Eilean Donan, Loch Duich, Highland (NMRS NG82NE 3) and Castle Stalker in Loch Laich, Argyll and Bute (NMRS NM94NW 2), tidal changes mean a constantly shifting relationship to the land. Coastal sites like Eilean Dearg in Loch Ruel, Argyll and Bute (NMRS NS07NW 1), are also distinctive because of the immediacy of their relationship to the maritime world. Once again it is recognised that flexibility is required and some reference will be made to saltwater and riverine sites.

Method and sources

The study combines fieldwork and desktop research. Where possible, sites were visited and more or less detailed surveys carried out on their surface and, in certain cases, underwater. Radiocarbon dating was used at a number of sites which proved useful in providing additional evidence for periods of occupation.⁶ This evidence was supplemented with the research of other archaeologists. The results from researchers of the later twentieth and twenty first century have been especially valuable while caution has been applied to the use of earlier material when methods and approaches were less well developed. Where a modern archaeologist has identified an island as natural or artificial this has generally been accepted unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, such as where islands are described as artificial that actually make extensive use of natural features. In such cases they have been classified as AI/MIs.

⁵ Shetland and Orkney were under Scandinavian rule until they were pledged to King James III by King Christian I of Norway and Denmark in 1468/9 while the Hebrides had only been ceded to Scotland by Norway in 1266.

⁶ Underwater work and radiocarbon dating was carried out with the support and assistance of the STUA, PKHT and Dr John Raven, then of Glasgow University.

This study attempts to distinguish between the artificial, extensively modified and the natural – sometimes with lesser modifications (NI/MIs).

Historical and modern sources have been used in the desktop research. A key element was the novel use of chorographic manuscript maps, printed maps and texts particularly those relating to the survey of Scotland carried out by Timothy Pont in the 1580s-90s. Texts from the Topographical Notices of Scotland (henceforth referred to as TNS/Pont), and elsewhere, which probably originate from Pont have also been used.⁷ So have estate papers and records, such as those contained in the *Black Book of Taymouth*⁸ (henceforward referred to as BBT) and material available from the National Archives of Scotland (henceforth NAS), charters and Crown documents as well as early histories. Site visits and the research of modern historians and archaeologists (including the many records held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland or RCAHMS) were essential to help verify the quality of the data from these earlier sources.

Diving and snorkelling, the use of electronic depth finders and plumb lines provided invaluable information about the immediate loch environment in which islands are located. Distances from shore were calculated using a variety of means, wherever possible a Leica Disto Classic laser measure. In addition to data gathered from fieldwork extensive use was made of the 1897-1909 bathymetric surveys by Murray, Pullar and associates (M&P henceforward) which have been digitised and made available by the National Library of Scotland (all the early maps and M&P material is available online from the NLS website at www.nls.uk/maps/ unless otherwise stated)⁹ and which, in addition to being of a high quality, sometimes show lochs before major changes in their depth and size in the twentieth century. Other data on the size and altitude of lochs was provided by www.UKLakes.net.¹⁰ This was used in conjunction with current and nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey (OS) material to provide an understanding of the sizes and locations of lochs where settlements existed and the position of islands within them.

⁷ A full explanation of these sources and their origins is provided on the National Library of Scotland's Pont maps website at www.nls.uk/pont/texts/textessay.html.

⁸ Written and compiled by William Bowie in the years to 1598 with additional material to 1648 and published in 1855.

⁹ See www.nls.uk/maps/bathymetric/index.html.

¹⁰ A collaboration between the UK environment and conservation agencies, The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the Environmental Change Research Centre at University College London.

The present work takes a critical approach to all source material. Early and contemporary textual sources are recognised as partial, incomplete and biased and, far from being neutral, they are treated as active and expressive artefacts (Driscoll, 1988, 165ff). For example, the bulk of Early Modern chorographic data emanates from individuals closely associated with a Lowland elite with agendas that are only partly understood. As Scots and English speakers – often Presbyterian with anti-Catholic sentiments – they were frequently recording social and physical landscapes and structures that belonged to a conservative, Gaelic-speaking, Highland culture, giving much room for misunderstanding. Similarly, early and contemporary sources are likely to emphasise higher status sites and people with the focus on men of power and influence. Some also concentrate on extreme rather than everyday events, such as changes in control, periods of unrest or violence and social and political intrigue. These do not reflect day-to-day experience and it is acknowledged that the evidence these sources provide is inevitably incomplete.

Early historians such as Walter Bower, or the contributors to the Statistical Account of Scotland of the 1790s (often known as the Old Statistical Account and hereafter called the OSA) wrote from particular perspectives. This may have been to promote a preferred view of the past, glorify a patron or assert the distinctiveness of a parish (Oram, pers. comm.). They also operated within a framework of time, language, culture and practice – as does this study. Sources such as MacFarlane's Geographical Collections (see below) or the OSA combine substantial amounts of local tradition with factual information. Both can be valuable, the former usually for the concepts within a story rather than its substance. Certain early sources present particular difficulties because they are sometimes the sole source of information about places or events. While the detail may be unverifiable they can still provide useful insights.

Map evidence along with chorographic texts have been of particular value for the present work. While mapmakers like Pont, and the contributors to Blaeu's *Atlas Novus* Volume V (which is largely based on Pont's survey work and is described by the NLS www.nls.uk/maps/atlas/blaeu/ as the first atlas of Scotland), were far from impartial, a substantial body of literature exists that examines their aims and motivations. Such maps and texts are normally intended to provide practical

information about human geography and the physical environment. Their content is frequently testable against other documentary sources and sometimes with fieldwork. Nonetheless, chorography was a form of portraiture and did not aim to be an exhaustive source of minutely accurate detail in the manner of an OS map. Cultural perspective is a key issue and such sources must be seen in their own terms, not treated as primitive versions of the work of twenty first-century geographers.

Charter evidence has been valuable in demonstrating links between people and islands, the functions of those islands and their place within estates. Language, social rank, culture and context have also been considerations throughout this work. The documentary sources do not reflect the views and experience of a number of groups – principally the poor, female, uneducated and native Gaelic speakers. One concern is that this might have led to terms such as ‘crannog’ going unrecorded, another is that the use of insular sites by poorer people may be under-represented. However the extensive use of sources such as Pont, who was concerned to record a wide range and variety of settlements and took care over the recording of place names, compensates to some extent. The aim throughout this thesis has been to use a wide range of archaeological and historical data. This has allowed sites to be considered individually through case studies that have illuminated particular similarities and differences, and collectively contributed to the thesis’s general conclusions.

Thesis outline

This main body of this thesis consists of six chapters; each one is intended to help develop a fuller understanding of continuity and change in the use of loch settlements during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. The first looks at the historiography of the subject area and reviews relevant modern literature. This makes it possible to explore changing attitudes towards and ideas about loch settlements across the centuries, starting in periods when they were a common feature of contemporary life. This moves through to more recent times by which stage they had fallen out of use and become objects of academic interest. An attempt is made to trace the development and understand the biases that emerged in the study of loch

settlements, especially the emphasis on artificial islands and the emergence of the ‘crannog’ concept. The chapter also discusses the modern archaeological and historical research which has helped shape this thesis. Finally it attempts to show that Scottish loch settlements existed within a broader context. It does this by briefly examining current literature, and pointing to some early sources, which show that settlements and structures of many different kinds existed in watery settings elsewhere in Britain and Europe.

The second chapter provides contrasting in-depth case studies of the artificial islands of Eilean Craggan on Loch Earn, Stirlingshire, and the Isle of Loch Clunie, in Angus near Dunkeld. In the first case much of the data is from archaeological research at a site which is likely to be secular but has the ruins of a church nearby. The latter is a site where much of the research is based on contemporary and early texts and manuscript maps, with only limited archaeological data. It passed from secular to ecclesiastical hands, serving as a secondary residence of the bishops of Dunkeld, before reverting to secular control. In both cases an attempt is made to provide an extensive account of the island’s past, to examine its possible or known functions, occupancy and ownership, the nature of the settlement and its relationship to and position within the surrounding loch and landscape. With Clunie it has also been possible to look at its economic role and the nature of its household as part of a bishop’s estates.¹¹

The extraordinary amount of data available from sources related to the Pont survey, and from other chorographic material, made it possible to devote a chapter to what the survey reveals about the number and distribution of loch settlements. These sources also provide some of the best evidence for the general status and nature of the settlements. This includes evidence that many loch settlements were split between the island site itself and a formalised port area. Some of these ports developed into settlements in their own right and some still survive today, either as farms or even as small villages. Taken together the chorographic sources show that loch settlements were a relatively common feature of mid to late-sixteenth and earlier seventeenth-century Scottish society.

¹¹ It is suggested that Clunie, and some other sites, should be considered as research topics in their own right. Their potential for research goes well beyond the scope of this study which was partly conceived as a means of opening up a new and promising area of investigation.

Chapter four looks at the role of secular loch settlements and is informed by the evidence from case studies and chorographic sources. It places them in context with a brief outline of evidence for their earlier use. The chapter examines physical evidence for whether there were patterns in the types, sizes and locations of islands selected for occupation in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. A key observation is that while islands of many sizes were in use, smaller ones have particular qualities that made them especially attractive for use during these periods. It is also suggested that there is a possible link between islands at greater altitude and seasonal use. The chapter looks at the type of structures they held, access arrangements, the use of boats and the strong evidence that emerged during the research for this study that many settlements were split between islands and designated ports.

Many of the sites for which evidence is available held settlements with substantial structures or can otherwise be identified as having been occupied by landholders, gentry, nobles and others of social significance with control of considerable resources. Some of these also hold the remains of less substantial structures which may have been the homes of people of fewer resources who were attached to the main household. In some cases there is little evidence to indicate what type of settlement existed. One of the principle biases in the archaeological and historical record is the shortage of evidence for fermtouns, cottouns and other settlements which were home to the vast bulk of the population. Chorographic evidence does, however, suggest that loch settlements were predominantly of a relatively high status. The sources used in this thesis have defined the structures on islands in a variety of ways: some refer to tower houses, towers, castles of enceinte, castles, country houses/residences, chateaux, halls and hall houses, fortified houses and peels. As discussed by Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 107) terms such as hall house, tower house and enclosure castle are modern and may not serve very well to distinguish dwelling types and fail to highlight that most settlements were complexes, not single structures. The approach taken in the present work is generally descriptive, using terms such as castle for many masonry structures with obvious defensive features, tower for upright masonry structures which emphasise height and minimise horizontal footprint. Along with Caldwell and Ruckley it is recognised that

the dividing line between settlement types can be inexact. Terms such as country house (or residence) have been used as a description of location and function in line with MacKechnie's (1995, 15) definition that this should be understood as a house in the country not the fully-developed 'country house' style of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In other cases the term used in the source material has been retained where there seems little value in imposing an alternative.

An attempt is made to bring the various strands of research together by using them to inform two interrelated accounts. The first looks at Eilean nam Faoileag, Loch Rannoch, and its role as a focus for competing interests in the area, while the second is a broader examination of the use of islands in the expansion of Campbell of Glenorchy authority. These pave the way for the fifth chapter which looks at islands as places of security. The concept of security is a broad one that encompasses the social as well as the physical. This tended to mean (as was the case with many castles) they provided a degree of protection from low-level violence and banditry but were not primarily military in nature – though they were sometimes the best available option when defence was required. The chapter argues that islands were effective at providing security and social exclusivity, but were superseded as the social circumstances and fashions of the wealthy changed. Generally small islands were ill-suited to new tastes in domestic architecture which emphasised residences with a larger footprint and which were surrounded by large gardens. These factors contributed greatly to the disappearance of secular loch settlements as a relatively common feature of Scottish society.

A minority of loch settlements were used for Christian religious purposes. Some held churches, chapels or burial grounds or were the base for devout individuals or communities. The sixth chapter takes a brief look at the spiritual and practical reasons for the adoption of islands by early Christians before moving on to examine their role in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. Particular attention is given to the emergence and decline of the three insular houses of Augustinian canons at St Serf's Isle in Lochleven, Inchmahome in the Lake of Menteith and Inchaffray Abbey in marshland east of Crieff.

The main body of the thesis ends with a brief set of conclusions. These draw together and summarise the conclusions from each chapter to provide an overview of

the research and suggests some possibilities for future study. Appendices have also been provided with additional information. Appendix 1 contains raw data on the known or conjectured structure of settled islands and also the locations of islands within lochs. Appendix 2 contains most of the loch settlement detail from the maps of Pont, Blaeu, the Gordons and elsewhere (some with current OS material for comparison), while Appendix 3 contains a variety of other images, recent and historic, showing islands discussed in this thesis plus the research findings from the Port of Loch Tay. Appendix 4 has distribution maps showing the settlements from the Pont, Gordon and Blaeu maps with accompanying table. There is also a table showing the sources for information on each of the islands discussed in this thesis. Appendix 5 contains the report on a double shoe sole found at Loch Tulla.

Chapter 1: Historiography and Literature Review

Introduction

The following section looks at how ideas and understanding of Scottish loch settlements have developed from the Late Medieval period to the present day. This takes in the transition from occupied islands as a familiar aspect of contemporary life to them being a thing of the past, studied by antiquarians and archaeologists. There has been a major shift in emphasis from one where occupied islands (regardless of their structure) were of interest for their role in the contemporary world to a situation where artificial islands are the prime focus, with an emphasis on their Prehistoric and Early Historic origins. This section looks at how particular biases in late twentieth and twenty first-century loch settlement studies emerged. It also examines the history of the term ‘crannog’.

From early to twentieth-century sources

There is a long tradition of interest in the insular settlements of Scotland and Ireland among chroniclers, historians and chorographers, native and foreign. Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1223), who first visited Ireland in 1183, wrote that the country had many lakes with beautiful islands that rise to some height. He added that they were only accessible by boat and were usually appropriated by lords as places of safety, refuge and habitation (Wales, 1982, 37). Entries in the *Annals of Ulster* include one from 1463 which says: ‘The crannog of Loch-Laeghairi was taken by the sons of Brian Ua Neill junior this year (CELT U1436.3).¹² In the mid-1440s Bower’s *Scotichronicon* listed a series of freshwater loch settlements (Vol. 1, 1993, 187ff).¹³ What the Irish and Scottish references have in common is the concept that loch settlements are distinctive and noteworthy. Something that distinguishes them, despite widespread common use of Gaelic, is the absence of the term ‘crannog’ in the Scottish context. Bower referred to AIs without treating them differently to NIs. His

¹² Crannog Locha Laeghairi do ghabhail le clainn Briain Oig h-Ui Neill in bliadhain-si.

¹³ The present work makes use of earlier sources, including Geoffrey of Monmouth (c.1100-c1155).

interest was their place in human geography rather than their physical structure. Equally, it is unclear what the Irish chronicles meant by a crannog, and whether it had to do with the structure of an island or the use to which it was put.¹⁴

Travellers in Scotland had a specific interest in identifying characteristics that seemed unusual to them. As a result they frequently commented on loch settlements as distinctive landmarks perhaps, but it is noticeable that there was little said about the origins of islands (see below). Dean Donald Monro's (1999, 309-10) 1549 tour of the Western Isles includes an account of Loch Finlaggan, on Islay, and its importance for the MacDonalds but does not mention that one island is artificial and the other natural. Monro says of the AI: 'thairis ane uther Ile sumquhat les, fair and round ... the said Ile is callit in Irish Ellan na comharle, and in English is callit the Counsell-Ile'. While Monro 'was not prompt in the Scottish tongue' he had help available with Gaelic and used appropriate translations where a name or concept seemed important. Despite this the term crannog does not appear. Timothy Pont who was highly conscientious in recording the names of places and features also fails to use the term. This need not mean that people were unaware that some islands were man-made. MacFarlane's Geographical Collections (Mitchell, 1906, Vol. 1, 345) which contains work from the fifteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries, has a passage attributed to Alexander Graham of Duchray and dated 1724. This outlines a legend that in the fifth century, despite an abundance of natural islands in Loch Lomond, Keith Mac Indoill was 'so curious as to fond an artificiall Island' close to Strathcashell Point (NMRS NS39SE 11). Graham said it was built on large square oak joists which were firmly mortised and adds that two of the largest were removed in 1714 by a gentleman building a house in the area.

Morrison (1985, 27ff) believed another passage in MacFarlane described an AI being built. Taken from transcriptions by Mitchell in 1907, it refers to a folk tale in which the 'cruell' Lord Cumming 'builded an Iland or ane house' in Loch Lochy, in the Great Glen, with four big oak jests below the water. The passage is from a text

¹⁴ Fredengren quotes Kinahan from 1878 as saying it was a 'modern term introduced to cover the place for an ancient one, which is unknown or unrecognised' (2002, 12). This creates problems in using definitions such as Lynn's (2002, 85) which regards palisades as a definitive feature as there is limited evidence for them round high cairn crannogs. O'Sullivan (2001a, 407), though, says surveys have produced Late Medieval dates from palisades and wooden structures at island sites in Co Fermanagh.

prepared for Sir Robert Gordon around 1630 by someone identified only as a native. MacFarlane has two versions of the story among texts that are now attributed to Timothy Pont. A more recent transcription speaks of: ‘a devyce of a hous built upon the water and a trap in the floor therof destroyed manie of the people ...’ (TNS/Pont). One version of the story is equivocal while the other refers to the building of a house rather than an island and neither can safely be seen as referring to the late building of an island. If the account shows an awareness of artificiality, it does not use the term crannog.

The term crannog was used in a Scottish context in the 1608 order by King James VI and I (1566-1625) to the MacLeans of Duart and the MacDonalds to hand over all their crannogs and places of strength on Mull (Morrison, 1985, 23). However there was more than one potential source for the word as English forces had encountered defended Gaelic Irish islets during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and it is worth speculating that members of James’ administration had encountered it there rather than in Scotland. According to O’Sullivan (1998, 169) such sites were identified in contemporary English sources as fortified islands, lodgings in the fen and ‘cronnocks’.

One reference to artificiality that probably dates from the seventeenth century is included in an unattributed text in the Blaeu atlas believed to be by David Buchanan (c.1595–1652). It addresses the tradition that there are three wonders of Loch Lomond – fish without fins, waves without wind and floating islands. It states: ‘... there are several structures of beams fixed together (like the oldest rafts), covered with green turfs. Into these, in time of war, the inhabitants of the Loch used to retire with their wives, children and domestic effects, and these are the floating islands, about which writers tell fables; you may find the same kind in many other lochs.’ The passage implies that building islands in this way was a past not a contemporary practice and does not give them a special name.

There was a long-standing tradition of interest in sunken islands – often now taken to be AIs. William Camden (1551-1623) claimed there was one with a house and garden in Camstraddan Bay, Loch Lomond (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2). This story was repeated on a number of occasions, including by Thomas Pennant (1998). Despite being anxious to report curiosities, early travellers do not tend to speak of

crannogs. The writer and bishop of Meath, Richard Pococke (SHS, 1887, 236 and 99) (1704-65) showed an interest in Priory Island and also commented on the ‘beautiful narrow lake called Loch Oich, with two or three small islands in it covered with little clumps of trees’ but does not mention that some may be artificial.

The eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment brought a greater emphasis on learning, education and observational recording. Works emerged like the OSA, of the 1790s, compiled by Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster. Sources like the OSA, with at least 15 references to islands being man-made, contain the first sustained evidence of antiquarian awareness of the artificiality of some islands. The records are often a mixture of observation and folklore like the passage on the island in Loch Brora, Sutherland (OSA, Vol. 10, 303-4). It describes the island’s ‘super-structure of dry stone work, which bears the resemblance of an ancient work’ and notes its division into two parts, speculating that one was a garden and the other ‘for lodgings in time of war’. In the early nineteenth century papers appeared in *Archaeologica Scotica* which discussed AIs at Loch Monzievaird and Lochmaben (1822, 65-75; 1831, 74-80). These suggest that the growing interest in antiquarianism was raising the profile of loch settlements. However, interest tended to be in function rather than structure.

It was in 1857 that the crannog concept was popularised in Scottish antiquarian circles, with far-reaching consequences for the study of loch settlements. At a December meeting of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland John Robertson gave a lecture which was later developed and published by John Stuart (1864-6, 114-78).¹⁵ Robertson’s lecture was on Scottish Examples of the Artificial or Stockaded Islands, Called Crannoges in Ireland, and Keltischen Pfahlbauten in Switzerland. It was among the first Scottish responses to the pan-European fascination with Swiss lake dwellings that followed Ferdinand Keller’s detailed report on Ober Meilen in 1854. The presentation prompted a considerable reaction and PSAS Volume 3 (1857-9) includes notices on the Isle of Loch Banchory, Aberdeenshire, and other ‘crannoges’ dated 1858 (35-7) and a second on ‘crannogs’ or palisaded islands in Bute, by John Mackinlay (43-6). The latter refers back to Robertson’s sites ‘called by the Irish antiquaries ‘Crannoges’.’. The subject is a low, green islet in Dhu-Loch built using oak piles. The footnotes quote a letter by George Chalmers in 1813 saying

¹⁵ During 1866 it was reprinted as a book entitled *Notices of Scottish Crannogs and of Analogous Remains in Other Countries*.

the discovery illustrates ‘some of the obscurest antiquities of Scotland – I mean, the wooden castles – which belong to the Scottish period when stone and lime were not much used in building’.

What aroused limited interest in earlier decades found an eager audience in the 1850s. The Swiss discoveries and the ideas of Irish antiquarians prompted their Scottish counterparts to start classifying islands according to their structure. Initially there was no clear-cut distinction between the natural and artificial, but an emphasis on the use of timber. Stuart had five lists (1866, 174-8) including one for crannogs – islands artificially formed of wood or surrounded with piles. He did not automatically associate crannogs with artificiality, noting that some Irish examples were on natural shallows or marl, not artificial islands. By naming them as a discrete class Robertson and Stuart can be seen as the joint creators of today’s Scottish crannog but they did not impose strict definitions. Stuart (1851-4, 26-7) suggested that they largely fell out of use in Scotland around 1300 AD, despite substantial evidence for their later use in his own paper, including that the Isle of Loch Banchory was inhabited by the Burnetts until c.1550. His work also drew attention to other sites like fortified natural islands and recognised that loch settlements came in many forms. But the antiquarian imagination was caught by crannogs and loch settlement studies subsequently narrowed rather than broadened.

Robert Munro did much to take forward Stuart’s work and his books, *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings* (1882) and *Lake Dwellings of Europe* (1890), remain compulsory reading for anyone interested in loch settlements. He acknowledged the use of AIs from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, while adding ‘their early origin is enveloped in the deepest mystery’ (1890, 486f). Munro tended to classify islands according to the extent to which they employed wood or stone. The study of Scottish and Irish loch settlements developed in parallel. Wood-Martin’s 1886 publication *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland* emerged as work of abiding influence like Munro’s. Distinctions in emphasis emerged following Irish independence and the rejection of ‘colonial’ history by the new Irish Free State under the de Valera government (Oram, pers. comm.). In Ireland the bias was towards the Early Historic

(400-800 AD) while in Scotland it was towards the Prehistoric (O'Sullivan, 1998, 7).¹⁶

Munro and Father Odo Blundell did much to build a constituency for Scottish crannog studies and were helped by the growth in public awareness. Munro (1892-3, 207) related a correspondent's comment that the AI in Loch-a-Bhailidh had been pointed out to him by a joiner named James Campbell who had recently been reading about crannogs. A report by John Grigor (1862-4, 117) described his discovery in the Loch of the Clans, Croy and Dalcross, of 'one of those crannogs which have of late occupied so much of the attention of the antiquary'. Growing scholarly interest in crannogs did not necessarily bring agreement on what they were. Wilson (1870-2, 737-9) called Tree Island, Machermore Loch, a 'true crannog' as it had a wooden foundation. His footnotes added that he used the Irish term for convenience, without implying it was ever used in Galloway.

Despite early statements that crannogs included natural islands, and the suggestion that the term referred to defensive qualities rather than structure, it came to mean AIs. At the same time loch settlement study became skewed towards the artificial and Prehistoric. Dalrymple's work in Wigtownshire was in an area with adjoining lochs, each with an island settlement (1870-2, 388-92). On the White Loch was an NI where the earls of Cassilis had a house in the seventeenth century and which was probably the site of an earlier parish church and burial ground. Yet his interest was the AI/MI on Black Loch, concluding rather lamely that it may have been a Celtic chieftain's refuge (1870-2, 392). A report on Loch Dochart Castle (Appendix 3, 85-6), Stirling, was among the few signs of interest in NI settlements in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras (1905-6, 358-69). However, the insular setting is treated as incidental except for the comment that the castle relied on the waters for defence.

Underwater surveys began when Blundell borrowed a diving suit to examine Cherry Island in Loch Ness (1908-9, 159-64). This revealed a causeway and enabled him to provide a fuller description of the submerged areas of an artificial island than was previously possible. His paper briefly referred to the presence of a castle on the

¹⁶ Fredengren (2002, 274) points to the negative effects that the keen archaeological interest in some eras at the expense of others has had, citing the way Hencken ignored later finds from his excavations at Lagore.

island in the fifteenth century (1908-9, 162). From 1910, Munro and Blundell worked together on a committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science looking at crannog distribution across Scotland. This increased the reporting of later Medieval and Early Modern associations, often because their sources told them of local traditions like that of the violent death of an eloped Chisholm and Fraser couple at Loch Bruicheach, Kiltarlity and Convinth (Blundell, 1909-10, 16).

Blundell's best-developed paper was just before the outbreak of the First World War (1912-3, 257-302). By this time his thinking had broadened and the publication included islands that are partly or wholly natural so long as there was an artificial causeway to show they had been adapted for habitation (1912-3, 257). He hoped to create a distribution map of loch settlements, which would have helped give equal prominence to artificial, modified and natural islands (1912-3, 301), but the war interrupted his work and he never returned to loch settlement studies. Blundell's departure to join the British fleet and the failure of Munro's health ushered in a period of quietude. Loch settlement studies tailed off just at the point when it looked possible that they could achieve a broader perspective that took in all island types. One noteworthy development was Hugh Fraser's excavation at Loch Kinellan which emphasised the later Medieval use of the island, which had been a hunting seat of the earls of Ross (1916-7, 50). Another excavation that emphasised the Medieval was by Fairbairn (1936-7) at the artificially enhanced former Donald's Isle in Loch Doon, which may have once been an ecclesiastical site. Yet the framework within which loch settlements studies – such as they were – existed remained unchanged so when interest re-emerged in the second half of the century the focus was squarely on the early origins of crannogs.

Recent sources

Archaeological literature on Scottish loch settlements in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods is sparse. Recent decades have seen a substantial revival of interest in AIs but this has largely focused on the Prehistoric and Early Historic. There has been some work at sites on NIs but this has not tended to treat their insularity as part of a wider phenomenon. Proportionally more material has emerged from Ireland

thanks to people like O'Sullivan (1998; 2001a, 397-417), Fredengren (2002) and O'Connor (1998; 2001, 329-45). Historians writing about Scotland have rarely identified islands, artificial, modified or natural as a subject for research. Some state that specific sites are insular without developing the theme and considering how this is significant. As loch settlements were relatively widespread this leaves a gap in our understanding, arguably all the more so as contemporary sources suggest they were regarded as a significant feature of society.

The resurgence of archaeological interest in Scottish AIs has included Piggott's work at Milton Loch, Dumfries and Galloway, in 1953, Jack Scott's excavation of the Loch Glashan crannog in 1960 (Crone and Campbell, 2005), Williams' at Loch Arthur 1971, Dixon's ongoing work at Oakbank in Loch Tay (2004) and Crone et al at Buiston (2000). This has been accompanied by some attempts to gain a broader perspective in terms of how AIs fit in with the landscape around them and with other settlement types and locations. Harding (2000, 301-2) argued for crannogs and island duns to be seen as complementary elements within a spectrum of settlement types and appealed against ever-more prescriptive approaches with increasingly precise diagnostic traits. His view (2000, 302) that natural, modified or artificial foundations do not represent a meaningful basis for classification is fundamental to the present work. It also agrees with Harding's desire to see loch settlements considered alongside land-based sites.

A sense of urgency was provided to the study of AI/MIs with Barber and Crone's 1993 publication of *Crannogs; a Diminishing Resource?* which emphasised the rapid deterioration of important sites. This built on the work of the South-West Scotland Crannog Survey which was established in 1989 (under the auspices of the Scottish Wetlands Archaeology Programme (SWAP)) and has grown to become one of the most dynamic and influential forces in the field. Since 2002 its Phase 2 work to develop effective means of monitoring and managing AI/MI sites has yielded an abundance of valuable research (Henderson, Crone and Cavers, 2003). In some cases there is direct relevance to sites with Late Medieval and Early Modern connections such as Loch Arthur, Dumfries and Galloway, and the work of the survey may prove vital to their survival (Henderson, Crone and Cavers, 2003, 79-102). SWAP has consistently argued for archaeologists to take a broader perspective, inclusive of all

wetland sites rather than just crannogs and for them to be given equal status to those on land. More recently Cavers (2005) focused on the traditional core area of Scottish loch settlement studies in his thesis *Crannogs and Later Prehistoric Settlement Types in Western Scotland*. His aim was to encourage the wider archaeological community to integrate fully crannogs, and the farmsteads they hosted, into the chronological and cultural context of Scotland from the late Bronze Age, through the Iron Age and into the Early Historic. Hale took research in a new direction with his work on estuarine crannogs (2004). This addressed a series of possibilities, including the use of AI/MIs as marine access and egress points.

In 2004 the STUA established a project which has undertaken research into AI/MIs and in Perthshire with special reference to those highlighted in Pont's manuscript maps of the 1580s-90s. This was consolidated by the publication of *The Crannogs of Scotland* (Dixon, 2004) which highlights research at a variety of sites with associations ranging from the Iron Age to the Early Modern. At the same time the STUA has pushed research forward by taking an holistic approach to the research of human interaction with lochs and their surrounding landscape. This has been exemplified by extensive shore walking and snorkel surveys as part of the Ben Lawers Historic Landscape Project, which has identified possible submerged artefacts including logboats and cup marked rocks. This has been accompanied by further AI/MI research. Among the results (Dixon, 2004, 107) has been the radiocarbon dating of Eilean Nam Breaban which yielded a date of 430±50 AD, among the first from this period, which is of significance to the present work as the island was also in use in the Early Modern period.

Despite Henderson and Sands' (2007, 221) statement that there has been a 'flurry' of activity surrounding loch settlements in recent years the level of interest has remained modest. Henderson (2007, 240) states that living on the water was a significant feature of society from Prehistoric times to the seventeenth century but remains one about which relatively little is known. It is a common lament within the field that AI/MIs offer a rich source of information, often with far better levels of preservation than on land sites, but are much less studied. This has much to do with the expense, equipment, training and levels of organisation required in underwater archaeology. Nonetheless a growing body of survey results has become available in

recent decades. Among the most valuable have been those that have looked across an entire lochscape, highlighting the number and relative locations of sites in places like Loch Awe (McArdle, McArdle, and Morrison, 1973), Loch Tay (Dixon, 1982a) and the Lake of Menteith, Stirling (Henderson, 1998a). In 1985, Morrison's *Landscape with Lake Dwellings* used the accumulating data to provide a wide-ranging analysis of Scotland's AI/MIs. This generated observations on key issues like patterns in the choice of location, with some islands being as far from shore as possible while others were conspicuously close, often in bays (Morrison, 1985, 64). Morrison (1985, 74 and 78) also follows Dixon in speculating that crannogs tended to be built near gently sloping land with arable potential and claimed that those in Loch Tay closely corresponded with pre-Improvement land divisions.

Henderson (1998a, 128 and 286) found that the AIs of the Lake of Menteith took advantage of natural features and noted that some were located as far from shore as possible. They were on average twice as far from land as AI/MIs in Loch Tay, which may be significant as a shallow Lowland-type loch of this kind provides a variety of choices over where to site an AI. Loch Tay as a long, deep, Highland-type loch only has shallows in the immediate fringe around the shore and in rather larger areas at either end. Henderson's evidence also tends – albeit tentatively – to support Dixon's and Morrison's views on the importance of proximity to arable.

Unusually the FIRAT survey of Loch Lomond (1995) embraced all island types and settlements from all periods. This work showed islands being used in a variety of ways by different groups throughout the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods and placed them within the broader history of the area. When this study is itself seen in a broader context it is clear that loch settlement use at these times was widespread. This is illustrated by the excavations at the residence of the Lords of the Isles at Loch Finlaggan (Caldwell and Ewart, 1993; Caldwell and Ruckley, 2005) and the STUA surveys of Loch Clunie, Perth and Kinross (1991), Loch Tollaidh, Highland, Gairloch (1992) and Lochindorb, Inverallan and Advie (1993).¹⁷ Research has also taken place into the castle on the natural island on Lochnaw, north-west of

¹⁷ Hunter's 1994 reconsideration of Dowalton Loch (Dumfriesshire Trans.: 53-71) is also worth considering in this context as is Corrie's paper on Loch Urr crannog (Dumfriesshire Trans.: 242-6).

Stranraer (CFA, 1995 and 1998)¹⁸ and in 1987 Ewart excavated Inchaffray Abbey which was on a marshland island east of Crieff (1996, 469-516). The settlements covered by these pieces of work embrace secular and religious settlements of a range of sizes and forms. There is not much to suggest that any of the islands was valued more or less, or regarded differently, because it was natural or artificial. However, little has been done to place insular settlements in a broader context relating either to the lands and waters around them or to settlements on land. One exception was Zeune's 1992 study of Scottish castles which details a series of island sites (119-25) and uses fieldwork and textual evidence to demonstrate the variety of structures islands held and how widely they were used.

Two works from Ireland show the potential for looking at insular settlements in broader contexts, though both have crannogs as their principal concern. O'Sullivan's *The Archaeology of Lake Settlement in Ireland* (1998) and Fredengren's *Crannogs* (2002) look at settlements as groups, and individually, and trace their use from the Mesolithic to Post-Medieval periods. Both argue that artificial islands had a significant role, often as high status settlements, during the later Middle Ages and beyond. Fredengren (2002, 266) suggests this may be related to a change in social organisation which resulted in the replacement of kingdoms with smaller Gaelic lordships. She offers a classification in which a high cairn signifies later Medieval use from 1100-1600 AD (2002, 84-5). High cairn crannogs are described as measuring an average of 26mx24m (some much larger), rising up to 2.6m above lake sediments, being oval/roundish in shape with a fairly uniform surface of loosely packed stones. Many have an off-centre mid cairn on the plateau – which may have been a small house and the island's edges slope to a berm which acts as a firm base on the loch bed. AIs of this description can be found in Scotland, but there is little to indicate that they represent a particular form used in the Late Medieval period. In terms of location and numbers Fredengren says they are normally in a bay with gently sloping shores and surrounded by drumlins, often not in sight of open water and with restricted views, usually limited to one or two per lough, though there are 12 in Lough Gara and the Boyle. They are rarely in an inlet with another crannog of

¹⁸ The riverine Threave Castle, near Castle Douglas (NMRS NX76SW 7), the estuarine Old Caerlaverock Castle, Dumfries and Galloway (Brann et al, 2004) and the lochside Cluggy Castle at Dry Isle, Loch Monzievaird (NMRS NN82SW 1) have also been excavated.

the same type and tend to be placed more centrally in the bay than other kinds. In mainland Scotland the AIs used in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods also tend to be in small numbers on any given loch and not to share inlets with others in use at the same time. They are, however, frequently in exposed locations and could be seen from afar.

Fredengren's classification is used to argue that a fundamental shift took place during this period. She asserts (2002, 273 and 278) that in the earlier Medieval period low cairn crannogs were in widespread use by ordinary people but they were pushed out as the loughs were annexed by lordly residents demanding exclusivity. The height and location of later settlements also made them less prone to seasonal changes, providing for stable and constant residence (2002, 274). She also points out (2002, 273) that high status Late Medieval lough settlements were not confined to AIs and that what she refers to as tower houses were built on small NIs as well as crannogs; she links them to Gaelic and possibly 'Anglo-Norman' lords.

O'Connor (2001, 329-45), also discussing Ireland, highlights the problem of archaeologists' attempts to make simplistic distinctions between natural, artificial and modified islands. He is clear about the importance of freshwater island settlements in developing a full understanding of Gaelic cultural development. In discussing the Rock of Lough Key, a natural or modified island, he speculates from its surrender in 1235, when threatened by fireboats, that it was a 'crannog-type' structure with unsophisticated timber defences. O'Sullivan's essay (2001a, 399) emphasises that AIs were used for a range of purposes throughout the later Medieval and Early Modern periods. They were lordly residences; fortified settlements; farmsteads; peasant dwellings; hospitals; prisons and gold, silver and munitions stores.

The study of artificial islands continues to face the problem of what should be included or excluded and what constitutes a crannog (Morrison preferred the term built up islets (1985, 21)). The term normally refers to artificial islands though there can be disagreement about which ones and what sort of artificiality. In Scotland it has not been possible to identify what, if any, special name was given to them by their builders or users. O'Sullivan (1998, 152 and 155) states that in Ireland until the thirteenth century the term 'inis' appears to have been applied to both artificial and

small natural islands. Likewise he discusses the many and varied characteristics of places which are, or aren't, regarded as crannogs by archaeologists. He observes that some islands regarded as artificial actually make extensive use of natural features like knolls or shoals. Fredengren (2002, 89) describes a site where a water-filled trench was cut to separate a piece of land from the shore, then reconnected with a causeway. While accepting this as a man-made island she rejects it as a crannog because material was removed rather than added. Yet the construction of small, circular artificial islands in shallow water, like at Loch Lundavra near Fort William, which would fit within most definitions of a crannog, could simply have involved the rearrangement of materials already present at that spot. As such, definitions continue to present problems. In Scotland, where artificial islands were used but rarely built in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods, it is most fruitful to look at occupied islands as sitting on a spectrum from artificial to natural and concentrate more on their function than structure. This may not be so true of Ireland where the term crannog has a greater historical pedigree. O'Sullivan (1998, 169) discusses how English forces regarded crannogs as hotspots of Gaelic resistance. Their use during centuries of occupation and struggle provides the term crannog with a genuine resonance that is lacking in Scotland.

Contemporary sources (O'Sullivan, 1998, 172-6; 2001b) include descriptions of attacks on crannogs between 1566 and 1645 which emphasise their importance as Gaelic Irish places of resistance. Detail of a Bartlett map indicates that the assault on one island by Lord Mountjoy's forces was a critical moment in the campaign against Tyrone (O'Sullivan, 1998, 171-2). He also refers to a map of escheated properties in the Monaghan area in which each barony has a site depicted as 'The Iland' (1998, 169) which contains rough sketches of chiefs' dwellings and says they were surrounded by water. There is also some evidence (O'Sullivan, 1998, 154 and 166) that AIs were used by incomers from England and were adopted because they were traditional power centres in order to assert their authority and adopt established rights. Irish crannogs have also produced high quality ecclesiastical and monastic metalwork (O'Sullivan, 1998, 136-41) which may have been there for protection. According to O'Sullivan (1998, 161-2) the island settlements of the Medieval church – many of which were natural – have received relatively little attention. He suggests

that long-distance shipping used them as hostels for sailors and pilgrims and that they also functioned as markets and trade centres.

Ultimately O'Sullivan's work aims to set an agenda for future research. In doing so he highlights two priorities. One (1998, 185) is to develop a full understanding of continuity and change and the other is to address the role of lake settlements in their wider social and economic landscapes. Fredengren (2002, 275) also suggests looking at contemporary imagery and symbolism connected to artificial islands. While Irish scholars have been moving towards an approach to loch settlements that takes a balanced interest in their entire period of use, and which is beginning to be more inclusive of natural islands, their Scottish counterparts are often a step behind.

Since the 1960s there has been a burgeoning awareness of the historical importance of the Early Modern maps and especially those associated with Pont's survey of Scotland. The way has been led by Stone with an abundance of publications ranging from an assessment of early printed maps of Dumfriesshire (1967, 182-95) to his monograph *The Pont Manuscript Maps of Scotland* (1989). Wide-ranging debate has taken place over the interpretation of such chorographic material and how much it can tell us about contemporary settlements and society. This has not just taken in the Pont manuscript maps, but also related texts and Blaeu's *Atlas Novus* volume five (1654), much of which was derived from Pont's survey. The growing body of scholarship, such as that contained in *The Nation Survey'd* (2001) has demonstrated the extraordinary value of Pont and the associated maps and texts as sources for research in many fields. One area which has not previously been considered is what Pont, and other chorographic sources, can tell us about loch settlements, though the subject was touched on by Taylor and Wentworth (2001, 65-83) in their work on the islands of Loch Maree. The translation of the Blaeu text, then the reproduction of the atlas in 2006 made valuable contemporary evidence about loch settlements more readily accessible. And while there has been little investigation into loch settlements per se, the recent scholarship paves the way by providing vital insights in areas such as symbology.

This study has been informed by recent scholarship on chorography but has used the National Library of Scotland's digitised versions of the Pont manuscript

maps, and many other early maps, as the prime research material in this area. Likewise, contemporary and early sources such as the *Rentale Dunkeldense* (with *Myln's Lives of the Bishops*), the *Charters of the Abbey of Inchaffray* (published 1908) and, to some extent the appendices of Tytler's *Life of James Crichton of Cluny*, have proved other highly valuable sources of specific information about specific sites, their occupants, functions, and their social and economic roles.

No counterpart to the archaeological interest in crannogs has developed among historians of Scotland, nor in the wider use of loch settlements. However, there is a substantial amount of relevant material in a variety of areas, much of which emphasises the complex and regionally varied nature of society in Scotland and the extent of its fluidity and change. There has been an ongoing reappraisal of the nature of Scottish political and social organisation at many levels. This is exemplified by a series of reassessments of the roles of individuals, clans, dynasties and the nature of social processes and events. A less than exhaustive list includes Boardman's work on the early Stewart kings and of Alexander Stewart, the earl of Buchan (1996a and 1996b) and the history of the Campbells (2006), Oram's studies of David I (2004) or of the house of Fergus and the Balliols (1991, 1999b, 2000) as well as that of Brooke (1991a) and Beam (2008). Then there are Michael Brown's (2007) analysis of the wars of Scotland, the work of Penman (2002), Chris Brown (2002) and Watson (1998a) on the Wars of Independence and Boardman and Ross' (eds. 2003) examination of how power was exercised in Medieval Scotland. Another valuable source is the 2003 PhD thesis *The Province of Moray c.1000-1230* by Alasdair Ross which he says on page four was probably the first attempt to reconstruct the interior of a Medieval province in Scotland. He rejects the idea that Moray was 'feudalised' by King David I after the defeat and death of Oengus at Strathcathro in 1130 (Ross, 2003, 207) and recognises the continued influence of Gaelic kindreds and the importance of the bishops of Moray. Beyond this Ross also points to a remarkable continuity of land divisions for centuries after the period of the old mormaerdom (Ross, 2003, 208). Indeed he argues that the vast majority of dabhaichean in Moray survived as viable units of land into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, giving them a recorded lifespan of over 600 years (Ross, 2003, ii). This reflects the longevity identified by this thesis (and previously by

Stewart (1990)) of the land divisions around Eilean Craggan in Loch Earn. All these sources provide invaluable appreciation of context as well as specific information on the use of some loch settlements in the earlier period covered by this thesis. The same is true for the later period of Dawson's (2007), Keith Brown's (1992) and Dow's (1979) work on the period from James VI through to the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century.

Neville (2005), Dalglish (2005) and Stewart (1990), along with Gillies' remarkably durable *In Famed Breadalbane* published in 1938 (republished 2005) provide extensive and detailed information about Strathearn, Lennox, Glenorchy and parts of Argyll. Neville and Dalglish pay considerable attention to the distribution of power and property, but neither discusses islands as a specific manifestation of this. Stewart is highly detailed in his examination of settlements in the Balquhiddy and Strathgryne area but hardly refers to the AIs of lochs Earn, Voil and Lubnaig which are at their core. Gillies treats the crannogs of Loch Tay as a specific topic (though his knowledge of them is limited) but does not link up the Late Medieval use of the AI of Priory Island and the natural Isle of Loch Dochart as part of common approach to the manifestation of authority by the Campbells of Glenorchy.

While little study has taken place into loch settlements, there has been a great deal of relevant work on the nature of high status country residences. This extends from Creighton's (2002) and Johnson's (2003) attempts to revise the traditional understanding of castles as largely military structures and (despite Platt's 2007-8 defence of this view) Cornell (2008) observes that castles were military vulnerable when isolated but had substantial military value as bases for the aggressive projection of power. But projections of power were about much more than military strength and castles conveyed ideas social and political authority. Such notions were partly conveyed by setting them in carefully manipulated land and waterscapes (see Liddiard, 2007). It is an approach which has strongly influenced the present work, with the proviso that certain islands were expected to serve a military role from time-to-time and that security – something far broader than defence or even safety from violence – was often significant to their use. In a specifically Scottish context a greater understanding of the use of architecture and landscape (and to some extent water) has been achieved with works like that of Oram and Stell (eds. 2005) and

through McKean's argument (2004; 2005) that Scottish architecture should be seen in terms of the country's position in relation to Europe rather than England – exemplified by the emergence of what he calls the Scottish chateau.

There was a strong tradition of using islands for religious purposes which dated back at least to Early Christian times. While little work has been done on this in a Scottish freshwater context, Peter Brown (2003), Davies (1982; 1992 and ed. 2006) and Bitel (1990) provide the means by which to understand the spiritual and practical concepts behind island use in the earlier Middle Ages. Veitch (2001) and Fawcett (1985) provide invaluable insights into the development of the Late Medieval church with Oram (2005) looking more specifically at prelatinal architecture, and with Neville (2002) and Cowan (1980) examining the church in Strathearn and the Highlands respectively. The growth and decline of the Augustinian canons, who held the insular religious houses of Inchaffray, Inchmahome and St Serf's on Lochleven, were of particular importance to this study. In that context, the work of Bond (2004) and Coulson (1982) provided valuable ideas about monastic landscapes and architecture while Dilworth (1974; 1986; 1995) and Cowan and Easson (1976) were sources of abundant information about specific aspects of the three houses and generally about monastic life in Scotland.

The use of islands, and watery settings, extended far beyond the Scottish mainland – to the islands to the north and west, Ireland, England, Europe and even further afield. Many social groups and cultures located settlements in watery environments during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods and at earlier times. At one extreme were island cities like Venice or the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan in what is now Mexico. At the other were Prehistoric pile dwellings, often along the shoreline, like those dating to c.3500BC at Lake Constance in Upper Swabia or in marginal areas of the Federsee a little later (Menotti, 2004, 29-30). Schlichtherle (Menotti, 2004, 30) refers to an expanding Prehistoric cultural practice of living in wetlands that spread from northern Italy, along the Rhone valley and into Switzerland and southern Germany. As Coles points out (Menotti, 2004, Ch. 7) there was also a tradition of early wetland settlement in England, for example at Glastonbury. In Keutschacher See, Carinthia, pile dwellings on a submerged island date back to the Neolithic period but Ruttkay et al (Menotti, 2004, 60) say some of

the 1,600 posts are from 1300-1490 AD. Likewise the work of Colardelle and Verdel (1993, 287ff) at Lake Paladru in the departement of Isere, near Charavines in France, produced 19 radiocarbon dates for a series of shore settlements showing a range of occupation periods from the Prehistoric through to the Medieval. Their principal interest was the fortified peninsular site of Colletiere which was occupied from c.1003-40 (producing a coin assemblage largely from a short period between the end of the tenth to the earlier eleventh centuries (1993, 285)). The site is now submerged in up to 4m of water, requiring substantial investigation by divers, and its study was a major interdisciplinary exercise which revealed a great deal about the development of Medieval society in an area between the Germanic world and southern cultural traditions (Colardelle and Verdel, 1993, 379). While the settlement was shore-based rather than insular its subsequent submerged state and the quality and extent of the preserved material is a forceful argument for the value of underwater archaeology as a means of studying Medieval society. This is reinforced by the fact watery locations were adopted for such a variety of purposes: for example pile structures could be used as glories for marsh or wetland pleasures.¹⁹ Harvey (1990, frontispiece) shows a 1442 depiction of nobles from the court of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, feasting in front of a complex palisaded wooden structure on four thick piles.²⁰

The tradition of loch settlements on mainland Scotland is a long one but did not exist in isolation from external cultural influences. As discussed below the practice of adopting islands for Christian religious purposes arrived from Ireland where it had previously been imported from Gaul (and was also practised in Northumbria). Islands continued to be used for religious purposes in the Late Middle Ages. At Lago Trasimeno in Italy there was a Franciscan monastery²¹ and fourteenth-century fishing village on Isola Maggiore. Lago di Bolsena's Isola Bisentina was a significant religious centre with strong papal connections and is the

¹⁹ Stokstad (2005, 73) says insular glories are reminiscent of Moorish Spain.

²⁰ Harvey adds that pleasures in the marsh existed at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, and Hesdin in Artois. The lake and marsh at Kenilworth were important features and used in a range of ways including and provided private space where the residents and guests could enjoy comfort and detachment from the outside world (Stokstad, 2005, 77ff).

²¹ There is a popular belief that St Francis spent Lent of 1211 on the island.

site of the church Santi Giacomo e Cristoforo, and a series of chapels and may also have been a Gothic settlement.²²

Islands were a familiar part of the secular life in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe and beyond. The world atlas first published by Ortelius in 1570 shows many occupied islands in freshwater lakes, rivers, isthmi and saltwater lagoons. Among these are a number in New Spain (Mexico) (1968, map 7). The large island of Isla de los Alacranes, on Lake Chapala, was a centre of resistance for independence fighters in 1812-6 and was also used as a Spanish prison. A map of Mexico of 1847 (Bruff/Disturnell) continues to show a settlement on a lake linked to Lake Texcoco at its north-east side. Ortelius also shows riverine settlements in France along the Loire near Angiers (1968, map 32), water-surrounded settlements near the River L'Oise north-west of Paris (1968, map 33) and south of Calais in an area where there are a number of lakes near Ardres, Bremes and Guines (1968, map 37). Ortelius used similar pictographs and symbols (towers or small circles) to depict land and water settlements all round the world. The maps indicate a settlement while saying little of its type, but they do underline the widespread use of watery locations in the sixteenth century.

The range and variety of European insular and semi-insular settlements is indicated by some of the castle locations – less research exists into lower status or more ephemeral settlements. At Chillon on Lake Geneva there is a mid-thirteenth century island castle which Anderson (1984, 24) says controlled water traffic on what was a vital trade route. In Italy the islands on Lago Trasimeno were variously the sites of a castle on Isola Polvese (demolished by Florentine troops in the seventeenth century) and the fourteenth century fishing village on Isola Maggiore. At Almoural, Portugal, there is a polygonal castle on the River Tagus which was kept by the Knights Templar from the twelfth century to 1312 (Anderson, 1984, 139). In England, Leeds Castle, Kent, occupies two islands in an artificial lake on the River Len (Stokstad, 2005, 72).

Bodies of water were also created or manipulated to create islands or wetland locations. At the thirteenth century Doornenburg Castle, in Holland (Anderson, 1984,

²² In book four of his *History of the Wars*, the sixth-century historian Procopius refers to 'a certain lake in Tuscany called Vulsina, within which rises an island, exceedingly small but having a strong fortress upon it' where Theodatus confined Amalasantha and eventually had her murdered. In book seven he adds that there were once many lake settlements in the Rhine region.

233), an inflow to the Pannerdensch Kanaal was partly diverted to provide a moat of running water round the keep. Alternatively there are places like the Chateau St Germain de Livet (Verdres, 1942, 32-4) which are set in expanses of still water normally described as moats, but which may be better thought of as water features – the term ‘moat’ often carrying defensive connotations which might not be entirely applicable.²³ Bodiam Castle, East Sussex, generally referred to as moated, is just as easily thought of as occupying an artificial lake. O’Conor (1998, 34) notes that some moats and water-filled fosses were used as fish ponds. Regarded as water features they can be seen as fulfilling a variety of uses including the functional and the aesthetic.

Similar effects could be achieved in other ways. Architectural styles and practices from beyond Scotland could arrive, and be adapted, by various means. Lochmaben Castle, in Dumfries and Galloway (NMRS NY08SE 8), was originally built by the forces of Edward I of England, making use of a location with water on three sides. The masonry castle which stands there today was further isolated by the use of canals; it is shown on the manuscript map Gordon 61 as being an island. Given the attractiveness of water to castle builders it is not surprising that in Scotland the abundance of freshwater loch islands allowed for numerous insular castles such as that of Loch Doon in Dumfries and Galloway (NMRS NX49SE 1; Appendix 3, 87-90) or the fourteenth-century site on Loch Kinord in Aberdeenshire (NMRS NO49NW 16). In the case of Loch Doon, the castle is attributed to the Bruce family, which had moved north in the reign of King David I (1124-53). They, and others with roots in England and Europe, arrived with their own experience of architecture in watery locations and the manipulation of landscapes.

External influences on how – as opposed to whether – secular loch settlements were used could come from the west and north as well as the south and east. Ireland, the Hebrides and northern isles, and areas of the mainland, were part of a maritime world and culture which reached out from Scandinavia. Shetland and Orkney were under Scandinavian rule until they were pledged to King James III

²³ Coulson (2002, 73) states that what were previously thought to be defensive features were often garden features, fishponds or settlements.

(1460-88) by King Christian I of Norway and Denmark in 1468/9.²⁴ AIs exist on Orkney but little is known about their periods of use.²⁵ Blaeu shows one possible site on Raasay which may be at the Loch of Wasbister (NMRS HY33SE 77) while Shetland has a church on what is probably the Loch of Burreland.²⁶ Evidence from the islands to the west is far better. While the Hebrides were ceded to Scotland by Norway in 1266 the emergent Lordship of the Isles, intimately connected to mainland areas like Ross²⁷, had a strong Hiberno-Norse heritage and its own regal pretensions.

Among the most important residences of the MacDonald Lords of the Isles was that at Loch Finlaggan, Islay, where there was a settlement based on neighbouring natural and artificial islands. Another island base was on Loch Gorm (NMRS NR26NW 19) where the natural Eilean Mor has the remains of a multi-phase masonry fortification and residence.²⁸ The Blaeu map of Islay (NLS, maps) shows three settled lochs including Finlaggan. The use of loch settlements was also notable in the Uists (see Raven, 2005 for one of the only studies which gives full and equal weight to insular and land sites). Pont 36(1) (NLS, maps) indicates six loch settlements on South Uist alone. The Hebridean evidence shows that a mix of NIs and AIs were in use, again with little sign that distinctions were made according to structure.²⁹

Finlaggan has certain characteristics which are similar to sites on the mainland, but in other respects it is very different. Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 118-

²⁴ According to the ODNB (2007) the first earl of Orkney and Caithness to be born of a Scottish native comital family was Harald Maddadson (1133/4-1206) whose father was Maddad, earl of Atholl.

²⁵ Dr Nick Dixon of the STUA is involved with a project to investigate the AIs of Orkney. Details are available from the Archaeology in Edinburgh 2004 annual report at www.arcl.ed.ac.uk/arch/annrept/AR2004.htm.

²⁶ A more negative connection between Orcadians and loch settlements is given in the Annals of the Four Masters (M1170.26) and the Annals of Loch Ce (LC1170.8) which say that in 1170 a fleet from Orkney killed Diarmaid O'hAinfeith, king of Uí-Meith, on an island he had built called Inis-Lachain in Loch-Ruidhe. This is likely to be Loch Ree which is the second largest of the Shannon lakes.

²⁷ According to Munro and Munro in the ODNB (2007) Alexander MacDonald, 12th earl of Ross (d.1449), administered the lordship and earldom of Ross as a single unit with one council including leading men of his own kin and other clans from both areas.

²⁸ Atkinson, Banks and MacGregor (2000, 65) suggest that the 10mx6m rectangular drystone building inside the castle is probably the sixteenth century hall of the MacLeans of Duart.

²⁹ Dean Donald Monro's (1999, 309-10) 1549 tour of the Western Isles includes a lengthy account of Loch Finlaggan and its importance for the MacDonalds in the days 'quhen thair callit thame selfis Kings of the Iles'. He notes the AI in the loch as 'ane uther Ile sumquhat les, fair and round, quhairain thair had thair Counsellhouse biggit, throw the quhilk the said Ile is callit in Irish Ellan na comharle, and in English is callit the Counsell-Ile' but shows no knowledge or interest in it being artificial.

9) identify two main periods of occupation by the MacDonald lords, the first from the twelfth to early fourteenth centuries and the second from the fourteenth to the end of the fifteenth centuries. In the first phase there was a lime-mortared masonry keep or castle on the AI, Eilean na Comhairle (which may have been linked to the NI by a causeway). On Eilean Mor there were a great hall, lesser buildings, a timber palisade, graveyard, possibly a chapel, plus entrance tower and causeway from northern tip of island to land. During the second phase three lesser buildings replaced the castle – these are identified as the council chamber, keeper’s hall and storehouse. The palisade was abandoned and the water was only defence for Eilean Mor; access to the settlement was mainly by boat and there were paved roads across Eilean Mor. There is a chapel, possibly larger than its predecessor, and a commemorative cross.³⁰ The great hall was remodelled. Nearby were kitchens, dwellings, storehouses and workshops. The area nearest the council isle was partitioned with another hall, perhaps the lords’ private residence.

Caldwell, McWee and Ruckley (2000, 62) also identify a sixteenth-century settlement on Eilean Mor of oval and sub-rectangular drystone houses rarely larger than 10mx7m of the type common elsewhere on the island. The settlement consisted of at least 13 houses with kilns, lazy beds and a chapel³¹, clustered round a laird’s or tacksman’s dwelling.³² On land nearby was Portaneilan, where the farm was renamed Finlaggan in 1868 (Caldwell, McWee and Ruckley, 2000, 59).³³

Most of the individual elements identified at Finlaggan can be found on islands elsewhere. There are masonry castles of many forms and sizes such as the early sixteenth-century tower at Loch Clunie or the curtain-walled thirteenth-century

³⁰ Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 99) say the chapels at Finlaggan, Orsay and Eilean Mor in the Cormac Isles may have been built by John I Lord of the Isles (d.c.1387).

³¹ Barrell states (2004, 184) that following the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493 the crown made at least one presentation to the chapel at Finlaggan, this was of Malcolm Dungalson in February 1503.

³² In 1541 the crown tenant was Donald McIllapsy of Ellenynegane whose house has been identified on Eilean Mor. It is 7.3mx6.4m, lime mortared and adapted from an earlier building. It has an upper floor within the roof space between two gables and appeared to have been thatched. The settlement was abandoned in the sixteenth century. By 1628 the McIllapsy family had lost their status to become joint tenants of Portaneilan.

³³ During the sixteenth and seventeenth century a romanticised view grew up of Finlaggan’s past glories. In Andrew Melville’s (1545-1622) description published in the Blaeu atlas (1654, 9v-10r) it is called ‘the island of Finlaggan, Queen of the British sea and palace of the Kings of all the Islanders ... Close to this and smaller is the island called Eilean na Comhairle, from the council of twice seven nobles, whose custom was regularly to declare justice, and to take counsel on matters of state; their great prudence and care for equity gave affluent peace at home and abroad’.

castle of Lochindorb (NMRS NH93NE 1). There are also islands with chapels, like the one on Island Columbkil in Loch Arkaig. Some islands had multiple structures around a lordly residence and administrative centre. Likewise the practice of having an established port, which sometimes developed into a farm or larger settlement in its own right was relatively common. Some islands, possibly including White Island, on Loch Moan, in Dumfries and Galloway, do not show any obvious sign of a lordly residence and may have been farming communities.³⁴ There are traditions that some mainland AI sites were council isles.³⁵ There are also clear examples of neighbouring islands being used on lochs, like the castle of Inch Talla and priory of Inchmahome on the Lake of Menteith. However, Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 118) appear correct to say that Finlaggan was of unique status and design. If they are right to regard it as proto-urban and possibly the location for other activities, such as markets, there seem to be no equivalents on the mainland.³⁶

O'Connor (1998, 79ff, 95-6) points to the widespread use of lough islands, including AIs, as high status residences. He also states that even the upper echelons of Gaelic Irish society tended to occupy quite insubstantial structures.³⁷ The idea that large masonry residences, especially ones with multi-storey towers, were not essential to the expression of high status is also true in the west and north of mainland Scotland. A probably contemporary comment in MacFarlane's

³⁴ Blaeu shows a settlement on White Island. A survey by this author in 2005 showed the last remains of three buildings. All appear to have been of drystone construction. The highest and most central was larger than the others at around 11.5m in length on the outside and the remains of well-constructed and one squared corner at the NE. The other buildings were difficult to measure on the outside but one had an inner space of 4.2mx3m and the other of 5.7mx2.2m. A possible jetty or causeway extended towards the island from the mainland to the south.

³⁵ The RCAHMS record (NMRS NS49SW 2) suggests the AI known as the Kitchen, near Clairinsh in Loch Lomond, may have been used this way by the Clan Buchanan. Morrison (1985, 67) refers to a local tradition that an AI known as Keppoch's Council Isle, on Eaderloch, an extension of Loch Treig, was used by MacMhicRaghnaill to hold meetings with nobles. The Owl of Strone, a long composite Gaelic poem of c.1600 (MacKechnie, 1932, verse 42) certainly shows it as a place of gathering. In it the poet Donald Mackinlay writes of sitting on a knoll overlooking the loch and complains that he has been left outside the 'house of feasts' (a term indicative of a chief's place) where a gathering is in progress. Place-name evidence (see below) may provide a future avenue for future research with loch names such as Loch Erricht translated by Watson (2005, 391) as loch of assemblies.

³⁶ The authors emphasise that the islands have a complex history of occupation extending back before the Medieval period. They also suggest that there were associated Medieval structures around the lochside.

³⁷ O'Connor attributes this partly to it being a society where wealth was measured by the possession of cattle rather than through impressive buildings and due to a tendency to rotate lands among members of kinship groups (2008, 95) meaning investment in substantial permanent structures would make little sense. However, there is a seeming paradox as he believes crannog settlements may have been excluded from this rotation and tended to be permanent.

Geographical Collections (Mitchell, 1907, Vol. 2, 159) says Cameron of Locheil (who occupied the saltwater Eilean Nan Craobh) and his superiors lived in wooden buildings on small islands in Loch Eil. This is also a likely explanation for why there is little obvious remaining evidence of residences at islands like those on lochs Treig and Lundavra which were used in the Early Modern period. Differences in architectural traditions between different parts of Scotland may also explain the relatively modest scale of stone structures on some islands in Argyll and the highlands to the north. These include the AI in Loch Tangy which the RCAHMS (NMRS NR62NE 7) records describe as holding a fortified house that was probably referred to in a charter of 1576 by John, bishop of the Isles, where there were two sub-rectangular buildings of 8.5mx5m and 6.4mx5.5m. However, the widespread use of stone castles in the Hebrides and on the Argyll coast is a reminder that cultural traditions in any area were often complex and reflected a widespread set of interests and influences.³⁸ The periods at which architectural styles were adopted by particular groups could also vary; O’Conor (1998, 20) underlines this in an Irish context arguing that most of the earthwork and masonry castles dating from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries were built by ‘Anglo-Norman’ lords rather than native nobility who only began using them later. Cultural similarities between Ireland, the Hebrides and parts of the mainland might explain the relative lack of what have tended to be called ‘tower houses’ on freshwater islands in the west and north of the Scottish mainland. Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 116) describe tower houses as a largely Lowland phenomenon relatively uncommon in the area of the Lordship of the Isles. They add (2005, 117-8) that local or Irish builders predominated in the area of the lordship until the end of the fifteenth century. As such this fits in with O’Conor’s comments (1998, 77 and 102) that such structures were adopted by the Gaelic Irish from the start of the fifteenth century but occur less in areas where there are large numbers of loughs. In these areas he says that ‘crannogs’ with fairly insubstantial buildings continued to be used as lordly residences. O’Conor argues that change was deemed unnecessary as, despite the obvious structural differences, tower houses and

³⁸ Rothesay Castle is one example; it is unusual for its early date and its circular plan. William I granted Bute to Alan the Steward around 1200 at a time when the Scottish crown was asserting its claims to control of the island against those of the kings of Norway. There may initially have been an earth and timber castle, but Alan’s descendants probably began the stone one in the first quarter of the thirteenth century (2002, 2 and 4).

lough settlements performed similar functions by providing protection against banditry and small scale attacks.

This section has outlined the context in which this thesis is positioned. This has been done by exploring the origins and development and current state of loch settlement studies in Scotland and Ireland and discussing some of the relevant early, contemporary and modern historical material which is available. It has also attempted to place Late Medieval and Early Modern loch settlements in a broader geographical context by pointing to the use of watery locations far beyond the Scottish mainland. Likewise it has emphasised that loch settlements are part of a long history of secular and religious use of freshwater islands and the case studies in the following chapter are very much rooted in that tradition.

Chapter 2: Case Studies

Introduction

The case studies presented below examine two very different AIs both of which were occupied in the Late Medieval period. The Isle of Loch Clunie was also used in the Early Modern period and archaeological evidence suggests that Eilean Craggan also had some degree of use during this period. The sites were chosen because they are contrasting in the type of evidence that is available and in likely function. They also differ in location in terms of the types of loch they occupy and their position within them. In addition to this the islands are also in different landscapes, with Clunie surrounded by low and gentle hills while Eilean Craggan is at the base of a mountain glen. Each provided the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of how loch settlements were used, by whom and when; as such they provide a springboard to look at loch settlements more generally.

Case study A: Eilean Craggan

The following case study draws together new and existing evidence regarding the role of Eilean Craggan during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. It also places it within a broader historical and geographical context. It proposes that for part of the Late Medieval period the island was a high status, possibly comital, residence closely associated with the nearby chapel of St Blane, situated c.90m away. It subsequently passed through the hands of other locally important landowners, some based at Edinample Castle. Today it belongs to the castle's former mains farm.

- Illustrations are provided at the end of the section which include maps of the area, photographs and survey results and images of St Blane's Chapel.

Location

Eilean Craggan is a small AI around 65m from the south shore at the western end of Loch Earn in the Stirlings parish of Balquhider (NN 5985 2306). This places it at the western end of the mormaership, or earldom, of Strathearn which extended from Fife and Angus to Argyll. This was under the control of a native dynasty which first appears in the record with Malise I in the 1120s and which ended when Malise V (d.1350) resigned his lands in 1334. His title and lands were then granted to John de Warenne, earl of Surrey (Neville, 2005, 35-6 and 1983, 46). At an earlier time the island may have been in the central area of the Pictish regional kingdom of Fortriu. However, the identification of Fortriu as consisting Strathearn and Menteith (Watson, 2005, 28) is disputed by Woolf who instead places it in the north.³⁹

To the immediate south of the island is Glenample, with a high pass route to Loch Lubnaig. The old south road runs along the loch's edge. To the west this linked to the main overland route to Balquhider, Strathyre and Callander, giving access to places of Medieval and Early Modern importance such as Menteith, Dunblane and Stirling. To the east the road and loch lead past Ardvorlich, to the AI now known as Neish Isle (or Eilean na Vow) and to St Fillans. Beyond there the River Earn heads into the heartlands of the old earldom, where the earls had their main demesne lands either between Crieff and Loch Earn or round the Pow and the Cowgask burns (Watson, 2005, 30). To the north west, and highly visible from the island, is Glen Ogle which provides access to Loch Tay, Glendochart, Strathfillan and Argyll.

Loch Earn is in a highland zone ringed by hills and mountains including the 985m Ben Vorlich. The lochside tends to be of narrow, gently rising pasture and woodland leading to steeper slopes some of which are used for forestry or rough pasture. There are broader, low-lying plains at either end of the loch. The loch is at an altitude of 97m and covers 946.7ha, with a perimeter of 22.7km (UKLakes). According to the bathymetric survey of 1902 its maximum depth is c.87.5m (M&P, 1908).

³⁹ Woolf argues that Fortriu was far to the north, possibly with Nairnshire and the Black Isle at its heart (2006).

Eilean Craggan lies on the edge of a shallow bay in water that can be as little as 10cm deep to the south and 2.8m to the north in summer. The depth varies by a metre or more between high summer and winter/spring periods of heavy rain and/or snow melt. A band of slightly deeper water means there is normally an area of more than a metre in depth, plus deep soft silt, between the island and shore. It is difficult to determine what the loch levels were when it was occupied, but it appears likely that it was intended to be accessible by boat rather than on foot. To the south east is a curved natural bay with an area of grassland fed by the Burn of Ample which leads up into the glen. To the south west is rocky, rough natural woodland. The shoreside is an unusual example of unimproved grassland and has been designated an SSSI (SNH site code 597). It is associated with deciduous woodland dominated by birch and alder. Other features, especially to the south west, include dry knolls and wet hollows.

The loch bed to the immediate south of Eilean Craggan is firm and gravelly. Elsewhere it consists of deep, soft grey silt of indeterminate thickness. The northern half of the island is constructed on a slope leading into deeper water. It is noticeable that much less material would have been required for its construction had it been sited just a few metres south – suggesting a deliberate decision to occupy the start of the relatively steep slope into deeper water.⁴⁰ Another important factor is that the island is directly exposed to strong winds and substantial wave fetch from the north west and north east – suggesting that shelter was not of primary importance. The body of the island is, however, sufficiently large to ensure there is almost always an area of still water between it and the shore.

The name

In 1469 the island was simply called the ‘upper island at the upper end of the loch’ (ER, Vol. 7, 625), but in 1620 it is called Ellan-Wragan (RMS Vol. 7, P. 773, Doc. 2129) and in 1663 Elinvragane and Elanuragane (RMS Vol. 11, P. 190f. Doc. 381). Nearby were the lands and fermes of Craggan. The name Craggan still covers the

⁴⁰ M&P’s survey shows the water rapidly deepens to c.23m and is up to c.47.5m to the north west (1908).

south-west corner of the loch which now includes a cottage, a cup marked stone at NN 5875 2307 and the land near the A84 beside the Kendrum Burn. In the 1440s there is reference to these lands as the £8 fermes of Drumquharegane and another to Drumquhargan in 1461-2 (ER, Vol. 6, 276; ER, Vol. 2, P. 255). Despite the absence of any reference to Craggan on Pont 21 (see below), Stobie's map of 1783 shows it beside two small settlements (NLS maps). The OSA also mentions the lands of Drum-Craggan (Vol. 11, 416).

Surveys

The island (NMRS NN52SE 3) measures 43mx40m at its base and measuring 29mx28m above the summer waterline (see below). The loch-facing parts of the island slope gently upwards to a central plateau of 21mx17m.⁴¹ The boulders used in construction are generally small to medium-sized, with the occasional larger slab of up to a metre in length. There are no indications of bedrock and underwater survey work suggests it is a primarily artificial mound taking advantage of a raised area in the loch bed. Blundell (1913. 1923) claimed that it stands on a timber foundation. The STUA survey of 2004 was only able to confirm that there are organic remains, including timber piles, beneath the stone capping in some places (Dixon and Shelley). Shelley later also identified a lateral timber 5cm beneath the summer water level and 5cm beneath sand and gravel at the shallowest point on the main noost.

The island has a deceptively complex structure with three distinct noosts and sections of straight, upright walling running from the south side of the chapel-facing noost, before turning west towards the castle-facing noost. This walling stands to a maximum of c.75cm. Close examination indicates the remains of other sections of straight, upright walling which is now in a denuded state. One is directly behind the chapel-facing noost and others are to the western end, near the castle-facing noost, set back from the water's edge. This could be the remains of stepped walling, with sections set back from each other toward the central plateau like small terraces.

⁴¹ It should be noted the basal and upper plateau measurements are not the same as the water level measurements given in Appendix 1, which in the case of Eilean Craggan is c.30mxc.40m.

The chapel-facing noost, and the third one that faces deep water towards the north east, are standard V to U shaped indentations in the body of the island. The castle-facing one, which is the largest, has a different character as rocks have been used to extend it out from the island. The two arms provide space for small, shallow drafted craft to enter and have solid ground either side. There is a steep-sided semi-circular area at the back of the noost. This would have been overlooked by a building on its southerly side. Walling, and/or a second building would have stood to the north. The result is that arrivals and departures appear to have been channelled towards the central area of the plateau. This suggests a degree of regulation over how the island was accessed – the intention was to provide appropriate places for arrival and departure rather than for it to be random. However, the island and its structures may have been changed over time and establishing which features were contemporaneous with each other is problematic.

Survey work by this author between 2005-8, including the removal of top soil in some areas, indicated that medium to large stones, up to a metre in length, were laid flat to act as a pathway from the north-east noost towards the plateau, which stands up to 1.5m above summer water level. In the central area of the island there are stone features suggestive of walling and a substantial platform. Some stood directly on the topsoil and may have been placed there relatively recently and others need further investigation. Two lines of parallel stones 3m long and 1m apart, close to the chapel-facing noost require further explanation.⁴² Topsoil had accumulated round the stones and when this was removed they proved to be carefully propped up using smaller stones. The lines of boulders had been positioned directly on top of the island's stone capping. A section of walling 1m wide ran towards them at around 90 degrees from the north east. The wall stands to a height of 1m and four courses beneath the top soil and ends in 1.5m from the parallel stones. Topsoil depths varied from c.10cm to c.60cm. In some areas the stone cap of the island beneath was very uneven. A series of stones near the centre of the plateau were laid in a 2m arc at but there was little to indicate any intended function.

In 2005 a 1mx1m area of topsoil was removed from the south east corner on the inside of the 6.7m-long building at the south west of the island. The building runs

⁴² They bear a similarity to the lines of stones used to prop up light fencing along which sheep were channelled into a pit for dipping.

east-west, and its western wall overlooks the castle-facing noost. It is built against the outer edge of the plateau so its south wall is also part of the island's structure. Inside the structure the walls are neatly built of dry stone with a sharp angle at the north east. At a depth of around 55cm, and four courses of walling, there was a floor of small flat stones of around 20cm in length with substantial fragments of charcoal, scorched earth and some burnt stone. A sondage of 25cmx25cm was excavated and showed that the walling continued beneath the flooring. After 30cm there were contexts of scorched earth up to 2cm thick which contained charcoal but no bone. Directly beneath this was another area of small and flat stones. The indications were of two stages of occupation. The depth of the floor levels, and the building's integration into the structure of the island, suggest that the outer walling rose substantially above ground level during the periods of occupation. The shape of the building suggests it was Late Medieval or Early Modern, but no finds were made to provide more specific dating.

A number of small finds of pottery sherds were made elsewhere on the island in 2008 which suggest Late Medieval and Early Modern activity. These have been identified by Adrian Cox, of Historic Scotland, as follows:

- SF-01: thirteenth-fifteenth century redware. Shows slight remains of decoration. Small amounts of mica.
- SF-02: thirteenth-fifteenth century redware. Possibly part of a jug or small storage vessel. Highly micaceous.
- SF-03: fourteenth-sixteenth century redware. Part of a base, perhaps a shallow bowl or plate. Some mica.
- SF-04: fifteenth-seventeenth century. Remnants of glaze, good-quality pottery. Highly micaceous.
- SF-05: Late Medieval or Modern. Remnants of glaze. Possible jug top.
- SF-06: fifteenth-seventeenth century. From small fine object, good quality. Some mica.

The micaceous character of Perthshire pottery, especially in the highland zone, indicates that some sherds may be of local manufacture (Cox, pers. Comm.).

The character of the building and the identification of the pottery all point to a Late Medieval and/or Early Modern settlement of some status. This is reinforced by the straight, upright walling which can be interpreted as presenting a deliberately impressive façade to the shore.

During the STUA survey Dr Nick Dixon sampled a pile from beneath the boulders on the north side of the island which was dated to 1090±50 BP, (GU-12344, cal AD 810-1030). Bearing in mind the limitations of dating with single samples, and the location of the pile at the periphery of the site, it may well indicate ninth-eleventh-century repairs or improvements rather than an original construction date.

Historical context

Enough evidence exists to start building a tentative history of the island using archaeological and documentary sources; some aspects are secure but others may well be overturned with further research. The relatively small amount of evidence for the origins and usage of AIs suggests that occupation was at its peak in the Iron Age (Cavers, 2005, Ch. 4). An analysis of available radiocarbon dates shows that 45% are from 800BC-200BC and 37% from 200BC-400AD. While Cavers identifies evidence of post 1,000AD occupation or activity at 22 sites, there are rarely indications that this was the period of first construction. If Eilean Craggan fits this pattern its origins are likely to be Early Historic or Prehistoric. The same is true of other local sites including Neish Isle and the AI/MIs of lochs Voil, Lubnaig and Venachar.

The site stood in the Medieval lordship of Balquhiddar which may have first emerged as a baile, or territorial sub-unit, of the mormaership of Strathearn (Stewart, 1990, 26). It takes in the west of Loch Earn, Strathearn, Glen Buckie and the glen surrounding Loch Voil. The lands of Edinample are towards its easternmost limits, with the parish boundary lying near Ardvorlich. At its heart is the Kirkton of Balquhiddar with a parish church dedicated to St Aonghus (who, local tradition claims, brought Christianity to the area between the seventh and ninth centuries) which was located close to a now-lost stone circle (Stewart, 1990, 8).

The radiocarbon dating from Eilean Craggan would appear to postdate the arrival of Christianity in the area and predate the building of the extant remains of the chapel of St Blane, which is tentatively identified as twelfth-century but could easily be later. The chapel measures 14.4m east-west by 6.4m north-south, with walls 0.9m thick which RCAHMS state rise to a maximum height of 0.4m. In 1927 a small boulder with incised Latin crosses was reported almost in line with the south wall at the eastern end. This is no longer visible but there may have been a line of three upright stones in this area, facing the island. Some 23.1 metres from the chapel is a stone jetty which faces one of the island's largest noosts. This consists of two main sections, with the first being c.1.5m wide and extending c.11.1m of which the first c.8.1m is on land in summer. A second, narrower line of rocks extends from the end of the main structure to c.15.4m and is largely underwater. From the chapel shore it is some 61m to the noost.

The chapel appears to have been built in reference to the island, using the nearest available firm ground – the immediate area could have provided alternative sites. The mound on which it stands has been slightly raised at the east to provide a level platform. It may have been an example of the active twinning of important religious and secular sites – in this case both in raised, visible and watery locations.⁴³ This would fit with Neville's suggestion that the island may have been an early comital residence (2005, 120). The building of a chapel and the provision of lands to support it required resources available only to those of high social rank.⁴⁴ And with a parish church relatively nearby (if indeed it was a parish church at the time of the building of the chapel), the chapel is likely to have been for the convenience of a family of importance. The earls of Strathearn had an exceptionally close relationship with the cathedral and diocese of Dunblane (sometimes also referred to as the diocese of Strathearn) and are credited with generous endowments (Neville, 2005, 149). The cathedral is supposed to have been built on the site of a monastery established by St Blane, or Blaan, in the late sixth or early seventh century. The family was highly active in providing for religious institutions in the late twelfth and

⁴³ Creighton (2002, 26) notes that in England there is frequently a close relationship between Medieval lordly and church sites.

⁴⁴ There is also the possibility, due to the presence within these lands of the cup marked stones at Druidsfield, that there were earlier spiritual associations which the church would be happy to subsume.

early thirteenth centuries. Neville also points out that the earls' households included private chaplains, some of whom went on to occupy the highest ranks of the area's religious hierarchy. Within this context it would be reasonable for a comital site to have a chapel nearby to provide for its spiritual needs. The dedication to St Blane, with whom they were so closely associated, may also be significant.

The peripatetic lifestyle of Late Medieval earls necessitated having residences throughout their lands. This was partly so they could gather rents and other dues, exercise judicial authority and distribute resources; it also allowed them to interact with the families and kindreds who exercised direct control of the lands and people in each district. Local loyalties were the bedrock of their authority. Watson emphasises that the existing evidence for directly controlled demesne lands is heavily concentrated in the east of the earldom (2005, 30). As the earls drew considerable rents in kind from Balquhider (Neville, 2005, 120) a residence would have been required and Eilean Craggan appears the best available candidate.

Exactly what stood on the island may have changed over time, but no indications have yet been found of substantial fortifications or of a stone castle. This fits with Watson's proposition that Strathearn was dotted with hall houses and manors (2005, 40) with extensive use of wooden structures.

The earls were no strangers to wetland sites, being founders of the marsh island Augustinian priory, then abbey, of Inchaffray. They may also have had a second island residence of their own at Neish Isle (Appendix 3, 95-6). The evidence is slight but worthy of speculation. Shortly after the battle of Methven, in 1306, King Robert I (1306-29) tried to force Earl Malise III into submission, and make him set aside his oath of loyalty to Edward I (Boardman, 2006, 26; Neville, 2005, 118). The earl took refuge at 'leyle de Kenmer' – which Watson describes as a promontory site which may have had a crannog as its base. This is an uncomfortable description as there is little to suggest that water levels have changed sufficiently to have an AI now landlocked on a promontory. There is an area called An t-Eilean beside the loch at NN 690 239, which might be relevant. Another option is that the comital residence was on Neish Isle (with an associated port area on the shore) or was otherwise split between land and loch. Neish Isle could also have proved an ideal refuge for the earl when he came under attack by the king's forces. Watson describes the 'island at

Kenmore' as one of the main seats of government and administration (2005, 29). Certainly in the mid-fifteenth century Neish Isle was referred to as the manor of Loch Earn (see below) and was occupied by a senior official managing the earldom's affairs on behalf of the queen after it was taken under direct royal control. Whatever the case may be, there are grounds for thinking the native earls had residences at both ends of Loch Earn. The use of islands, natural and artificial, by earls may not have been uncommon. Innis Chonnel, on Loch Awe, was the principal seat of the Campbell earls of Argyll, the Bruce earls of Carrick held the castle of Loch Doon, and Neville (2005, 122) identifies Elan Rosdhu, the AI at Strathcashell and the large natural island of Inchmurrin (all on Loch Lomond) as known, or possible, residences of the earls of Lennox.

Strathearn underwent a series of disruptions in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries – detailed by Stewart (1990, 38). David II's refusal to return the earldom to the native house (which had been forfeited) saw it pass to Sir Maurice of Moravia. In 1437 it was forfeited again and annexed to the Crown in 1455. It was then turned into a stewartry under the administration of the Murrays of Tullibardine in 1484.

One beneficiary of the changes of control was Andrew Mercer of Inchbrakie who, between 1442 and 1446, returned accounts as chamberlain of Strathearn (ER, Vol. 5, 170, 262 and 246). He was paid an annual fee plus expenses as keeper of the isle and manor of Loch Earn (ER, Vol. 5, 249; ER, Vol. 6. LXXXV). By 1461-2, Sir Robert Mure was chamberlain and may have held the island in that capacity (ER, Vol. 7, 49). Royal interest in the area was keen as Queen Margaret (d.1486) had been guaranteed the profits from Strathearn as part of her marriage contract.

Despite being granted sweeping powers, the Murrays of Tullibardine were far from secure in their position and faced challenges from the Drummonds. Maurice Drummond of Concraig held the hereditary right to the offices of steward, coroner, and forester of Strathearn. In 1474 King James III confirmed Maurice's resignation of the posts in favour of his kinsman John Drummond of Cargill. The king's move was resisted by the Murrays of Tullibardine and by September 1475 James had reversed his decision (ODNB, 2007).

The resulting discord led to strife and bloodshed that involved Eilean Craggan, Neish Isle and Inchaffray. In 1488 James III attempted to appease the

Drummonds by raising John to the rank of a lord of parliament. The manoeuvre backfired as he supported the monarch's son in the conflict which brought the king's death after the battle of Sauchieburn that June (ODNB, 2007). Having earned favour with King James IV (1488-1513) the Drummonds began to oust William Murray of Tullibardine from royal lands he had controlled for over 50 years (Dawson, 2007, 37). In 1490 the conflict spiralled when David, the Master of Drummond, and his brother-in-law Campbell of Dunstaffnage cornered and killed 20 men in Monzievaired Church (Dawson, 2007, 37).⁴⁵ There are various accounts for the cause of the violence. One suggests it was part of a revenge attack by Drummonds who felt wronged when Murrays were sent by the abbot of Inchaffray – their kinsman George Murray – to poind cattle on his behalf.

Around 1490 the Drummonds appear to have had legitimate control of Eilean Craggan and disputed possession of Neish Isle. Charters from 1488 to 1496 show the port, the nearby Glentarken, and isle let to Sir William Drummond (ER, Vol. 10, 708). In 1491 John, lord Drummond and William Murray of Tullibardine were called before the Lords of Council and may have been held in custody (Porteous, 1925, 40; ODNB, 2007). Lord Drummond accepted that he was in the wrong over occupying Neish Isle and swore 'Within XV dais fra this day furth to ger cast down the hous of the est Ile of loch ern and destroy all the strenthis of the samy and tak away the bate and put hir to the west Ile' – the latter is probably Eilean Craggan.

By May 1492 David had been executed, seemingly for the kirk massacre. However the Murrays had also complained that David – who claimed to have a royal tack for the property – had taken the isle of Loch Monzievaired. While this is likely to refer to Dry Isle, the modified knoll where Castle Cluggy stands in wetland beside the loch, it is not entirely clear and could mean one of the islands in the loch. John, lord Drummond managed to remain in favour and had his stewardship confirmed in 1495. Marriage alliances with the earls of Angus and Argyll, and the new king's taking of his daughter as his mistress, strengthened his position (Dawson, 2007, 38).

These events indicate that in the late fifteenth century the four, very different, 'insular' settlements of Eilean Craggan, Neish Isle, Dry Isle and Inchaffray were

⁴⁵ The Murrays' principal base was at Tullibardine but their interests extended up Strathearn. The Monzievaired lands were sandwiched between the Drummonds' interests in the crown lands in the upper strath and Glenartney and their major centre which extended from Crieff south through Drummond proper to the Graham property of Orchill (Oram, pers. Comm.).

points of power within Strathearn. Control of two was contested through physical and legal means, marking a dislocation in the social and political fabric of the area as feuding families disputed parcels of property with long-established boundaries. The Drummond influence in the area remained strong although John was imprisoned and forfeited, he was subsequently pardoned and his fortunes partially restored under the Albany regime (ODNB, 2007).

David, lord Drummond (1519-70) held the Stewartry and Crownship of Strathearn and Balquhiddel (Stewart, 1990, 42) but the lands of Edinample, and Eilean Craggan, passed to others. The MacGregors briefly held the lands of Glenample from 1544 as vassals of the earl of Argyll (who controlled them as a vassal of lord Methven) (MacGregor, 1989, 77). But in a precept dated 15 March, 1547 Henry Stewart, lord Methven, who held the whole of Balquhiddel, granted the lands of Edinample to Colin Campbell, second son of Archibald Campbell, earl of Argyll (MacGregor, 1989, 77; Stewart, 1990, 43). The island was part of a discrete landholding belonging to the Campbells of Edinample. The lands and settlements included in the Glenample or Edinample estate may have been relatively stable throughout the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods – a characteristic Stewart (1990) noted throughout the area. The current Edinample Castle was built, taking advantage of an existing tower of unknown date (NMRS NN62SW 2.00). Pont 21 shows the castle – which McKean (2004, 116) cites as a mock-military Scottish chateau – as an elaborate structure. It also shows a group of natural and man-made features including the island (which is empty) and its bay, or port. The Pont manuscript map suggests that the locations mentioned in legal documents closely corresponded to what the situation on the ground. A number of the settlements known from the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods are now extinct, with their names lost or just preserved as identifications for areas, like As Blair (Tashblair) and Coille Baile a Mhaoir (Ballemer). The disappearance of some was relatively recent, for example in 1800-01 John Stevenson, was recorded as a farmer and cattle dealer, Auchviovie of Glenample (NAS CS96). The list below shows how the features of the Pont's map correspond to those in earlier and later documents.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ A copy of an instrument of sasine following on precept, 15 March, 1547/8 [?1546/7] by Henry, lord Methven, to Colin Campbell, second son of Archibald, earl of Argyll, refers to the £20 land of old extent of Glenample with island called Ellenbragan (NAS GD112/2/65/1). A further copy of a precept

1562/3	Pont 21	1663
Glenampill Ednambill with mill	Uddin-ampill	Edinample
Achyveve	Achaueoy	Acheyvevie
Balleveir	Baleueur	Ballener
Ballivoyllin	Baleuoulin	Ballevolin
(Not mentioned)	Gartnasae Ken	(Not mentioned)
Cascheblair	Toskblair	Tashblair
Catrone	Kartrin	Cartron
Letter	Letyr	Letter
Lie Port	Port	Port
Ellen Vragran	Island	Elinvragane
Fishing of Locherne	Loch	Loch fishings

While such estates are typically regarded as landholdings it is clear from this, and many similar charters that they are better thought of as asset holdings as they include features like ports and lochs as well as resources such as fishing rights.⁴⁷ What is clear from the Pont map is that the heart of the estate has definitively shifted away from the island and that the chapel is no longer in use. Just when these changes took place is uncertain, but the existence of an earlier tower on the Edinample Castle site may mean it had been a considerable time beforehand.

The island may nonetheless have been occupied for parts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1560 Archibald, earl of Argyll, infetted Colin Campbell of Glenorchy in franktenement and liferent of £20 land of Glenample, Edinample, with the port, Eilean Craggan and the fishings of Loch Earn which were said to be occupied by Janet, lady Ruthven (NAS GD112/2/65/1; NAS GD112/2/65/1).

Subsequent charters make reference to the island, which shows it remains a place of some significance, but do not indicate whether it is occupied. On 19

of sasine from 22 February, 1562/3 by Archibald, earl of Argyll, in favour of Colin Campbell of Glenurquhay also refers to the £20 land of old extent of Glenamble and Edynamble and to Edynamble Wester with mill and Estleblair (NASGD112/2/65/1). The 1663 charter of erection of lands into a free barony for John Campbell of Edinample includes the £20 of old extent of Balquhidder called Glenample with mills (RMS Vol. 11. Doc. 381. P 190f).

⁴⁷ Neville speculates that natural and artificial islands may have been used to extend access to fish stocks beyond the reach of lochside and river weirs as happened on the continent (2005, 90).

December, 1596 Margaret Munro, widow of Colin Campbell of Ardveich was ordained her 'sunny third' of lands including Eilean Craggan (NAS GD112/25/73).

In 1624 Colin Campbell of Ardveich and his wife Jean Chisholm (who had been infeft in the lands by her father), sold Patrick Campbell of Culdares (later of Edinample) Glenample and Edinample and the port, 'Yllanvragane' and the fishings. Patrick was to infeft Colin with the same lands (NAS GD112/2/65/1). Then in 1632 Anna Campbell, daughter and heiress to Colin Campbell of Ardveich, renounced her rights to Edinample, Glenample and Eilean Craggan and its port (NAS GD112/2/6/53). In 1662 there is mention of the harbour, the island called 'Glentoragan' and fishings (RMS, Vol. 11, 145f). And in 1663 John Campbell of Edinample was granted the £20 of Balquhider including the port and 'Elinvragane' with fishings (RMS, Vol. 11, P. 190f, Doc. 381).

When occupation of the island finally ended is unclear and may not have been a straightforward process. Other islands, such as the Isle of Loch Moy, which was at least once used to hold a prisoner, or the abbey of Inchmahome were put to a variety of uses after they ceased being the centres of estates. In 1720 a prisoner went missing from the Isle of Loch Moy after making a raft from old beds and boards. L Macintosh wrote that the man had 'swimed the Loch; whether he be drowned, or hes really escaped, I cannot tell' (NAS GD248/47/1). Inchmahome, by contrast, was used as a pleasure ground in the early eighteenth century (see below). Closer to home, in 1644 the Stewarts of Ardvorlich were alleged to have fled to Neish Isle during their conflict with the Grahams (there was also a lengthy blood feud with Clan Gregor). At the time they were said to have used the island as a storehouse (MacNish and Todd 1925, 40; Fraser, *Menteith*, Vol. 1, 403). Eilean Craggan may equally have been kept available for emergency use⁴⁸ or as storage or for other purposes – in early 2009 a series of fragments of slag from iron production were discovered to the north-east of the island; while their age and origin is unclear they were among the surface stones so may relate to the island's later stages of use.

⁴⁸ In 1645 James Campbell of Ardinglass besieged Edinample Castle after the Campbells of Edinample joined the Montrose uprising (Stevenson, 1994), there was also extensive military activity during the Glencairn rising of 1653-4 and government reports of 1689-90 state that the lands of Balquhider were plundered by Jacobites (SHS, series 3, Vol. VLVII, 267). However there is no indication of whether the island was used as a retreat at these times.

Conclusions

Eilean Craggan is one of a series of AI/MIs towards the end of lochs in the west of Strathearn, leading into Menteith. Little is known about their origins, but they may be Prehistoric or Early Historic. Their locations could have been selected to take advantage of good pasture and fishing and to dominate and access travel routes. Like many of the others, Eilean Craggan has not been built in a sheltered or hidden location and is exposed to extremes of the wind, rain and waves. Further archaeological work would be required to establish its exact origins.

The available evidence allows an historical picture to be built up of a high status Late Medieval and Early Modern site. There are indications of activity and/or occupation from the ninth/eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. Around the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it may have been a comital residence at the heart of demesne lands and closely associated with the chapel of St Blane. If this is the case it was part of a cultural package reflecting the wider exercise of secular and religious authority, as well as the exploitation of land and water resources. The chapel fell out of use and by the later sixteenth century, if not earlier, the island may have lost its primacy to Edinample Castle or a predecessor tower.

It is also possible to make some cautious observations about the island in terms of symbolic use of space. The boat noosts and positioning of the island suggest it has probably always been a site where access is mediated by water. This indicates a degree of exclusivity and control over who came and went and how they did so. This is reinforced by the presence of areas of straight, upright walling acting as a shore-facing facade. There are no indications of fortification and the only archaeological remains appear domestic. The size of the island is also of fundamental significance in thinking about how islands were used. Its location, and the charter evidence, point to it as somewhere for accessing and asserting control over fishing resources, but the island itself is far too small to cater for all the needs of occupants. While it is feasible that there was space for a small garden (an issue discussed below) it could not provide for the growing of corn or oats or for the pasturing of sheep or cattle. This is in marked contrast to some of the large islands on places like Loch

Lomond. The island is, therefore, in a position of deliberate detachment from many of the resources that inhabitants would have required simply to live.



Fig. 01: Above: Eilean Craggan main boat noost, taken on the approach from Glenample and facing north-west towards Glen Ogle, Shelley 2008.

Fig. 02: Below: Results of surface and underwater survey by Shelley 2006, also showing location of c14 sample.

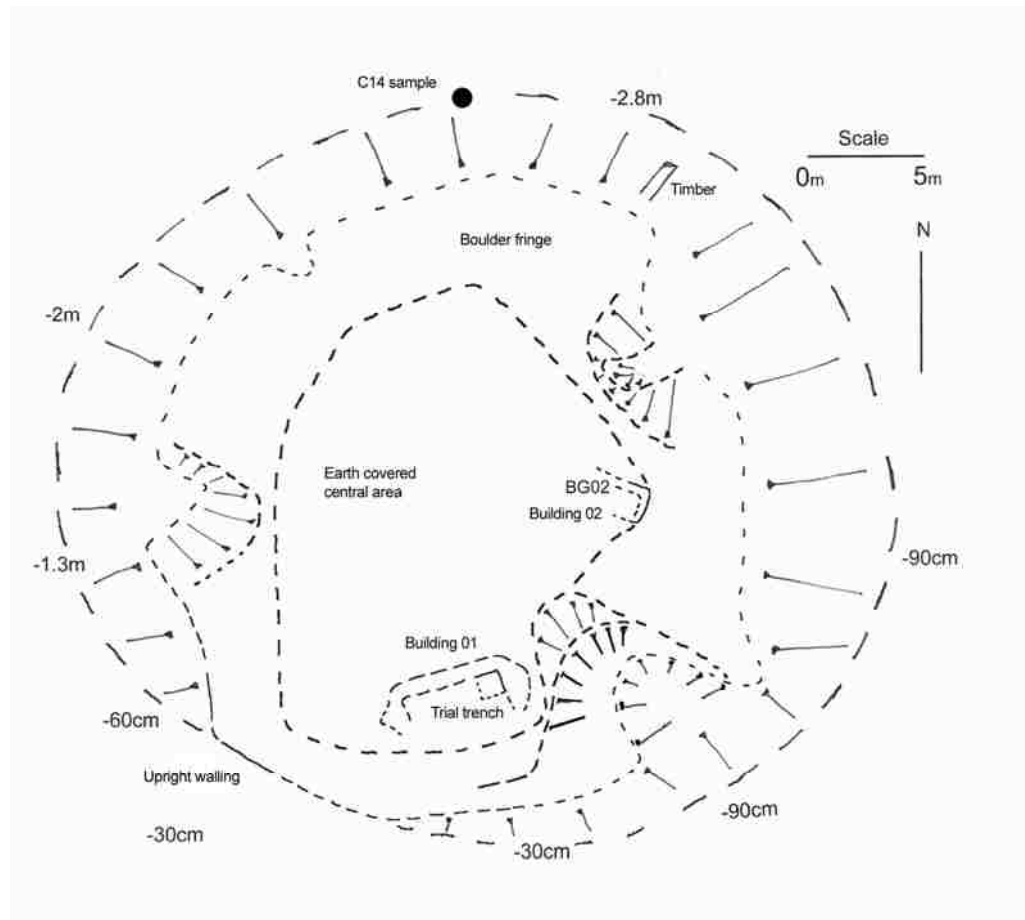




Fig. 03: Left: Detail from OS map at 1:10,000 showing Eilean Craggan and St Blane's Chapel.

Fig. 04: Below left: Detail from M&P 1902 bathymetric survey showing the island and loch bed.

Fig. 05: Below: Detail from OS map showing Eilean Craggan at 1:2000.

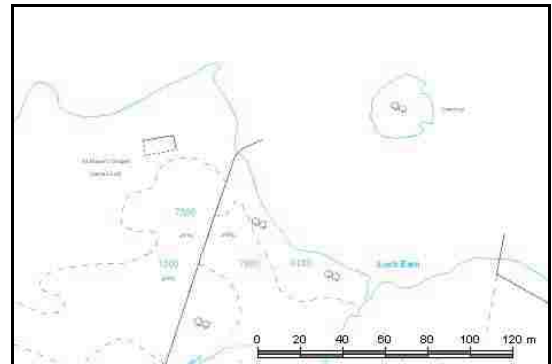
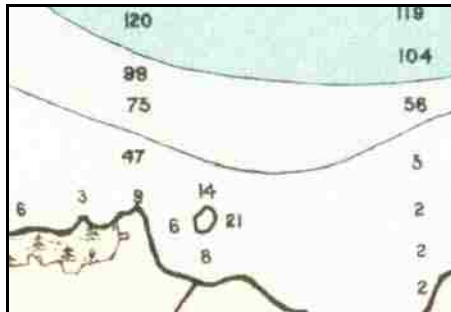


Fig. 06: Left: Upright walling on the south face of the island, with a second section along the east face looking towards the chapel. Shelley 2008.

Fig. 07: Below: Detail of upright walling on the south side of Eilean Craggan. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 08: Left: Outline of probable domestic structure on Eilean Craggan. Shelley 2008.





Fig. 09: Above: Stone jetty below St Blane's Chapel facing directly towards boat noost on Eilean Craggan. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 10: Above left: Upright stone in the east bank of the chapel mound, facing Eilean Craggan. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 11: Above right: East bank of chapel mound from the stone jetty. Shelley 2008.



Fig 12: Left: Eilean Craggan seen from St Blane's Chapel. Shelley 2008.

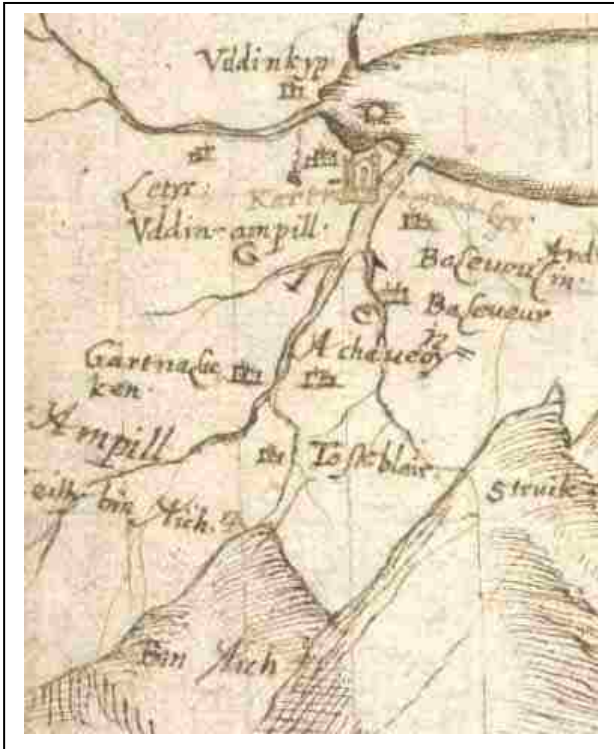
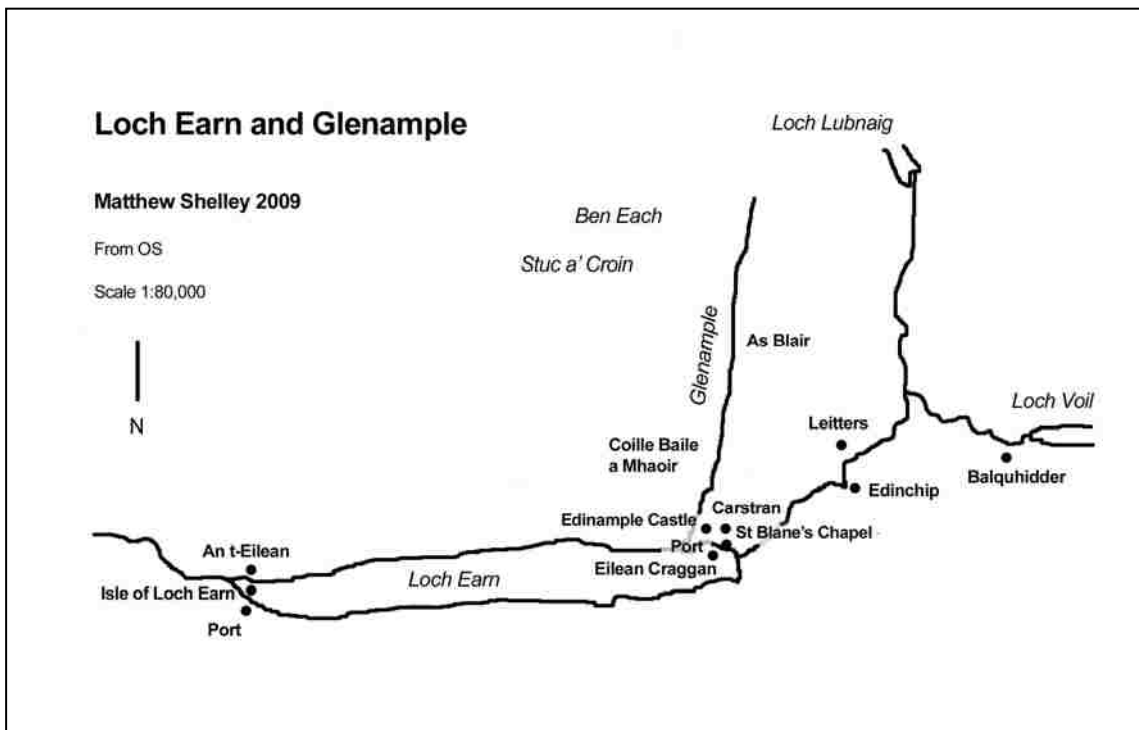


Fig. 13: Left: Detail from Pont 21 showing the Edinample or Glenample estate with Eilean Craggan and Loch Earn
Fig. 14: Below.



Case study B: The Isle of Loch Clunie

The second case study takes a similar approach to the first and uses a variety of contemporary and modern sources to examine the role of the isle of Loch Clunie in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. Like Eilean Craggan it was a high status residence and passed through the control of several locally important figures and families. However, the differences in use and available source material mean the sites provide an excellent contrast. Where Eilean Craggan appears to have been part of secular landholdings, Clunie was part of the properties of the diocese of Dunkeld which covered a large area of central Scotland with 60 parishes north and south of the Forth (Shead, 1999, 123). Where documentary evidence for Eilean Craggan is limited, there is a relative abundance for Clunie including accounts, charters, legal records, maps, historical records and even biographical details of residents. As a scheduled ancient monument there are not the same fieldwork opportunities as at Eilean Craggan (NMRS NO14SW 4.00), but the available data make it possible to establish a history of the island which is highly detailed at certain points. The most significant single source is the *Rentale Dunkeldense* (RD hereafter) which contains accounts of the bishopric from 1505-17 (plus some later material in the appendices) and Alexander Myln's⁴⁹ *Lives of the Bishops* (covering 1483-1517 but principally a biography of Bishop George Brown⁵⁰ who was bishop from 1483-1514). This, along with other documents, allows a partial reconstruction of the role of Clunie as an autonomous household within a wider estate.

- A range of illustrations is provided at the end of this section including modern and historic maps of the area and the loch, photographs of the island and historic pictures.

⁴⁹ Myln (c.1470-1548) was a member of the bishop's household, serving as rural dean for Angus after 1505, became chief clerk and was later abbot of Cambuskenneth and first president of the College of Justice (ODNB, 2007).

⁵⁰ Little is known of Brown's origins but Boardman, who says he was an active proponent of the cult of St George, quotes Keith's assertion that he was the son of the treasurer of Dundee (pers. comm.).

Location

The island appears to be artificial and measures around 50m x 60m above summer water level. It is situated in the Loch of Clunie, in the Perth and Kinross parish of the same name (NO 1132 4401). It is around 10km ENE of the cathedral of Dunkeld, by whose bishops it was held in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The loch is one of a chain that extends along and around the Lunan Burn and is among the best examples of a Lowland river in Tayside (SNH site code 1080). These lochs are of shallow, clear water and are noted by SNH for their biodiversity as they provide a range of wetland habitats. The Loch of Clunie is at 47m above sea level (UKLakes) and is set within gently sloping arable with small areas of woodland. To the immediate south west are the remains of a lochside castle, the parish church and mains farm. To the east is the Loch of Drumellie where there may have been another later Medieval and Early Modern loch settlement (see below and Appendix 3, 93-4). The lands to the south and east tend to be low lying and include the important Late Medieval and Early Modern port settlements of Perth, Dundee and Montrose. To the north are the uplands of the Forest of Clunie and the Forest of Alyth, with the highlands of Glen Almond to the west. As part of the earldom of Atholl it had Strathearn to the south west and the lands of the Campbell of Glenorchy due west. The river Tay, running past Dunkeld, and beyond it the Tummel provided routes into Rannoch.

The Loch of Clunie covers an area of 50.6ha and has a perimeter of 3.2km (UKLakes). The bathymetric survey of 1903 gives it a maximum depth of some 20.4m (M&P). The island itself stands in an exposed area of water in shallows of c.2m-c.3m towards the west side of the loch. An area of deeper water stands between it and the nearest shore. It is on the edge of a rapid drop off into water of around 6.5m to the north. Standing around 150m from the shore it is probable that access has always been by boat, and there are no remaining indications of a causeway. In the north of the loch is a second, much smaller AI which is frequently entirely submerged and has no known history.

The name

The name Loch Clunie, or Loch of Clunie, means loch of the meadow or pasture, reflecting its location next to Clunie Meadow which was traditionally part of the same landholding as the loch and island (Ross, 2001, 50; Watson, 2005, 499).⁵¹ Spellings have varied and it was most often expressed as Cluny or Clony in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The AI tended to simply be known as the island. A series of settlements and features to the west, as well as the parish, also take the name of the loch such as Hillocks of Clunie and the Auld of Clunie.

Physical remains

The island is low lying with a level surface, soft soil, and has a carefully constructed retaining wall round much of the outer edge. In the summer of 2008 parts of the island were little more than 20cm above water level. The island is heavily overgrown in many areas. Dixon conducted a limited underwater survey in 1991 that suggested it is artificial and confirmed its position at the edge of a drop-off into deeper water (EUAD, Ann. Rep. 1991). RCAHMS reports that there is a well-constructed stone quay at the south.⁵²

There are two upstanding structures. A fifteenth and sixteenth century castle (described by the RCAHMS as an L-shaped tower house with extensive eighteenth and nineteenth century renovations) occupies the centre of the island. The main block has three principal stories and the east wing has five. This is in a ruinous state though sketches from the nineteenth century exist (Appendix 3), which give an impression of what it was like before it was gutted by fire in the twentieth century.

The west facing wall of the tower is 11.25m long and has three large windows, each more than 2m high, at first floor level which are said to be eighteenth

⁵¹ The name 'meadow' has now been lost, but former farm manager Jim Webster (pers. comm.) suggests it may have corresponded to an area of around 10-11 acres on the west of the loch just below the Lunan Burn which has good-quality land suitable for arable and rich pasture, but which requires good drainage.

⁵² This was not visible when surveyed by this author in August 2008. However, very high levels of rainfall probably mean it was submerged and that other parts of the island normally visible were also underwater, explaining the difference in shape compared to early OS maps. Former farm manager Jim Webster (pers. comm.) also claims that silting of the outlet has raised the loch level in recent years.

or nineteenth century. The south facing wall is a little less than 8m in length. The single surviving entrance is in the south east re-entrant angle and holds a newel stair that provides access to the main block and the east wing of the tower.⁵³ The east wall of the tower is 5.58m long and the south wall is a little more than 12m long. The walls vary between c.1.5 and c.2m thick at ground level. Below the newel stair is a floor-level gap through into the lowest chamber of the east wing – which is itself on a higher level than the main block. The chamber is roughly rectangular with internal dimensions of 2.7m by 3.05m. It is nearly 5m from the entrance to the vault of the main wing. This may be the vault round which Bishop Brown's early sixteenth century tower was built (see below). It has been divided in two by a later wall with the southern section used as a kitchen. The northern part has stone storage cupboards built against its north and east walls. Light was provided by windows at the north and south. The floors are now gone from the east wing and the floor of the first floor of the main wing appears potentially unsafe, making survey work above ground level too hazardous to attempt. The RCAHMS, however, identified substantial remodelling from the later sixteenth century when additional fireplaces were introduced and pedimented half-dormers were added to the west front, perhaps during the time of the Crichtons (see below).

The second structure is a mortared stone-built, single storey structure identified by the RCAHMS as an eighteenth or nineteenth-century kitchen block (NMRS NO14SW 4.00). This occupies part of the northern area of the island. Later walls, one extending from the kitchen block towards the main tower, the other from the tower towards the kitchen, appear once to have formed another structure with a roof linking the two buildings.

Historical context

The area first appears in the record in the reign of King Kenneth I (d.858) whose lands were ravaged by Norsemen as far as Clunie and Dunkeld (Skene, 1867, 8; Orr Anderson, 1990, Vol. 1. 288). The king had been instrumental in moving relics of St

⁵³ The RCAHMS states that there was a straight-flighted mural stair in the north wall that provided independent access to the first-floor hall and a chamber in the adjoining wing.

Columba to Dunkeld where he built what by 849 was the chief Columban church of his realm (Brown, D, 1997, 114-5; Veitch, 2001, 153). The significance of Clunie, and why it warrants specific reference, is unclear.

The remains of what the RCAHMS describes as a curtain-walled thirteenth-century castle stand on a lochside motte at the nearest point on the shore to the island (NMRS NO14SW 5 centred on NO 11075 44030). This mound may also have been the site of the royal hunting lodge that according to the RCAHMS existed from at least c.1141 and was occupied by King Edward I of England in 1296. In 1291 the castle was in the hands of the Sir John Comyn whose bailie, Hugh de Erth, was recorded as making a payment of £4 to the castellan Patrick Grant (NAS RH5/187). In 1382 a payment was made for work on the tower at Clunie and two years earlier there had been a payment for lead for the king's use there (ER, Vol. 3, 58 and 98). But, in what could have been the reverse of the process at Eilean Craggan, by the fifteenth century the emphasis had shifted from land to island. Whether the two were in use at the same time is unclear but it would appear that the rights and privileges associated with the land castle were later deemed to have moved to the island. A charter of 1306-24 grants Henry Butterwambe (or Winterwambe) the lands and fishings of Clunie (RMS, Vol. 1, P. 466. Doc. 81) and another of 1329-71 sees 'Andree Buttirgask de lacu de Clune Stormond' exchanging the lands of Clunie and Stormont for those of Ballgillie in Forfar (RMS, Vol. 1, P. 573, Index A, 897, Index B, 12). Neither refers to the island. In April 1466, Andrew Gray de Kinnef and his heirs were regranted the loch, lands, castle mount, meadow and superiority of the house of Clunie (RMS, Vol. 2, 183. Doc. 870; ER, Vol. 9, 671). In 1479 an instrument of sasine was made in favour of James Hering of Tulibole of the lands of Clunie, toun of Clunie with loch and island of the same and of the superiority of all tofts and crofts (NAS GD 16/5/3). This was followed in 1488 by a charter by James Hering of Tulibole in favour of his son Andrew Hering of Clunie with the loch and island of the same, reserving liferent to David Hering of Glasclune (NAS GD16/5/6). In 1495 Bishop Brown confirmed a charter by James Hering of Clunie under which he had presented Sir David Hay to the chaplainry of the recently founded altar of Our Lady in the parish church (NAS GD 16/5/10).

Just what structures existed on the island during this period is unclear and it is

also uncertain whether the Herings enjoyed undisputed control. Myln states that 'robbers' had been established on the loch in the time of Bishop Thomas Lauder (bishop from 1452-75) who had plundered victuals on the way from the church of Alyth to Dunkeld and had denied common pasture to tenants (RD, 310).⁵⁴ It is not clear to whom this refers, but in 1479 Walter Stewart was judged to be wrongfully occupying the isle, town, loch and meadow of Clunie. The accusations levelled at the robbers are also similar to those made against James Hering of Clunie in the time of Bishop Brown (RD, 307). A lengthy legal dispute took place that centred on whether the Herings or the Crown and John Stewart, son of Walter (and through them the bishop), had rights to the properties. The Herings lost and were ordered to refund all rents and profits (ALCC, Vol. 2, 493). A final resolution was agreed in October 1501 when Andrew Hering of Glasclune agreed to renounce his claims in return for alternative lands (RMS, Vol. 2, P. 555. Doc. 2608). A series of payments were made which ultimately allowed the bishops to secure the island and lands (RD, 309f).

Once established in control of the island Bishop Brown embarked on a major building programme, creating what is described as a castle (RD, 312). Myln indicates that a substantial stone structure had existed previously by stating that everything except the vault of the greater tower was new. It was not the first project to build a 'tower house' by a bishop of Dunkeld. Indeed Oram (2005, 8) points to Bishop Robert de Cardeny's (1398-1437) rebuilding of the bishop's palace at Dunkeld as illustrating the receptiveness of the episcopate to an architectural form used by secular lords to express their seigneurial authority.⁵⁵ On 10 June, 1504 a chapel of St Catherine was endowed at the Isle of Loch Clunie with two chaplains. Each was granted half the income from lands including the Mains of Clunie and Milton (with brewhouse) and two acres near the south of the loch (NAS GD16/5/13). This guaranteed the availability of literate and numerate men to help with administration (Creighton, 2002, 128). Among them was Patrick Oliphant, chaplain and granitar (RD, 162ff).

⁵⁴ Lauder was a renowned preacher, but faced a difficult time asserting control over the diocese and was reportedly driven from his altar by what are described as bands of Highland robbers (ODNB, 1993, Vol. 9, 638-9).

⁵⁵ Oram (2005, 22) goes on to add that in the medieval mind there was no contradiction in the exercise of secular jurisdiction by a spiritual authority. The church increasingly acted as an office of government. The most potent symbol of lordship for proclaiming a prelate's worldly might was through crenellation.

Brown's settlement did not consist of a solitary tower but a complex of buildings. Myln refers to the island having 'houses'. There were ancillary structures such as a great barn and stables – the latter probably on land. Its facilities were in keeping with substantial country houses of the era as described by Tabraham (1986) with kitchens, a pantry, accommodation for the lord bishop and guests, a hall for entertaining and a granary for storing crops (also see Creighton, 2002, 184; McAleavy, 1998). There are also references to barnyard fowl and a cattle-fold. However, there may have been key differences between Clunie and many land sites which were often more compact, bringing all the elements together within a barmkin wall that kept livestock in and deterred intruders. No evidence survives of a barmkin, which may mean that insularity alone provided sufficient physical and symbolic demarcation in space between the private lordly heart of the estate and the surrounding lands.⁵⁶ This would be in keeping with Johnson's suggestion (2003, 47) that water could act like a ha-ha, allowing people to see across it while still presenting a barrier. However, caution is needed as there is now little evidence of the barmkin that the Campbells of Glenorchy are known to have built at Priory Island after 1475 (Dalglish, 2005, 246). The wooden pallsading round Eilean Mor, at Loch Finlaggan, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also shows that there were alternatives to a stone wall (Caldwell and Ruckley, 2005, 107).

The development of Clunie was in keeping with Creighton's (2002, 110) observation that castles were the focus of huge investment by the Medieval elite. The island, with the associated chapel and chaplaincies, provided a clear statement of Bishop Brown's piety and wealth. The settlement he built provided an important residence during his own lifetime and for a succession of bishops and secular occupants. Indeed, Bishop Brown's biographer claims he regarded it as 'the key to the see of Dunkeld' (RD, 317). The RD and Myln's account of his master's affairs present a picture in which there were years of tranquillity and order, but also a variety of conflicts which not only involved legal disputes but the fear of violence. Between 25 October, 1507 and 4 January, 1508, there was intense activity on the island including labour on 'the roof of the east house between the chapel and the hall' (RD, 170). This underlines that the investment in a substantial country house

⁵⁶ This would be different from the castles of Lochleven and Innis Chonnell which had surrounding walls.

was not just for the initial building but also for upkeep. The bishop was present for some of the time, probably including St Catherine's Day (25 November) which was a time of celebration which saw feasting plus special services in the chapel. Payments were made 'to those visiting this place ... and chanting' (RD, 169). Visits by the bishop could last a number of weeks, but between October 1507 and 1508 he was absent for more than 266 days (RD, 170) and for 53 weeks on another occasion (RD, 177).⁵⁷

One moment of tension Myln describes involved a confrontation near the Bridge of Earn between the bishop, accompanied by 40 horsemen, and Sir James Creichton of Strathord, with a dozen armed men, which nearly descended into a skirmish (RD, 306). Later, in the factionalism that developed after the battle of Flodden (where members of the episcopal household were killed (RD, 315)) Bishop Brown came into conflict with William of Struan. Myln accuses John, earl of Atholl, of failing to sort out the affair. The bishop's niece Matilda was abducted and Brown retired to the island 'with what was left of the household retained for his own control of the castle of Clony, a better Episcopal residence and more easily guarded' (RD, 317). Myln's description of this brief period does much to sum up the value of an island retreat and the bishop's twin identity as a temporal and spiritual lord. He says that the ailing Bishop Brown sought tranquillity in his hour of adversity but kept the nativity with all due honour in his chapel and his hall (RD, 318). Thus the island settlement was seen as a place of relative safety. Bishop Brown suffered a lingering final illness (he had been diagnosed with kidney stones) and died on 14 January, 1514 in his 76th year. Myln says the remnants of the beleaguered household remained loyal after his death. He wrote: 'We remained by him, as did Robert Brown and all his faithful servitors, kinsmen and relatives, in charge of his chests and his cattle' (RD, 320).

Unlike a secular residence, where succession would normally have been to the nearest heir, the death of Bishop Brown brought a period of uncertainty. Gavin Douglas contested the bishopric with Andrew Stewart, brother of the earl of Atholl. Atholl had been able to pressurise the chapter into accepting his kinsman (Watt and Murray, 2003, 130) and took control of Clunie (RD, 189). However Stewart dropped

⁵⁷ The feast day was kept by the household, with a special service, wheat bread and fish. The bishop appears to have been present in some (such as 1507) but not all years.

his claim in 1516 and Douglas (previously Brown's guest on the island while postulate of Arbroath (RD, 188)) was bishop until 1522. Douglas, best known as a poet, referred to Dunkeld as 'a rycht gud Byschopry of rent and the thryd Seyt of the realm' (ODNB, 2007).

In 1524-5 Master John Campbell of Lundie had custody of the house and fortalice of Clunie, on behalf of the Crown, during the vacancy of Dunkeld. His control was unsuccessfully challenged when an order for him to deliver the house within 24 hours was suspended – Campbell was in the king's service at the time (ALCPA, 217). By 1526 Clunie was in the possession of Bishop George Crichton. Tytler's *Life of James Crichton* quoted earlier sources describing the bishop 'as a man nobly disposed, very hospitable, and a magnificent housekeeper; but in matters of religion not much skilled' (2005, 7).

Bishop George tried to shift the 'whole of his portion' of the barony of Clunie estates to his brother, Robert the lord advocate, with a reservation that he could resume their possession at any time (Tytler, 2005, 8). But as the bishop aged there were increasing challenges for his lands and titles. The Crichtons, however, were determined to keep the diocese and Clunie with George offering to resign the bishopric to his nephew Robert. Matters came to a head in 1543 when Robert was appointed coadjutor bishop to assist his uncle and establish himself as the natural successor. John Hamilton, illegitimate brother of the earl of Arran – then regent of Scotland – also claimed the diocese. Hamilton occupied Clunie by force, prompting an appeal by Nicol Crichton in December 1543 'touching the wrong done him [George Crichton] in the taking of his palace of Cluny and stepill of Dunkeld' (Yellowlees, 1990, 75). This dispute was only settled when Hamilton was given the archbishopric of St Andrews after the murder of Cardinal Beaton in 1546. However, another claimant emerged in the form of Donald Campbell and it was only in 1554, when regent of Scotland Mary de Guise recognised Crichton, that he became the undisputed bishop of Dunkeld.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ There are indications of continued insecurity at Clunie, despite the fact that extensive building and maintenance took place under the Crichtons (RD, 360). During Robert's reign there were payments for 24lbs of pulder (gunpowder) for Clunie for £4 16s and swords for Alexander and George Crichton and William Murdoch. Two hagbutts were also purchased and a total of 56s was paid for iron and workmanship to repair artillery – though this may not have been for Clunie (RD, 352). Accounts of 1558 include a payment of 10s for ten locks and keys for Clunie. Gear was sent from Perth, and furniture from Dunkeld, with a George Crichton and Robert Boyd being sent to look after it all. A sum

Around the time of the Reformation the Crichtons, who were firmly associated with the Catholic cause, did all they could to secularise Clunie and its lands (ODNB, 2007). Around 1560 agreement was gained from the chapter of Dunkeld to transfer Clunie from the bishop to Robert Crichton of Eliock, the queen's advocate (ODNB, 2007). The shift of tenure was designed to avoid annexation in the Reformation while continuing to allow full access for the bishop. This appears to have been acceptable to the chapter of a diocese where Catholic sympathies remained strong throughout the 1560s. Indeed, Yellowlees (1990, 75) says Bishop Crichton acted as the focus of religious conservatism.⁵⁹ His chaplains at Clunie, David Henry and Henry Mow, were among the diocesan clergy who maintained the Mass (Yellowlees, 1990, 80). In 1562 the bishop chose Clunie the safest place to meet Nicholas De Gouda, leader of the first Jesuit mission to Scotland (Yellowlees, 1993, 52). Security was strict, De Gouda arrived disguised as an Italian banker's clerk, and Crichton refused to discuss anything but financial matters.⁶⁰

According to the ODNB there was a further property transfer in 1566, this time to the six-year-old James Crichton. One tradition has James born on the island in 1561 and it is likely he spent much of his childhood there before heading to Italy and fame as the 'admirable' Crichton.⁶¹ Bishop Robert Crichton was dead by 27 June, 1576, by which time the Protestant kirk had been making strenuous efforts to reform Dunkeld and its recusant clergy. In 1579 came confirmation of the charter of James Paton bishop of Dunkeld – a Protestant – to James Crichton for the lands of Clunie (RMS, Vol. 4, 791; RD, 279-80). It described the properties associated with the island as the castle, chapel, east croft, meadows, lake, old castle mound, lands of the brewhouse of Concragy, of Adamstoun, Craigend, Concragy, the mill of Mylntoun of Concragy, Drumellie, and all else that pertained to them. James was killed in, or following, a sword fight in Mantua in 1581 aged 22, but there was uncertainty about his fate for some time and his father's will of 1582 still anticipated

of 7s, 6d was paid to Tom Wright for putting in the locks, mending doors and making beds (RD, 359). At this point six males of the Chrichton name, four other named men, five masons and Wright were left at Clunie by the bishop.

⁵⁹ Bishop Robert was a prominent figure among the Castilians, supporters of Mary, Queen of Scots, an armed faction which held Edinburgh Castle in the early 1570s (OBDN, 2007).

⁶⁰ Dilworth (1984, 116) however says that De Gouda reported back that the bishop had planned to provide Catholic preaching and sacraments at Easter but had been overruled by Queen Mary.

⁶¹ James' signature certainly appears on a deed dated 20 June, 1575.

his return (RD, 275). The lord advocate was not a man of great wealth despite his high office. James was to be his principal beneficiary, followed by his younger son Robert. His daughters Marie and Grissell were each to get two years' profits from the lands of Clunie as tocher, and a third named Elspeth also benefited. In the event Clunie and Eliock passed to Robert, who was not an adult at the time of James' death.

Robert, despite being knighted, had an ultimately disastrous career, during which he was accused of the murder of the laird of Moncoffer (Tytler, 2005, 162ff). In 1590-1 Robert was confirmed in the lands of Clunie old castle, loch, island plus the lands of Drumellie. In 1591 Sir Robert kidnapped his half-sister Marion who was under the care of Henry Stirling of Ardoch (his brother in law) and her tutor, and stepmother Isobel of Borthwick (Tytler, 2005, 165). He refused to appear to answer charges and was declared a rebel. By 1593 there was charter of Robert Crichton to James Stewart, lord of Ballachane, for the lands and barony of Clunie, with meadow, lake, castle and manor on the lake, plus the lands of Drumellie (RMS, Vol. 6, P. 6. Doc. 18). Sir Robert's lands were forfeited when he failed to answer a summons to appear before the king in 1602. Tytler adds that was accepted back into royal favour, and his lands appear to have been returned, but ruined his comeback when he committed an assault in the king's presence at St Andrews.

Around this time the loch and island are recorded by Pont whose manuscript map (23(2)) shows the island with 'The Peel of Kluny' along with the loch, church and mains. Text also ascribed to Pont then indicates that the Hering family had reasserted themselves at Clunie. Part of the text says 'the loch of Cluny which hath ane Iland and a good dwelling therein pertyning to the lard of Lethyndie ... Lethindie pertyning to the Herings' (TNS/Pont, 134v-135r). While most of Pont's survey work is dated to the 1580s and 90s, this reference could suggest a period around 1608. In early 1608, Sir Robert Crichton wadset the lands and lordship of Clunie to Sir David Hering of Glasclune. The lands were subsequently passed to William Stewart of Dowallie in around 1617 (NAS GD16/5/128). Around 1619 there was legal action by James Ramsay of Arbeckie against Sir David Hering over the lands of Clunie and barony of Lethendy (NAS GD16/5/143). However, in 1623 Joan Stewart of Dowallie is named as holding lands including the Mains of Clunie, island and loch (RMS, Vol.

8. P. 188. Doc. 553). A significant change of emphasis may have taken place by the middle of the century with the heart of the estate shifting from the island back to the land. In 1653 a grant was made to Katherine Nairn and James Ogilvie of Muirtoone, her husband, of the Mains of Clunie with the new dovecote, the loch, fishings, old castle and the island and castle in the loch (RMS, Vol. 10, P. 69f. Doc. 135).

Later in the century the island briefly became the focus of military activity when a Jacobite band opposed to the deposition of James VII and II took refuge there after raiding the area round Balquhiddar. The loch was surrounded by pro-government forces and the Jacobites, who included Lord Dunkeld, Major Menzies and gentlemen of Angus, surrendered through lack of provisions (Balfour-Melville, 1955, 287-90).

In 1723 the lands, island and castle were part of the dowry of Margaret, eldest daughter of the pro-government David Ogilvy, when she married into the Jacobite house of Atholl (Wilson, 1924, Vol 2, 154). James Stobie's map of Perthshire, dated 1783, shows the castle intact (NLS Maps). In the OSA the Reverend William McRitchie (Vol. 9, 231) provides a detailed description of the island and its functions towards the end of the century. He wrote of it as an 'old castle, in good repair, an occasional summer residence of the earl of Airlie, who is superior of the loch, proprietor of the barony of Clunie and first heritor of the parish'. He continued: 'Around the verge of this island are old ashes and planes, that have withstood the storms of some hundred years, yet still continue to vegetate.' (OSA, Vol. 9, 232). There may have been a period of neglect as McRitchie states that herons used to nest there 'but not since the late reparation of the castle' (OSA, Vol. 9, 235). At this point the castle was a fishing residence for several weeks a year and appreciated for the views of the loch and glen from the dining room. The fishing net was only used when the Airlie family was in residence but local gentlemen were allowed to use rods. The OSA also refers to a kitchen garden and nursery on the western shore of the loch with a recently enclosed orchard. By this time the chapel was a ruin and had been replaced by a kitchen and a gardener trenching in the area had recently discovered human bones (OSA, Vol. 9, 232). McRitchie says repairs were made to the island because waves had made 'visible encroachments' on the north east side and laid bare the tree roots, which may be one of the last references to structural work on an AI

(OSA, Vol. 9, 232). It was also recorded that high waters swamped the island following a rapid thaw in February 1788 which left it 2ft underwater. The NSA has an entry by the Reverend George Millar who said the castle was still owned by the earl of Airlie (Vol. 10, 1025) and the 1864 OS survey shows Clunie Castle as an extensive complex and refers to site of St Catherine's Chapel.

Estate and household in the early sixteenth century

Thanks to the RD and other sources there is an unusually good opportunity to examine the role of a loch settlement while it was in use. The following section reconstructs aspects of the household and lands associated with Clunie under Bishop Brown. It also looks at how Clunie interacted with the wider locality and considers the architecture and location of Clunie in relation to the surrounding physical and human geography. The bishopric of George Brown is also of interest because it offers insights into the aims of a new proprietor. He was a man with a number of choices over how to organise and administer his possessions and rather than move to land he opted to invest heavily in the renewal of the island settlement.

Brown's career, even accounting for the partiality of his biographer, does not point to a visionary figure. Rather, he was an able and reforming administrator and a solid churchman who lived within the norms of his era. There is no evidence to suggest that his choice to redevelop the island at Clunie, or the sort of settlement he created, were seen as unusual. Indeed, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century saw construction projects at a variety of island sites (see below). The creation of the chapel (dedicated to St Catherine) with two chaplains was noteworthy, but very much in keeping with the options available to an ecclesiastical figure with large resources who wished to demonstrate his piety and have administrators available for his estates. Something that is, perhaps, unusual about Brown is his vigour in embarking on a large construction project when he was in his 60s. But the importance of Clunie is that it fits within social norms and accepted practices rather than being exceptional.

Clunie was an elite country residence of a type that has many parallels with Tabraham's findings (1988, 269) from excavations at Threave, with the occupiers

requiring a variety of buildings, rather than a solitary tower, to meet their needs. As such it acted as a clear visual statement that the owner was of the same elite status as the possessors of similarly grand sites. Many of its elements would have been readily recognised by lords across several centuries throughout the British Isles. Gerald of Wales (2004, 150) recalled his twelfth-century childhood at Manorbier Castle, in Pembroke, with fishponds beneath the walls, streams, nearby church, orchard, and watermill.

Having said this, one of the particular attractions for Brown, and others using islands, may have been the added physical security. Humans normally need boats or rafts to cross lochs. Water is a mediated space and if the occupants of the island control the boats they can do much to determine access, bringing a sense of safety. This is demonstrated by two historical accounts. In June 1654 General George Monck arrived at Loch Tay where Priory Island was occupied by a royalist garrison under the command of Captain Donald Robertson (Firth, 1899, 134ff). The royalists were initially defiant, having seized all the boats in Loch Tay (Firth, 1899, 149; Gillies, 2005, 154-56). Their determination evaporated when the Commonwealth troops hauled boats upriver and prepared rafts to storm the island. The surrender agreement stated that the garrison would not damage the boats, buildings or defences of the island. In 1685 the rebellious earl of Breadalbane tried to assert control over lines of communication by sending a party to gather the 18 to 20 boats on Loch Awe and secure them at Kilchurn (Appendix 3, 80-2), Innis Chonnell or Fraoch Eilean (Campbell, 2004, Vol. 3, 43).

In the cases of Clunie and Craggan there are good reasons to think that security was an issue for the occupants. The 'Tower of Clunie' is cited in Blaeu's *Atlas Novus* Volume V (1654, 88ff) as one of the principal strengths of Perthshire which indicates that contemporary society perceived it as a place of military potential. It would certainly be wrong to underestimate the difficulty that armed men faced in crossing the 150m from the shore to Clunie isle or even the 61m to Eilean Craggan. The high, thick-walled tower at Clunie might also point to the settlement having been built with strength in mind. This might be reinforced by the references to purchases of swords and gunpowder. Loch islands provided settings that were suited to passive defence. Tabraham describes a series of features that castle builders

wanted to include (1986, 17-18) and among them were high, thick stone walls to protect from fire and missiles. Engineers looked for means to prevent an enemy getting close and either undermining or scaling the walls; moats and ditches could achieve this – as could lochs. A small island provided readily controllable space which could be difficult for attackers to access without putting themselves at great risk. Even as military technology became more advanced, islands could be of value. During the Civil Wars of the mid-seventeenth century the Isle of Loch Tay was regarded as a better defensive point than the land-based castle of Balloch because it avoided the risk of a petard being used to blow the gates in a surprise attack (NAS GD112/39/68/27). And while neither Clunie nor Eilean Craggan have obvious remains of potentially defensive outer walls, Tabraham (1988, 273) believes insularity itself lessened the need for them.

At the same time there are good reasons for caution over the extent to which castles – let alone sites like Eilean Craggan – were military structures (Creighton, 2002; Johnson, 2003; McKean, 2004).⁶² However the history of Clunie demonstrates that assaults and violence were a realistic concern. The instances mentioned in the RD show that the main worries for Bishop Brown and others were of small-scale attacks aimed at asserting control over lands, kidnap or robbery – in the case of Sir Robert Crichton it may also be that the island was a refuge from reprisals for his own predations. The recorded counter measures include the choice of an island location, thick walls, yetts, strong doors, locks and watchmen. What is noticeable is that the security measures seem proportionate to the threat – a view supported by the fact that they were largely successful. They might also support a view that as a place of strength Clunie was a secure location more than a military fortification.

The island's place in the immediate land and waterscape placed it in specific relationship with neighbouring structures and people. The old royal castle was a visible reminder of the past. The parish church, the other major centre of authority in Late Medieval and Early Modern Scotland, stood by the loch and Gibbet Knowes, which may be a reminder of a judicial function, is nearby. In his final illness Bishop Brown was said to have had his beard trimmed so he would die looking better-kempt

⁶² While Johnson's observations that water features may well have had aesthetic value, their role in providing security cannot be dismissed in the same way as he attempts with the moat at Bodiam Castle (2002, 24).

than a man named Makay executed the day before (RD, 318). Close by were the meadow (used for growing oats as well as hay despite its name (RD, 185, 186 and 190)) and the kirklands which were farmed directly from the island. There was also the tenanted mains farm. As such the island was the key component in a landscape of power. It was an active and visible centre of administration and control of extensive lands stretching south-west of the loch, and beyond to Dunkeld. Myln highlights that Brown was able to ride from Dunkeld to Clunie any of four ways without leaving his own lands or those of his canons (RD, 310). With landholding being a prime expression of power, the ability to move substantial distances without being beholden to anyone else made a significant statement about his wealth and status.

The bishop was lord, landlord, spiritual father to much of the community around him and Clunie, with its associated structures, was the physical embodiment and expression of his position – and that of those who existed in relation to him. It was a place of comfort and leisure where the bishop, his relatives and guests could enjoy the material and social benefits of wealth and power. In keeping with Creighton's model (2002) it was also a centre of social and economic activity, it was on important lines of communication for the proprietor, it asserted social control, was close to demesne lands, gave access to resources and made use of water for a variety of functions. The fact of controlled entry and staged access, from land to water and back again, also fits Johnson's picture (2003) of a place that uses space – and permission to cross boundaries – as a marker of status and power and where topographical settings are manipulated to make a deliberate impression on the visitor. The visiting Jesuit missionary, De Gouda, could not ride into a courtyard and, like anyone else, had to forgo his autonomy and rely on the bishop's boatman to transport him from shore to isle. Disembarkation was at a predetermined point – the pier – which meant that access and egress was controlled. Some island castles, such as Loch an Eilean or Lochindorb, had landing places and gates – though there is no indication of the latter at Clunie. In either case the role of water might be interpreted as adding to Johnson's view (2003, 72) that entrances were intended to make the guest feel vulnerable.

Clunie was also a major local economic hub providing permanent employment and opportunity for some, and also hiring men, women and children for

a variety of tasks from working on the land to carrying out building and repairs. Clunie was organised according to a pyramidal structure with the bishop, whether present or absent, at its peak. There were several key elements to the estates – the demesne lands (including lochs, orchard and gardens) which were directly managed and lands which were rented out, feued or otherwise held by others from which rents or tithes were due. There was livestock, mainly sheep and cattle, which were raised on demesne or other lands plus working animals such as horses and oxen. There was the household and hired labour; in some cases the distinction was blurred due to multiple roles and the close relationship of some local families to Clunie. The granary was the repository for agricultural produce coming in where it was held for consumption on the estate or onward distribution. The kitchens were responsible for food consumed by the household, guests and some temporary workers and for some which was for onward distribution. The chapel was an autonomous centre of minor consumption of goods and the provision of spiritual services.

The socio-economic relationships centred on the island were sophisticated: it was a place of consumption, habitation, spirituality and labour – by hand and by brain. When the bishop was present it was also a centre of leisure, hospitality and sometimes of church and secular politics. The level of sophistication can be seen from the flow of produce and/or finished goods in and out of Clunie (see below).

The way Clunie functioned and how people related to it was strongly influenced by the surrounding waters. There were a series of orders for boats and boat repairs in the RD (using the services of men like boatwright John Tempilman, alias Cowper, who worked at Clunie and Dunkeld and of Thomas Wright) and the construction of a pier (by Hugh McBre) (RD, 126, 163, 183 and 184). Any goods or people moving back or forth from the island could only do so by water; some came from substantial distances. Peat was brought from the Forest of Clunie (RD, 163) and six men delivered lead from Dundee (RD, 178). An extensive variety of goods was required by the household such as eight carriages of dried sea fish (RD, 174), hemp and cork for fishing nets⁶³ (RD, 217, 226 and 228), soap and heather (RD, 179-80), plus salt, sugar candy, candles and dishes for the kitchen (RD, 222). In some cases the quantities were large: in 1507-08 there was a payment for 830 loads of peat and a

⁶³ Lines with hooks are also recorded in 1558 (RD, 355).

further 1,436 in late 1511 or early 1512 (RD, 167 and 179). As with visitors, foodstuffs, rents in kind or household furnishings could not simply be driven or carried through a gate. Each had to undergo an additional stage of being loaded into a boat, rowed to the island and unloaded again and references to a large/great boat (RD, 183) suggest there may have been a transport vessel for bulk items. While there is nowhere named as a port, the pier occupied this role and was the place where men were paid to deliver goods such as peat or gunpowder (RD, 187).

The loch thus played a multiple role as a security barrier and a means by which to express status through use of the land and waterscape. The additional labour involved in transportation also demonstrated the wealth of the proprietor.⁶⁴ The loch also had a nutritional function as is demonstrated by the employment of a household fisherman, Walter George, who also worked at the 'outer lochs' such as the Drumellie and Rae Loch (RD, 174). Fish played a role in both the diet and economy of the household and were sometimes used as part payment for labourers in Clunie Meadow and especially important for a clerical household in terms of observing dietary restrictions (Ditchburn, 2000, 139-40).

Water was important to the household and the diocesan estates more generally. The bishopric owned the boathouse at Capeth which provided a ferry service across the Tay. Payments are recorded to boat keeper Donald Bernard in 1506 for carrying stone across the river for use at Clunie (RD, 78). Timber was also required for building projects. There are accounts for payment to parties, including one led by Sir⁶⁵ Thomas Greig (RD, 129), that had travelled to Loch Rannoch to collect timber and float it across the loch, possibly then transporting it to Dunkeld along the Tummel then the Tay.

The meadow and kirkland (and the autonomous but linked mains) meant there was considerable productive capacity closely associated with the island. The granitars (Sir Patrick Oliphant, Sir James Henrison and Sir John Balbirny) and avenars/stablemen (William Erwyne and John Fode) followed annual cycles in which they oversaw the growing, harvesting, collection and distribution of barley, oats and hay and the sale of surplus (RD, 168). Substantial amounts of labour were required

⁶⁴ There may also have been an idea, as argued by Johnson (2003, 47), that reflections in the water would exaggerate the scale of the castle.

⁶⁵ The designation indicates a priest who does not have a degree in theology rather than a knight.

for these and other tasks, such as manuring, ploughing, harrowing and cleaning of crops – ridding them of weeds (RD 163, 183 and 187). Haystacks and stables had to be watched and workhorse and ox teams managed (RD, 184 and 186). There was also structural work like the digging of drainage ditches, the demolition and reconstruction of dykes (for sheep and cattle folds) and purchase or mending of equipment like harrows or ploughs (RD, 164, 179, 180 and 186).

In addition to arable and fish, the directly controlled lands had an orchard and gardens, with professional gardeners (see below). The household at Clunie also had direct oversight of sheep and cattle production – and the farmyard birds may have been in the keeping of fowler and falconer Walter Stewart (RD, 172, 182 and 184). The numbers of sheep were substantial, with Duncan Cokkis and John Admagw described as shepherds in Clunie answerable for a flock of 284 (RD, 183 and 275). Flocks may have been kept at more than one place: Cragend is named, while cattle are recorded at Inschevin (RD, 142 and 163). Sheep were used for a variety of purposes, with some given to the reapers of the meadow while others were delivered to the kitchens (RD, 276-7). During this period they were often used as rent in kind (Gemmill and Mayhew, 1995, 265).

The processing of animals was carried out at Clunie, with livestock slaughtered there and, in the case of marts⁶⁶, salted for storage and later consumption (RD, 65 and 66). This was probably a duty of Ewen the cook who was responsible for feeding the household and making sure there was adequate and appropriate provision whether the bishop was present or not. This was especially important as some workers were partly paid with meals. Thus Clunie was not simply about primary production of raw materials but also transformation into a secondary and/or finished form. A mill was available to turn grains into flour, allowing for the production of items like wheat bread for the feast of St Catherine (RD, 185). Of particular importance was the production of ale (RD, 168, 174 and 182), for which Clunie provided the barley to a number of people in the area. Mariot Browne and Janet Erwyne are described as the bishop's brewsters in Clunie, a role frequently occupied by women (RD, 171). Ale was consumed on occasions like St Catherine's Day – four gallons (RD, 173) – or more generally provided for the household and

⁶⁶ Cattle fattened for slaughter in late November as winter food.

labourers – 11 gallons for haymakers (RD, 173 and 185). The amounts brewed indicate small-scale but regular production with Janet Erwyne having to answer for around seven bolls of barley, and Mariot Browne around six, in the accounts of 4 January, 1508 to 22 June, 1509, which was enough by Gemmill and Mayhew's calculations (1995, 177-80) for around 130 gallons.

The relationship between Clunie and the community was often complex. Members of the bishop's household were not necessarily confined to one place, set of responsibilities or source of income. The painter William Wallange (RD, 18, 137 and 270) worked across the bishop's properties; the granitar Sir John Balbirny was also a chaplain, the butler Henry Bannerman (RD, 188) was recorded at Dunkeld and Clunie; brewer Mariot Browne also acted as washerwoman (a role also performed by Bessie Mortimer (RD, 179, 226)) and was paid for the delivery of linen (RD, 61 and 170). Hugh McBre, alias Stewart, kept cattle in the summer as well as building dykes in the loch, repairing and watching the stables (RD, 184 and 187) and John Skougall, servitor at Clunie, received a weekly allowance of meal and was also a brewer and quarrier (RD, 174 and 286). Clunie was served not just by household members, but relied on substantial amounts of labour, often drawn from the surrounding tenantry. This provided considerable flexibility to respond to seasonal demands and the upsurge in requirements when the bishop and his guests were present.⁶⁷ And while McAleavy's description of the Medieval castle in the absence of its lord (1998, 8) gives the impression of somewhere left to simply tick over with a skeleton staff, Clunie was highly active.⁶⁸ Its complement of staff (sometimes roles were combined or people worked between Clunie and Dunkeld) included:

- Granitar – looking after many household needs, plus collecting rents and distributing produce.
- Two chaplains – who drew livings from lands assigned to the chapel of St Catherine and acted as secular administrators as well as priests.
- Avenar – looking after oats, barley, animal fodder and horses (sometimes referred to as a stableman).

⁶⁷ One of the few insights we have of numbers of guests is that priests in spiritual and secular roles – including his scribe - eight lairds, his apothecary (Thomas Brown), 'and many others' were gathered at the time of the bishop's death (RD, 319).

⁶⁸ When Bishop Crichton departed the island on 27 June, 1558 – during a period of construction – he is said to have left up to 25 people behind (RD, 357).

- Avenar's assistant – other servitors would have assistants who would not necessarily appear in the written record.
- Shepherd – in practice the sheep may have been cared for by a variety of people, with Duncan Cokkis having overall responsibility.
- Cook – who also acted as slaughterman.
- Gardener.
- Butler – in charge of ale and drink.
- Fowler.
- Brewster/s.
- Servitors – a description applied to people carrying out a variety of functions.

These were supplemented on a regular or ad hoc basis by skilled and unskilled labourers such as ploughmen, reapers, harvesters, watchmen (and boys), crop cleaners, carpenters, masons, quarriers, smiths and others. Such roles were sometimes occupied by members of households already closely linked to Clunie, with Hugh McBre's son employed to watch hay stacks (RD, 187). Clunie was a source of welfare as well as work. Household members, such as Bessie Mortimer (RD, 180) and John Skougall (RD, 202), were supported during periods of illness and alms were given to the poor (RD, 187). And when the bishop died there were legacies for a number of servitors and friends (RD, 149). During his lifetime the granitars and avenars at Clunie had been responsible for the collection of victuals, and sometimes money, from a number of sources (see below).⁶⁹ These were principally from the tenants of lands within a few miles of Clunie (for example the parish of Lethendy) but in the accounts of 4 January, 1512 to 28 December, 1513 included the victual of the parish church of Alyth (RD, 181). These victuals could be used for direct consumption by the household, as payment to workers or some might be sent to Dunkeld. Equally the granitar at Dunkeld sometimes sent victuals to Clunie. The bishopric had other property interests in the area (see below) which extended beyond those overseen by the granitars and avenars at Clunie.

The island's administrative machinery oversaw tenants of secular lands and the collecting of teinds on behalf of the bishop. As an administrative reformer Bishop Brown split his diocese into four rural deaneries, collecting certain rents and fines,

⁶⁹ Some areas are now difficult to identify such as Burronstoun (RD, 179) though this was probably close to Clunie.

from around 1505 (RD, XVIII) with Clunie falling into Angus.⁷⁰ The episcopal lands were combined into two baronies, those north of the Forth forming Dunkeld and those to the south Aberlady (RD, XIX). At the time of the Reformation the diocese had 69 parish churches, many appropriated to the cathedral (Yellowlees, 1990, 74). Appendix II of the RD, showing rentals from the *Book of Assumptions*, gives an idea of the extent of the bishopric's holdings. It names 45 temporal holdings and divisions many of which were feud (RD, 341) and some, like Fordie were split between two or more tenants. It also had the livings of 15 kirks, some with mains (RD, 340-1), many of which are set to temporal landlords. The values of the holdings vary considerably but the Mains of Clunie was set at £16 and Drumellie at £5 (RD, 343). Dunkeld's property interests were widespread – extending north and south of the Forth – at this time, with the bishop having houses in Perth and Edinburgh and having the rent of Castle Campbell and lands in Dollar (RD, 343). A considerable concentration of temporal and ecclesiastical properties from which the bishopric drew rent was in the area close to Dunkeld and Clunie as can be seen from the illustration below.⁷¹

A considerable diocesan income flowed in through the rural deans. The accounts were often rendered at Dunkeld, but those of 19 October, 1510 to 31 December, 1511 were at Clunie. They included crops valued at £32 in 1506 and 1507. Considerably larger sums came in through the granitar of Dunkeld. Again, these were not always rendered at Dunkeld, but reflected the movements of the bishop so were at Clunie on 26 November, 1511 (RD, 111). The accounts of the granitar of Clunie tended to be rendered on the island, demonstrating its autonomy as an administrative centre. There was a marked distinction in the scale of economic activity and financial responsibilities between Dunkeld and Clunie. This is reflected in the financial expenditure. From 25 August, 1505 to 7 September, 1506 this amounted to £43 8s 1d (ordinary) 23s 2d (extraordinary) compared to £395 6s 10d for the bishop's whole estate, of which £196, 10s, 5d (ordinary) and £4, 6s, 1d (extraordinary) was by Dunkeld (RD, 60). This ratio was more, or less, consistent over the years. Between 11 April, 1513 and 20 April, 1514 there were total expenses of £456, 18s, 4d over the estate, including £233 5s 1½d by Dunkeld and £96, 20d

⁷⁰ The others were Perth, Lothian and Dunkeld.

⁷¹ This illustration probably understates the number of properties in the area as some are now difficult to identify.

from Clunie, which is recorded as a superexpenditure of £20 19s 4d.

Conclusions

Clunie was a place of some importance from at least the ninth century. The role of the island, however, is only known from the fifteenth century after the eclipse of the land-based former royal castle. At this point it was in secular hands, although the bishopric of Dunkeld may have had some form of claim to the island and surrounding estates. From the opening of the sixteenth century to beyond the Reformation it was a significant residence for a succession of bishops of Dunkeld, after which it returned to secular control.

Even without evidence of earlier use, the available information provides an extensive biography for an island site with a multi-faceted identity. It was a place of security, where one beleaguered bishop went to die, another tried to resist the Reformation and where cornered Jacobites attempted a stand. The use of the loch points to a rational response to the real and potential risks of the Late Medieval and Early Modern world.

Actual violence seems to have been rare and small-scale and for most of the time the island residence fulfilled functions other than as a place of physical security. One was as a country residence within easy reach of the heart of the diocese of Dunkeld and all the necessary foodstuffs and luxuries were available for a seigneurial residence where guests of similar or equal status could be entertained.

The isle of Loch Clunie was also an economic, social and religious hub. Its structures were in a highly visible position in the landscape as an affirmation of the hierarchical nature of the contemporary world in which the powerful exploited topography to express their authority. The island settlement, slightly detached from nearby land, was at the apex of a local social and economic structure. This was symbolised in part by the use of water as a mediated space and by the control of access.

The island was a source of land and livelihoods through tenancies, employment, purchase of goods and giving of charity. The bishop and his household provided a market for local and non-local goods. They also provided opportunities

for skilled and educated labour from gardeners to administrators. In physical terms the island provided an appropriate division between the source and subjects of authority. This was visual, thanks to the loch; experiential, due to the need to cross water; and assertive, owing to the impressive character of large stone structures.

As such Clunie was a place of power in a landscape which could be read by literate and illiterate alike as readily as the religious messages of a church fresco. Goods and produce of many kinds were delivered, stored, consumed, redistributed or traded from the island. Labour was directly organised from the settlement. Rents, fines, teinds and other fees went, directly or indirectly, to pay for its upkeep, to members of the household and to the diocese and its clergy. This is another fundamental characteristic of Clunie – that it was part of a larger social network. While it was a primary centre in many lives – administering substantial estates – it was ultimately secondary, providing a pleasant retreat and an effective means for the bishops of Dunkeld to organise their broader and greater authority and interests.



Fig. 15: Above: The Isle of Loch Clunie. Shelley 2008.

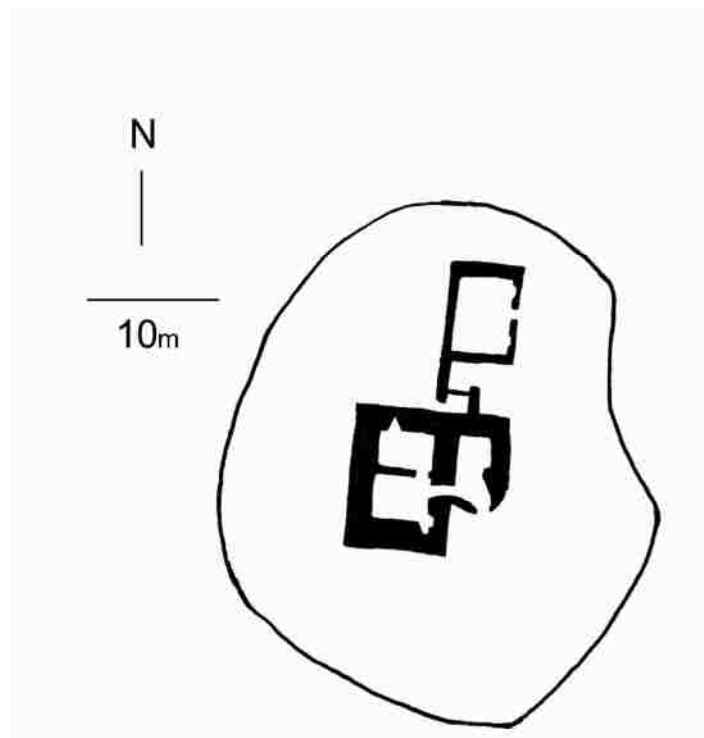


Fig. 16: Left: Isle of Loch Clunie surveyed by Shelley 2008. The main tower is to the south. A single remaining entrance exists through the later east tower. The structure to the north appears to have been a domestic structure or kitchens and probably dates from the nineteenth century.

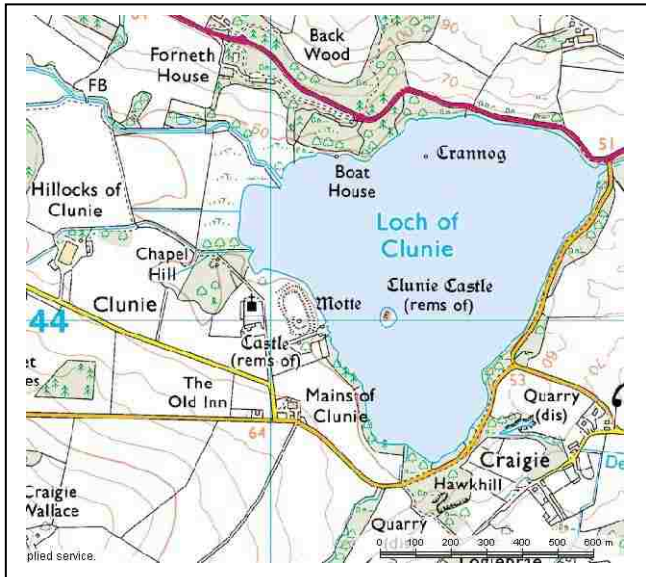


Fig. 17: Left: The Isle of Loch Clunie and surrounding area, detail of OS map at a scale of 1:10,000.

Fig. 18: Below left: The island and surrounding loch bed from M&P bathymetric survey of 1903.

Fig. 19: Below: Detail of island from OS map at 1:2000.

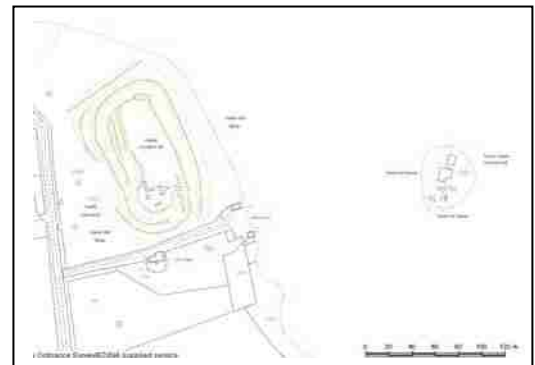
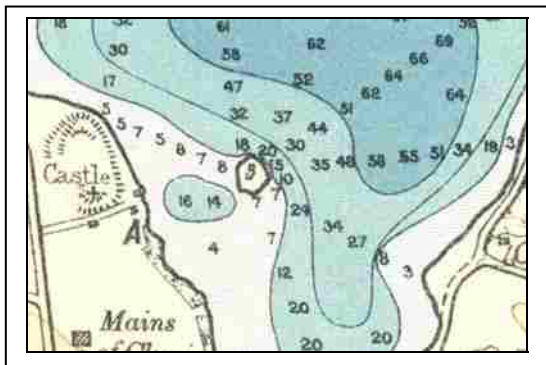


Fig. 20: Above left: The entrance to the residence on the Isle of Loch Clunie. Shelley 2008
 Fig. 21: Above right: The top of the spiral staircase which linked the upper floors of the main and the east towers. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 22: Left: View up inside the east tower from the ground floor. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 23: Above: The windows of the first floor hall in the main tower. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 24: Above left: The old kitchens in the ground floor vault of the main tower. Shelley 2008.
Fig. 25: Above right: Barrel vaulted ceiling of the ground floor of the main tower. Shelley 2008.



Fig. 26: Above: Sketch of Clunie from 1849 (Scran).

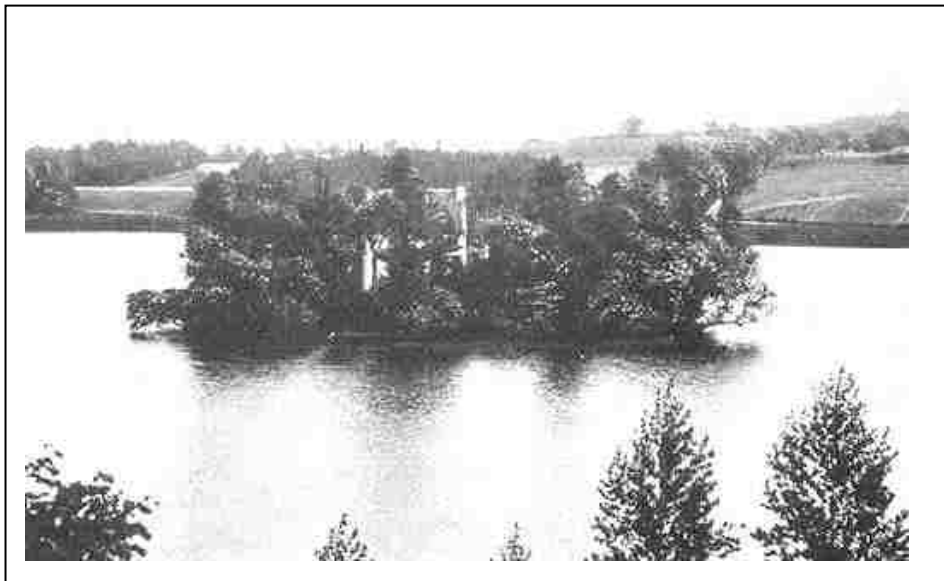
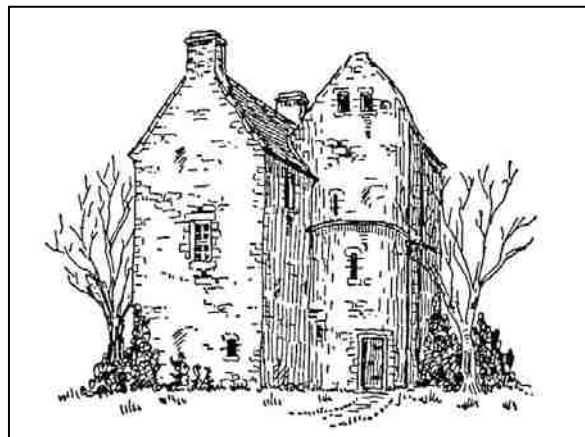


Fig. 27: Above:
Photograph of the Isle of
Loch Clunie from 1885
(Scran).

Fig. 28: Right: 1960s
pencil sketch of the the
residence showing the
east tower and entrance to
the right.



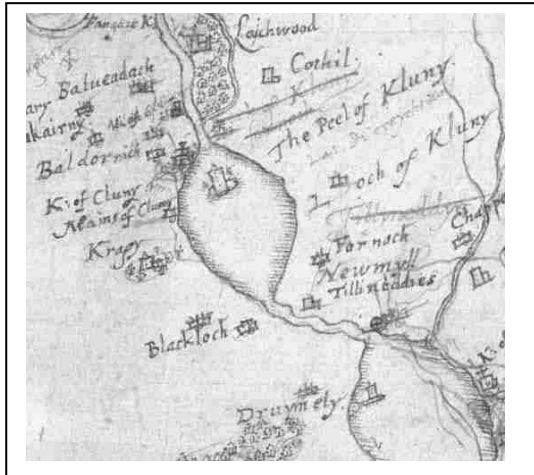


Fig. 29: Left: Detail from Pont 23(2) showing what it refers to as the Peel of Kluny.



Fig. 30: Right: Detail from the Blaeu atlas showing the settlements on the lochs of Clunie and Drumellie.

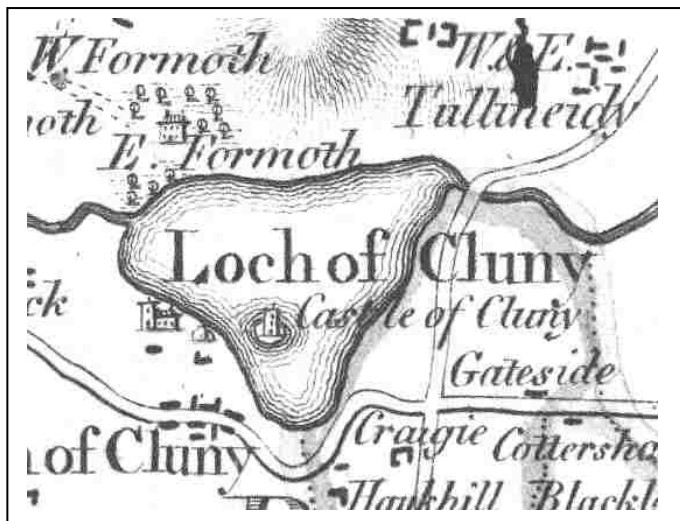


Fig. 31: Left: Detail from Stobie's map of 1783 showing the loch and residence.

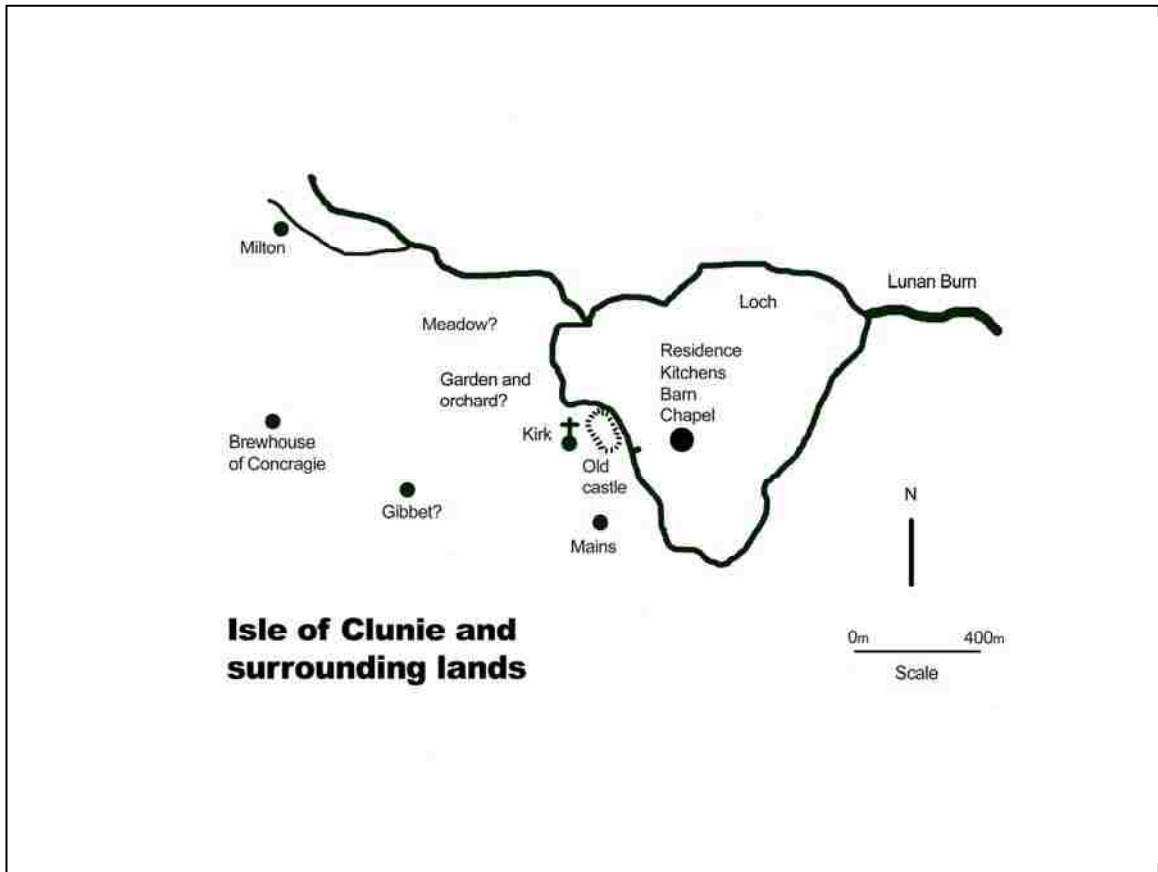
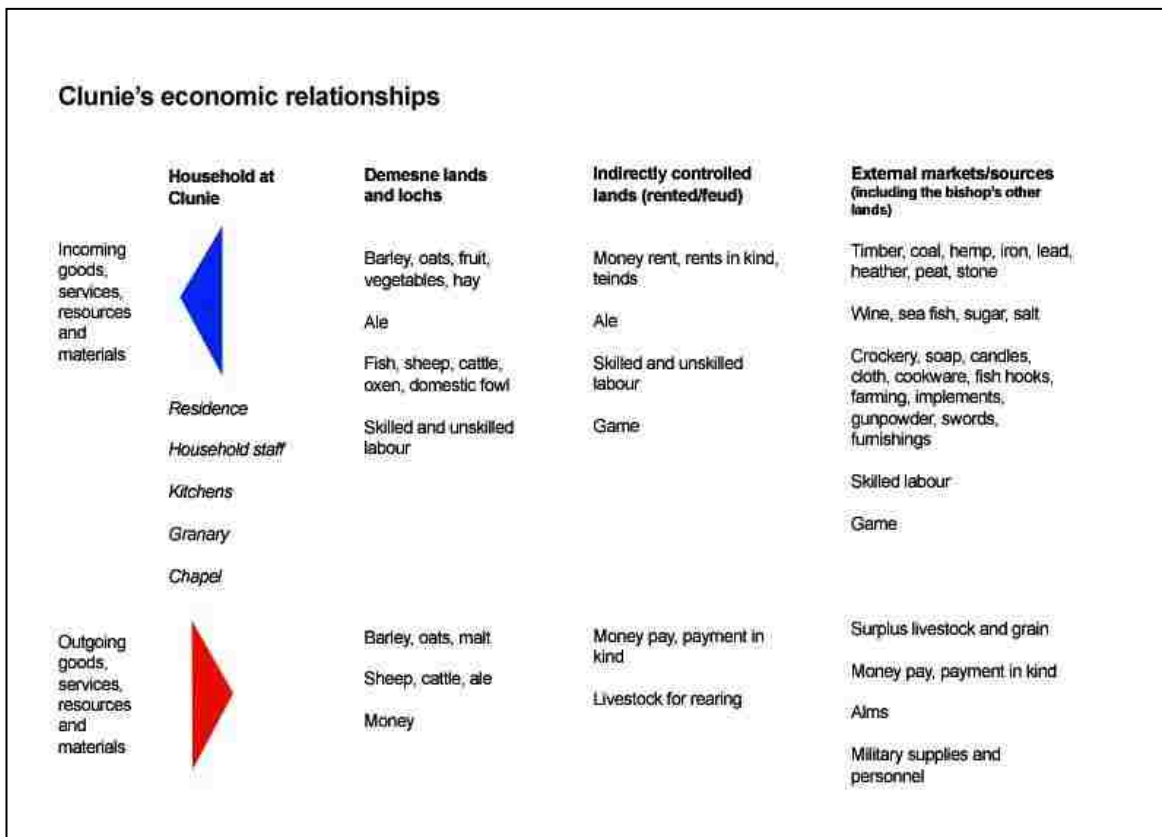


Fig. 32: Above.
Fig. 33: Below.



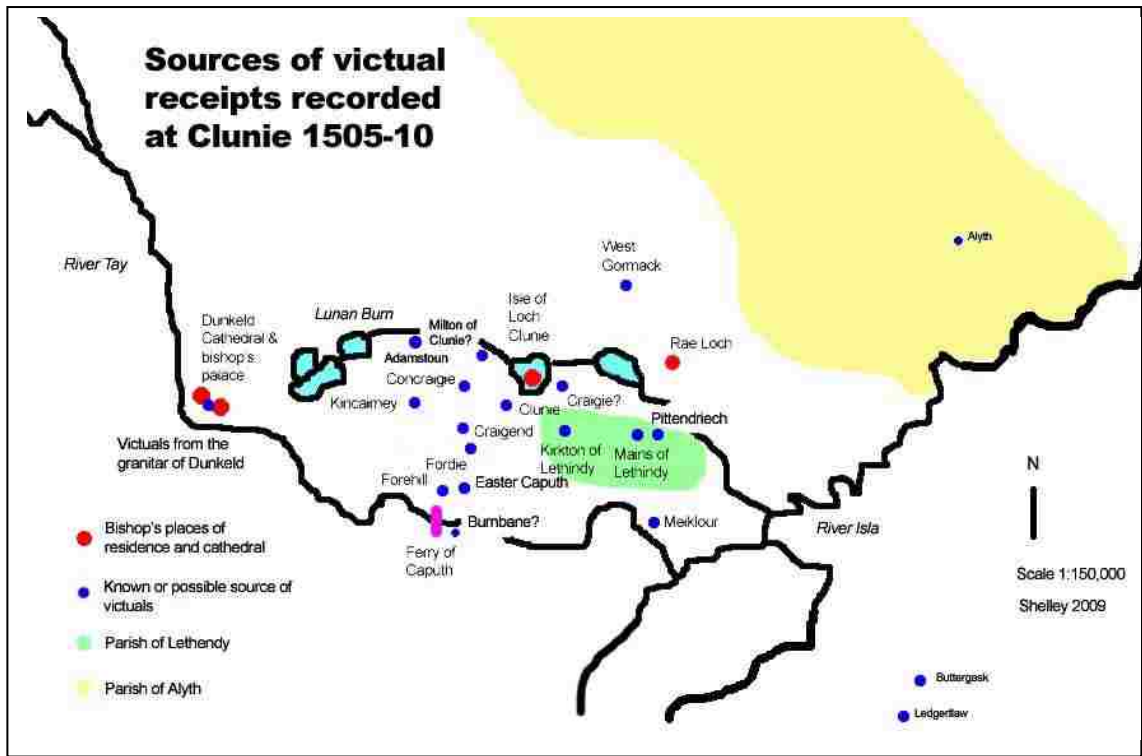
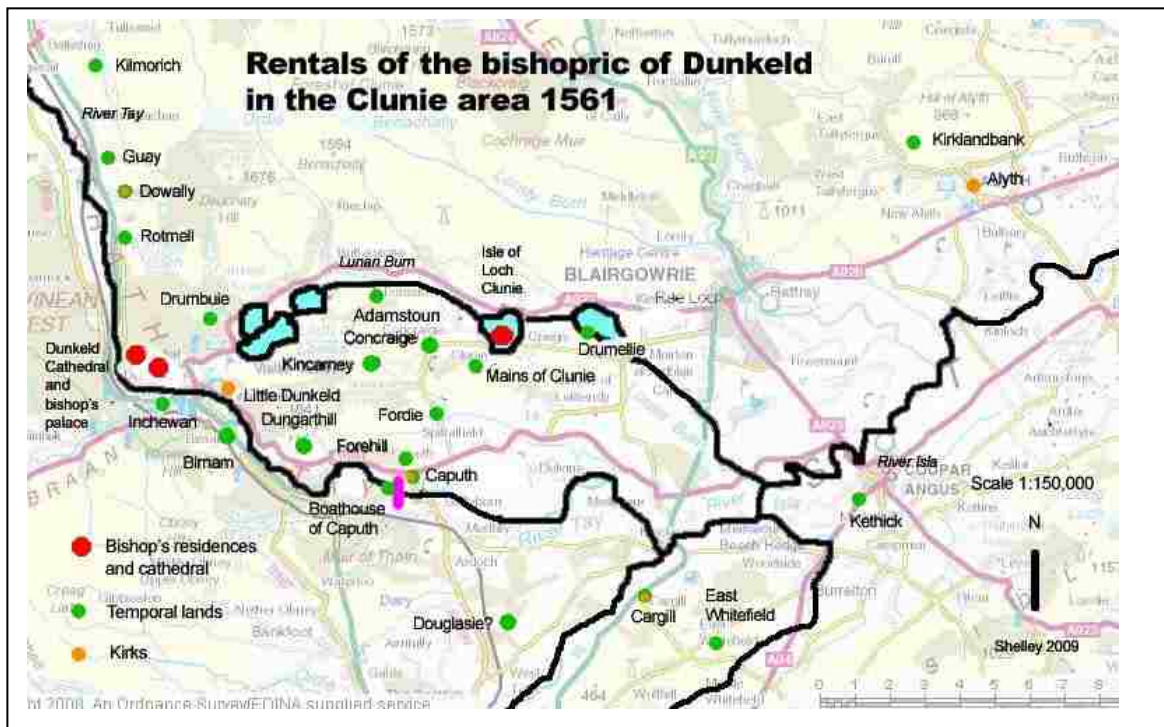


Fig. 34: Above.

Fig. 35: Below.



Chapter 3: Chorography

Introduction

The case studies in the previous chapter provide extensive detail about two very different AIs over many centuries. The evidence included information from contemporary chorographic sources. Prior to this thesis, no systematic analysis has been carried out of the information these sources contain about loch settlements. This chapter aims to provide such an analysis by considering maps and texts dating from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. The main emphasis is on the legacy of manuscript and printed maps, plus descriptive texts, which emerged as a result of Timothy Pont's survey of Scotland. The Pont-related sources contain the largest surviving body of contemporary data on loch settlements and relate to the relatively short period from the 1580s to 1650s. They add to the depth of information from the case studies by helping to provide a breadth of data about the numbers, role and distribution of mainland loch settlements within a specific timeframe. The Pont legacy contains depictions of, and references to, at least 102 occupied islands, with probably another 10 from sources linked to the maps of Ortelius and Mercator (see Appendix 2 for a comprehensive set of map images). The chorographic evidence clearly points to mainland freshwater loch settlements being a relatively common phenomenon, however the nature of the data means it must be interpreted cautiously. Nonetheless, there is good to excellent corroborative evidence from other sources, excluding Mercator and Ortelius, for settlements on 64 of the 102 occupied islands identified in the Pont legacy material, plus less firm evidence in at least 15 other cases.

- Illustrations showing the areas covered by the Pont and Blaeu maps are provided at the end of this section. Distribution maps and symbological tables for the Pont manuscript maps, the Gordon and the Blaeu maps and a table of sources for all the loch settlements discussed in this thesis are supplied in Appendix 4.

Early maps of Scotland

The Gough Map of Britain, which dates to c.1360, contains limited but valuable information about loch settlements.⁷² The information on Scotland may have been gathered by the English, or their allies, during the invasions of the Wars of Independence (Parsons, 1996, 2 and 13) or alternatively might result from links between the draughtsman and the mid-fourteenth century English royal administration (Barrow, 2003, 338-9). While the detail is sparse (especially for the Highlands), and the identities of some locations are speculative, it highlights that certain loch and wetland settlements were regarded as places of importance by the English. Firmly identifiable features include Loch Doon and Lochleven castles. Other possible sites include Burned Island (the 1958 facsimile speculates that it is Soulseat Abbey), Inchaffray Abbey and Lochindorb (Parsons, 1996, 28-35) believes it is Loch an Eilean rather than Lochindorb). There were sound reasons to include any of these sites: Loch Doon and Lochleven castles had been important garrisons in the 1330s, Lochindorb was the site of a chivalric expedition by Edward III and Inchaffray was a moderately notable religious house whose abbot Maurice (see below) had been a significant supporter of King Robert I.

Tracing the development of mapmaking in Scotland is difficult as much may have been lost; nonetheless a strong tradition developed in the sixteenth century. One landmark came in 1543 when Caithness man John Elder provided a plotte [map] to help Henry VIII of England's invasion of Scotland (Barber, 1998).⁷³ Elder, who described himself as a Redshank, claimed his map showed 'every port, loigh, creke, and haven' (Bann. Misc., 1827, Vol. 1, 9). While the original map is lost it may have been a source for Mercator's 1564 printed map of Scotland which contains two

⁷² The map is now housed in the Bodleian Library Map Room. There are earlier sources of chorographic information. The *Brevis Descriptio Regni Scotie* (Maitland Club, 1847, 21-34), probably from the 1290s and possibly by an Englishman, provides an early account of a small number of Scotland's settlements and natural features. Matthew Paris' map of Britain from the 1250s features limited Scottish detail.

⁷³ He promised England the support of disaffected Highland chiefs and proposed that Henry VIII should rule both countries.

references to Redshank lordships (British Library, Collect Britain).⁷⁴ Elder wanted to rid the land of ‘Popery’ at any price, distinguishing his position from that of post-Reformation Protestant loyalists to the Scottish Crown like Pont and the Gordons and from John Leslie, bishop of Ross (1527-96). Bishop Leslie was part of the Catholic establishment displaced by the Reformation and eager to see the Protestant triumph overturned. Leslie was exiled in Rome and under his direction one map of Scotland was published and another engraved in 1578 (Skelton, 1950, 103). Despite their obvious differences, these characters were united by a recognition of the value of maps in achieving their own aims, or those of people who might pay them.

Sixteenth century maps vary greatly in detail and delineation but over time the tendency is towards greater accuracy and sophistication. One aspect of this was a general, but not universal or uniform, trend towards higher numbers of loch settlement depictions. The first printed map of Scotland, called *Scotia* and dating from 1564, shows just one loch settlement, the castle on Lochleven.⁷⁵ By contrast Mercator’s 1564 map includes 10 depictions of mainland loch and wetland settlements and displays a more detailed knowledge of Scotland, especially in the north (British Library, Collect Britain). These are lochs Calder, Doon, Erricht/Errochty, Katrine, Leven, Maben, Laggan, Spey, Tay and Kean Castle on Loch Glass or Ussie, plus Inchaffray which is shown on land. Most of the sites are probably identifiable but some, such as ‘Monoch Castle’ on Loch Katrine, present difficulties. In this case the reference is likely to be to Eilean Molach, but there is little alternative evidence to support the suggestion (NMRS NN40NE 2).

In 1570 Abraham Ortelius produced a map which showed Lochindorb in addition to the loch settlements, and other content, from Mercator’s work of 1564. The Ortelius map was important in terms of cartographic development as it was the first map of Scotland which was sufficiently accurate to get an idea of relative distances (Moir, 1973, 9-10). In 1595 Mercator produced a yet more detailed map of Scotland which used a better outline that may originate from Nowell (Moir, 1973, 15). The loch settlements of the 1564 map are all included but Mercator adds ones at

⁷⁴ This is the view of Barber, Withers and Moir though there is some speculation that Lawrence Nowell who produced manuscript maps in the 1560s could have been the source (Moir, 1973, 14).

⁷⁵ Withers (Charting the Nation, image 00000364) says *Scotia* was probably engraved by Paolo Forlani. Its content underlines how mapmakers used each others’ work, as the outline of Scotland was copied from the relatively well-developed one from the map of Britain by George Lily in 1546.

Loch Beann a' Mheadhoin, west of Loch Ness, Inchmahome on the Lake of Menteith, Loch Avon (also called Loch A'an), Loch Assynt, Loch Nell and an additional two on Loch Tay. Not all the additional sites can be readily identified as Loch Avon, Moray, is now dammed with no obvious candidate islands, and there are no islands identifiable on Loch Spey, east of the Great Glen. There are several candidates for the settlements depicted on lochs Tay and Assynt and the one on Loch Nell is likely to be Rubha na Moine (NMRS NM82NE22). It is unclear whether Mercator was using more material from Elder or whether he had new sources by this time. Whatever the case, the maps in the Elder/Mercator tradition are of value as they indicate the presence of 19 loch settlements (plus Inchaffray) of which more than half can probably be traced back using these sources to 1543 or before. They also show them to be deemed of sufficient interest to be included on maps designed for international sale.

The significance of Pont

The chorographer Timothy Pont is the single most important source of information on Scottish land and loch settlements of the late sixteenth century. His survey work in the 1580s-90s established a separate tradition to that of Elder/Mercator. One difference between them is in the number of loch settlement depictions. In the north Mercator's 1595 map omits Loch Ruthven, Loch Brora (Appendix 3, 83-4) and Cherry Island on Loch Ness. Given Elder's background it is of interest that work originating from him does not feature the Loch Alterwell settlement included on Blaeu's map of Caithness. As the surviving body of Pont and Pont-derived sources is fuller, it may be more important if it excludes a site shown by Elder/Mercator. For instance, Pont only has two occupied islands on Loch Tay which may indicate the third, included in the Elder/Mercator maps, had fallen out of use. The existence of a five year tack for Eilean Puttychan in 1568 makes it feasible that the island was in occupation when Elder was gathering information but not when Pont visited (BBT, 410).

Other factors could account for some differences between maps of the Elder/Mercator and Pont traditions. The narrow coverage of the manuscript map

called Pont 5 suggests that he did not stray far either side of Loch Ness while carrying out his survey. This could account for the absence of the Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin settlement and raises the possibility that the differences are simply because both sets of information were incomplete – or have not survived in full. The issue of scale is also significant. The only remaining Pont-related material covering lochs Spey and Laggan are on the large-scale Blaeu map of Breadalbane and the settlements may not have been seen as important enough for inclusion. Loch Avon (Aberdeenshire and Banffshire) and Loch Glass (Moray and Nairn) are also empty but Loch Ussie is mentioned in the Pont texts as having a house. Unfortunately the shortage of evidence means it is only possible to highlight distinctions and speculate on reasons for these rather than arrive at firm conclusions. Pont's output also requires cautious handling as the manuscript maps are drafts, some very rough, mostly intended for Pont's own reference and not for public consumption (Stone, 2001b, 49). There was also extensive rewriting of names and overdrawing by Robert Gordon of Straloch who played an important role in the revision of Pont's work for publication by Blaeu.

Some 77 manuscript maps survive (on 38 sheets) and these are often fragmentary (Stone, 2001a, 17). They cover the islands as well as the mainland and while most of the survey work was carried out towards the end of the sixteenth century some fieldwork may have continued as late as 1608 (Stone, 2001a, 3 and 6). The manuscript maps contain around 9,500 place names, mostly of small rural towns and other settlements where 80% to 90% of Scots then lived (Stone, 1972-3, Vol. 1). Most of Pont's better developed maps, including almost all he would have regarded as ready for the engraver are lost, probably destroyed in the 1672 fire at the Blaeu printworks in Amsterdam (NLS Pont). A substantial amount of the information they contained had by that time been used in manuscript maps by Gordon of Straloch and formed the basis of most of the maps in Joan Blaeu's 1654 *Theatrum orbis terrarium, sive Atlas Novus*, Volume V – commonly regarded as the first atlas of Scotland (discussed below).⁷⁶ These sources combined name some 20,000 settlements (Stone, 1972-3, Vol. 1).

⁷⁶The exact extent is still debated but Stone (2001a, 16) attributes 35 of the 47 Blaeu regional maps directly to Pont, seven to Straloch with Pont as his only source and three to Pont with additions by Straloch. One is by Straloch's son James Gordon and another is of unknown provenance.

Pont also wrote texts, some of which survived after being absorbed into other works. One is *Cunninghame Topographized*, contained in Sir James Balfour of Denmilne's *Collections on the Shires* (NLS Pont). Other texts were preserved thanks to Robert Gordon of Straloch and Robert Sibbald and in 1748-49 were incorporated into the *Geographical Collections relating to Scotland* made by Walter Macfarlane II, Volume 2, edited and published by Sir Arthur Mitchell in 1907 (NLS Pont). More recently a transcription of texts believed to originate with Pont has been carried out by Jean Munro. These are from the Topographical Notices of Scotland (hereafter TNS/Pont) and it is these that are the principal source for this chapter's analysis of Pont's texts (NLS Adv.MS.34.2.8).

Some understanding of Pont's background is necessary to appreciate his work. Born around 1565/6 he was the second son of the Protestant reformer Robert Pont.⁷⁷ He attended St Andrews University, at the same time as his older brother Zachary, from 1580/1 to 1583 and graduated with an MA. While there he may have learned mapmaking under Professor William Welwood (NLS Pont).

There is little indication that Pont had a great passion for religion (MacDonald, 2002, 45-62) but he was deeply imbued with Protestant sentiment. In *Cunningham Topographized* he celebrates the preacher William Aird as a 'detector of the Romisch whoore in the beginning of the Reformation of our church' (Pont, 1858, 13). This may have influenced Pont's chorography leading him to play down sites with unpalatable Catholic associations. Few island religious sites are shown on the maps or mentioned in TNS/Pont and prejudice may explain the absence of ones like the chapel on Isle Maree, though it could just have been defunct (Pont 4(5) and 4(6)).

Baptie (NLS Pont) shows that Pont probably spent much of his early life around Culross and St Andrews, where his father had property, and also in Edinburgh. From an early age he would have been aware of loch settlements such as Lochleven Castle and St Serf's Priory. The family had strong links with the north of Scotland; Timothy was commissioned to carry out mineral surveys in Orkney in 1592 and was minister of Dunnet, Caithness, from the turn of the seventeenth century to c.1614 (NLS Pont). Zachary held the neighbouring parish of Bower and Watten,

⁷⁷ Robert Pont (1524-1604) was a lawyer and minister who was six times elected moderator of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland (ODNB, 2007).

making them the only two graduate ministers out of 13 in Caithness (MacDonald, 2002, 49). Their father was close to King James VI (MacDonald, 2002, 45-52) at a time when the monarchy wanted to strengthen the state and ‘civilise’ the Highlands, islands and Borders (MacInnes, 1993). Timothy was a member of an educated elite ambitious to secure a unified realm with a unified kirk and Lynch (2001, 27-34) argues that his survey was part of a process intended to bring this about.

Maps and information about resources and people offered several potential benefits. The Crown would be better placed to demand taxes and impose its will, the kirk would know more about the value of benefices and state of parishes, and the nation would know more about itself. MacDonald (2002, 53) argues that the Pont survey’s overwhelming interest in the secular and seeming indifference to ecclesiastical structures indicates he was almost entirely interested in the ‘landscape of secular power’. Chorographical information was also of potential value for a regime interested in planting settlers to take control of areas, as James VI attempted in Lewis in 1598. As Baptie points out (NLS Pont) Pont was not averse to such practices and in 1609 unsuccessfully applied for lands in the north of Ireland.

The ultimate aim of his survey appears to have been a chorographic description, consisting of maps and text, providing national and regional portraits of Scotland. In 1596 Dionise Campbell, Dean of Limerick, wrote telling English Secretary of State Robert Cecil that ‘... one Pont, who has compassed the whole of Scotland, purposes to set forth a perfect description of that land ...’ (Megaw, 1969, 71-4). This was never achieved, perhaps through lack of royal funding, but Pont’s plans clearly fitted royal policies as Charles I (1625-49) made it known in 1629 that his father had always intended to grant financial support for the project (NLS Pont).

Pont as a source

Fleet (2001, 40) observes that one of Pont’s principal survey methods involved travelling up one side of a river valley and back down the other. This meant he came in contact with many lochs and is an invaluable source for information on loch settlements, but the fact that his maps were only intended to show selected information, with texts providing additional material, is clearly a complicating factor

(Cunningham et al, 2001, 124). One implication is that just because a loch settlement is not shown does not mean it wasn't there. Withers (2001, 139-54) shows that chorographers were more concerned by the quality of places than their quantity. The seats of the rich and powerful are given greater emphasis – and are more likely to be shown – than those of the poor. Nonetheless Pont went to remarkable efforts both to record modest settlements and (as a non-Gaelic speaker) to get phonetically close to place and feature names.⁷⁸ In *Cunninghame Topographized* (1858, 5) he comments that 'the duellings of the yeomanrie verry thick poudered over the face of this countrey, all for the most pairt veil and commodiously planted and garnished'. It is not entirely clear whether smaller structures on Pont's manuscript maps were the homes of the yeomanry or of poorer folk, or even how consistent he was in his depictions.

The geographical extent of Pont's survey was enormous, but not every part of each area was surveyed. We cannot, then, be sure whether he was aware of all the loch settlements. Thus, it may be the case that some loch settlements were omitted because they were too poor or insubstantial, or were in a glen or high plateau he never reached. We do not know whether Pont worked alone, relying on guides, as Stone thinks (2001a, 23-4) or, as McKean (2001, 120 and 124) believes, he had a team of helpers and a powerful backer.⁷⁹ MacDonald raises the possibility (2002, 48) that Zachary, appointed chief printer to the king in 1590, had a significant role in the survey work.

Pont's project was intended to be grander and more detailed than anything that had gone before. Recognition of the value of maps for administrative and military purposes had spread rapidly through Europe during the sixteenth century (Harvey, 1973, 156). England and Wales had already been mapped by Saxton and relatively detailed maps of Scotland were emerging but the information they contain is a fraction of what Pont gathered in his survey.⁸⁰ While it would be inappropriate to

⁷⁸ This is discussed by Fleet and Taylor on the NLS Pont website.

⁷⁹ Robert Gordon of Straloch wrote that he worked with limited resources and had no Maecenas as his patron (Blæu, 1654, 3v-4r).

⁸⁰ Joan Martines' 1587 map *Iscoitia* (which can be viewed at www.chartingthenation.lib.ed.ac.uk/) shows settlements on lochs Earn, Laggan and Calder – it is fairly crude but starts to display a concern for relative locations and coherent symbology. It is taken from a 1564 map by Gerhard Mercator (Moir, 1973, 26-30 and 166) and contrasts with Mercator's more sophisticated 1595 *Scotiae Regnum* which has 15 settlements on mainland freshwater lochs (NLS Maps).

judge Pont by twenty-first century notions of accuracy, what survives provides more information than any other source of its time for the qualitative and quantitative study of sixteenth century loch settlements.

Pont's loch settlements

The Pont manuscripts maps contain depictions of loch settlements at 53 readily identifiable mainland sites (see Appendices 1, 3 and 4). Some are shown twice which means there are a total of 58 depictions of these sites.⁸¹ There are, however, some 69 possible depictions covering 63 sites. Some are problematic, perhaps because the depiction is unclear or difficult to interpret (like easternmost of two isles on Loch Rannoch (Pont 23(1)), or there is reason to think there was a drafting error.⁸² Other factors create problems with identification such as changes in loch levels and the disappearance of buildings. Baikie Loch (Pont 26) is a case in point: it is shown with an insular tower, of perhaps four storeys, linked to land by a causeway. The loch has been drained and the island, from which castle ruins were said to have been removed before 1864 (NMRS NO34NW 4) are now difficult to trace. Fortunately in this case, and others, there are alternative sources to verify the map evidence. Nonetheless the impact of drainage projects, and the date they occurred, raises problems in identifying islands, their relative positions in lochs and sometimes their periods of use. This is highlighted by Ross (2003, 228) who argues that Flemish settlers were responsible for the extensive drainage and reclamation of land around the Laich of Moray in the twelfth century. These, or other events, were responsible for turning Inshhagarty, the priest's island, which Ross (2003, 71-2) says was linked to the church at Kintrae into a landlocked site.⁸³

⁸¹ The term 'strongly indicate' acknowledges that there may be cases where Pont was wrong or his meaning is misunderstood.

⁸² These are categorised separately rather than entirely disregarded as they may still provide valuable information when combined with evidence from other sources.

⁸³ Ross (2003, 71) is unsure of the nature of the link but says the church at Kintrae was being described as ancient between 1203 and 1222. The island of Inshhagarty was probably connected to this church. He adds that that the boundaries of the parish of Spynie do not seem to have changed since the Medieval period although it has gained in land surface area through the retreat, and draining, of the loch of Spynie.

The fragments, being drafts, may contain errors Pont intended to rectify later, so even where there is a very clear depiction it may not be accurate. They also contain corrections, so lochs and islands can be duplicated on the same sheet as Pont (and possibly Gordon) attempted to place them to his satisfaction. Loch Lundie appears three times on Pont 5, each time with one insular settlement and twice with two islands. For all these reasons the present work takes a conservative approach to estimating the number of freshwater loch settlements Pont intended to show. So what appears to be a loch settlement on the Loch of Drumellie, near Dunkeld, (Pont 23(2)) is only seen as being possible. Blaeu shows it as an island but over-inking on the Pont map may obscure an original intention to depict a promontory settlement or an island with causeway. Fieldwork revealed an island in shallow water that may be linked to shore in dry seasons, much in line with what the map shows (Dixon and Shelley, 2006, 72); there is, however, a pronounced promontory nearby. By contrast Pont 4(7) depicts Ardvreck Castle in a way that could readily suggest an insular rather than a promontory site.

As an act of topographical portraiture, chorography involves the deliberate inclusion, omission, exaggeration or playing down of certain features.⁸⁴ Accordingly, Pont was selective about the lochs, islands and – possibly – loch settlements he included. By comparing Pont's evidence with archaeological, historical and modern geographical sources it is possible to gain insights into his selection process. That he often regarded lochs, along with burns and rivers, as key features is unsurprising as they would often provide the readiest routes for travellers.

Pont 5 has 13 readily identifiable lochs along the Great Glen. Eight are named while five are treated as peripheral and are unnamed. Six lochs are shown containing a total of 11 islands of which 10 have buildings and seven of the occupied islands are named. Raised water levels due to the Caledonian Canal development, hydro projects and other changes mean it is not always certain what islands existed during Pont's survey. Nonetheless, Loch Tarff, where there is little evidence of major change, has five distinct islands. Loch Lundie has 10 islands plus a number of small rocky protrusions. Loch Garry, west of the Great Glen, now has five visible islands. Two others, which are artificial or modified, were visible in 1910 before the water

⁸⁴ Withers (2001, 139-54) provides a detailed discussion of the nature and aims of chorography.

level was raised and were surveyed by Odo Blundell (NMRS NH2OSE 1 and 2). In Loch Ness Pont shows Cherry Island (Eilean Muireach NMRS NH31SE 1) but not the nearby Eilean nan Con. The situation is similar on Pont 2(1) where Loch Loyal has one, perhaps two, islands (both with buildings). There are five islands visible today. Three – possibly four – islands are shown on Loch Assynt (Pont 4(7)), compared to the dozen (more depending where the line is drawn) there today. Two are clearly shown with buildings. There is, therefore, good reason to suggest that islands were more likely to be depicted if they were occupied.

The fact that not all loch islands shown are depicted as settled indicates that occupation was not the only reason for inclusion. On Pont 17 (where there are challenges in being exact) there are around 43 islands shown of which around 35 appear to be named. There are seven clear and two possible settlements. Pont 4(5) and 4(6) show around 26 of the islands in central Loch Maree with 16 names (Taylor and Wentworth, 2001, 76). One building is clearly shown and there is a mark which may depict the oval burial ground on Isle Maree. There is clearly a need to explain why Pont sometimes kept island depictions to a minimum, and other times showed and named large numbers.

Part of the explanation is that he was continuing a centuries old tradition, which included Nennius in the eighth century and Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth, which regarded the sheer number of islands in Loch Lomond as a natural wonder (Giles, 1841, 155). Leslie's map of 1578 has 17 islands (see Appendix 2, 54, for a selection of chorographic images of Loch Lomond). There is no attempt to identify them or show shapes, sizes and relative positions – simply to show that there were a lot of them (NLS Maps). Pont was keen to show the same was true of some other lochs but also showed diligence in naming and placing many of them (Taylor and Wentworth, 2001, 65). This is in keeping with Mitchell's analysis (2001, 104) of Pont's depiction of mountains which states that he provides more information about them than anyone until – and perhaps beyond – the military surveys of the mid-eighteenth century. That did not mean showing them all but did involve emphasising those that are prominent landmarks and/or unusual shapes. Much of the identifiable surviving Pont text is in the form of itineraries listing the distance between landmarks. Fleet (2001, 40) believes Pont may have created his maps by fitting

together extensive lists of distances rather than using a compass or trigonometry. And he was certainly interested in relative positions and accurate distances.⁸⁵ One illustrative passage reads: ‘twa myl thence Spanyoldal with Avon Spanyoldal thrie myl long, with Loch Migedal a myl long, with ylen loch Migedall with a hous in it, a myl up the water of Spanyoldal Cruiks with a kirk, a myl thence Sowerdil, a myl thence Makel, a myl thence Innersinn’ (TNS/Pont). It is, therefore, likely that some islands are included on maps and in texts as landmarks.

Pont had a keen interest in the natural resources that areas had to offer. Smout (2001, 85) says he distinguished between enclosed and unenclosed woodlands, possibly even between pleasance, managed park, timber wood and pasture wood. His texts also often link resources and aesthetics. Of the area around Loch Maree he said there is ‘good and serviceable timmer for masts and raes, in other places ar great plentie of excellent great oaks, whair may be sawin out planks of 4 sumtyms 5 feet broad. All thir bownds is compasd and hemd in with many hils but theis beautifull to look on ...’ (TNS/Pont).

Lochs, islands and resources are closely linked in Pont’s work. Loch Naver, Sutherland, with its occupied island simply called ‘ylen’ (possible shorthand for ylen Loch Nanern as the loch is named as Nanern) has a note about the presence of salmon written next to it. Pont 18 shows ‘ylen Loch-Tay’ and comments that fair salmon, trout, eels and pearls are to be found in the loch. This is in keeping with contemporary charters where the resources, such as fishing rights, are often given in conjunction with possession of an island.⁸⁶ That same year David Balfour, an usher at court who received fodder for his horse at royal expense, had a fee from his farms of Portnellan.

Pont identifies certain sites as *the* isle of a loch, like Ylen Loch Erin (Pont 21(2)) or ylen Loch Stack (Pont 3(1)). This can be the case even though there are other islands – shown or not. In some cases seemingly unoccupied islands are attributed significance by being named as well as depicted. These include ‘ylennachockyrr’ on Loch Eck (Pont 14), ‘ylen na Breban’ and ‘yle Baddachilly’ on Loch Tay (Pont 18) and ‘ylen Loch Houpp’ Pont 2(1). Thus, some islands may be

⁸⁵ See TNS/Pont. The issue is also discussed by Fleet (2001, 35-47).

⁸⁶ One example is that in 1502 Michael, 2nd lord Balfour of Burleigh, and his wife Margaret Muschet had Portbank and the superiority of the Isle of Loch Venachar, the loch and fishings (RMS, Vol.2, P. 564. Doc. 2657).

locally significant as whoever held them would also be understood to have particular rights, resources and property related to the loch.

Loch settlement depictions

There has been extensive debate about the interpretation of Pont's settlement depictions, including the extent to which they are representational or symbolic. Another area of discussion has been whether, or not, they contain a consistent and interpretable hierarchy of settlement types. An analysis of the loch settlement depictions suggests that Pont's approach was generally symbolic, drawing on a small number of shapes and lines which could be readily combined to show simple or complex structures. While some depictions were representational (or contained representational elements) it is only possible to get the best out of Pont's manuscript maps by avoiding over-interpretation.

These points, and others related to the nature of Pont's depictions, are discussed below and tend towards the conclusion that there is a degree of internal consistency within the remaining fragments but they also show development and change. This is partly because the surveys were carried out over many years and also because the remaining fragments were at different stages of development – some rough notation, others close to readiness for the engraver. With respect to loch settlements it is argued that the evidence suggests that Pont is likely to have recorded most of those that he encountered, but that there is insufficient evidence to say whether that included the poorest and most insubstantial of dwellings. Pont did have a concern for social hierarchy which is reflected in his depictions which, it is also argued, makes it possible to say that the loch settlements he shows tend to be of middling to high status – though rarely of the very highest.

The Pont manuscript maps depict settlements, including those on freshwater lochs, in a variety of ways. This is highlighted by comparing the simple island sites on lochs Balnakill and Borralie, near Durness, (Pont 2(1)) with the sophisticated treatment of Baikie Castle, Angus, on Pont 29 (NMRS NO34NW 4). Stone (2001b, 54) asserts that some information was intended for use in texts and would not have been shown on final maps – and should therefore be treated as notation. He also

argues that Pont's aim was normally to indicate whether a settlement was major or minor. If somewhere was of special importance then individual characteristics might be included. McKean (2001, 111-24) claims Pont was more systematic and complex and identifies 10 categories of structure⁸⁷ while Smout (2001, 79) suggests that some differences occur because the maps were created by at least three people.

Pont gathered information about Scotland in greater quantity and detail than anyone else, but he was no innovator in terms of mapmaking style. He was also working at a time when conventions were developing and gaining wide acceptance (Harvey, 1973, 153-68). What Pont had in mind as an end product might have been similar to that of contemporaries like Abraham Ortelius. The maps of Ortelius, whether it's *Scotia Tabula*, first engraved in 1573, or his 1575 map of the northern part of former Yugoslavia (*Schlavoniae, Croatiae, Carniale ... Bosniae*) have stylistic similarities to Pont. Settlement locations were shown using small circles while towers and turrets helped indicate whether a place was important. Aesthetics mattered as maps were primarily bought by the wealthy and had to look sumptuous. Even where Pont provided specific information on individual structures, like the number of storeys or the presence of crenellations, he tended to use pictographic indicators rather than miniature portraits. This helps make sense of the range of towers, rectangles and circles (all in the same hand) drawn out in rows on Pont 27. They indicate that depictions, like that of 'yle Terbert' (Pont 17) are part of an intended symbological continuum that should not be over-interpreted. The small key on Pont 36 (back) also emphasises that the approach was symbolic. While recognising that certain depictions, like Linlithgow Palace on Pont 36 (back), are representational this work assumes that most are symbolic and their relationship to actual buildings should be treated with caution. It seems, though, that Pont included more information at the draft stages than on final versions prepared for engravers.

Pont's prime interest was in reflecting the 'landscape of power' by emphasising the burghs (where he often showed a representation of their market crosses) and the residences of members of the nobility who exercised jurisdiction in the surrounding countryside (Fleet, 2001, 30). However, Pont also showed relative

⁸⁷ These begin with small boxes – the most modest dwellings – and boxes with vertical lines indicating a hearth and culminate with grand, accurately drawn buildings where the numbers of floors and even the crenellations, locations of doors and number of floors are faithfully shown.

differences between people and places of power, sometimes avoiding the temptation to exaggerate a structure to demonstrate that it was the residence of an important person. Pont 13 shows Cameron of Lochiel's residence on the saltwater Loch Eil as a small rectangle, in sharp distinction to the many grand structures depicted in the affluent area now known as the Central Belt.

What Pont showed, and how, depended on factors including the stage of development of the map and the scale. Pont 1 covers a small area round Durness and Tongue and has a settlement in Loch Borralie. The better developed but smaller scale Pont 2(1) also has one in the nearby Loch Balnakill. Smaller settlements, especially on larger scale maps, were often indicated with just a symbolic circle or a pictographic rectangle, with or without a line out of the top.⁸⁸ Pont's depictions break down into elements providing varied levels of information. They were created over a number of years and are works in progress containing inconsistencies. This is underlined by differences between Pont 4(5) and 4(6) showing the same islands in central Loch Maree (Taylor and Wentworth, 2001, 63ff). These are perhaps not maps that Pont felt were fit for the engraver so it is essential to be cautious about the information they contain. Their images suggest a range of settlement types on islands in freshwater lochs from simple buildings to castle complexes. The symbols tend to contain three basic elements:

- squares
- upright rectangles
- and horizontal rectangles.

These can appear individually or in groups and vary in size both in absolute terms and relative to one another. Pont 1 shows Loch Borallie with an island and two squares of different sizes attached to one another, seeming to indicate the presence of more than one building and of different sizes. Some buildings have triangular roofs. In others (including Baikie Castle on Pont 26) the horizontal line is absent, making an inverted V. Additional features can include windows – the number going up a building may relate to height in storeys. Crosses indicate churches and chapels. As McKean points out (2001, 114 and 117) most of Pont's buildings are vertical elevations and sometimes show features like dormer windows or the gables of

⁸⁸ See Stone (2001b, 49-54) and McKean (2001, 111-24) for alternative interpretations of Pont's symbology.

ecclesiastical buildings. Vertical lines rising from some buildings mostly indicate hearth smoke or a chimney (McKean, 2001, 117).⁸⁹ Vertical lines from some larger buildings may indicate flag poles, in keeping with McKean's argument (2001, 114) that Pont's depictions show an appreciation of the function of skylines in reflecting the status of the owner. Pont's loch settlement symbols are mostly simple combinations of the elements described above and can be readily interpreted. There are:⁹⁰

- 27 multiple/complex structures
- 32 single structures.

The single structures include:⁹¹

- 11 with pitched roofs
- 13 flat roofs with vertical lines
- 2 flat roofs with (possible) crosses
- 3 flat roofs with no additions
- 3 unclear.

Some 11 of the single structure depictions appear to show windows. Some have settlement circles appended, but these can be difficult to distinguish from islands. There are 11 structures where vertical lines of two or more dots may indicate multiple storeys. Four of these are single structure depictions and seven are complex or show several buildings. All but one appear to have pitched roofs. While the other taller rectangular structures, especially those with pitched roofs, may be designed to indicate towers or hall houses there is insufficient evidence to be sure from the maps alone.

Certain depictions are difficult to assess, including the six marginal ones that are so faint or poor that little can be deduced. In some cases it is difficult to say more than that archaeological evidence exists for settlements on the lochs (at some period) that is not inconsistent with Pont. This is true of the Loch of Kinnordy which has an

⁸⁹ This is partly confirmed by the small image on Pont 36 (back) which shows a row of buildings with wavy lines of smoke ascending.

⁹⁰ Symbols where a single rectangle is divided in two by a vertical line are assumed to be multiple structures.

⁹¹ The possible cross topping a structure on Long Loch (Pont 26) is uncertain and may be a vertical line incidentally crossed by another line. A pitched roof is recorded where there are angled up and down strokes of the pen, but some may simply be intended as single verticals.

AI/MI (NMRS NO35SE 7) and a natural island with what may be a substantial boat noost at NO 36509 54329.⁹² The same applies to Loch Lundie which also has an AI/MI.⁹³ More detailed explanations may be possible for the unusual symbols at Lochindorb and Loch Beanie [Sessatur]. The three images (Pont 6(1), 8 and 27) each have horizontal elements with vertical lines emerging.⁹⁴ Lochindorb had been slighted in 1458 and was a ruin (NMRS NH93NE 1). Text on Pont 27 says the island on Loch Beanie was ‘sumtyms’ the dwelling place of the chief man of Glenshee. Gordon 43 refers to it as an ‘old’ chief dwelling place, meaning the depictions might show ruins.⁹⁵

Rectilinear shapes in front of structures may indicate outer walls or palisades as at Cherry Island on Pont 5. However, there are sometimes difficulties in determining whether such elements are walls, or the island itself, as with Priory Island on Pont 18.⁹⁶ There are other islands where Pont’s information is difficult to interpret. Sometimes this is because the depiction is unclear – possibly because it has been over-inked by Gordon. One is Inveruglas where there was a substantial MacFarlane stronghold (NMRS NN30NW 2). Another Loch Lomond site is named by Pont ‘Felt ylen’ and shown in Pont’s light ink with what appears to be a settlement in darker ink on top but with a cross beside it. This is near the MacFarlane residence of ‘Eilean na Vow’⁹⁷ but does not appear to match any island now known (NMRS NN31SW 2).⁹⁸ Still more problematic are Loch Rannoch B (Pont 23(1)),

⁹² This was visited by the author in 2005. The island is lower to the north and west, reaching a maximum of c.2m above water level in the south. In the higher areas there are three indistinct features which might be the vestiges of structures. At the north of the island is what could be a substantial boat noost pointing to north north west. The outer NE arm extends 14.5m, with a maximum width of 10m at the highest points and 7m at water level. The innermost area is around 4.2m wide at the bottom and 7m at the top. Some parts are steeply banked and more than 1m high.

⁹³ The Loch of Cossans has been largely drained and identifying possible sites is problematic. There are a number of islands on Lindores Loch but RCAHMS has no record of archaeological remains.

⁹⁴ The one on Pont 8 could indicate a remaining small settlement as it can be seen as a box split in two.

⁹⁵ Gordon 43 and 6 show complete structures rather than ruins.

⁹⁶ Another problematic image appears on the Loch of Rescobie, in Angus, on Pont 26, where there are three natural islands visible today and the remains of a possible AI alleged to have been the site of Barnsdale Castle (NMRS NO55SW 10). However, it may be related to what are probably boats on lochs nearby and bears similarities to another mark in the Dornoch Firth on the Pont map called Gordon 20

⁹⁷ FIRAT’s research indicates that the castle of Eilean na Vow would have been quite new when Pont visited, having been built by Andrew MacFarlane in 1577, with the chief’s dowager having liferent after 1581, and that the site may still have been inhabited in 1724.

⁹⁸ One explanation is that it is an error recognised later on which involved a misplacing of Creag a’ Phuirt (NMRS NN31SW 3) which is croft of the landing (or port) and which stands on a peninsula

Loch Tay B (Pont 18) and Loch Assynt C (Pont 4(7)). Assynt C is inked in and has the words 'ylen Skadden' above it and another island settlement with no name just below.⁹⁹ It may be that the darker island was an error. But the inking could be a symbol and is at least superficially similar to that on what Pont names 'ylen Rann' (Pont 18).¹⁰⁰ The name is important as the MacNabs had a stronghold at 'Ylen Ran' (NMRS NN53SE 16). Loch Rannoch B has two trees and a small dark rectilinear mark on an island with the word 'ylen' written nearby. A survey in 2004 failed to locate any obvious candidate for this island which is shown close to Eilean nam Faoileag (NMRS NN55NW 3). There are, however, submerged features in the loch which may correspond (Dixon, pers. comm.).¹⁰¹

Some Pont depictions are problematic due to their implied location. This may be to do with alterations to a map. One case is the island on Loch Tummel (Pont 23(1)) which is easy to miss as it was included within the original line of the loch but not reincorporated when the outline was modified. This could work the other way round. The straightforward depictions of buildings on Long Loch fall within an

and which probably served Eilean na Vow, or of the MacFarlane-built and endowed almshouse of Bruitfort.

⁹⁹ An AI was recorded near the south west shore of Loch Rannoch in 1928, close to the island where it says baron Grantly built the tower in the early nineteenth century (Stewart, 1928, 52ff).

¹⁰⁰ The depiction and name are a source of confusion as Eilean Rowan is an area of land bounded by the loch on the east and the River Lochay on the south and west. Pont shows an island some way into the loch. This island is similar in shape to an existing one at NN 58464 33320 which was visited by the author in 2004 and showed no signs of archaeological remains. It is, though, in the right spatial relationship with another nearby island (NN 58857 33448) identified as ylen Baddachailly. Similarly it is in the right spatial relationship with an AI with Late Medieval associations called Eilean Puttychan (NMRS NN53SE 2) but named on the map as ylen na Breban even though Eilean nam Breaban (NMRS NN63NW 3) is considerably further north east. This may mean that names were applied at a later stage, perhaps from notes, and were misplaced. This would conveniently explain the location of islands, especially as this end of the loch has experienced substantial silting.

¹⁰¹ A highly speculative possibility is that these ephemeral symbols indicate temporary, seasonal or insubstantial structures.

altered second outline for the loch.¹⁰² There is no archaeological evidence for structures on the loch, and there are currently no islands.¹⁰³

Some depictions have additional features that make them more complex than most. In certain cases, like at Kilchurn and Baikie, these might be crenellations or other indications of social rank. It is also the case that buildings of higher status were sketched rather than shown using the standard notation. This might explain the crossed lines in the centre of depiction of the old country residence and private chapel on Priory Island (Pont 18) near the Campbell of Glenorchy castle of Balloch.¹⁰⁴ Without the crossed lines it would be a straightforward depiction of a substantial multi-structure site, possibly with barmkin. Another image that may show walling rather than just buildings is of 'ylen Geoi' (Pont 4(6)). Wentworth claims (2001, 66 and 71) the building is the manor and garden of Eilean Ruairidh Beag (NMRS NG87SE 4). The archaeological evidence (see above) tends to agree with Wentworth's suggestion (2001, 66) that it was occupied at least seasonally by John MacKenzie at round the time of Pont's survey.¹⁰⁵

There are also cases where Pont may be attempting to show structures behind one another in perspective. This could be why there are unusual lines on Tarbet Island (Pont 17) or they might just be a revision to make a simple multi-structure site taller.¹⁰⁶ Galbraith Castle, Eilean na Vow, Kilchurn Castle (shown with impressive crenellations) and St Margaret's Inch (Pont 29) all have substantial towers flanked by blank boxes. If these are aspects of the primary structure, barmkins perhaps, they might form a distinct group. However, the surrounding wall at Cherry Island, Balloch Castle (Pont 18) at Melgund (Pont 26) and Ardvreck Castle (Pont 4(7)) run in front

¹⁰² Another uncertain depiction is on Pont 36 (back) where there is a sketch of Linlithgow, its palace, park and loch. It is drawn from the north side and, according to Dennison (2001, 133) shows particular attention to the importance of features like the Tollbooth. She says this acknowledges the significance of a building that had been of enough importance to house a session of parliament in 1545. It is noticeable that Pont's perspective puts the greatest emphasis on royal possessions, reflecting his concern with social and political hierarchy. It shows one of two AIs in the loch as planted with trees. Behind this, to the west, is a double-fronted building on what might be the island known as the Rickle at NT 00125 77553.

¹⁰³ The slightly slanting roof on the lower section of the upper building on Long Loch is of note. If one accepts McKean's idea (2001, 119) that Pont used such devices to show unfinished buildings then some, or all, of this structure may have been under construction.

¹⁰⁴ The crossed lines might refer to the fact that the building contained a chapel.

¹⁰⁵ The depiction needs to be compared to the duplicate on Pont 4(5) which seems just to show two structures. It is difficult to tell which map came first 4(6) has marginally more information.

¹⁰⁶ The depiction of Tarbet Island on Pont 16 shows a simple flat-roofed multi-structure site.

of the main structure. It may then be that these are ancillary structures Pont felt worthy of inclusion but not of embellishment with doors or windows.

There are two versions of Baikie Castle and of the occupied islands on the Loch of Forfar. Pont 26 has Baikie as a simple four-storey tower with pitched roof and with a three-gabled pitched roofed, windowed and doored building on West Inch and a seemingly complex structure on St Margaret's Inch. Pont 29 nearly reverses the position with Baikie as a complex depiction of three linked and pitch-roofed towers, windows and doorway.¹⁰⁷ The two colours of ink on the relevant sections of the Loch of Forfar on Pont 26 imply revision and the abbey (to the right) is more detailed than on Pont 29 indicating a shift to greater individuation of some sites. There is little to distinguish the style or level of detail between the 12 possible loch settlement depictions on the two maps. That the duplicates are different for no immediately obvious reason shows the difficulty of making detailed claims about what stood on the sites based on the maps alone.

There are 18 depictions which appear to show more than one building and a further nine of substantial and complex structures, or which are difficult to determine. There are 12 images that clearly have more than one storey and another five which are problematic to interpret. Three of the multi-structure images have buildings of two or more storeys while another four have lone multi-storey structures. Five more multi-storey sites are shown in depictions that are either of multi-structure sites or more elaborately drawn single buildings.¹⁰⁸ Overall the Pont loch settlements provide a complex set of data but with a strong tendency towards a straightforward symbolism using basic elements. Indeed, there is a marked internal consistency and a preference for simplicity with most structures being combinations of the triangles, dots and upright rectangles.

Printed maps of the day tended to depict settlements with pictographs, but they were rarely intended as portraits. The similarity in the representation of Baikie Castle (Pont 26), Innis Chonnell (Pont 14) Clunie Castle (Pont 23(2)) and Loch

¹⁰⁷ The term pitch-roofed is used for any triangular roof, though it could equally imply turrets in some circumstances. There are circumstances where the lack of a horizontal line to complete a triangle may be to show gabled buildings.

¹⁰⁸ There are duplicate symbols of six of the sites, Baikie Castle, St Margaret's Inch, West Inch, Tarbet and ylen Geoy and the information in them can differ. The one giving suggesting the greatest number of buildings or storeys has been preferred as the assumption is an underlying move to reduce scale and complexity as the project progressed.

Winnoch Peel (Pont 33) are of potential interest. Each is shown as a simple tower (Innis Chonnell has vertical lines that may indicate crenellations) and the last two are referred to as peels. All occur on relatively well-developed maps and suggest that Pont was moving towards an engravable image which would not show everything on the site, or even give a detailed impression of the principal structure. It would instead tell the map reader that there was a structure of scale and significance.¹⁰⁹ A preference for simplicity is also evident with the repeated attempts to place Loch Lundie and its settlement/s on Pont 5 which see a move from crossed out multi-structure sites to a final single one. Seen in symbolic rather than representational terms even the island sites that initially appear difficult to explain are often straightforward. Our expectations of the fragments must be conservative and should not assume that because Pont shows a four-storey tower in splendid isolation that a sixteenth century visitor would have found just that. By avoiding elaborate hierarchies we get closer to Pont's intention and can realise the archaeological value of the maps.

The maps can also provide some insights into the distribution of loch settlements. Most are in the west, with a band running from the Lennox into Argyll, up the Great Glen to Sutherland. This is demonstrated by the presence of the following settlements:

- seven on Pont 17
- five on Pont 14
- eight on Pont 5
- six on Pont 4(7)
- and six on Pont 2(1).

Five of the 77 fragments contain 32 of the firmest locations. The other 27 are mostly concentrated north of the Forth line but outside Aberdeenshire and the north east coastal area. One exception is the Peel of Loch Winnoch in the south west

¹⁰⁹ Castles such as these tended to have other associated features, perhaps within an encompassing barmkin and courtyard. Clunie's tower was one of a number of structures including a great barn, chapel and other houses. Baikie Castle appears to have had turrets and been surrounded by fortified walls and a range of stables and other buildings in the courtyard and a chapel. Similarly Innis Chonnell is a complex thirteenth-century castle of enclosure remodelled in the fifteenth century. It has a series of courtyards, towers and outer bailey.

(Appendix 3, 124-5).¹¹⁰ This distribution tends to be confirmed as other elements of the Pont legacy, such as the texts, are taken into account.

The Pont texts

Fleet (2001, 47) observes that the failure to publish Pont's maps and texts in his own lifetime, and beyond, was a great national loss. What remains of his written work, both in notes on the maps and incorporated into other texts, is nonetheless of historical and archaeological value providing qualitative details about some loch settlements as well as information about their ownership. It is a mixture of chorographic description covering areas of north and west Scotland and itinerary or survey notes. There are 26 direct references to mainland freshwater loch islands that mention past or present settlements, 11 on Loch Lomond. Of the Loch Lomond settlements three (possibly four) are shown on Pont 17, meaning Pont was aware of seven or eight more than he showed. Of the other 14 some 10 are not shown on maps. The textual evidence, which is limited in its geographical cover, continues to emphasise Loch Awe, Loch Lomond and areas east and west of the Great Glen. It also puts a focus on an area around the firths of Beaully and Dornoch, with Loch Doon the only addition in the south west.

Pont's texts showed a great interest in resources and the ownership of property. Fleet (2001, 30-1) draws attention to his comment that the Loch Lomond islands of Inchtavannach and 'Ylen Rosh'¹¹¹ pertained to the earl of Glencairn and the laird of MacFarlane respectively. There are references to the ownership or occupancy – contemporary or historic – of 10 island settlements. In all but one case (Loch Beanie, see above) this information is contained in texts. With Inchmurrin on Loch Lomond the reference is to Duke Murdoch's sons having been executed there

¹¹⁰ The most visually impressive loch dwellings on the Pont fragments (including Kilchurn Castle, Innis Chonnell (and what he calls peels at Lochs Winnoch and Clunie), Priory Island on Loch Tay, Baikie Castle, the settlements at Forfar, Tarbert Ylen, Galbraith Castle and Eilean na Vow) tend not to be in the far north.

¹¹¹ There are no NMRS references to any archaeological evidence on any of the islets around Ross Point.

after seeking refuge from King James I (1406-37) in the island castle. Contemporary proprietorship (not necessarily occupancy) is given for:

- Innis Chonnell Castle, the earls of Argyll
- Kilchurn Castle, the lairds of Glenorchy
- Clunie Castle, the lairds of Lethindie
- Moy, Mackintosh of that ilk
- Inveruglas, the laird of MacFarlane
- Inche Devennan, the earl of Glencairn
- and Inchlonaig, the Colquhouns of Luss.

Most references to loch settlements are in the chorographic sections of text rather than the itineraries. The itineraries tend to use islands as landmarks, so no building is mentioned on Loch Venachar, Loch Dochart or Eilean Molach on Loch Katrine (TNS/Pont). The TNS/Pont texts mention churches at Inishail (Appendix 3, 79), Inchcailloch, and Island Columbkil.¹¹² A former church site is also recorded on Inchlonaig. This brings the number of firm references to freshwater religious sites to six when combined with the map evidence.¹¹³ Eight sites are simply described as having houses, buildings or dwellings. Elsewhere there is additional information, often suggesting places of substance and status. Inveruglas has a ‘prettie’ (better understood as ‘fine’) house, and the terms good or fair are applied in four other cases, including one ‘now burned’ on Clairinsh.¹¹⁴ The word tower is used once, for Loch an Eilean at Rothiemurchus, and there are five uses of the term castle. Overall Pont indicates that 12 of the 26 island settlements in the texts had substantial buildings. The word house can cover a range of structures with Pont (TNS/Pont) referring to an ‘old house called castle Dune’ (Loch Doon Castle). In many cases there is archaeological evidence to support the Pont texts. The castles, towers, churches and substantial settlements he refers to can be identified with confidence at:

- Inishail
- Innis Chonnell
- Kilchurn
- Island Columbkil

¹¹² An artificial island in Loch Arkaig (NMRS NN18NE 1 and 7).

¹¹³ Eilean Munde in Lochleven also features on Pont 13.

¹¹⁴ The remains of a settlement of indeterminate age are recorded as NMRS NS49SW 3.

- Loch Clunie
- Loch Doon
- Loch Laggan
- Loch Moy
- Inchcailloch
- Inchmurrin
- Inchgalbraith
- Inveruglas
- Eilean na Vow
- Loch an Eilean

At Clairinsh there are archaeological remains of indeterminate age and written records of contemporary occupation. Inchcruin, Inchtavannach, Inchconnachan and Inchlonaig can all be readily identified and the RCAHMS records show each has archaeological remains which could match Pont's references. Loch Bruicheach has an AI (NMRS NH43NE 5) which is a strong candidate as it was a place of refuge for Lord Lovat (Fraser Chronicles, 1905, 197). Loch Migdale, near Dornoch, has one identifiable island, which is artificial, but has no remains of a structure on the surface (NMRS NH69SW 39) and Loch Ruthven also has an AI (NMRS NH62NW 4). But, while Pont indicates a site called Eunlich at the northernmost end of Loch Lomond it cannot be readily located.¹¹⁵ Yet half the Pont text sites can be confidently identified, and there are settlement remains and AIs which are candidates for all but two of the others.

Pont's work afforded him an unrivalled knowledge of Scotland's natural and human geography. The maps and texts indicate that loch settlements were in use across much of Scotland outside the central Lowlands, Borders and north east. No distinction is made between natural, modified or artificial islands. His interest is more in the geography of power than its exercise. The loch settlements he describes are of varied status but include a high proportion of castles, towers and good houses. If it is accepted that the 9,500 place names Pont records include the bulk of

¹¹⁵ The possibilities include Eilean-a-Ghoar, a mile from the head of the loch. Fraser says MacFarlanes took refuge there during a Macgregor incursion but were killed. He says the name means bloody. Farther north is Kernaige, near the mouth of the Falloch, which Fraser says became silted up and linked to the land (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 147).

fermtouns, mills and other settlements then his work would seem broadly inclusive. There is no obvious reason to apply different criteria to what was recorded on islands to what was noted on land, supporting the initial suggestion that late sixteenth century loch settlements tended to be of middling to high status.

The maps of Robert and James Gordon

Robert Gordon of Straloch (1580-1661) was a key figure in the survival and transmission of Pont's texts and maps and as a source of evidence for loch settlements in the late sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries. His son James Gordon, the Parson of Rothiemay (c.1617-86), also played a role. Straloch edited some Pont manuscript maps and transcribed parts of his texts (Stone, 2001a, 10). Blaeu (1654, 3v-4r) described Straloch and Pont as joint 'fathers of the maps' in his *Atlas Novus* volume V. This section is primarily concerned with the evidence from 65 surviving manuscript maps produced by Straloch and his son. It argues that they should largely be seen as extensions to the Pont manuscript map fragments and texts as Straloch and Rothiemay added little new of their own. As such, the data probably tells us more about loch settlements in the late sixteenth century than the mid-seventeenth century and it certainly adds to our knowledge of their number, distribution and status.

The Gordon manuscript maps were mostly created using survey information from Pont but are not necessarily preparatory drafts for the Blaeu project. Stone (2001a, 13) believes that by 1648 Straloch was using the material for purposes of his own as they bear little relation to the published Blaeu maps or to gaps in coverage within the atlas (NLS Pont). Stone does (NLS Pont) suggest that Straloch and Rothiemay did some additional survey work but this was largely limited to the north east which was an area with few loch settlements.

Robert and James Gordon represented the two generations of Scotland's post-Reformation educated elite which followed on from that of Robert, Zachary and Timothy Pont. All but Robert Pont may have had a role in creating maps and textual descriptions of Scotland appearing in the Blaeu atlas and elsewhere. The families

seem to have known each other, with Straloch writing that Timothy Pont told him how he travelled Scotland and was frequently robbed (Blaeu, 1654, 3v-4r). Straloch may have been the first graduate of Aberdeen's Marischal College in 1597 before going to Paris where he completed his education, associating with fellow Scots like the exiled Presbyterian preacher Robert Bruce (ODNB, 2007).

During the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century Straloch had parliamentary exemption from quartering troops and protection 'from all public burden or injury' as he was 'doinge the worke of this kingdome' (Spalding Club, 1841, Vol. 1, 56-7 and 58). Despite this Blaeu (1654, 2v-3r) says 'the works of Gordon would have advanced further if the wretched blow of civil wars on Scotland had not impeded the writer's industry'.¹¹⁶ His intellectual interests were wide and included history and antiquarianism as well as map making. The value Straloch placed upon his chorographic material is evident from his will which also gives an insight into the project he had in mind. It states: 'I appoint my son Mr James Gordon minister at Rothemay, all mappes, papers and descriptions the most part written and drawn with my hand, which conduce to the description of Scotland, and hee to be countable therefore to the publique, but because they are all imperfect, that they be weil corrected or any use be made of them' (Spalding Club, 1841, Vol. 1, XLIIX-XLIX).

James (one of Robert's fifteen children who grew to adulthood) was a renowned mapmaker in his own right, having a hand in the Gordon manuscripts and creating famous town plans of Aberdeen and Edinburgh (NLS Maps). Stone (ODNB, 2007) says he must have signed the National Covenant to have been awarded the parish of Rothiemay, which he held from 1641. Apart from accusations of royalist sympathies during the civil wars James seems to have kept a low political profile. His map output was limited, perhaps due to ill health, but of a high quality.

The Gordons were working at a time when the artistic elements in mapmaking were becoming less important. Maps had become recognisably modern, created to scale and were primarily the product of surveys (Harvey, 1973, 153 and 164). Straloch's role, however, was largely to redraft and edit (Stone, 1972-3, Vol. 1) but it is unclear how much revision he carried out to account for changes in the

¹¹⁶ As a close associate of the Gordon earls of Huntly he was frequently called on for advice and mediated between them and the Covenanters (ODNB, 2007).

decades since Pont's survey. However the manuscript map Gordon 40, which has been dated to between 1636 and 1652, has two versions of Loch Dochart, one with an island and building crossed out, while the other shows it empty. The castle on Loch Dochart was ruined by fire in 1646 (Gillies, 2005, 98) which might suggest active revision.¹¹⁷

The Gordon manuscripts tend to show fewer settlements, probably indicating a filtering out of lower status sites as drafts were prepared for engraving (Fleet, 2001, 42). So if loch settlements tended to be of higher, or lower, status than average they might appear in relatively higher or lower numbers than on the Pont originals. This might be further emphasised by the Gordons' adoption of clearer and more coherent symbologies. Stone shows that on larger scale maps Straloch tended to use a simple circle with a vertical line for the settlements of lesser importance.¹¹⁸ A circle with one tower and vertical line was used for more important ones. There are also symbols with a circle, two towers and vertical lines which may indicate another level of status or size and there are occasional specific site plans (Fleet, 2001, 47). There is only limited evidence to explain Straloch's revision of Pont's symbology and where the same site appeared on more than one of his own maps he was not always consistent (Fleet, 2001, 47). But his expertise and breadth of learning – drawing on a variety of sources for his work – mean Straloch's work should be taken seriously.

The Gordon manuscript maps clearly indicate mainland loch settlements at 36 sites.¹¹⁹ Thirteen are shown between two and five times in a total of 55 depictions. Nineteen of the settlements are shown by both Pont and the Gordon manuscript maps but 15 are not on the remaining Pont fragments (which need not mean they were unknown to Pont as three of the sites shown on Gordon manuscript maps are referred to in Pont texts).¹²⁰ An analysis of the loch settlement depictions reveals that none of the clearly identifiable sites were shown with the basic circle and vertical line. Some

¹¹⁷ There is ample evidence to suggest he took his responsibilities seriously, such as title for Gordon 14 which reads 'Coygach and Loch Breyn, drawin out of many imperfyt papers of M. T, Pont'. The notion of imperfection implied gaps in coverage, and a need for completion, as well as putting right mistakes. The Gordons' own project might have been hampered by not having access to all, or the best, of Pont's work as much may have been kept by Blaeu (Stone, 2001a, 12).

¹¹⁸ Stone's analysis of symbols for Buchan show that 221 sites have settlement circles, 59 have a single tower, eight have two towers and there are three plans.

¹¹⁹ Two other depictions are treated as possible because of difficulties identifying the site they are intended to show.

¹²⁰ This statement is made with a degree of caution as Straloch, or others, who edited Pont texts could have included additional detail of this kind.

37 have a settlement circle with a single tower, though not all have a vertical line. Four have two structures, only one of them clearly has a settlement circle. In five cases there is a tower with no clear circle and in two, at the far east of Loch Maree (Gordon 13) and St Serf's (Gordon 6), the settlement is just a small rectangle. This, according to Stone's classification, suggests they are more than peasant homes or ordinary fermtouns, though not necessarily of the highest order. The consistency increases when we distinguish between the authorship of Straloch and James. The castle of Lochleven is shown five times (Gordon 02, 06, 48, 52 and 53). In the first three cases it is depicted with a circle and tower. The remaining two are variants with no circle on 53 and two structures on 52. Both these maps are attributed to Robert Gordon of Straloch or James Gordon of Rothiemay (Gordon 53).

Other variants include a depiction of Lochindorb which is difficult to interpret with confidence (on Gordon 5 it is the standard circle and tower). The Peel of Lochwinnoch (which Leighton ascribes to Robert, the 'great' lord Semple between 1547-72 (1834, 214)) is a tower and circle on Gordon 59 but a rectilinear tower with a small side structure on Gordon 55. The former is a rough draft which also gives cursory treatment to the nearby Castle Semple while the latter is better developed with a more complex plan of the castle. The close attention to the area, and grand images, echo Pont 33. Pont's survey may have been carried out in the time of Robert, 4th lord Sempill (d.1595) a privy councillor to King James VI, famous poet and Protestant controversialist (ODNB, 2007). The family remained influential with Robert Sempill (d.1660x69) being a notable Protestant writer and a royalist officer (ODBN 2007), the latter fact suggesting similar political thinking to Gordon.

The other main sites where there are potentially significant inconsistencies are Loch Moy and Priory Island. In the first case the home of the chief of the Clan Chattan has a two-structure symbol on Gordon 25 but has a standard symbol on Gordon 05, perhaps denoting a tension between social significance and architectural grandeur. Priory Island appears four times including twice in standard form on Gordon 02 and 48 and on the small scale Gordon 06 it is just a tower. But the last depiction echoes Pont 18 and shows two island structures, the Port of Loch Tay and a complex two-towered Balloch Castle. Like Castle Semple and its associated peel, Balloch Castle and Priory Island were at the heart of the possessions of a powerful

noble family whose influence was widespread during the lifetimes of both Pont and Gordon. Such people were high in the social order (and potential patrons for regional maps) so chorographers might well emphasise their possessions. This also explains the attention paid by Pont and Gordon to the Campbell of Glenorchy castle of Kilchurn – Gordon 06 gives it a settlement circle, two structures and vertical line.

The Gordon manuscript maps omit some loch settlements shown by Pont. On Loch Assynt (Pont 4(7)) this may just have been to correct an error. In other cases it seems linked to the scale of the map. As the scale reduced Gordon would appear to exclude settlements of lesser social significance. Pont 4(7) and Gordon 12 cover some of the same area at a similar scale. The latter presents information more neatly and removes mistakes rather than leaving out clearly depicted loch settlements. Another example is Gordon 25 (dated 1640) which includes the same parts of the Great Glen as Pont 5 but covers an area including Aberdeenshire. It clearly shows settlements on lochs Lundie and Tarff (and possibly on Loch Ness although the image is unclear) but Pont had 10 on six lochs in their common area of coverage. This might indicate that some had fallen out of use, or that Gordon was filtering by status. However, he shows and names ‘Ylen Innergarry’ and ‘Ylen Dreynachan’ on Loch Oich, highlighting them as significant in the human landscape.¹²¹

There is, then, little obvious suggestion that Gordon knew of a drastic decline in loch settlements since Pont’s survey, but only some were deemed important enough to feature on a small scale map. It is, though, important to acknowledge that mapmakers’ decisions could involve relativism as they would sometimes fill space rather than leave it empty (Harvey, 1973, 176). This could mean that some loch settlements might be shown on small scale maps because they were on large expanses of water and in remote areas.

Insights into loch settlement status can be gained by comparing the 22 depictions Gordon and Pont have in common. The Pont depictions are of the types where Gordon would use a settlement circle plus one or two structures. Six, where Pont’s depictions are problematic, are simplified by Gordon as single structures. Nine multi-storey and/or multi-structure Pont sites become one tower depictions in Gordon, but three are shown with two structures. This leaves four anomalies. Pont

¹²¹ The island symbols are unclear and may hold more information than readily apparent.

may have tried to indicate that Lochindorb and Loch Beanie were ruins but Gordon used a standard circle and single tower. There is a slight variance with the Gordon 43 depiction of Loch Beanie which has no circle and an upright rectangle on a small oblong island. It may be significant as this map carries the text describing the site as the 'old' chief dwelling of Glenshee. The final seeming anomaly is with Loch Stack (Pont 3(1)) which appears to be a single structure on a small island. On Gordon 11 it has an island, circle, tower, vertical line and second structure. A possible explanation is that Pont's horizontal rectangle is walling, rather than the island, and a mark to the right of the main structure originally indicated a second building.

The islands on Gordon but not Pont are mostly in areas with no surviving Pont coverage. Two exceptions are the Loch of Drumellie and Loch Maree. In the former case Pont 23(2) possibly shows a structure in the loch. Straloch over-inked the map to emphasise its insularity and we do not know why. It is shown as insular on a Gordon manuscript map and in Blaeu. Pont's Loch Maree coverage does not include the east where Gordon shows a loch settlement. Gordon 13 covers the entire loch (reducing the number of central islands from Pont 4(5) and 4(6)) but omits the Pont settlement taken to be the manor on 'Ylen' Ruairidh Beag. That he appears to retain 'Ylen Geoi', which is untraceable, suggests he did no fresh survey work. The difference between these maps, and others, may be the level of development. Gordon's is at an early stage showing natural features such as rivers, lochs and coastline marked but only around six settlements in all Coygach. He may have been redrafting now lost Pont material.

Some differences between Pont and Gordon are the result of original survey work. The depictions of Lochleven Castle, St Serf's Isle and the castle of Lochore originate from James Gordon, to whom Blaeu attributes the Fife coverage. Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet obtained the consent of the kirk general assembly for James to leave his parish for two months in 1642 to survey Fife (ODNB, 2007). Some of the most difficult depictions are on Gordon 42 which has a loch west of Glamis with two towers. They are in a similar area to structures on Pont 26 categorised as possible sites because the loch might have been drawn later. But the loch's linkage to the river system and the relative position of some nearby settlements are different. Furthermore there are no archaeological remains which correspond well with the

depictions. Gordon 14 shows a settlement on Loch Achall (Highland, Lochbroom) which does not feature in Pont or Blaeu. Once again, there is little to corroborate Gordon, but there is an AI/MI demonstrating human presence at some point (NMRS NH19NE 3).

Many loch settlements on the Gordon manuscript maps, but not on Pont's, are scattered from the south west to the north west. Others, while north of the Forth, are on lochs at the edge in the plains just south of the Central Highlands. These include the Lake of Menteith, Lochleven and Lochore which are among the most south easterly loch settlements recorded at the time. Factoring these sites in beside those from Pont does however reinforce the idea that loch settlements spread from the south west, into the central and northern Highlands but were less common in the south east and north east.

Site comparisons

The extent to which Pont and the Gordons filtered out smaller and poorer settlements and whether they had coherent symbologies is an important issue. So too is the matter of whether they had comparable symbologies. One limited area for comparison does exist as all produced which involves a small number of rural land settlements immediately outside Old and New Aberdeen (Appendix 2, 69-70). All the mapmakers covered the area, and one in very great detail. Cross comparisons tend to confirm that there was some filtering out of the poorest settlements and the emphasis on places of social significance became more pronounced with larger scale maps. Having said that there was a high level of inclusiveness and the symbologies of the mapmakers is comparable. This suggests that when it comes to loch settlements Pont and the Gordons probably included most of those they encountered but the least important are likely to be omitted from maps of large regions or the entire kingdom. Once again the evidence suggests that the maps must be treated with caution as symbologies and hierarchies have a general value but contain inconsistencies.

James Gordon presented Aberdeen town council with his pen and ink town plan of the area (*Aberdoniae Novae et Veteris Descriptio*) in 1661. It included a

smaller scale map of the district on the same sheet (NLS Maps).¹²² A similar area is covered by Pont 11, Robert Gordon's 1640 manuscript map Gordon 25, and Blaeu's Aberdonia and Banfia, which is attributed to Straloch. Rothiemay was not inclined to prettify places to please benefactors – Stone says he complained that engravers falsified his 1647 plan of Edinburgh to make it more commercially attractive. The Aberdeen plan shows the 'shells of fishers' on the waterfront, meaning he included some of the most modest dwellings. Fermtouns, milltouns and cottouns appear as small clusters of single-storey buildings and many have fenced or walled yards (gardens) and trees. The plan has 13 named settlements outside Aberdeen and (depending on judgements about where touns begin and end) has 17 unnamed. There are isolated single buildings and clusters. The accompanying map names 13 of the sites, four of them unnamed on the plan, meaning nine names in common. The shift from pictorial plan to a map using symbols leads to the immediate omission of some of the smallest sites like Spa Well and the fishers' sheilings. Futy, a larger settlement, is also missing. The modest change in scale also sees Rothiemay represent six of the remaining settlements using circles with either a vertical line or cross while the others have circles with one or two structures.¹²³ What criteria he used to decide which symbol to use is not easy to judge, but with his Fife loch dwellings he showed a tendency to use more elaborate pictographs than Straloch.

Straloch's map of northern Scotland is at a very small scale and shows only two sites, both milltouns, from the plan. Blaeu's Aberdonia and Banfia, created by Straloch, has six names in common with Rothiemay's plan and also has two settlements which James Gordon names on his map but not the plan. Pont 11 is very poor but names three sites from the town plan and its chief value is in helping understand Pont's symbols. Rothiemay shows Futy as a linear settlement of closely built homesteads, yards and back buildings. Pont has a long rectangle subdivided into six small boxes with vertical lines from the top. Both also show small clusters of buildings at Upper Torry. They disagree on Nether Torry which Rothiemay has as another long line of buildings and Pont, 60 to 75 years earlier, has as a cluster. That priority was generally given to larger or more important settlements is indicated by

¹²² The council rewarded Rothiemay with a silver cup, silk hat and 'ane silk gown to his bed fellow' and had his work engraved the following year (ODBN, 2007).

¹²³ Comparing the appearances of the settlements on the plan shows no obvious reason why Cotton, Gordons Mill and Upper Torry have two structures.

the treatment of Ferryhill and the Cottoun of Ferriehill. The latter is shown on Rothiemay's plan, but the former does not come into the area covered. On his accompanying map he gives Cottoun a small circular symbol and abbreviates its name while Ferryhill has a structure and circle and is highlighted with red ink (though this could have been a later decision). Straloch and Pont also show Ferryhill, but leave out Cottoun of Ferriehill. All the settlements Blaeu shows are identified with circles, except for a small cross above Kethaksmill. The Pont settlements are depicted with his most basic symbols. James Gordon's work also tends to confirm that Pont's upright rectangles do not necessarily imply more than one storey, especially without additional indicators like windows.

The Gordon manuscripts are a valuable source of information about loch settlements, filling some gaps left by the loss of Pont material. How much editing or adding Gordon did remains uncertain, but a small piece of text on Gordon 14 may indicate it was often limited. The map of Coigach is from Pont's papers and shows a settlement on Loch Achall which is not covered by Blaeu or on Pont's surviving maps. The text says: 'Avon Challoskag in ye yle wherof Tohill [Mac]Loyd dwelleth is ye march betuix Loch Bryin and Coigach ...'. During the period of Pont's survey this area was held by Torquil Connanach MacLeod, who was challenged for control by his half brother Torquil Dubh MacLeod of Lewis (Highland Papers, Vol. 2, 277-9. See Munro, 2005, 278-9 for an account of events). By the time Gordon was working on the maps control was in the hands of Ian Mor MacLeod, seventeenth chief of the Mackenzies (d.1649). This suggests Gordon did not always update and that we have a direct view back to the late sixteenth century.

The Blaeu atlas and the Pont legacy

Volume V of Blaeu's *Atlas Novus* is the final element in the Pont's legacy and the only contemporary major project for a publication based on his surveys to come to fruition. Seen in conjunction with the surviving output of Pont and the Gordons it provides a wide-ranging chorographic account of Scotland and its mainland freshwater loch settlements. Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit (1585-1670) worked with Blaeu on the final versions of the maps and had an input into the content –

supplementing the revisions of Straloch and Rothiemay (Blaeu, 1654, 1r-2r). The maps are accompanied by text from a variety of sources which contain additional information about loch settlements.

There are 47 clear depictions at identifiable locations contained in the Blaeu atlas (nine are on three Loch Lomond islands with multiple settlements) adding up to 40 occupied islands.¹²⁴ The Blaeu texts make reference to 26 identifiable sites.¹²⁵ There is considerable overlap with the other Pont sources and just four Gordon manuscript map sites do not appear in either Pont or the Blaeu atlas.¹²⁶ There are, nonetheless, 15 map depictions of occupied islands (some with more than one settlement) are not (and in one other case is not clearly) which only appear in the atlas.

Volume V is commonly regarded as the first atlas of Scotland, even though it also includes six maps of Ireland and researchers including Stone (1989, 5) have stated that it made Scotland one of the best mapped countries in the world. There are 48 plates of Scotland with two maps of the whole country (ancient and modern) and 46 of regions. Pont is credited on 36 of the maps; Stone (1972-3, 143-50) concludes that 30 were entirely from Pont and 16 were drafted by the Gordons.¹²⁷ The Gordons provided the new information for up to six.

Fleet (NLS, 2006) details the decades of difficulty that preceded final publication of the Blaeu atlas. Eventual success involved intervention by the commander of Commonwealth forces in Scotland, Colonel Robert Lilburne. Lilburne underlined the close connection between chorography and state interests by writing ‘the said mappes might bee very usefull to the army’ (ODNB, 2007). Indeed Charles I had previously written to Robert Gordon entreating him to revise and improve Pont’s maps as a project of benefit to the nation (Spalding Club, 1841, 11).

Once published the *Atlas Novus* was the most expensive book in the world, sought after by European nobles who wanted to demonstrate their modernity and

¹²⁴ There are a total of 57 clear depictions, with 13 sites shown between two and four times. There are also three problematic depictions, either because they, or the intended location, are unclear. Two, at Bardowy and another loch near Glasgow, show structures which could be interpreted as being in the water.

¹²⁵ There are another six problematic references. The difficulty is often that the name given to the loch is hard to identify.

¹²⁶ Loch Achall, St Serf’s, Eilean na Craoibhe and Lochmaben – now largely surrounded by water.

¹²⁷ Stone’s work was based on their different approaches to the recording of place names.

knowledge (Fleet, pers. comm.). Pont's maps, possession of which gave Blaeu a distinct competitive edge over rival map publishers, had always been dogged by political problems (NLS, 2006, 11-12), but they were considered of national and international importance by James VI and I, Charles I, and Cromwell – to whom Blaeu's volume was dedicated (NLS 2006, 1-34; Cunningham, 2001). James Gordon's work was also acknowledged by the kirk General Assembly (NLS, Blaeu). Pont and the Gordons all presented loch settlements as part of their work. This indicates that they were of sufficient cultural, social and political significance to be considered relevant to the rich and powerful of Scotland, England and Europe.

Blaeu's engravers may have greatly simplified the complex and sometimes confusing symbology provided by Pont (Findlay, 1978, 36-47). Findlay also comments that Blaeu concentrates on more notable landmarks and emphasises great estates, with a likely view to selling maps to their owners. As a commercial project it needed to be attractive to wealthy buyers wanting to adorn their libraries with works of aesthetic as well as chorographic appeal. This involved a degree of standardisation which reduced the amount of information conveyed about most settlements. An example can be seen on the map of Cunningham where a crenellated pictograph of Castle Semple is still visible beneath the simpler final version (NLS, Blaeu). The peel in the loch becomes a small tower with a door and a wide line across the top and conical roof. Both are nonetheless regarded as important external reference points as they are used to provide context and are outside the map's main area of coverage. Accordingly they receive additional emphasis on the Renfrew map (NLS, Blaeu). Pont 33 names the peel tower, shows an island and indicates that it has a building with three storeys, while showing the castle in three dimensions with towers and four storeys high.

Blaeu's map of the whole of Scotland, and some larger regional ones like Breadalbane and northern Scotland, tend to use settlement circles rather than pictographs. Each of these is attributed to Robert Gordon and indicates his tendency to simplify and standardise, especially when the map is small scale. Rothiemay sometimes preferred more complex symbols. Where pictographs are used they tend to use a small number of components, and are often single or multiple towers, sometimes with doors or windows. The roofs are either flat or tapering conicals. The

vertical lines from the top of some towers often look extended, having more the appearance of flagpoles than chimneys. Islands are sometimes reduced to a simple line below a building. There can be smaller structures off to one side, perhaps indicating the size or importance of a settlement by showing more than one building. The overall approach was to individuate the symbols rather than provide individualised depictions showing real characteristics.

Of the 64 loch settlement depictions 34 are circles only. A total of 51 include settlement circles, indicating a high level of consistency. In 25 cases there are single towers (13 may have additional buildings) and in five cases there are multiple towers. There are 13 sites without settlement circles all have one or more towers. While there are tower element/s in 30 instances, there is a roughly even split over whether they have settlement circles included. Some 19 sites are important enough to appear on the map of the Kingdom of Scotland (which has eight) and the largest regional maps of Northern Scotland (with four) and Central Highlands (with seven) all of which are attributed to Straloch. The overwhelming majority of sites of any kind on these maps are shown by settlement circles or just names, as with Inishail kirk. Just two of the loch settlements on these maps, both on Northern Scotland, have towers as well as circles. The 45 depictions on other maps include 17 which are settlement circles only and 28 with one or more towers. Of these nine are on the Dumbarton (attributed to Pont) map and located in Loch Lomond.

Overall the use of settlement circles on larger scale maps may be related to perceived hierarchy. They include sites like Innis Chonnell, a stronghold of the earls of Argyll, and the Campbell of Glenorchy castle of Kilchurn. Six of the 13 sites are in areas included on the larger scale regional maps. These are:

- Loch Brora
- Loch Doon
- Lochindorb
- Lochleven Castle
- Loch Moy
- Loch Nell

All are shown on the relevant maps and each appears as a multi-structure site. Some decisions over depictions are curious – Lochindorb, for example, had past

rather than contemporary significance. Stone suggests 30 maps were used directly from Pont's material without revision by the Gordons. The difficulty of interpreting material without local knowledge might be considerable – and the extent to which the Gordons did revise is debatable. Nonetheless, there are sometimes good reasons why extra emphasis might have been placed on the loch settlements with multiple structures. For example the Isle of Loch Brora was a hunting seat of the earls of Sutherland and Inch Talla was a comital residence (Mitchell, 1907, Vol. 2, 466). The content of regional maps was adjusted according to the perceived significance of a site. The map of Galloway, attributed to Pont, has a group of four lochs of which Loch Moan has a settlement circle and the rest have empty islands. The larger scale map of Wigtownshire adds settlements on lochs Dornal, Maberry and Ochiltree.

Loch Ochiltree is unusual showing two towers of unequal height. It has been suggested that this may reflect an attempt by Pont to indicate that it was still under construction. It might also reflect the style of the engraver, or inconsistencies in the original sources. It is noticeable that two of the clearly pitched roofs are for the Peel of Lochwinnoch and the third is at the Castle of Loch Doon in the same region. However, the depictions for lochs Dornal and Ochiltree (geographically close to one another) are not stylistically similar. Indeed they are atypical of most Blaeu representations.

The extent to which Pont's maps were updated for the Blaeu project is unclear, even on maps where the Gordons had an input. Blaeu's map of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire is attributed to Straloch, covers the area where he lived, and appears closely related to Gordon 25. However, Blaeu shows a settlement circle in Loch Kinord west of Aberdeen (NO 4414 9937) while Gordon 25, dated 1640, has an empty loch. An island castle (noted in 1511 as the mansion of the earl of Huntly. NMRS NO49NW 16) was restored and garrisoned in 1646 but razed by act of parliament in 1648. Blaeu may either have not been provided with updated information after 1648, or felt it was not worth making changes.¹²⁸

Blaeu provides far wider geographical coverage than the Pont fragments. Contiguous maps take in much of the Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, the Lothians,

¹²⁸ Willem Blaeu asked Scotstarvit for maps of Scotland as early as 1626. When he heard of Balfour's purchase of the Pont maps he informed Blaeu. Stone suggests that at least some Pont manuscripts were returned to Scotland in or around 1633, after which Straloch and Rothiemay began their revisions (NLS Pont).

large parts of the west coast and central Scotland. There are fewer detailed maps of the north and most maps of the south east are without loch settlements. Settlements at lochs Ochiltree, Moan, Maberry, Dornal, Martnaham, Tangy, nan Torran, Kendais and Bradan indicate a greater concentration towards the south west than Gordon or the Pont fragments.¹²⁹ The islands on the Lake of Menteith and a reference to Inchaffray continue to suggest a band of settlements just below the Highland line.¹³⁰ Once again, the indications are that the greatest number of loch settlements was in the Highlands and the west, the areas of the country with the largest numbers of lochs.

Blaeu's texts

A series of texts, mostly descriptions of Scotland and its society, accompany Blaeu's maps. They are drawn from a variety of sources, attributed and unattributed, and appear to date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The most prolific contributors were Sir John Scot and Gordon of Straloch (Cunningham, 2005, 270). The latter was responsible for descriptions of Ross, Eddrachillis, Sutherland, Strathnaver and Caithness. Many of these were with Blaeu by 1645. Cunningham identifies other sources – probably and definitively – including William Camden's 1607 *Britannia*, George Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (1582), David Buchanan (c.1595-1652), and Lord Robert Gordon tutor of Sutherland (1580-1656) (NLS, Blaeu). Many texts are located close to maps of areas they describe but few refer directly to them.

Most of the material is to do with social hierarchy and topographical description and the loch settlement references are limited. Those that do exist might bear a closer relationship to the maps than other parts of the text. Cunningham says the account of the islands in Loch Lomond may have come from David Buchanan but is closely related to the TNS/Pont's texts (Blaeu, 1654, 68-9). Close analysis of other sections, some linked to Straloch (and an anonymous description of Sutherland

¹²⁹ The maps also indicate far more in the Western isles, and especially the Uists, than are shown elsewhere.

¹³⁰ Pont 21 also shows Inchaffray on land as a substantial settlement with distinctive ecclesiastical features.

which appears in addition to the one he provided (Cunningham, 2005, 272-3)) also bear similarities to Pont maps and TNS/Pont texts. Like the TNS/Pont texts they offer qualitative insights into the roles and perceptions of loch settlements.

The Blaeu texts contain around 35 possible references to mainland freshwater loch settlements on 32 islands.¹³¹ Thirteen occur in the New Description of the Province of Perth for which Cunningham says no author can be identified (2005, 274; Blaeu, 1654, 88-91). Nine are in the list of islands in Loch Lomond (Blaeu, 1654, 68-9) and there are three other references to Loch Lomond islands elsewhere in the atlas. The loch settlement references tend to concern lordly residences (permanent and seasonal), places of strength or ecclesiastical sites. Of the 23 not on Loch Lomond 13 appear to be readily identifiable sites which are:

- Loch Doon Castle
- Lochleven Castle
- St Serf's
- Loch Dochart Castle
- Priory Island, Loch Tay
- The Isle of Loch Venachar
- Eilean Nam Faoileag, Loch Rannoch
- An T-Eilean, Loch Tummel
- The Peel of Loch Clunie (named as a peel on Pont 23(2))
- Inch Talla Castle, Lake of Menteith
- Neish's Isle, Loch Earn
- The Isle of Loch Moy
- The Isle of Loch Brora.

The reference to Loch Doon (Blaeu, 1654, 7v-8r) occurs in Andrew Melville's Topography of Scotland which Cunningham says dates from 1603-4 and is largely a versified version of George Buchanan's 1582 work (NLS, Blaeu). Other references are less readily identifiable but concern lochs where there is other evidence for contemporary settlements. These are:

- Loch Awe
- Loch Inch (Galloway)

¹³¹ Other potential references exist but have been excluded because they are too vague and/or because research suggests that they are more likely to indicate settlements on land.

- Loch Shin
- Loch Loyal

Further possible references present significant additional difficulties. These are:

- Loch Ronald, Dumfries and Galloway
- A second loch/island at Loch Clunie
- Two lochs/islands at Cardney
- Loch Lednock, Perth and Kinross
- Loch Turret, Perth and Kinross
- Loch Dothan.

The description of Perth is intriguing because it contains much that is demonstrably correct but its confusion in other respects leads Cunningham (2005, 275) to claim its author had no personal familiarity with the area.

The Blaeu texts are rarely concerned with freshwater loch settlements in their own right, but their role in the wider social geography of a region. Several references are concerned with current proprietorship and original endowments. Lochleven is mentioned in a section from Camden because it holds a castle described as belonging to ‘the Douglasses, now Earls of Morton’ (Blaeu, 1654, 72-3). Straloch, in text to accompany his son James’ map of Fife, states that Portmoak Priory (St Serf’s) was founded by Brude, king of the Picts and that it had possessed great revenues (Blaeu, 1654, 78-9).

John Maclellan (1609-1650), minister of Kirkcudbright, who provided a description of Galloway identifies Castle Kennedy on Loch Inch as being the possession of the earls of Cassillis and one of the two main strengths of the Rhinns (Blaeu, 1654, 50). The site now stands on a neck of land but was insular, holding an early seventeenth century four-storey tower (NMRS NX16SW 6.00).¹³² The interest in social elites extends to all parts of the country despite some severe prejudice. The description of Breadalbane, from Camden, says Highlanders ‘are a race of men uncivilised, warlike, and utterly wicked ... They are divided into families which they

¹³² RCAHMS also states that building work at Castle Kennedy is on record in 1607. It was acquired in the mid-seventeenth century the property was acquired by the Hamiltons, lairds of Bargany, passing in 1677 to the Dalrymples of Stair. After a fire in 1716 the family took up residence at Culhorn and the building was not repaired.

call Clans' (Blaeu, 1654, 96-6). The Isle of Loch Moy appears repeatedly in the maps and texts of Pont, Straloch and Blaeu. Straloch's description of Moray explains its importance as the holding the house of the chief of Mackintosh 'head of a very old and wide-spread family, called Clan Chattan'. The interest is also due to past status as he says Mackintosh means son of the thane and that thanes were regional prefects and of the highest noble rank (Blaeu, 1654, 106-7).

Straloch had an interest in Sutherland, its history and politics. This combines to provide an insight into the seasonal use of some loch settlements. Text, provided by Straloch but described as coming from a most valuable manuscript belonging to his kinsman Lord Robert Gordon, states that Sutherland's resources include 60 fishing lochs (Blaeu, 1654, 108-9). It adds that most have islands 'well suited for habitation in the summer'. Other islands are said to be well stocked with animals, swans and wild geese while there are valuable pearls in the waters. Similar text is found in Lord Robert's own book *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* and its core contents are strikingly similar to the notes on Pont 3(2) which say fine pearls are to be found in the loch and the largest salmon in Scotland. It shows four named island, 'Ylen Heyraig', 'Ylen na Vym', 'Ylen Mewyr' and 'Ylen Mulruy', the last with a building.¹³³ Blaeu also says Loch Brora has an island 'appropriated to the habitation of the Earls of Sutherland, and pleasant for hunting deer, of which there is a great supply here in the woods which surround the loch on both sides'. The settlement on Loch Brora is shown three times each on Gordon manuscripts and Blaeu maps. Loch Loyal, which also has at least one settlement marked on Pont 2(1), is described in another piece of text from Lord Robert as having an island that is inhabited in the summer (Blaeu, 1654, 112-3; Gordon, 1813, 11).

The *New Description of the Province of Perth* differs from much Blaeu text in its formalised arrangement which presents information in lists (Blaeu, 1654, 88ff). It displays a marked interest in lochs, distances and castles.¹³⁴ The list of lochs notes

¹³³ While the Loch Lomond description is recognised as originating from Pont it may also be possible that some of the information about Sutherland has a common source. In addition the interest in distances between settlements in the unattributed description of Perthshire (Blaeu, 1654, 88ff) has similarities to Pont's itinerary texts.

¹³⁴ It may have originated before 1646 as it describes Loch Dochart as having 'an island and fortified castle, each facing the western side of the River Tay' (Blaeu, 1654, 88-9).

that lochs Lyon (Perth and Kinross), Tay and Dothan (which may be a repetition of Dochart) have islands with defences. Lochs Rannoch, Turret, Lednock, Venachar and Tummel are also referred to as having islands, possibly implying that they too have defences. The same applies to the otherwise ambiguous references to two lochs at Clunie and two at Cardney. The context relates to numbers of islands not lochs. In the case of Clunie this would be explicable by the presence of a second, now submerged, artificial island (NMRS NO14SW 26). Cardney, near Clunie, has a series of lochs including Loch Cardney which has an island (NO 04095 45523) but RCAHMS records do not indicate local loch settlements.

The list of principal castles includes the ‘Tower of Clunie’ and ones on the islands of lochs Tay, Dochart, Ronald¹³⁵, Tummel, Menteith, Earn and the Lake of Mentieth. This again strengthens the suggestion that even where no structure is mentioned there are contexts where reference to a loch island indicates a place of significance. Little can currently be said about lochs Turret, Lednock and Lyon and given the difficulties with the text it may be unwise to attach too much weight to them – but as the references are themselves clear they have been included in distribution data below. All are reservoirs with raised water levels and the only NMRS reference of relevance is from 1888 and notes the subsequently submerged Crannag nan Luban at the far west of Loch Lyon (NMRS NN33NE 2).

There are three sets of references to loch settlements – in their broadest sense – in Loch Lomond. One, possibly from David Buchanan, adopts an established pattern and starts by emphasising that the loch has many islands (Blaeu, 1654, 72-3). In this case the author says 30, where Pont lists 40. Geoffrey of Monmouth (probably copying Nennius) says 60 (Giles, 1841, 155) or even 340 ‘peopled by men’ (OPS, 1851) and George Buchanan (1827, Vol. 1, 28) puts the number at 24. The Blaeu text adds that there ‘were’ three churches in the islands. These may include the parish church at Inchcailloch, and Inchlonaig where Pont says there had been a church. There are possible religious sites associated with St Mirren on Inchmurrin (NMRS NS38NE 7) and St Kessog on Inchtavannach (NMRS NS39SE 3).

Blaeu’s main references to Loch Lomond island settlements are in a Latin version of the Scots/English text originally written by Pont (Blaeu, 1654, 68-9). This

¹³⁵ This reference presents difficulties as there is no obvious candidate for the loch, unless it is an extreme corruption of Rannoch.

contains significant differences to the version (transcribed by Munro) which was ultimately included in MacFarlane. Where TNS/Pont says Clairinsh had a good dwelling that has been burned down, Blaeu simply says the island is inhabited. In Blaeu there is no direct reference to houses on Inchconnachan, whereas there is in TNS/Pont. Blaeu, however, refers to 'Ylen Eunlich' being cultivated as well as inhabited and locates it three miles down from the head of the loch. This version also adds to the information about Eilean na Vow by saying it is noted for its houses, gardens and groves. At the same time most of the detail about Inchlonaig is absent, including its proprietorship, along with the historical information about Inchmurrin.

Blaeu does refer to Inchtavannach as belonging to the earl of Glencairn. This may suggest that the editing of the text had taken place towards the end of the 1640s (as suggested by Cunningham) as the earl of Glencairn led a royalist uprising in 1653. Blaeu's description of him as 'noble' sits uncomfortably beside the eventual dedication to Cromwell, though by September Glencairn had capitulated at Loch Lomond declaring the king's cause to be broken (Graham, 1820). However, the Blaeu material may be earlier as his description says Inveruglas is worth seeing for the comfortable house belonging to the chief of MacFarlane. The MacFarlanes had backed Montrose's uprising of 1644, Inveruglas had twice been besieged and was eventually destroyed forcing a move to Eilean na Vow (FIRAT, 1995; Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 77).

Ports and harbours

How insular settlements were accessed and their links to settlements and agricultural units on land are key issues but they have received little attention from archaeologists, perhaps due to the lack of readily identifiable remains. Map and charter evidence suggest island settlements often had highly formalised relationships with the mainland, with specific port or harbour areas, often connected with landholdings. Place-name evidence suggests that formal ports were widespread and there is also reason to believe that this evidence may understate the actual numbers.

There are a number of names in Gaelic and Scots which denote more or less formal embarkation and debarkation points for boats. Dorward (2001, 109) says the

word port, from a Latin term for haven, came into Gaelic relatively unchanged.¹³⁶ It occurs in many forms along freshwater lochs on the Scottish mainland such as Portmoak, by Lochleven, and can be shown to be a long-established name form. Watson (2005, 328) traces that particular name back to Portemuoch in c.1152 and believes it indicates a British influence, probably meaning harbour of Docus or Cadog, a sixth century Welsh saint.¹³⁷ Another significant term is camas/camus (Lowlands cambus) meaning bay or creek and carrying the implication of being somewhere vessels are drawn out of the water (Dorward, 2001, 36). The term harbour is rarely incorporated into place names. A 1662 grant gave Colin Campbell of Aberqhall the harbour, the island called Glentoragan [Craggan] and the fishings of Loch Earn (RMS, Vol. 11, P. 145, Doc. 284). The bay has no recorded name. In contrast Pont 18 shows a settlement labelled Port close to Priory Island and has ‘Letyr Ylen’, or slope of the island, just behind. Pont 21 shows an inlet on the far north east shore of Loch Earn with buildings and again the designation Port close to Neish’s Isle. Pont 17 has the word port at Rosdhu Bay in Loch Lomond, close to a probable AI/MI believed to have held a residence of the first lairds of Luss. It is also shown on Blaeu’s Dunbarton map (NMRS NS38NE 3). An area known as Port’o’Rosdhu, with a cottage of that name, remains today close to Port Burn and Port of Rosdhu Mill (NS 35452 89382).

The term kamez appears just beside the words yl: Luz, a possible AI/MI in Luss Bay (NMRS NS39SE 13) on Pont 17. The words ‘Cammez raddach’ are similarly placed on Blaeu’s map called *The Province of Lennox called the Shyre of Dun-Britton* (Dunbarton). Pont 18 names Kammez-fearnan in the area of Fearnan Bay where there are two AIs neither with any evidence of use in this period (NMRS NN74SW 3; NN74SW 16). It also has Kammezzvourich (which survives today as Cambusurich), Kammez Moir and Kammez Sleich. Other examples are:

- Portsona, Loch Awe, [opposite North Port and near South Port] (Pont 14)
- Inscherry or Finch [K]ammez (Pont 14)

¹³⁶ There are cases where it has been attached to places such as forts.

¹³⁷ Simon Taylor (pers. comm.) says the original function of Portmoak is a matter of speculation but the name combines the Gaelic for harbour with a second element that could be a saint’s name which underlines its close connection with the ecclesiastical island. One option (Taylor, 2007, 509) is that the name may be an Old Irish expression of slave or serf and represents a direct allusion to the island name of St Serf’s, or ‘little servant’. Watson (1926, 328) traces the name back to Portemuoch in c.1152.

- Portlaremoir, Loch Ness, now Portclair (Pont 5)
- Portlair beg, Loch Ness (Pont 5)
- Kammez-erach, Loch Rannoch (Gordon 06 and 40)
- Poirt [Port of Menteith] (Gordon 51; Blaeu Dunbarton)
- Port Mark/Portmarck, Loch Doon (Gordon 60; Blaeu Mid-Ayrshire)
- Portmellan b[eag] (Blaeu Dunbarton)
- Portmellan M[or] (Blaeu Dunbarton).

Not all ports or bays served islands; many were for ferries such as Portsonighan on Loch Awe, which the TNS/Pont texts describe as coming after four ‘trowblesum’ miles of walking over high and steep mountains. In other cases names such as Portnellan, port of the island, suggest a close link with a loch settlement – indeed some charters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicate that the primary purpose of some ports may have been to serve islands. Among the best recorded sites is Portnellan close to the Isle of Loch Venachar (NMRS NN50NE 2). In c.1640 Sir Robert Campbell, 9th laird of Glenorchy, gave his second son Colin the isle and Portnellan (BBT, 97 and 98).¹³⁸ A farm bearing the name still stands near the island today. Sir Robert’s fourth son, Alexander, held lands including the isle, loch and port of Loch Dochart – now a small settlement called Portnellan.¹³⁹ There is also Port N’Eilean House, formerly an hotel close to An T-Eilean on Loch Tummel. There are also charter references, including one from 1642, to the port of Eilean Ran in Loch Tay (RMS, Vol. 9, P. 391. Doc. 1058).¹⁴⁰ There are several port names on Loch Katrine including Port na Lich (NN 240302 710936) and Portnellan (NN 240229 712258). Similarly Little Port Farm exists at St Fillans east of a former port, shown on Pont 21, which faced the Isle of Loch Earn.¹⁴¹ Other sources suggest that the surviving Pont material only records a percentage of port areas. Gillies (2005, 383) states that Portbane, translated as fair haven, may have been the seventeenth-century residence of John Campbell of Portbane, and used to be the location for a

¹³⁸ It is possible the settlement controlled a pearl fishery which was exhausted in the nineteenth century, at which time the island was referred to as Bhroine, or the Isle of Lamentation (Leighton, 1834, 34).

¹³⁹ Campbell possession of these lands was not always secure as on 15 January, 1656 Sir James Livingstone of Kilsyth took legal action against John Campbell of Portnellan for unpaid rent on the lands of Portnellan (Paton, 1922, Vol. 8, 326).

¹⁴⁰ At this point the chiefs of MacNab were the tenants of Eilean Ran.

¹⁴¹ Stobie map shows Portmore and Little Port beside Loch Earn plus east and west Portnellan at Loch Venachar and shows Loch Tummel with a settlement called Portnellan.

ferry across to Ceann a' Gharaidh. He also identified Lagphuir as the hollow of the port or ferry (2005, 383).¹⁴²

The presence of designated port areas is likely to be even more widespread than the overt references suggest. Many charters lacked specific detail and identified an island and all that pertained to it rather than naming everything included.¹⁴³ A possible example of the incompleteness of the charter details is that on 19 December, 1596 Margaret Munro, widow of Colin Campbell of Ardveich was ordained with lands including Eilean Craggan but no mention is made of a port.¹⁴⁴ However the port is mentioned in a 1624 contract selling lands including the 'Isle called the Yllanvragane' to Patrick Campbell fiar of Culdares (NAS GD112/2/6/53). In this case there is little to suggest that the port existed as a settlement in its own right.

Contemporary maps tend to show buildings at the harbour areas they identify though there is nothing to suggest that ports and bays consisted of a specific set of buildings or were associated with landholdings of a particular size. As the maps only mention certain port or camas locations it may be that they were only regarded as worthy of record where there was a settlement. Gordon 60 shows Portmark at Loch Doon with a settlement circle and upright rectangle (NX 49017 94266).¹⁴⁵ Some ports emerged as settlements in their own right and may not just have served the islands but provided for other transport and fishing needs. Others may have been little more than a safe places for boats which probably provided access to land belonging to the island. Pont 18 shows a settlement labelled 'Port' close to Priory Island and has Letyr Ylen, or slope of the island, just behind. This, like the settlement on Pont 21, is shown with buildings. The Port of Lochtay is depicted as being enclosed by a circular fence with two buildings and trees within (see Appendix 2). Its proximity to Balloch Castle as well as the old Campbell of Glenorchy caput of Priory Island made it integral to the dynasty's holdings. One of the fullest descriptions of

¹⁴² A further sign of the importance of water transport is the tradition that the MacPhedrains held hereditary rights to all Loch Awe ferries for 400 years (BBT, 12).

¹⁴³ Broun's study of the development of Gaelic charters (1995, 16) suggests this is because written documents were originally subsidiary to ceremony. These spoken declarations relied on people's awareness of what was traditionally included. Even by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the transition to fully detailed and described documents was often incomplete.

¹⁴⁴ This was done when she presented an ordinary mare to Alexander Campbell and a precept of John earl of Gowrie was recited. The lands were symbolically transferred by the handing over of earth and stone (NAS, GD112/25/73).

¹⁴⁵ Nearby is Port Stone or Cat a Stone, described as a natural rocky feature which is traditionally the point from where the English set off to besiege the island castle (NMRS NX49SE 15).

the port and associated property was in a legal action of February 1635 by Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy against Archibald Campbell, brother of the laird of Lawers. It describes the lands as including the 10 merkland of the Port of Lochtay, with hill and fishings of the loch (Paton, 1922, Vol. 8, 283).¹⁴⁶ Records identify a variety of tenants at the port down to 1730 when a resident was accused of witchcraft and called before the Kirk Session of Kenmore where all parties were dismissed with a rebuke (Gillies, 2005, 346).¹⁴⁷ Some idea of the extent and nature of the settlement is provided by a disposition of 1631 which refers to the houses, buildings and yards of the port, isle, alehouse and alehouse crofts (NAS GD112/2/135). In 1574 a confirmation of liferent by Colin Campbell of Glenorchy to his future wife Jean Stewart, daughter of John, earl of Atholl, mentions the Port of Lochtay first and says it came with island, manor, place, garden, orchard and fishings in the north of the lake (NAS GD112/2/135). While it is not always clear what was at the port or on the island, and which was regarded as more important, they combined to create a relatively sophisticated settlement which, unlike an island on its own, had the lands and workforce to raise livestock, vegetables and fruit and could yield sufficient surplus to keep a noblewoman. The Port of Menteith was also a well-established settlement (having been made a burgh of barony in 1467 to improve the supply of victuals to James III while he was hunting in the region (Gilbert, 1979, 61)) while the loch islands were in use. Gordon 51 and Blaeu's map of Lennox show it with a church marked 'K. of Poirt'. There also appears to have been a port near the castle of Loch Doon; Gordon 60 shows Portmark with a settlement circle and upright rectangle, indicating a settlement (NX 49017 94266).¹⁴⁸

It can be difficult to determine the extent of port lands as they are frequently referred to as part of larger holdings, but the linkage of islands and ports is often explicit, like in John earl of Atholl's confirmation of William Robertson of Strowan as holder of the port and island of Loch Tummel and house (RMS, Vol. 3, P. 7. Doc. 32). In 1500 there was an action by William Stewart of Baldorane and his daughter

¹⁴⁶ Other charters, such as that of 1546 also refer to the 10 merklands of the Port of Lochtay (RMS Vol. 3, P. 762. Doc. 3254).

¹⁴⁷ In 1726 the tenants and cottars of the Port of Lochtay petitioned Breadalbane's commissioners to continue their allowance of turf (NAS GD112/2/135).

¹⁴⁸ Nearby is Port Stone or Cat a Stone, a rocky feature which is traditionally the point from where the English set off to besiege the island castle (NMRS NX49SE 15).

Janet Stewart, widow of Andrew Balfour, against his brother and heir Robert Balfour which involved a dispute over the 2½ merklands of Portbank plus the Isle of Loch Venachar and its pertinents (ALCC, Vol. 2, 426).

The relationship between islands and ports was not always fixed as is shown by the five-year tack of 1568 which gave Patrick Campbell, brother of Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon, Eilean Puttychan with the power to build a stable at the port of the isle (NMRS NN53SE 2). He had to live on the island, or the other lands granted him, and was allowed to set six small nets next to the island, but not kill salmon and was charged a nominal rent of a sheaf of arrows annually if required (BBT, 410). The suggestion is of flexibility, whereby one tenant might decide to live on land and their successor on the island.

Conclusions

The chorographic sources considered in the chapter are of enormous value in starting to consider the number, distribution and usage of mainland freshwater loch settlements in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Together they clearly indicate a total of 118 on 112 islands (114 from Pont related sources), the vast majority being recorded in Pont-related sources. A few of these depictions may be wrong, but the evidence from elsewhere (considered in the next chapter) suggests this under rather than overestimates their number. The symbols and words used to depict them tend to suggest they were often held substantial houses and country residences.

The Pont-related sources included a variety of prominent figures with a great interest in the history, society and geography. Yet scant acknowledgement is given to the fact that some island were natural and others artificial and the word ‘crannog’ is not used to describe any of them. The interest was in location, type of settlement and sometimes in ownership but not in structure. Insular settlements are not highlighted as in any way unusual, nor are they identified as belonging to particular areas or social groups; rather they are an accepted aspect of Scotland’s human geography. In terms of distribution, loch settlements tended not to appear in the north-east, south-east and Borders. Instead they were largely identified in – or at the edge of – mountain and hill country. Yet the seeming absence of loch settlements in upland

areas of the south east suggests their distribution was not simply a function of available locations.

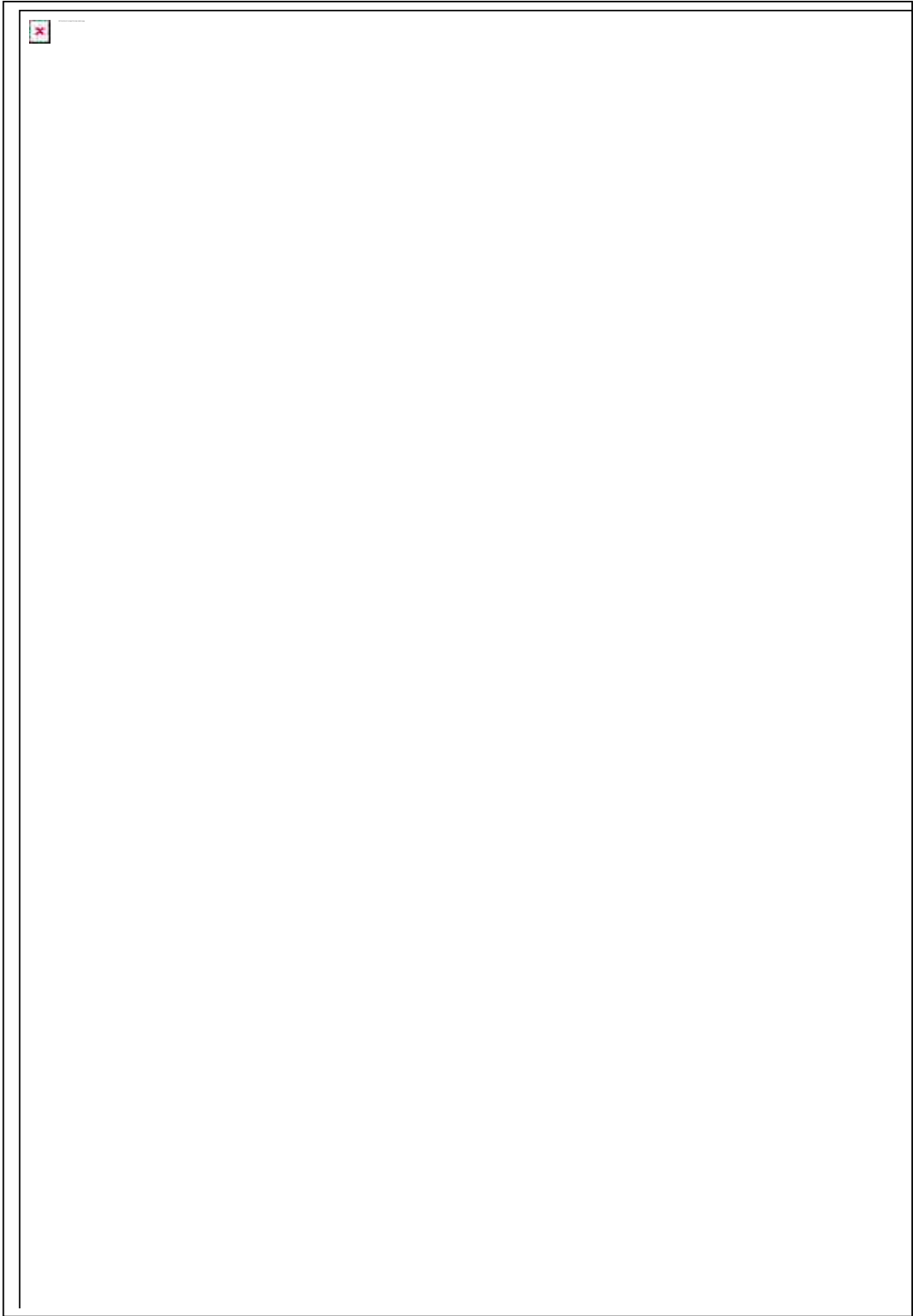


Fig. 36: Above.

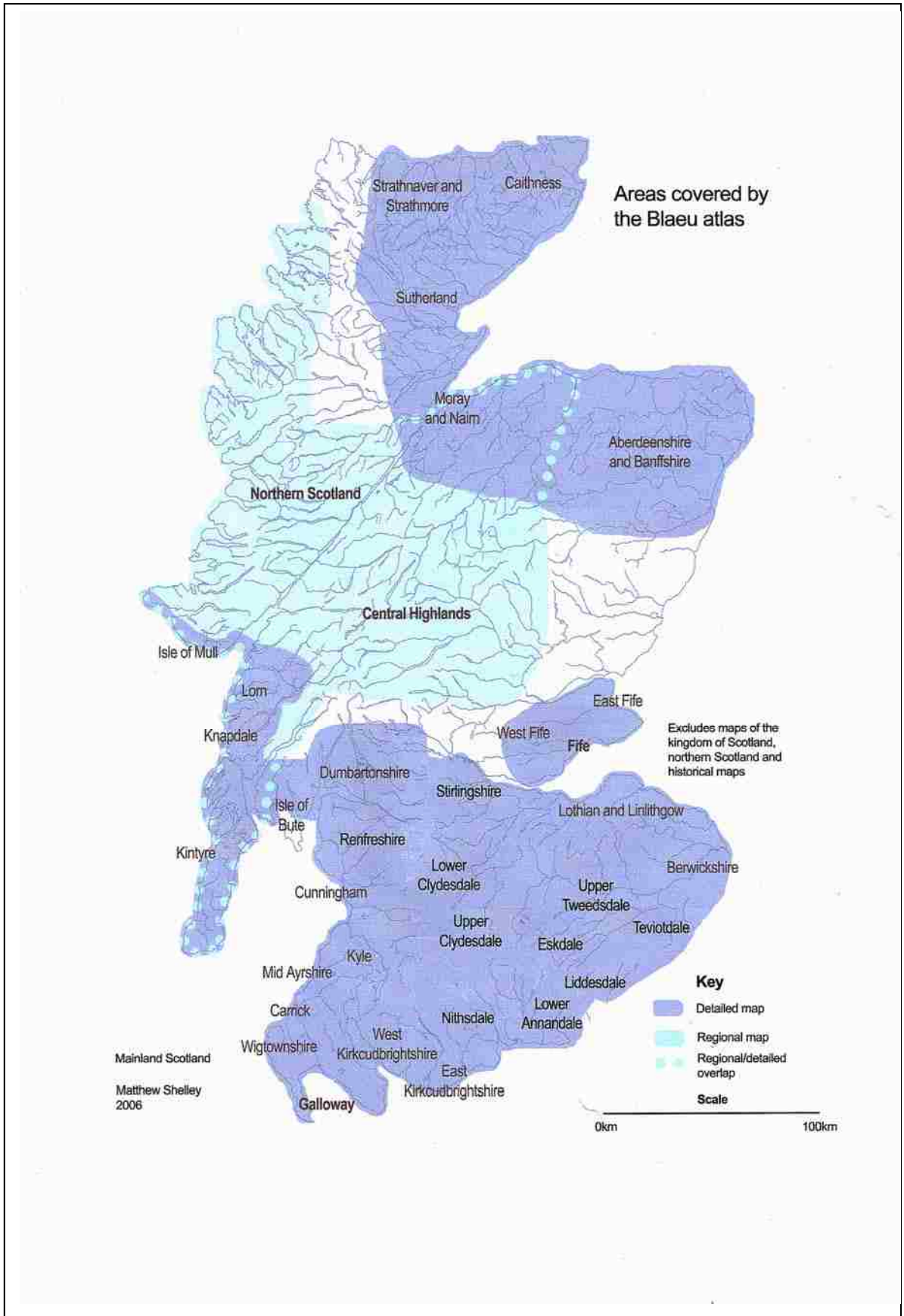


Fig. 37: Above.

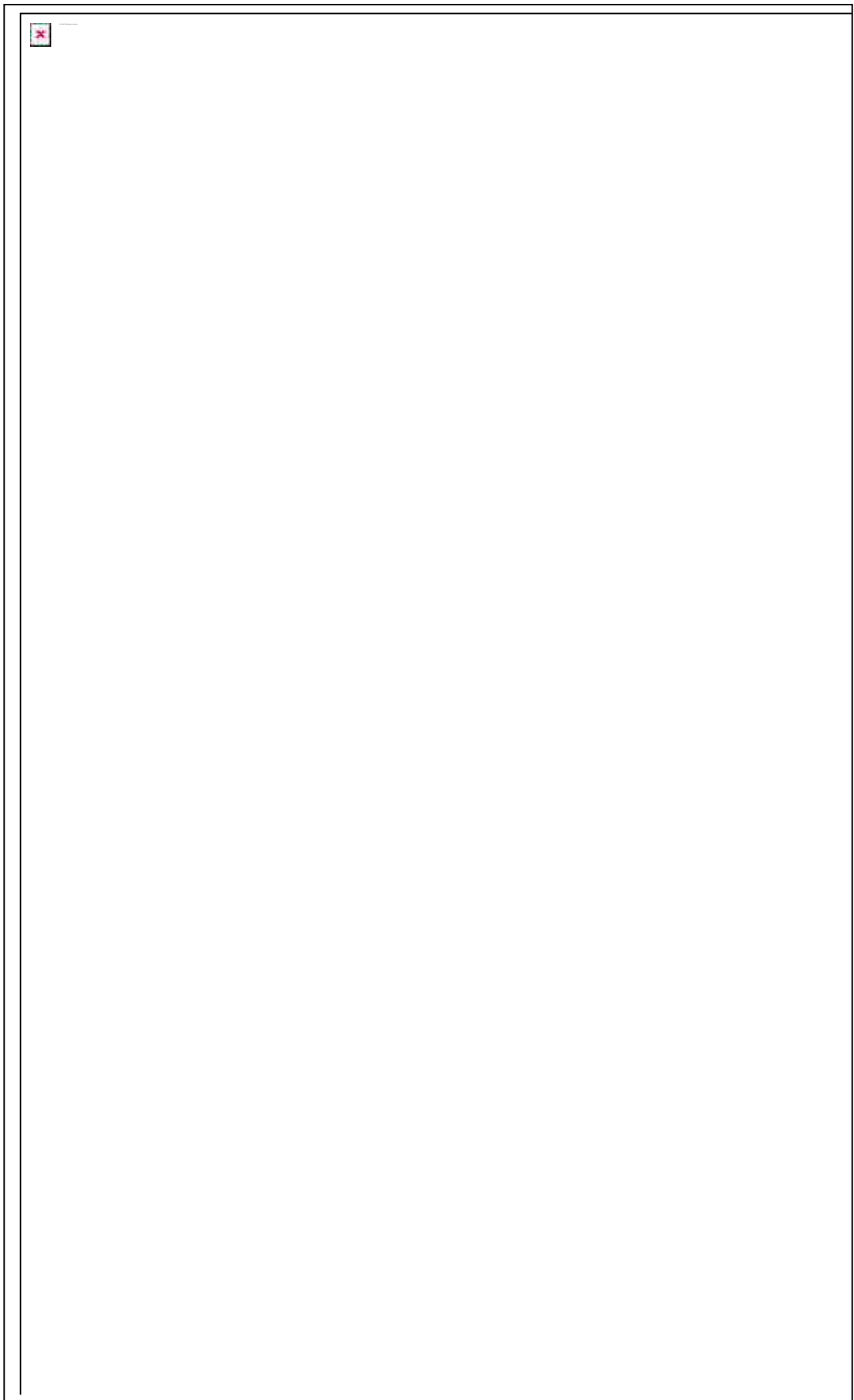


Fig. 38: Above.

Key to map of Late Medieval and Early Modern Loch settlements discussed in this thesis.

	Loch name	Island name
1	Baikie Loch	
2	Cam Loch	Eilean an Tighe?
3	Castle Loch	Castle Island
4	Dowalton	Long Castle
5	Inchaffray	
6	Lake of Menteith	Inchmahome
7	Lake of Menteith	Inch Talla
8	Loch A'an	
9	Loch Achall	
10	Loch Acharydigill	
11	Loch Achilty	Eilean Mhielidh?
12	Loch Alterwall	
13	Loch Ard	Duke Murdoch's
14	Loch Ard	
15	Loch Ardbhair	
16	Loch Ardbhair	
17	Loch Arkaig	Island Columbkil
18	Loch Arklet	
19	Loch Arthur	
20	Loch Assynt	Ylen Assynt
21	Loch Assynt	Ylen Skadden
22	Loch Avich	Innis Luana
23	Loch Awe	Innis Errich
24	Loch Awe	Eilean Fraoch
25	Loch Awe	Inchdarrach
26	Loch Awe	Inishail
27	Loch Awe	Innis Chonnel I
28	Loch Awe	Kilchurn
29	Loch Awe	Unidentified (Inchdreying)
30	Loch Baile Mhic Chalein	Fassin na Cloich?
31	Loch a' Baillidh/Tangy	
32	Loch Balnakill/Lanlish	
33	Loch of Banchory	Isle of Loch Banchory

34	Loch Beanie	
35	Loch Beann a' Mheadhoin	
36	Loch Borrallie	
37	Loch Bradan	
38	Loch Brora	Eilean nam Faoileag
39	Loch Bruiach	
40	Loch Calder	Big Island?
41	Loch Chleibhe	
42	Loch Chon	
43	Loch Chroisk	
44	Loch Clunie	Isle of Loch Clunie
45	Loch of Cossans	
46	Loch an Daimh	
47	Loch Dochart	Garwhellane
48	Loch Doon	Castle Island
49	Loch Doon	Donald's Isle
50	Loch Doon	Prisoner's Stone
51	Loch Dornal	Castle Island
52	Loch of Drumellie	
53	Loch Drunkie	
54	Loch Dubh	
55	Loch nan Ealachan	
56	Loch Earn	Eilean Craggan
57	Loch Earn	Neish's
58	Loch an Eilean	
59	Loch Erricht	
60	Loch Fithie	
61	Loch of Forfar	St Margaret's Inch
62	Loch of Forfar	Fa/W Inch
63	Loch Gainamhach	
64	Loch Garry	
65	Loch Gartur	
66	Loch Glashan	
67	Loch Glass	Eilean nam Faoileag
68	L Glen Strathfarrar	
69	Loch Goosey	
70	Lochan Hakel	Grianan

71	Loch of the Inch	Castle Kennedy
72	Loch of the Inch	Inch Crindil
73	Loch Katrine	Eilean Dharag
74	Loch Katrine	Eilean Molach
75	Loch Ken	Burned Island
76	Loch Kennard	
77	Loch Kindar	
78	Loch Kinellan	
79	Loch Kinord	Castle Island
80	Loch of Kinnordy	
81	Loch Laggan	Eilean An Righ
82	Loch Leathan	
83	Loch Lednock	
84	Loch Leven (castle)	
85	Loch Leven	St Serf's
86	Loch Lochy	Eilean Darach?
87	Loch Lomond	Buckinch
88	Loch Lomond	Clairinsh
89	Loch Lomond	Inchcailloch
90	Loch Lomond	Inchconnachan (3)
91	Loch Lomond	Inchcruin
92	Loch Lomond	Eilean Rossdhu
93	Loch Lomond	Eunlich
94	Loch Lomond	Inchfad
95	Loch Lomond	Inchgalbraith
96	Loch Lomond	Inchlonaig
97	Loch Lomond	Inchmoan
98	Loch Lomond	Inchmurrin (4)
99	Loch Lomond	Inchtavannach (2)
100	Loch Lomond	Inveruglas
101	Loch Lomond	Kernaig
102	Loch Lomond	Tarbet
103	Loch Lomond	Eilean na Vow
104	Loch Loyal	Eilean nan Crodh/Mor?
105	Loch Lundavra	
106	Loch Lundie	Eilean Mhic Raonuill?
107	Loch Lyon	Crannag nan Luban?
108	Loch Maberry	Loch Maberry Castle

109	Loch Maree	Eilean na Craoibhe
110	Loch Maree	Eilean Gruaidh
111	Loch Maree	Eilean Ruairidh Beag
112	Loch Maree	Eilean Subhainn
113	Loch Maree	Isle Maree
114	Loch Martnaham	
115	Loch Meadie	
116	Loch Migdale	Isle of Loch Migdale
117	Loch Moan	White Island
118	Loch Moulin	An Sean Chaisteal
119	Loch Moy	Isle of Loch Moy
120	Loch Monnairr	
121	Loch Naver	
122	Loch Nell	Rubha na Moine
123	Loch Ness	Cherry Island - Eilean Muireach
124	Loch Ochiltree	
125	Loch Oich	Eilean Drynachan
126	Loch Oich	Eileanana H-Ealaidh?
127	Loch Oich (C)	
128	Loch Oich (D)	
129	Loch a' Phearsain	
130	Loch Quoich	
131	Loch Quoich	Eilean Mhic Phi
132	Loch Rannoch	Eilean Nam Faoileag
133	Loch Rusky	
134	Loch Ruthven	Tom Buidhe?
135	Loch Shiel	Eilean Fhianain
136	Loch Shin	Ylen Mulroy
137	Loch Shin	Ylen na Craioibha
138	Loch Shin	Ylen Heyraig
139	Loch Shin	Ylen na Vym
140	Loch Skerrow	Craigherron Island
141	Loch Sloy	Isle of Loch Sloy
142	Loch Spey	
143	Loch na Sreinge	
144	Loch Stack	Ylen Loch Stack
145	Loch Tarff	

146	Loch Tay	Eilean Nam Breaban
147	Loch Tay	Eilean Puttychan
148	Loch Tay	Priory Island
149	Loch Tay	Ylen Ran
150	Loch Tollaidh	
151	Loch Treig	Eilean Tigh Na Slige
152	Loch Tromlee	Eilean Tighe Bhain
153	Loch Tulla	Eilean Stalcair
154	Loch Tummel	An T-Eilean
155	Loch nan Torran	
156	Loch Turret	
157	Loch Unapool	
158	Loch Urr	Rough Island
159	Loch Ussie	
160	Loch Venachar	Isle of Loch Venachar
161	Lochfergus	Palace Isle
162	Lochfergus	Stable Isle
163	Lochindorb	
164	Lochinvar	
165	Lochmaben	
166	Lochnaw	Isle of Lochnaw
167	Lochore	
168	Lochrutton	
169	Lochwinnoch	
170	Mochrum Loch	Long Island
171	White Loch of Ravenstone	
172	Yetholm Loch	Yetholm Tower
	Unidentifiable	Possible ID
i	Arnprior	No
ii	Auchmore	No
iii	Bardowy Loch	No
iv	Cardney	No
v	Cardney	No
vi	Clunie (second loch)	No
vii	Inchecornze	No
viii	Inchermonzie	Dry Isle?

iix	Loch Assynt	Yes
ix	Loch Dothan	Dochart?
x	Loch Ronald	No
xi	Long Loch (A)	No
xii	Long Loch (A)?	No
xiii	Long Loch (B)	No
xiv	Unnamed	Pont 4(7) & G 12
xv	Unnamed	No
xvi	Unnamed	Blaeu (Dunbarton)
	Duplicates/errors	
a	Loch Assynt	Unidentified
b	Loch Awe	Unidentified castle
c	Loch Garry (B)	Error?
d	Loch Loyal (B)	Error?
e	Loch Tay	Unidentified
f	Loch Tay	Unidentified
g	R/Keane Castle	Loch Glass/Ussie?

Chapter 4: Secular Loch Settlements

Introduction

This chapter looks at the location and role of secular mainland freshwater loch settlements. The data from the Pont-related sources points to around 114 mainland freshwater loch settlements in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries¹⁴⁹ while Mercator and Ortelius probably show 18. This thesis identifies up to 172 likely and possible Late Medieval and Early Modern sites (including those from Pont and other chorographic sources. There are several others for which locations have not been established). Only a minority, some 51, of the readily identifiable loch settlements are not included in either Pont-related material or the Mercator and Ortelius maps. It is likely that there were more but the textual and archaeological evidence is weak, has been lost or is yet to be identified.¹⁵⁰ This chapter begins by giving brief consideration to the way in which some sites occupied in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods had previous periods of use.

Settlement origins and phases of use

Work by Cavers (2005, Appendix 4) and Dixon (2004), among others, has demonstrated that most artificial and extensively modified islands were occupied in the Prehistoric and Early Historic periods. The evidence for AIs and MIs being built in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods is very limited. This shows that many AIs and MIs occupied in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods had at least one period of previous use. Some settled NIs of the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods were also used at earlier times. Current evidence is limited but does not point to any obvious correlation between dating for initial construction and/or

¹⁴⁹ The calculation is complex as some sites are clearly shown but there may be reasons to doubt the accuracy of the depiction. In other cases the depiction can be unclear but other evidence exists to suggest there was a settlement.

¹⁵⁰ These sources provide limited evidence for another 16 settled lochs or islands. Examples of sites that have been omitted are Loch Lochy where the evidence is largely folkloric. Similarly, the three-storey Lochhouse Tower (NMRS NT00SE 18) has been left out because while Tranter believes it was insular there are other suggestions that the now-drained loch only extended round two sides (1963, 88).

early use and later occupation. Rather, it tends to indicate that loch settlements were a feature of society during many periods. Loch Migdale, in Sutherland, which held a summer house in the seventeenth century (Gordonstoun, 1813, 5) yielded radiocarbon dates of 800-420 BC and 40-140 AD (Dixon and Shelley, 2006). Dating evidence shows Eilean nam Breaban, Loch Tay, which was occupied during the sixteenth century also had Early Historic use (GU-12124, cal AD 430±50) and the Loch of Drumellie, Perth and Kinross, (which this author believes to be a natural island) yielded a date of 1490±50 BP (GU-12345, cal AD 430-660) (Dixon and Shelley, 2006; Cavers, 2005, Appendix 3). Dixon and Shelley (2006) also obtained a radiocarbon date of 810-1030 AD at Eilean Craggan.

In the Medieval period sources of evidence for loch settlement use begin to increase, as does the survival of evidence. This sometimes points to multiple phases of use and, occasionally, indicates continuity of possession by specific groups or families. Place-name evidence suggests that the natural Threave Island (Brittonic from ‘tref’, meaning homestead (Brooke, 1994, 71; Dorward, 2001, 135)), in the Dee, and artificial Burned Island, in Loch Ken, were in use well before the Late Medieval period. Threave now holds the ruins of a fourteenth-century castle¹⁵¹ (NMRS NX76SW 7) while Burned Island was closely linked with Edward Balliol in the Wars of Independence. Likewise there are archaeological hints of a tenth-century settlement at Old Caerlaverock, a modified island in tidal salt marshes at the edge of the Solway Firth, where the Maxwells built a castle in the thirteenth century (Brann et al, 2004, 3). Ross (2003, 123-4) suggests that in Moray four ‘fortified’ insular settlements of Loch Moy, Loch an Eilean (Appendix 3, 97-8) and Loch Laggan and Lochindorb may date back to the period before 1130 and that they were linked to the landholdings of Oengus the mormaer of Moray (and probably the last male representative of his kindred), who was killed in battle that year. Ross (2003) argues that Loch Moy, Loch an Eilean and Loch Laggan and probably Lochindorb probably all became ecclesiastical lands as the bishops of Moray were granted lands

¹⁵¹ Oram (2005, 9) says the castle built by Archibald, 3rd earl of Douglas was an influential structure and was the inspiration for Bishop John Cameron’s tower at Glasgow.

previously belonging to the mormaers, and extensive secular authority in order to fill the power vacuum and represent the interests of the Scottish Crown.¹⁵²

In the south west it may be possible to follow the use of island sites from the twelfth to mid-fifteenth century, through six generations of ‘kings’, princes, lords and ladies, beginning with Fergus, lord of Galloway (c.1120-1161) who exercised power as a regional king until retiring to Holyrood Abbey in 1160.¹⁵³ Oram (2000, 149) claims that Burned Island was likely to have been the original administrative centre for Lady Dervogilla of Galloway (d.1290). Her lands (including the family’s principal residence at Buittle) were inherited from her father Alan, last of the native lords of Galloway, whose patrimony stretched back to Fergus. Brooke (1991, 108 and 109; 1994, 54) says Buittle shares its place name roots with Burned Island, which also appears in the record as Erysbutil or Arsbutil (meaning homestead or hall) and may date back to the seventh to tenth century Northumbrian overlordship. It is also among the candidates for the location where Uchtred, son of Fergus was blinded, castrated and left to die by supporters of his brother Gilbert in 1174.¹⁵⁴ Brooke gives Palace Isle as an alternative while Oram (2000, 222) says it might have been Threave.¹⁵⁵ Whichever is true, the family of Fergus is clearly linked to insular sites.¹⁵⁶ The association continued after Dervogilla married the English knight John Balliol. She was mother of John Balliol, king of Scots (d.1314) and grandmother to Edward Balliol (1283-1364), who also claimed the crown. Burned Island was among the final mainland strongholds of Edward Balliol in the later stages of the Wars of Independence – he stayed there throughout 1346. Balliol subsequently gave Burned Island and its castle (along with vice regal powers) to his valet and friend Sir William

¹⁵² The lands round Laggan were very desirable according to Oram (pers. comm.) with one of the biggest concentrations of rich grazing lands in upper Badenoch.

¹⁵³ Fergus may have ruled from c.1120 and styled himself ‘King of the Galwits’. He first appeared in the record in 1136 (Brooke, 1991, 47-58). Retirement to Holyrood may have been politically necessary but was also one of the best available means for a man who had led a life of violence and warfare to achieve the salvation of his soul (Burton, 1994, 217).

¹⁵⁴ Blinding and emasculation was not necessarily intended to kill but to debar a man from ruling. The Annals of Ulster refer to how Patrick Savage was blinded and emasculated by Conn, son of Aedh Ua Neill in 1481 (CELT, UA, U1481.6).

¹⁵⁵ The uncertainty is due to varied interpretations of a passage from *Gesta Henrici II* which says Gilbert’s son Malcolm besieged the island abode in which his uncle, a cousin of King Henry, had a residence. It states: ‘He sent his butchers to put out Uchtred’s eyes, cut out his tongue and emasculate him – shortly afterwards he died’. The version by Anderson (1908, 257) translates the passage as saying ‘the island of *blank*’ when it actually says ‘*Insule de*’ which can be interpreted as an island on the Dee.

¹⁵⁶ Brooke (1994, 100) describes Burned Island as a stronghold of Uchtred.

of Alderburgh in 1352 (with a yearly reddendo of a rose if requested) (Oram, 2000, 222; Beam, 2008, 263).¹⁵⁷ While there is no obvious remaining archaeological evidence for the size or type of settlement the island held, Oram (1999b, 180) describes Burned Island as a significant strategic stronghold commanding access to pro-Bruce Carrick. The island finally disappears from the record in 1456 (Oram, 1991, 109).

Widespread loch settlement use becomes more readily demonstrable from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries onwards. This suggests that their use in the Late Medieval period was the continuation of an existing tradition rather than a new or revived phenomenon. There are radiocarbon dates from AI/MIs such as Eilean nam Faoileag, in Loch Rannoch, where Dixon and Shelley (2006) took two samples which gave results of 730±50 BP, (GU-12340, cal AD 1020-1250) and 900±50 BP (GU-12341, cal AD 1210-1330). Barber and Crone (1993, 531) obtained dates of 820±50 BP and 830±50 BP at Lochrutton, which held what was interpreted as a mid-thirteenth-century hall house.

At Loch Lomond there is slight evidence for the secular use of Inchgalbraith in the twelfth century. FIRAT (1995, 23) identifies the name with a Gilchrist Bretnach (or Briton) who appears in 1193. The island, which is probably natural, holds the remains of a tower which has been variously dated to the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Salter, 1994, 124-5). The family remained an important presence in the area with the Galbraiths of Bandry holding the tenancy of Inchconnachan, one of the largest islands in the loch (FIRAT, 1995, 52). The quantity and quality of evidence for the occupation of the loch's islands improves in the thirteenth century. Two surviving charters, one by Maldouen 3rd, earl of Lennox, from 1225 and a confirmation by King Alexander II (1214-49) of 1231, show that Absalon, son of one Macbeth, was infeft with Clairinsh (NAS GD220/2/1/4; GD220/2/1/5). As the original charter was granted at Clairinsh it appears to have already had buildings of sufficient importance for the required civic ceremonial (FIRAT, 1998). The saga writer Sturla Thoroarson also refers to Loch Lomond in his account of King Hakon IV's 1263 campaign in Scotland, claiming ships were dragged there and that the Norwegians wasted and burned its heavily-populated

¹⁵⁷ Beam (2008, 26) says that in 1354 Edward Balliol specifically identified Burned Island as part of his inheritance, thereby linking it to his father John.

islands (Neville, 2005, 83; Anderson, 1990, Vol. 2, 625-6).¹⁵⁸ The increasing survival of evidence also provides further information about sites like that at Loch Laggan (NMRS NN48NE 1; M&P, 1902).¹⁵⁹ Ross (2003, 112) says the dabhach of Laggan Choinnich was mensal and belonged to the bishops of Moray from at least 1224x33 and that they had a fortified insular residence there by 1451 – their earliest-known fortified residence outwith the Laich.

Loch settlement characteristics

A mainland freshwater loch settlement of the Late Medieval or Early Modern period had a number of typical characteristics. They tended to be on a raised area of firm ground in a watery setting – whether natural, modified or artificial. This would have been small, around 45.4m for AI/MIs and 227.9m for all settled islands for which data was available.¹⁶⁰ They would have contained domestic accommodation plus a means of access to the surrounding water or land, which might be a noost, jetty or pier for boats or, less often, a causeway. A designated port area might well exist on nearby land belonging to the island. The settlement would be multi-structural, with buildings split between the island and the port area. As with any norm or average, there are many loch settlements which vary from the typical.

The archaeological evidence suggests that loch settlement occupants tended to be of middling to high status. The day-to-day work of fishing, growing crops or vegetables or caring for livestock on the lands and waters under their direct control was carried out by others on their behalf. Much of this work would have been conducted on the mainland as most islands were small, though some held a garden.

¹⁵⁸ Bower recounts Geoffrey of Monmouth's (c.1100-c.1155) statement that Loch Lomond had 60 isles (Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 191). Monmouth wrote of a naval expedition – by the mythical Arthur – against densely occupied islands on the loch (Thompson and Giles, 1999, 155). He says the Scots and Picts fled there 'thinking the lake would serve them instead of a fortification'. Its significance is not whether it relates to an actual event but that it demonstrates the prominence of the idea of Scotland as a place of lochs settlements.

¹⁵⁹ Referred to as the tower of the lake of 'Lagankenze' in the *Registrum episcopatus Moraviensis* (233) which shows that control of the island was accompanied by rights to the loch and its fishings.

¹⁶⁰ See Appendix 1 for raw data. Natural islands were frequently much smaller than the average suggests. The data, which is for 111 islands, is heavily distorted by a group of 10 of exceptional size, between 620m and 2,470m in length – in these cases it is arguable that their size and sometimes their capacity for self-sufficiency and multiple settlements marks them out as a distinct sub-set. Of the remaining 32 natural islands below 620m, 15 are less than 100m long. Indeed, 79 of the 111 islands considered are 100m or less.

The island residences were the hubs for landholdings of various sizes and types. Some were the principal residences of major landholders who belonged to the social elite, such as local lords, clan chiefs, earls or bishops. Others were secondary residences for such people, as was the case at Clunie and possibly at Eilean Craggan, which they visited from time-to-time as they moved round their estates. It is likely that many were occupied year-round by wardens, constables (some of them kinsmen of the lord who owned the island) or others who would maintain any buildings and oversee the associated lands. There is also substantial evidence to show that some islands and their lands were used by wealthy proprietors to provide a residence and/or income for close family members such as their widowed mothers or younger brothers.

Islands used as lordly residences would perform the same functions as their equivalents on land as centres for administration, justice, and entertainment with accommodation for the lord, his retinue and guests.¹⁶¹ These functions required public areas for the family to carry out its duties and private ones to which they could retire. The BBT gives a good idea of the business conducted by a lord at his island residence, with the Isle of Loch Tay (now known as Priory Island) being used by the lairds of Glenorchy as a place to witness charters, grant lands, conclude bonds of manrent and sometimes hold prisoners (see below). At such a residence a hall was needed for feasting, while kitchens were needed for the preparation of food and storage was required for goods (for consumption, redistribution and sometimes sale at market). Some residences had chapels and prison cells, though Oram warns (pers. comm.) that some rooms previously identified as for the holding of prisoners were strongrooms for money boxes and records. It is not clear how structures, which could include workshops and barns, were distributed between the port and island, though the former probably provided for functions like stabling.

While the overall functions of loch and land settlements were similar the split between island and port represents one clear difference. The watery setting was

¹⁶¹ This also applies to the prelatial site belonging to the bishops of Moray, on King Fergus' Isle on Loch Laggan where the head court of the bishop's barony sometimes met into the sixteenth century (Lewis, Pringle, et al, 2002, 168-9). Ruins of what is described as a hunting lodge stand on the island – the structure of which is unclear. The island settlement is shown on Mercator's 1595 *Scotiae Regnum* (north sheet) as Ellan Moy. This is not to be confused with Loch Moy as the loch is correctly located on the river Spey below Kingussie and a settlement called Moy still exists at the south end of the loch.

another, not least because access had to be mediated, principally by use of boats. Where a land settlement could be in the midst of its lands, a loch settlement had a degree of separation. Some were significantly distant from shore like Eilean Stalcair on Loch Tulla at 400m (Appendix 3, 117-8), while the island at Loch Dornal is within 15m of land – little different from that provided by a moat. Conversely a land settlement was always removed from the waters it controlled. This can be seen as part of a continuum in which land settlements were set apart from their surroundings by certain mechanisms like placing them on an artificial eminence such as a motte, or a modified mound like at Cluggy Castle (known as Dry Isle, in wetlands beside Loch Monzievaird). Natural ones were also used – small and large – like the rocks occupied by Dunstaffnage, Dumbarton or Stirling Castles. Earthworks or water features, like the moat at Caerlaverock Castle, were another alternative as were promontories that could be divided from the land with ditches and/or ramparts like at Ardvreck Castle, Loch Assynt.¹⁶² In the Early Modern period social separation was increasingly achieved using designed landscapes, large gardens and policies, and perimeter walls round estates.¹⁶³

Many loch settlements, like land-based ones, were consciously designed into the land and waterscape. This could involve topographical manipulation, but also the active adoption and development of sites with specific characteristics to express ideas and values. This is in keeping with some of Creighton's (2002, 65) observations about castles. The landscape in which they were placed was not a blank; it was full of meaning, and the locations were chosen for a reason – sometimes being remodelled to emphasise their iconic status. Some were positioned to be seen from favourable angles and to be approached in particular ways. Many loch settlements must also be understood as deliberately positioned. In the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods this could reflect a desire for physical security, or be the expression of wealth and rightful authority over the surrounding waters and lands.

¹⁶² The castle is shown as an island on a sketch in John Home's Survey of Assynt from the 1770s (Adam, 1960, from Plan No. 9).

¹⁶³ For a discussion of enclosed woodlands see Smout (2001, Ch. 5).

Island structures and sizes

The diversity of islands in use during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods suggests no particular preference for islands that were natural or artificial. There is sufficient data about 98 islands to indicate that 54 were largely or wholly/largely artificial and 44 were natural or had lesser modifications.¹⁶⁴ The range of island sizes was considerable – An T-Eilean (Appendix 3, 119-20) has an upper plateau of 16mx12.5m while Inchmurrin on Loch Lomond measures 1.2kmx1.7km. However, where there was a choice, there was often a preference for smaller islands. The 14mx6m Duke Murdoch's Castle, in Loch Ard, occupies most of the available space on the upper plateau of a natural islet measuring c.8mxc.40m while in the same loch there is the c.30mx160m natural Eilean Gorm. The high plateau of the castle island allowed the building of a tower with walls at the very edge of a near-vertical drop into the loch on two sides, creating an impressive façade from the nearest shore. Some lower parts of Duke Murdoch's Isle were too rocky and uneven to be used. This may explain why AIs were sometimes preferred to nearby NIs, as the nature of their construction meant that a higher proportion of the space above water level was available for use.

There was a marked tendency for Late Medieval and Early Modern loch settlements to be on islands less than 200m long (see Appendix 1, 39ff). Occupied natural islands were often larger than AIs, perhaps because less of the space was usable.¹⁶⁵ As there is limited evidence of AI construction during these periods it seems they were selected for use out of the total number of available islands rather than being purpose-built. The existence of port areas, such as the Portnellans at lochs Venachar and Dochart, indicates that the occupants used islands out of preference, rather than because they had no land.

Distinctions can be made between islands on the basis of size. Small ones could not be self-sufficient as there was no pasture for animals or arable, though there was access to fish and fresh water. But in terms of security it was easier to monitor or control who was present on a small island. Security and access

¹⁶⁴ Of these at least six were primarily used for religious purposes.

¹⁶⁵ Islands used for religious purposes tended to be natural, and relatively large.

arrangements could be formalised with physical barriers like at the castle of Lochindorb where walls enclose much of the island the castle occupies. Caldwell and Ruckley (2005) state that Eilean na Comhairle at Loch Finlaggan, on Islay (an AI which held a hall belonging to the Lords of the Isles), was palisaded during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. The terrain could make it impractical to enclose a large proportion of an island and at Innis Chonnell the walls embrace much of the high ground rather than the slopes and shoreside. Size-based distinctions become clear at Inchmurrin, on Loch Lomond, where the earls of Lennox built a castle in the late fourteenth century (FIRAT, 1995, 5). To enclose an island of c.2,470mxc.630m would have been impractical. The castle was positioned on a bedrock knoll where the north-west and south-east sides formed near vertical cliffs and the natural topography has been enhanced by ditches along the north-east and south-west sides (NMRS NS38NE 6). Its insular location made little difference to the construction, which was carried out as if it was on a mainland shoreside. Large islands could also hold more than one settlement.¹⁶⁶ While a small island was a base from which people went to farm or hunt, a large island could be a place where these activities were carried out. Inchmurrin was used for deer hunting by the earls of Lennox and royal visitors. Gordonstoun's (1813, 5) contemporary text says the Isle of Loch Brora was used by the earls of Sutherland as a base from which to hunt red deer in the woods on either shore.

There were just four occupied islands of c.301m-c.350m in length, and none between c.451m-c.620m (Appendix 1, 39ff).¹⁶⁷ There are 11 of c.620m-2,470m. These are Inishail in Loch Awe, Inchcailloch, Inchconnachan, Inchcruin, Inchfad, Inchmurrin, Inchtavannach, Inchlonaig and Inchmoan on Loch Lomond, Eilean Subhainn on Loch Maree and St Serf's at Lochleven.¹⁶⁸ While the physical characteristics of islands differ, making it difficult to draw an exact demarcation line, a distinction might be drawn between islands on the basis of their potential for being self-supporting. The larger they get, the more they become like areas of mainland.

¹⁶⁶ The Pont legacy indicates multiple settlements on some Loch Lomond islands. At Inchmurrin there is a possible chapel (NMRS NS38NE 7).

¹⁶⁷ Among these is the Isle of Loch Moy which is identified as an AI/MI due to the observations of Odo Blundell and also a tentative assessment by Historic Scotland inspector Dr John Raven in 2006. However, the size of the island would make it quite exceptional as an AI.

¹⁶⁸ A reduction in loch level means the last of these has to be treated with care as it was certainly considerably smaller when the priory was in use.

But there is little to suggest a close link between the size or structure of an island and the type of secular settlement (as opposed to its organisation and architecture). Quite substantial castles like Lochindorb and Innis Chonnell were built on AIs/MIs and NIs. There were also more modest towers such the Peel of Lochwinnoch or at Inchgalbraith.

Locations and lochs

It is not only the physical characteristics of an island which might influence how, or whether, it was occupied. Another potential factor considered during this study was the location of islands within lochs. Research suggests that not only was there often a preference for small islands, but also for ones in exposed locations.¹⁶⁹ This is reinforced by the fact that in lochs where there seems to have been a choice of islands the one selected for occupation was often among the most distant from shore. While this initially appears counter-intuitive as it meant that many islands had little shelter from the elements – waves, wind, driving rain, sleet or snow – there may have been over-riding considerations such as the visibility of the island and its detachment from surrounding society.

Loch Tulla in Argyll and Bute has three small islands of similar size: two are in a sheltered bay on the south side, the other is roughly central and in a highly exposed location. The first two, which are natural, show no sign of habitation while Eilean Stalcair (NMRS NN24SE 1) is an AI where the double soles of a shoe dated to the late fourteenth century were discovered during an underwater survey by this author (see Appendix 3). The area belonged to the MacGregors (and was among the early sites associated with them (MacGregor, 1989, 155) but passed to the Campbells, a loss lamented by Giolla Glas in a poem recalling ‘Loch Toilbhe of sunny slopes’ (Watson, 2005, 201) and ‘Ellanelochtollyff’ was among the properties granted to son Colin Campbell (c.1395-1475) by Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochawe (d.1453) on 20 October, 1432 (Highland Papers, 1934, Vol. 4, 199). At the extreme

¹⁶⁹ Morrison (1985, 64) observes that some AIs were noticeably distant from shore, but others were very close and often in sheltered bays. Bay locations appear to have declined in use by the Late Medieval and Early Modern period. Other cases like Burned Island are difficult to interpret as they stand on the edge of bays in lochs where the water levels have been raised.

west of Loch Rannoch there are again three islands of which two are natural and in relatively sheltered positions close to land just off the north and west shores, neither of which shows signs of occupation. Yet the highly exposed AI in the middle of the loch called Eilean nam Faileag appears to have had a long history of occupation in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods (see below). The Blaeu map of Lorn shows an occupied island in the middle of Loch Nell with a second empty island nestled in a bay at the north-west end. An NI in that area again shows no signs of occupation while the exposed AI called Rubha na Moine¹⁷⁰ (NMRS NM82NE 22) appears the best candidate for the chief residence of the Campbell of Lochnell sept which emerged with John Campbell 1st of Lochnell (who died at the battle of Langside in 1568). The clan's interests in the area stretched back at least to the reign of Robert I who granted Sir Arthur Campbell the two penny land of 'Letternanalla' (NAS GD112/75/103).¹⁷¹

The emphasis on distance from shore is manifested in two ways. One is the use of islands, like Eilean Craggan, which are at the extreme of a coastal fringe round loch edges next to drop-offs into deeper water. The other is the use of islands in shallows towards the middle of a loch as at Clunie. In a large Highland-type loch like Loch Tay there are shallows at either end and in a narrow fringe around the edge meaning central locations are unavailable.¹⁷² This contrasts with places like Loch Maree where there are islands in the central area plus shallows at the fringes and at the ends. As well as the settlements on the central islands of Loch Maree there is also what RCAHMS describes as the fortified island of Eilean Gruidh, which was a reputed stronghold of the MacBeaths from c.1430-1513 (NMRS NG96NE). An NI, it is c.0.2ha in size, around 200m from land and has 1m thick and 2m high diamond-shaped walling. It is not only much smaller than NIs a little to the west but has a belt of deeper water, up to 14m, between it and the shore (M&P, 1902). At the eastern end of the loch is Eilean na Craoibhe, shown as inhabited on Gordon 13, which a

¹⁷⁰ A survey by Cavers in 2003 showed it to be an AI 43m in diameter at its base and 23m above the water, sub-circular, largely featureless apart from a boat noost. The Blaeu map of Lorn shows an island in the centre of the loch as occupied.

¹⁷¹ There are further references to the lands in c.1385 and in 1498 when they were bought by the Campbells of Argyll from the MacDougalls (Highland Papers, Vol. 4, 194).

¹⁷² The size of loch seems not to have been an important issue as settlements existed in the largest and some of the smallest. At one end of the spectrum is the 7,073ha Loch Lomond (c.34kmxc.6.7km) and at the other is the White Loch of Ravenstone at 6ha (c.380mxc.180m) or Loch a Chleibh (Highland, Tongue) at 2.8ha.

survey by this author indicates is an NI but perhaps with artificial or modified capping. This again occupies a shallow area in the loch at a far point of around 300m from shore (M&P, 1902).¹⁷³

An analysis using Murray and Pullar's bathymetric survey data, plus new fieldwork and evidence from OS and archaeological sources indicates that (where information was available) 114 of the 172 sites identified in this study were in lochs with more than one island. In just 24 cases do they appear to be the only available insular location. This tends to confirm that choice was exercised not just over whether to use an island, but which island. One of the most important factors appears to have been distance from shore. Some 72 occupied islands for which there was good bathymetric data were at one of the farthest available points from land and 18 were not.¹⁷⁴ In 13 of these 18 cases they were still at the edge of the shoreside shelf and some have depths of water that could not be crossed on foot between them and the land.¹⁷⁵ Some occupants might not have been able to choose between the seemingly available locations, either because they only had rights within certain areas or because some were already in use or unsuitable.

It is only in a few instances that there may have been readily available alternatives substantially further into the water. These include the Loch of Forfar where there is an AI further from the shore than St Margaret's Inch – however the loch levels have changed and it may have been submerged. The position is more clear cut at Loch Dornal, South Ayrshire (which appears in the Blaeu atlas), where there is an AI/MI (NMRS NX27NE 5) with remains of two substantial Late Medieval or Early Modern structures which Zeune (1992, 121) dates to between 1300-1600. The island is 25mx25m and 15m from shore in a loch where there are a number of other islands, some in more central areas. A survey and trial excavation by this author and Dr John Raven (Appendix 3, 91-2) in 2004 produced one sherd of fifteenth to sixteenth-century Scottish red ware (Bob Wills, pers. comm.). The west

¹⁷³ The upper surface, which is of small to medium boulders, is largely flat and measures 31mx14m. The extent of exposure is seasonal. The sides slope away gradually, then fall more sharply into water of at least 3m on all sides. The slopes in some areas consist of sand and gravel with scattered stones and boulders. There is a sand and gravel layer immediately beneath the stone surface. The loch bed consists of soft silt and medium to large boulders.

¹⁷⁴ The assessment looked at whether other islands or shallow areas of 2m or less were readily available within c.1km.

¹⁷⁵ Circumstances may have changed due to rising or falling loch levels. Where major changes are known to have taken place that cannot be compensated for the islands have been excluded.

building had two levels of flooring, including one of good-quality flagstones. The settlement was of a high status and would have required significant resources to build, again suggesting that its owner probably had the authority to exercise active preferences over where their residence was located.¹⁷⁶ A not dissimilar situation exists at Loch Lundie, above the Great Glen near Invergarry, where there is a small AI known as Eilean Mhic Raonuill (NMRS NH20SE 3) which is carefully constructed with an upper surface of flat stones. Other islands are available at greater, or similar, distance from shore but none have obvious remaining evidence of occupation. If this was the island shown in use on Pont 5 then it may have been chosen because out of 10 on the loch (there are also rocky protrusions and areas that are seasonally insular) it was among the smallest with a readily available surface for building.

Physical security is one possible reason for generally preferring islands which are as far as possible from the shore, which placed some settlements well beyond the range of most weaponry that was likely to be deployed against them. Similarly there was likely to be ample chance to spot an enemy's approach during daylight. Safety might have been especially important for somewhere like Eilean nam Faoileag, Loch Rannoch, which was in an area of contested authority in the sixteenth century and was held and taken on more than one occasion by the use or threat of force. It stands 380m from the nearest land and faces 8km of open water to its east. Eilean Stalcair and Inchgalbraith on Loch Lomond is c.400m from its closest large island. But in many cases the distances from shore are quite small, some 51 occupied islands were within 100m of shore (less than a bowshot) including 20 within 50m¹⁷⁷ – some, such as Loch Dornal are also immediately overlooked by higher ground. Certain sites are close to other islands even if they are some way from the mainland. This need not

¹⁷⁶ There were also the remains of a poorly built wall running north to south around 60cm from the west wall. A stone with an artificially made hole, perhaps a cooking pot stand, was found directly above a context of scorched earth and burnt bone. The excavation suggested two main periods of settlement, while the secondary wall and possible cooking pot stand indicated that part of the west building had been reused during a later third phase.

¹⁷⁷ The figures have a bias towards overestimating distance from shore as figures were rounded up to the nearest 5m to take account of seasonal loch level variation. Twenty eight of the islands within 100m were AI/MIs and of these eight were less than 50m from the modern day shoreline. These figures should be treated cautiously, as indicative of a trend, as relatively small changes in loch levels could push a number of sites in or out of the categories.

deny a security element but, as Creighton says of castles (2002, 65), it strongly suggests that location was a multifaceted issue and not just about defence.

Permanent and seasonal use

Late Medieval and Early Modern loch settlements took many forms, including permanent and seasonal residences – the latter often used as hunting lodges. Without a full programme of excavation it is difficult to assess how many sites performed what function during which period of occupation. However, some insights are certainly possible, for example it is tentatively suggested that there may have been a relationship between altitude and use as seasonal or hunting lodges, for example, the settlement on Loch A'an (Mercator, 1595) was at 725m asl which would probably have been inaccessible, and certainly a very harsh place to be, during winter. There are some 46 islands with archaeological remains of high status secular settlements likely to date between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁷⁸ These have been categorised by a variety of researchers according to a range of criteria which are not always consistent. They extend from multi-period castles like Kilchurn, to halls like that at Loch Ochiltree, fortified houses such as at Loch Tangy (NMRS NR62NE 7) to the Laird's House on the Isle of Loch Moy (NMRS NM62SW 1).

Zeune (1992, 122) suggests that the islands in the south western lochs Ochiltree, Ravenstone, Urr, Bradan, Goosey, Dornal and possibly Maberry held halls which could date from 1300-1600. He points (1992, 121) to Lochinvar, Dumfries and Galloway, and Lochnaw, in the Rhinns of Galloway, as having 'bulkier and more massive remains' in keeping with 'tower houses' of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The denuded remains on Loch Rusky suggest a similar date and may have been the residence of Sir John Menteith (c.1260-c.1325) at the beginning of the fourteenth century (NMRS NN60SW 7).¹⁷⁹ As Zeune points out, many of the extant remains are drystone with few distinguishing features, allowing little more than an

¹⁷⁸ This is a conservative figure as sites such as Loch Banchory, which are insufficiently well recorded, have been excluded. In other cases there are the remains of buildings which is consistent with historical evidence for high status settlements, but where surveys have so far been inconclusive.

¹⁷⁹ Sir John Menteith was a frequent witness on charters of Robert I (Barrow, 2003, 372) and was tutor of the earldom of Menteith in 1320. He is chiefly remembered today as the betrayer of William Wallace to the English.

identification as Late Medieval or Early Modern residences of people at the upper end of the social spectrum. Nonetheless the structures on the islands rarely appear to be at odds in terms of type, date or function with land-based settlements in the areas where they are found. The addition of historical to archaeological evidence makes it increasingly possible to consider the relationships between settlement type, function and location. This recognises that many sites could have complex and changing identities and roles, as is illustrated at Loch Loyal. Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun (1813, 11¹⁸⁰) wrote that the loch had an island which was a pleasant habitation in the summer¹⁸¹, thereby suggesting seasonal use, possibly as a hunting lodge as seemed relatively common in Sutherland and the surrounding area.¹⁸² This may have been the same island where the young clan chief Sir Donald Mackay fled with his pregnant lover, Mary Lindsay, and remained while demanding a divorce from his wife Lady Barbara (Grimble, 1965, 67).¹⁸³ The island was described as holding the house of Mackay's kinsman John MacAngus Ruadh and as such it would appear to be a permanent residence for Mackay's kinsman and a summer retreat and bolt-hole for the chief.

There are numerous references to islands as hunting lodges and summer residences, a number from Gordonstoun who says (Blaeu, 1654, 108-9) that Sutherland has 60 fishing lochs and that most have islands 'well suited for habitation in the summer'.¹⁸⁴ In *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* Gordonstoun names summer residences at lochs Migdale, Shin, Brora, Dolay and Stack (1813, 5 and 11). These references correspond to Pont maps 3(1) and 3(2) which show lochs Shin and Stack with settlements on some islands and other islands

¹⁸⁰ The text dates from the seventeenth century.

¹⁸¹ Seasonal use of islands existed outside Scotland and Harvey (1990, 87) refers to a pavilion or kiosk on an island in the river Thames at Sheen where the king and queen would dine in summer.

¹⁸² Pont 2(1) shows one occupied island, a second is also possible but more likely to be an error. A survey by this author of the five islands visible today identified severely denuded archaeological remains of a settlement on Eilean nan Crodh, a small NI close to land with the remains of a causeway crossed at right angles with a drystone wall in the water, possibly to keep grazing sheep on the island.

¹⁸³ The incident scandalised the royal court. A letter from Sir Alexander Gordon to Sir Robert Gordon on 22 November, 1616, says Mary 'is gryt with child and remainis as yit in the Iyll of Lochtyoll' and asks if the king knows what is going on (Fraser, 1894, Vol. 2, 128). Mary was a sister of the earl of Crawford (Grimble, 1965, 67). Grimble says Mackay was sent to the tollbooth and fined but was ultimately reconciled with his wife. Mary bore a son and disappeared from the record.

¹⁸⁴ AIs near the Late Medieval residences at Cherry Island on Loch Ness and King Fergus Isle on Loch Laggan bear the names Eilean nan Con and Eilean n'Cone (Isle of the Dogs) which has been taken to suggest they may have held hunting kennels. There is little evidence for this suggestion.

named but empty. This raises the possibility that some islands were depicted and named because they were used but shown as empty because they were not occupied year round.¹⁸⁵ The structures on some islands could have been temporary rather than permanent (which might also explain the absence of obvious archaeological remains on many islands associated with hunting or summer houses). Gilbert (1979, 80-1) says that Scottish kings had hunting lodges which were either permanent structures built of stone or temporary ones of wood. They also had mobile canopies or pavilions (Gilbert, 1979, 55).

The social importance of hunting was immense. In areas with strong kinship structures MacInnes (1996) describes how hunts – some lasting a whole month – were a means of clan mobilisation, a source of solidarity and an opportunity for leading figures to demonstrate their prestige.¹⁸⁶ Throughout Scotland hunting and hawking were an essential part of noble and royal life, seen not just as pastimes but as closely related to military training (Gilbert, 1979, 72). Barrow (2003, 158) describes falconry as a great love of the noble elite, second only to a passion for deer hunting – which was often a summer activity (Gilbert, 1979, 67 and 68). Gilbert (1979, 72) adds that in 1498 Andrea Trevisiano believed most Scots nobles had hunting forests (the term implies a reserved area and does not necessarily suggest woodland). The hunting lodge would therefore be a place of great significance and probably one where nobles felt they enjoyed life the most.

¹⁸⁵ Eilean Dharag, on Loch Katrine, may be an example. It was described by an early eighteenth century source as a summerhouse of the Buchanans (Mitchell, 1906, Vol. 1, 335). It is shown – without building – as *yl Verraik* on Gordon 51 and corresponds to a small, circular island with nineteenth century walling close to the ferry terminal at Stronachlachar. Loch Skerrow, Dumfries and Galloway, which is 49ha and 122m asl, has a very late example of a purely seasonal dwelling. The 1847 Ordnance Survey Name Book also identifies a small wooden house on Craigheron Island as the ‘country house’ of Dr Kennedy of Gatehouse, who used it in the fishing season (R210). The 1852 OS survey shows it as unroofed (NMRS NX66NW 15). The building there today is of wood and glass and in a state of advanced decay.

¹⁸⁶ He adds that hosting and hunting were also means to discretely raise fighting men. There is evidence for the use of loch settlements as muster points during feuds and wars. John Graham of Deuchrie, supporter of the royalist Glencairn, said the clans met them at the hall in the Isle of Loch Rannoch (Macgregor, 1898, 148; *Mercurius Politicus*, No. 167). The MacFarlanes of Arrochar are reputed to have used an island on Loch Sloy as their muster point and Clairinsh performed a similar function for the Buchanans (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 45). ‘Loch Sloy’ was the traditional battle cry of the MacFarlanes and ‘Clar Innis’ of the Buchanans. In 1690 Major-General Thomas Buchan, commander-in-chief of Jacobite forces in Scotland, wrote to Major-General Cannon asking him to ‘advertise the Clans that the Randiewous’ at what may have been Loch an Eilean had been postponed to April due to bad weather (NAS GD26/8/120). Jacobite forces did gather at the castle, but not as Buchan envisaged, when they carried out an unsuccessful assault during their retreat in 1690 after defeat at Cromdale.

Among the areas where royal, baronial and ecclesiastical hunting reserves are recorded are Clunie (where the lochside castle was a royal hunting lodge in the keeping of John of Airth who was also the king's forester in 1432) and Rothiemurchus (at the northern end of the pass from Glentilt to Strathspey (Ross, 2003, 114)). The latter was transferred from the bishop of Moray in 1383¹⁸⁷ to Alexander Stewart who Grant (1993, 149) says was pursuing a deliberate policy of expansion by trying to gain control of the lands bordering his lordship of Badenoch.¹⁸⁸ There were other hunting reserves at Glenshee and Lochindorb (Gilbert, 1979, 361 and 365). Hawking seems to have persisted at Clunie after the centre of activity moved to the island, as Bishop Brown had his own falconer. Gibson (1979, 70 and 79) says marshes, lochs and rivers were favoured areas for falconry and that King James IV visited Inchaffray on a hawking expedition. Lochindorb and Loch an Eilean both had insular castles with the latter having a hall that may have been created as a hunting lodge for Alexander Stewart, the earl of Buchan (Smout and Lambert, 1999, 3).¹⁸⁹

Some sites with hunting associations are among those at the highest altitudes. Among them is Loch Beanie identified by Pont as 'sumtym's' the dwelling place of the chief man of Glenshee.¹⁹⁰ This suggests it may have been a hunting lodge and summer home of the MacThomas chiefs who had their main residence at Thom on

¹⁸⁷ Oram (1999c 203) and Grant (1993, 148) see this lease as a major success for Stewart in his ongoing power struggle with Bishop Bur. The previous year the bishop had won royal recognition of his rights over church lands. The loss of Rothiemurchus appears to have been the price of this settlement. It was then leased to Stewart for £8 a year in return for protecting the bishop and his lands from malefactors. Grant believes Stewart attached great importance to possession of Rothiemurchus. The lease included Loch an Eilean Castle and six davachs of land - all of Badenoch plus the davach of Braemoray in Edinkillie parish which held the castle of Lochindorb amounted to 60 (Ross, 2003, 126).

¹⁸⁸ Ross (2003, 113) says the earliest reference to Rothiemurchus was in 1226 when King Alexander II granted the lands of 'Rathmorchus' to the bishop of Moray and suggests that it may have once been a Thanage.

¹⁸⁹ Properties including Loch an Eilean were granted to Andrew Murray, bishop of Moray, in 1226 and the island's hall house may also have been his work or that of Bishop Archibald 1253-98 (Smout and Lambert, 1999, 1-2).

¹⁹⁰ At the time of Pont's survey the loch settlement would have belonged to the 4th chief, Robert McComie of Thom (granted Glenshee c.1571 and killed c.1600) or his successor John McComie. Robert's death was after 31 March, 1595 as a mutual bond of manrent between 'Robert McColme of the Tome in Glensche', Lachlan McIntoch of Dunnachtane and others' was dated on that day (NAS, GD176/168). As the MacThomas's were a branch of the Clan Chattan reputed to have arrived in the Glenshee area in the fifteenth century this also suggests an active choice in adopting an island site rather than the continued use of somewhere with traditional associations.

the east bank of the Water of Shee.¹⁹¹ Certainly an island residence on a small, flat AI with an upper plateau of 20mx15m, in the centre of a shallow 16.9ha loch, at an altitude of 406m asl (above sea level), would have been inhospitable at many times of year.¹⁹² Eilean na Faoileag on Loch Glass is just 85m from land but is exposed to more than 5km of open water (and strong winds) to the north west. Described in the OSA (Vol. 1, 281-82) as a summerhouse of the lords of Foulis it is at 215m asl on an island that now measures 20mx15m above summer water level.¹⁹³

It may be that other upland island sites for which there are no remaining records or traditions were used in a similar way. In some areas it is possible that high altitude islands were related to transhumance rather than being lordly hunting lodges, though this is a speculative suggestion. Nonetheless landholders like the bishops of Moray, where Ross says (2003, 123) the bulk of ecclesiastic lands were in the higher ground to the west and the Forres plain¹⁹⁴, would certainly have needed residences in their upland properties and islands may have proved suitable for the purpose. Not all island hunting lodges were at great altitude as Loch Brora is at 25m asl but it seems that a linkage could exist.¹⁹⁵

The Wardlaw Manuscript (Fraser Chronicles, 1905, 197) says that in 1588 Simon Fraser, lord Lovat, used what is likely to have been an AI on Loch Bruicheach, near Eskdale (NMRS NH43NE 5), as a base for hunting. The island is 50mx25m, at 288m asl, and there are no remaining indications of the kind of

¹⁹¹ The *Brevis Descriptio Regni Scotie* (1847, 31) comments that Glenshee was favoured hunting area for King Robert II.

¹⁹² The island was surveyed by this author in 2006. The loch is rarely more than 2m deep and the bed is extensively covered with soft sediment. The island barely breaks the surface and is a maximum of 10cm above water level. It is roughly circular and has a flat surface plateau. It is on a slight rise in the bed, which is of firm and compacted sand and gravel, in a roughly central location. The water is 80cm deep to the east where the bed is exposed. Timbers are visible on the SW side. These are horizontal with two extending outwards from under rocks and one lying laterally with rocks on top.

¹⁹³ Mercator's map of 1564 shows a Kean Castle, which may be the AI on Loch Glass, and a charter of 1608 confirmed Andrew Munro of Tannavar in lands including the Isle of Loch Glass (RMS, Vol. 6, P. 750. Doc. 2061).

¹⁹⁴ According to Oram (2005, 2) extensive episcopal landholdings were an established phenomenon by the twelfth century with bishops of Caithness, Moray and Ross acted as royal agents in the crown's attempts to broaden its authority.

¹⁹⁵ It may be worth conjecturing that the now-deeply submerged island (it is beyond conventional diving limits at 47m after a midtwentieth century hydro scheme) on Loch Sloy might also have been used as a seasonal residence of the MacFarlanes. It was located at 287m asl on Ben Vorlich, above the important insular clan residence of Inveruglas on Loch Lomond at 4m asl. The clan has some traditional associations with the loch; Fraser (Vol. 2, 1869, 45 and 76) points out that the battle cry was Loch Sloy and claims it was a muster point for the clan and. He argues that the island may have been the source of the clan motto 'This I'll Defend' – though there are good reasons to doubt the explanation.

structure that stood there. The absence of physical evidence makes it difficult to judge what other functions it could have fulfilled. Even then the evidence from Loch Clunie, used as a summer fishing lodge by the earl of Airlie in the late eighteenth century, underlines the extent to which island uses could change according to their role in a proprietor's wider estates rather than just the nature and potential of the buildings.

Situation, space and access

Johnson (2003, 50-2) argues that many castles had to be approached by complex processional routes. At Caister in England this was done by making use of a location beside marshy ground and a complex set of moats (which emphasised the watery nature of the area) to separate different elements of the site and gradually direct visitors to an entrance at the side which was not immediately seen from the road. Something similar can be observed at some loch settlements. Water was used as a mediating element which had to be negotiated in order to reach the residence. This appears to be in keeping with Johnson's concept (2003, 47) that water could be a form of ha-ha – displaying a site but limiting access. He also suggests that reflections can play a role, exaggerating the size and grandeur of physical structures (Stokstad, 2005, 72) says lakes such as that at Kenilworth could double the image of a castle).

One approach to expressing high status was to create residences which dominated areas of ground which were elevated above the surrounding land or water to create a visible distinction and separation. The site could be dominated by the settlement, or entirely embraced by it, using curtain or barmkin walls, like at Smaillholm Tower in the Borders. Some of the insular structures conform to McKean's (2004, 15) description of the Medieval country house¹⁹⁶ in 'pure form' as a rectangular or L-shaped tower; examples can be found at sites such as the Isle of Lochwinnoch, Duke Murdoch's Castle, An T-Eilean and Inchgalbraith.

The settlements were frequently of multiple structures, such as those at Clunie, Inch Talla, Loch an Eilean and Lochleven. Others islands were so small that

¹⁹⁶ MacKechnie (1995, 15) says that at this point the country house should be thought of as a house in the country and distinguished from the fully-developed 'country house' style of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

there may have been little room for the full set of structures normally associated with a high status residence such as workshops, barns, or external kitchens. In these cases all but the most immediate functions of providing the proprietor and his immediate retinue with accommodation and space to entertain guests or do business, plus providing space for some storage, may have been catered for at the port. In this way there might be a division between port and island that was similar to that of keep and bailey.¹⁹⁷ If, however, the island was not an administrative centre for surrounding lands and served other purposes, such as a summer residence, an extensive port may not have been necessary.

Examples of islands where there would have been little room for anything more than a tower include At T-Eilean, Duke Murdoch's Castle and the Peel of Lochwinnoch (NMRS NS35NE 6).¹⁹⁸ The first was a permanent lordly residence while the second has little recorded history. The third is an AI which local residents ascribe to Robert, 3rd lord Semple in around 1560. A survey by this author in 2005 showed the island to be 27mx17m at base with a single plateau. It consists of an artificial mound on the northern and eastern edge of a natural rise in the loch bed. At the east end there are the remains of a large noost which was defined by the peel wall and a U-shaped embankment.¹⁹⁹ The island holds a small tower; only the vault remains and a small amount of the first floor to the south, where the outer wall drops vertically to (or below) the sixteenth or seventeenth-century water level.²⁰⁰ The building may have been five or six-sided, with long straight walls to the north and south and shorter ones at the east and west. At the east and south the walls run close to what was once the water's edge, with a plateau, then a steep or vertical bank on the other sides. Gun ports face north and south. As the island stands in the loch near

¹⁹⁷ Kenyon (1990, 184) refers to baileys and outer wards as having the granaries and other buildings for agricultural storage.

¹⁹⁸ MacFarlane (Mitchell, 1906/7, Vol. 3, 213-14) describes the peel as an old tower 'a full mile' from the loch shore where the Semples would take refuge during feuds or warfare.

¹⁹⁹ To the west it is ill-defined and badly eroded, rising fairly gently and unevenly to the edge of the peel. To the south the edges are sharply defined. The embankment appears to have extended towards the edges of the natural feature. It sweeps round to north and west and reaches a height of 2m above water level. The inner parts of the noost contain fallen masonry, including part of the stone stairway that once led up to the peel entrance.

²⁰⁰ The water surrounding the island is 30cm to 1.1m deep. The loch was partially drained in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century (RCAHMS) and there is now a pathway to the shore. In the sixteenth century the loch was larger and included what is now Kilbirnie Loch. This would have required additional depth of 1m.

the site of Castle Semple, and an earlier residence of the Semple family called Castleton, it is unlikely to have been the administrative centre for demesne lands.

A feature the peel and island have in common with a minority of other AIs and small insular castles is the use of vertical walling in relation to the water. Some well-preserved parts of the AI suggest there may have been vertical sections such as those at Eilean Craggan, Loch Brora and Loch Maberry. Like at Loch an Eilean Castle the façade facing the nearest land also drops to the current water level. This is also reminiscent of Loch Dochart Castle which is located on the edge of a cliff, presenting an impressive façade to the closest shore and main route through the glen. This suggests a deliberate use of the topography of certain islands to help create formidable frontages.

Creighton points out (2002, 35, 65) that castles required exceptional investment; they had an iconic roles as places of power and influence and were visible symbols of lordship. The landscapes in which they stood were full of meaning and the surrounding environment could be remodelled to enhance their status. They were often set within parks, hunting grounds, gardens and used fish ponds or other water features to present them from carefully chosen angles. The same applies to insular castles, and other high status loch settlements.

There was a complex relationship between function and perception, necessity and choice. This can be seen at insular settlements not just in the nature of the buildings but even the arrangements for access. It was rarely possible to reach island sites, especially when transporting goods, on foot or by horse. Causeways were one option, though their use in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods was limited.²⁰¹ In most cases access was by boat and occupants had choices over how to cater for these. In terms of functionality, it is normally possible to land at an island without special arrangements but a jetty, noost, beach or pier makes it much easier.²⁰² In terms of symbolism having a designated landing area directs arrivals

²⁰¹ However, former islands may have become peninsulas as silt gathered round causeways, like at Eilean Puttychan, Loch Tay. Surveys of islands like Loch an Eilean Castle, Loch Maberry and Loch Achilty where there have been suggestions of causeways or drawbridges yielded negative results.

²⁰² With reference to English castles Creighton (2002, 41) notes that many made use of water transport, being located by rivers or having waterways diverted past them and says a surprising number had little ports or landing places.

according to the wishes of the proprietor. A safe area can also be essential to prevent boats being damaged or washed away.

Those arriving or departing the island would need to be directed to and from the landing area. At Duke Murdoch's Castle a narrow flight of steps was cut into the steep rock to reach the single known entrance. A plateau at the bottom, close to water level, provides a double sided landing place for boats – facing the nearest shore and the loch. This contrasts with Eilean na Vow where a relatively low-lying island with a substantial shingle beach and bay to the north east lent itself to another solution. Here the natural landing area was enhanced by building two roughly parallel arms of stone set 10.5m apart. One extends 7.2m, the other 10m, into the water and they are up to 70cm high. Each is connected to drystone walling round the edge of the island. The more denuded eastern section can be traced for 13m while the northern one, up to three courses and 1m high, extends 32m. Anyone disembarking there was within a confined area, and entry to the main part of site was along a path between two steep 2m banks at the rear of the beach. The 45m path led first to the main plateau, overlooked by a small rubble building to the north-west, and then to the main tower. Loch Kennard, Perth and Kinross, also has two parallel arms of boulders extending out into the water, one for c.3.6m the other for 8m (Appendix 3, 101-2).

Landing places varied greatly, at Clunie there was a jetty while Eilean Craggan has three noosts. AIs had the advantage of malleable boulder caps that allowed the easy creation of bespoke landing areas. These were generally U or V-shaped noosts suitable for a small rowed/paddled boat. However the noosts at the AI/MIs on the Loch of Kinnordy (Appendix 3, 103) and at Eilean Stalcair on Loch Tulla are distinctively arced, possibly for greater protection from the elements. The former uses a curved arm reaching north north east while at Loch Tulla the landing area is directly below the high plateau which may have been the site of the main Late Medieval structure. This has a similarity with the Peel of Lochwinnoch where a noost was developed by extending an arm from the island to form a small, sheltered bay. This sits directly below the remains of stone steps that led to the tower entrance. The extended arms of the main noost at Eilean Craggan may suggest that it was used to provide access for something slightly larger than a rowing boat with more than one pair of oars and/or that a flat area either side of the boat was needed for loading.

Jetties or piers whether of wood, like Dixon and Shelley identified at An T-Eilean, or stone like at Clunie and Inchmahome can reach out into deeper water and might allow larger vessels to tie up rather than land.²⁰³ At the Isle of Loch Earn there was a nineteenth-century jetty for steamers, but the settlement had been served by a noost leading to a steep path and steps with banks either side, acting to channel arrivals and departures.²⁰⁴

The positioning of a landing area is important as it establishes a relationship between the settlement and the surrounding water and landscape. At the Isle of Loch Venachar the noost points towards land, but not the port, and away from the main body of the loch. At Rubha Na Moine, Loch Nell, the noost faces north by north east, away from land but sheltered from the main area of water. At Loch Achilty (with an AI that Munro (2005, 274) tentatively associates with the Mackenzies possibly from before they were granted lands in Brae Ross in 1463) (Highland, Contin) the noost faces north, into the main body of water and on the opposite side from land. These examples suggest that a variety of considerations may have determined the location of noosts, including:

- shelter from prevailing winds
- swift access to port
- concealment from land
- easy access to open water.

The first and third are likely to be the most important. Encouraging boats arriving from the port to go round the island increased the time during which they were visible and would allow the site to be fully appreciated.

Some islands had multiple landing sites which might suggest that more than one boat was kept there. Alternatively, they may have been used in different ways in different time. This could explain why at Eilean Craggan one noost faces Glen Ample, another the chapel and a third looks out into the loch. Some landing sites

²⁰³ A stone jetty of indeterminate age exists on the island in the Loch of Drumellie with others at Lochan Hakel and Inveruglas. At Isle Maree Hooper (2002, 21) suggests the main landing place was to the relatively sheltered south east and was served by a pier.

²⁰⁴ This parallels Eilean Fraoch where a single landing point exists and entry to the castle is provided by a steep track, leading past what may have been a boat house, and overlooked by a tower. By contrast the relatively flat and low chapel island of Innis Errich has a modern jetty in line with the current entrance to the kirkyard, but away from this stands an older and more elaborate landing area. The latter uses walling to create an enclosed area of still water which may have been helpful for tasks like unloading coffins.

may have been most convenient for reaching larger vessels for travel on large lochs, or for fishing. At Loch an Eilean a noost has been created at the north end of the east side, pointing out into the loch, and providing a flat paved area for unloading. The castle has one entrance near the noost and another at the front facing the shore. This implies a second landing place or that some arrivals had to walk round the edge of the island before going inside. At Lochindorb the RCAHMS record refers to a landing place close to the entrance on the east of the island. However, the STUA survey (1993, 4), suggests that submerged walling to the north could represent a second landing area or harbour. At Loch Brora a recess, which may have contained steps, led up from the water on the east side – facing the nearest shore – where the walling is close to vertical while there is a probably noost on the west side. At Loch Maberry the island is surrounded by high drystone walling. There are two access points with the one at the east having been interpreted as a small harbour (NMRS NX27NE 1).

The number of landing sites bears no clear relation to the type of island, scale or type of settlement or even the size of the loch. There may be a tendency for smaller AIs to have a single landing point such as those on Lochwinnoch and lochs Tulla and Tummel. This is highly speculative and it is also the case that medium-sized NIs such as Loch Dochart Castle and Eilean na Vow only have one readily identifiable landing area. Indeed there appears to have been no simple formula for landing arrangements, though the surviving evidence suggests a preference for noosts.

Boats and loch settlements

Boats were the principal means of access for most Late Medieval and Early Modern loch settlements. They were also a means by which the occupants exploited their fishing rights and reached their lands. However the relationship between boats and loch settlements is not well understood, though Cheape (1999, 853) claims that logboat distribution is beginning to match AI distribution in the west Highlands, and demonstrates continued use of logboats into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Various sizes and types of vessel could have been used to reach islands. Cheape

refers to curachs used for fishing, ferrying and timber floating. Logboat dimensions vary greatly; ones found at Loch Doon measured 3.66m and 7m long.²⁰⁵ The discovery was reported in the 1857 *Archaeologica Scotica* of 1857 which carried a paper from 1832 by Frederick Macadam Cathcart (299-301) and described how the logboats were recovered from deep silt in front of the main entrance to Loch Doon Castle.

Most accounts do not describe the kind of boats used by loch settlement occupants. But a seventeenth-century description of the island in Loch Bruicheach says the author visited it in a 'little coble boat' boat' (Fraser Chronicles, 1905, 197). He adds that he saw a boat (that he claims was used in 1588 by lord Lovat) sunk in the loch. Cheape quotes a Gaelic poem from Lochaber (1999, 853-4):²⁰⁶

*Pity I was not with my love,
In the island of trees
Without then another beside us.*

*But a small boat with a pair of oars,
After its shaping with the adze,
Of the oak that the ocean seas will not consume.*²⁰⁷

In some circumstances boats were specifically associated with islands. In 1458 a fee was paid for custodianship of the boats of the Isle of Loch Tay (ER, Vol. 6, 409). Gillies (2005, 83) says the 'mair' of Discher and Toyer received a higher fee than that of Dull in 1456 because he was also the keeper of the boat of the Isle of Loch Tay. This may relate to security and control, but might also have been about ensuring the boats were in good repair. Boats were not just vital for reaching insular settlements but fulfilled a wide range of functions for their occupants and other water users. The monks of Inchaffray used a specially-cut channel to access a three acre

²⁰⁵ The shorter boat, which was eventually taken to the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, was C14 dated in 1975 and gave a date of 509+- 110AD (Mackie, 1984, 132-33).

²⁰⁶ In the 1490s the Campbell earl of Argyll granted out the lands at the head of Loch Feochan to a kinsman who was required to maintain a fishing vessel called a 'cobill' for use on the loch (Boardman, pers. comm.).

²⁰⁷ This could suggest a logboat and a saltwater island (NMRS NN07NE 5).

plot of dry land (CAI, 317). In the late fifteenth century payments of 3s are recorded for a boat to carry the king's wrights between islands on Loch Lomond to gather timber (ALHS, Vol. 1, 247). Around 1470 the abbot of Dunfermline had a pleasure or fishing boat on Lochleven (Haldane, Henderson and Wright, 1990).²⁰⁸

Just as the use of boats could vary so might their size and construction; a lord or his family may not row themselves around though fishermen might. At Clunie there were references to a large boat which may have been for goods and materials rather than passengers. On small lochs or where the island was close to shore it may have been that only small vessels were required for getting to the port or going fishing. But the order by the Lords of Council in 1491 for John, lord Drummond to remove his boat from the Isle of Loch Earn and take it several miles to Eilean Craggan suggests that islands could be associated with the mooring of quite substantial vessels as the loch is not easily navigable in very small unmotorised boats.²⁰⁹ One boat that that may have been associated with the Late Medieval or Early Modern use of an island settlement was 'an old built boat', constructed from nailed planks, found on King Fergus' Isle in Loch Laggan for which the curved floor beam was c.1.53m (Maxwell, 1950-1, 162). Adam's 1720 plan for the improvement of Taymouth shows a sailing ship on Loch Tay near the island (Tait, 1980, 34-5). The loch-facing entrance to Innis Chonnell may have been specifically located to give access to the galleys with which the Campbells were so closely associated.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Boats were also vital to commerce, as is demonstrated by Donald McAngus of Glengarry going to the Privy Council in March 1575/6 before he could win redress after Hugh, Lord Fraser of Lovat stopped boats taking timber to Inverness on Loch Ness (RPC, Vol. 2, 500).

²⁰⁹ The order was related to a power struggle between the Murrays and the Drummonds. The Murrays, led by John's son David, had raided into the Murray heartlands of Monzievaird in 1490. A massacre resulted in which Murrays holed up in the kirk of Monzievaird were burned to death. The Drummonds were also holding the Isle of Loch Earn, which the Lords of Council judged to belong to the Murrays. Lord Drummond accepted the decision and promised 'Within XV dais fra this day furth to ger cast down the hous of the est Ile of loch ern and destroy all the strenthis of the samy and tak away the bate and put hir to the west Ile'.

²¹⁰ Loch Awe-side estates were held for galley service in the fifteenth century which was presumably discharged on Loch Awe itself (Boardman, pers. comm.). Robert I is said to have kept a small fleet on Loch Lomond (FIRAT, 1995, 5).

Islands and gardens

Gardens were an important feature of Late Medieval and Early Modern life for people at many levels of Scottish society and are recorded in association with around one in ten contemporary loch settlements. These may be on the islands themselves or on lands belonging to them.²¹¹ This is likely to be a substantial underestimate as the presence of gardens was not automatically mentioned in contemporary documents. Throughout Europe those with resources manipulated landscapes, creating pleasure gardens and using water features as a key element in the settings of their residences (Johnson, 2003, 41-2). A charter of 1574 (RMS, Vol. 5, P. 596. Doc. 2253) refers to the port and island of Loch Tay with garden and fruit orchard – features which are reflected on Pont 18. According to Landsberg (1996, 13 and 46) wealthy Medieval landholders might have a selection of gardens including a herber (an acre or less containing a lawn and herbaceous borders), an orchard garden (larger, with fruit trees and shady walks) and a park (with birds and animals to watch rather than hunt).²¹² Those of moderate means might have the first two types. Peasants would have a small, enclosed garden for growing vegetables – kale yards feature prominently round low status homes on James Gordon's town plan of Aberdeen and its nearby rural communities and the pictorial survey of Scotland by John Slezer published in 1698.

The *New Description of Lennox* contained in the Blaeu atlas (1654, 68-9) says Inchtavannach, in Loch Lomond, which belonged to the earl of Glencairn was striking for its 'lovely habitations, gardens, and blooming with fruit trees on the shore that faces south-west'. It adds that Eilean na Vow (Appendix 3, 107-8) had fine houses, gardens and groves and Ylen Eaunlich was cultivated and inhabited. What was grown and who maintained them is likely to have varied. The small island gardens of the wealthy may have been largely for pleasure, putting an emphasis on sweet smelling flowers and blossoming trees in keeping with the Medieval desire to stimulate the senses. There was likely to have been an increasing use of features such

²¹¹ In some cases the date of the garden is difficult to ascertain and there are instances, like at Inchmahome, where an island's principal function became that of a garden after the main period of occupation ended.

²¹² Creighton (2002, 73) refers to English castle gardens being on two key scales; the small enclosed garden and the large-scale, typically with enclosed pleasure ground, water features and deer park.

as bed patterns and topiary in the sixteenth century (Landsberg, 1996, 10). In 1578 the earl of Morton spent time during his confinement at Lochleven Castle drawing up garden plans and creating walls and alleys (Breeze, 1984, 269-84). Small enclosed flower gardens had been a feature of castles across Europe – often placed beneath bed chambers – from the twelfth century onwards (Landsberg, 1996, 14). Something of this kind may have existed at Eilean Ran where a charter of 1591 mentions its bedchamber and garden (RMS, Vol. 5, P. 643, Doc. 1901). Enclosed gardens appear to have been present on island locations such as the (saltwater) Eilean Donan where there were gardens and orchards within the barmkin (TNS/Pont). MacFarlane's Geographical Collections mentions 'beautiful' gardens and orchards at Inch Talla Castle (Mitchell, 1906, Vol. 1, 340). Pont 18 shows trees on Priory Island; they are also shown at Baikie Castle (Pont 26, but not 29) and on the two islands in the Loch of Forfar (Pont 29 but not 26) and at Clunie (Pont 23(2)). This indicates that gardens were not restricted to castle islands.²¹³ A grant from 1605 to Mungo Murray, son of John, Lord Murray of Tullibardine included St Margaret's Inch, in the Loch of Forfar, with gardens, trees and houses (RMS, Vol. 6, P. 590, Doc. 1625; Appendix 3, 99-100).

Trees may have had practical as well as decorative functions with Dennison and Coleman (2000, 67) referring to a writ of 1508 in which Sir Alexander Turnbull, chaplain of St Margaret's Inch, was ordered to build stone dykes and plant trees to protect against the action of the water (likely to have been more of a problem on AIs and MIs than NIs). They would also have provided a valuable windbreak on islands in exposed locations and certainly the nineteenth-century drawing of Loch Clunie (see Appendix 3) shows the settlement surrounded by tall trees. Where gardens and orchards on land required boundaries such as ditches and hedges for demarcation purposes and to protect them from livestock and/or deer (Landsberg, 1996, 62-6) islands had the advantage of being surrounded by water. Island gardens still required protection from the wind. At Loch Moy and Eilean Ruaridh Beag, in Loch Maree,

²¹³ The OSA says a Loch Stack island used by the Mackays as a hunting lodge also had a garden (Vol. 6, 294). While this has to be treated with caution the OSA makes 11 references to loch settlements with gardens. These include the earl of Sutherland's hunting lodge at Loch Brora (OSA, Vol. 10, 303-4; Gordonstoun, 1813, 5). The artificial Eilean an Tighe, Cam Loch, Assynt also shows evidence of a garden, but of indeterminate date (NMRS NC21SW 10). Some planting is relatively recent with an AI in Loch Kinellan containing a nineteenth century kitchen garden (NMRS NH45NE 7).

this was achieved by creating walled gardens rather than relying on trees.²¹⁴ Pont shows a substantial building on what is probably Eilean Ruaridh Beag. The island is associated with the late fifteenth-century Macleod chief Ruaridh MacLeod and John Roy MacKenzie, 4th lord of Gairloch, said to have lived in the later sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth (NMRS NG87SE 4).

Tastes in gardening developed and there was an increasing emphasis on larger and often elaborately designed and planted gardens immediately round the residences of the wealthy. Hynd (1984, 269-84) suggests that terraced gardens became a widespread feature of Scottish castles in the sixteenth century, citing Aberdour in Fife, Neidpath near Peebles, Hangingshaw, Elibank, Whytebank and Torwoodlee Tower all in Selkirkshire. The planting at Edzell in 1604 by Sir David Lindsay (Hynd, 1984, 269-84) showed the growing taste for bed patterns, which included features such as heraldic designs. McKean (2004, 105) sums up the changing tastes with his description of Balloch Castle as a turreted, romantic and showy country seat environed by plantations and formal gardens – a decisive shift from geometric simplicity of the Late Medieval tower with its small enclosed garden. Cultural changes of this kind, which demanded far more space for the expression of wealth and abundance²¹⁵, may help explain the decline in loch settlements.

Gardens were an important source of nutrition as well as pleasure. The range of produce in the Late Medieval garden was potentially quite wide, extending from salad plants to cabbage, beetroot and herbs (Harvey, 1990, 78) which could be medicinal²¹⁶ as well as culinary.²¹⁷ Produce need not have been restricted to what was available locally as there is evidence to show a trade in seed from England from the thirteenth century when merchants were bringing leeks into Scotland (Harvey,

²¹⁴ A survey by this author showed that much of the north-western half of the small and highly exposed island on Loch Maree is walled, fitting in with its description as an island with gardens. Parts of the walling retain an uneven central plateau. To the south west the wall extends c.42m before turning north and then rounding the edge of the plateau, reaching a sharp turn back to the north east and then south east before petering out. The remains of two buildings are readily identifiable, the larger 10m from the abrupt terminus of the garden wall and was bicameral, measuring around 14mx3.6m.

²¹⁵ Johnson (2003, 45) emphasises that the garden was about ideology and social power.

²¹⁶ Cox (1935) says the Medieval monastic herb garden and surrounding countryside were used as the source of medicinal plants such as elecampane for coughs and bad stomachs, tansy for gout, barberry was for fevers and St John's wort for hysteria.

²¹⁷ Cox (1935) notes that 15 plum trees were sold to James IV's treasurer in 1503. Vines grew on orchard walls at Melrose and Jedburgh and even Balmerino. Ferdinand and Isabella's ambassador Don Pedro de Ayala said 'There are all kinds of garden fruits a cold country can possess'.

1990, 79).²¹⁸ According to Robertson (2000) a seventeenth century kitchen garden would have contained kale, onions, garlic, leek, shallots, celery, parsley, lettuce, poppy, radishes, parsnip, carrots and peas. Andrew Kippen, the gardener at Balloch Castle in 1653, produced cherries, apples, pears, kale, soft fruit and herbs (BBT, 424). *The Scots Gard'ner* (1683) by John Reid (born 1655/6 and who, like his father and grandfather, was a gardener at Niddry Castle near Edinburgh) gives advice on designing gardens and orchards and growing everything from soft fruit, vegetables and salad plants to lawns, shrubs, flowers and physic herbs.

The presence of gardens and orchards on islands, or lands associated with them like the onshore orchard at Loch Tay, raises the issue of who created and maintained them. As most loch settlements appear to have belonged to people of moderate or extensive means it is likely that the work was not done by the proprietor. In some cases specialist gardeners were employed, but it is unclear how extensively used they were or exactly when they started to emerge. Cox (1935, 14) notes that the RD identifies three professional gardeners at the Isle of Loch Clunie and Dunkeld. One was John Broun who was there in 1506 and 1507, another was Robert Howison, (who doubled as a watchman) who was recorded in 1509-10 (RD, 174, 187) and there was also Lesley Jok; an under-gardener is also mentioned. Exactly what their duties included is uncertain but Cox (1935, 15) believed that the purchases of onion and 'green stuff' were for growing – cabbage seed is specifically mentioned as is a pound of beans to be sown at Clunie. Evidence for professional gardeners at island sites is limited but a tack of 1570 mentions a gardener's house at the Port of Lochtay (BBT, 413), and in 1707 a John McQuirtin was 'gardener in the Isle of Monteith' (NAS GD22/1/521) after the former priory island of Inchmahome was turned into a pleasure ground. At the very least this shows that the employment of professional gardeners at Clunie was not unique.

²¹⁸ The availability of new and interesting plants broadened greatly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with imports from the Americas and other parts of the world creating new opportunities in gardening. Robertson (2000) says that in 1691 the earl of Morton was writing of sweet American raspes, double yellow roses, Virginia spindle tries and sweet wild olive.

Convention and choice

Some island sites may have been centres of estates and places of authority before they appear in the historical record. Whoever controlled the island may have enjoyed rights over its associated lands and waters. This raises the issue of the extent to which they were used out of convention or choice. Both may have been important to families like the Maxwells, who were of Saxon origin and arrived in Scotland before 1119. Sir John Maxwell was awarded the lands of Caerlaverock in the 1220s seemingly after they were ceded by the Cumbrian abbey of Holm Cultrum (Maxwell-Irving, 2005, 206).²¹⁹ The Maxwells took up residence on a modified island, which may have had a long history, in the saltwater setting of the Solway Firth, building a castle in around 1225 (Maxwell-Irving, 2005, 206; Brann, 2004, 117). The site, now known as Old Caerlaverock Castle, was in a tidal salt marsh with a ditch to ensure it was always surrounded by water and was linked to a harbour at the south. Excavations in 1998-9 show it underwent rapid development in the half century after the arrival of the Maxwells before being abandoned in favour of a castle less than 250 metres away (Brann, 2004). A distinctive feature of the new castle was its setting within a wide moat, maintaining the visual message of isolation.²²⁰

The example of the Maxwells may show how a family initially adopted the traditional centre of power before choosing to exchange it for a fresh site where they could build on a grander scale. The moat round the new castle showed they actively valued a watery setting and the short move maintained a clear link with the past. In 1568 when Patrick Campbell, brother of Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon, received a tack of five years for Eilean Puttychan, Loch Tay (NMRS NN53SE 2), he was given the explicit choice of whether to live on the island or lands (BBT, 410).²²¹ The use of islands could, therefore, be a positive choice rather than simply a following of convention.

²¹⁹ The family were likely to have been Northumbrian, based in Teviotdale (Oram, pers. Comm.).

²²⁰ Liddiard (2007, 203) argues that surrounding a site with water was not about inhibiting siege engines but providing a suitable setting for the expression of seigneurial power. Certainly Caerlaverock, with its small garrison, capitulated relatively quickly after a well-equipped English laid siege in 1300.

²²¹ He was also able to build a stable at the port of the isle and was allowed to set six small nets next to the island, but not kill salmon. The rent was a sheaf of arrows annually if required.

Throughout the Late Medieval and Early Modern period there is evidence of numerous decisions, some giving preference to islands others to land sites. This created an interchange, with moves both from and to the mainland. By the end of the seventeenth century the balance had tipped strongly in favour of the latter. The MacFarlanes of Arrochar are illustrative of the process. The clan was associated with the lands between Arrochar at the north tip of Loch Long, leading through Tarbet and northwards up the west side of Loch Lomond. The Loch Lomond NIs of Inveruglas and Eilean na Vow were in the hands of the family since at least 1395 when they, and Elaig, formed part of a grant by the earl of Lennox to Duncan MacFarlane lord of Arrochar (FIRAT, 1995, 148; Fraser, 1883, Vol. 2, 22). Inveruglas (NMRS NN30NW 2) was an important residence until the successful siege by Commonwealth troops in the mid-seventeenth century.²²² The focus then shifted to Eilean na Vow and the castle built by Andrew MacFarlane in 1577.²²³ However, from 1697 the family's principal residence was a house in Arrochar called New Tarbet (NMRS NN20SE 1).

Stepping back again to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it may have been that English, Norman and Flemish families were already familiar and comfortable with the use of watery settings. Indeed Ross (2003, 10-11) suggests that this was the reason for Crown grants of lands in Moray to Flemish incomers in the 1170s. Far from being what Barrow regarded as an attempt at feudalisation, Ross argues that King David I and King Malcolm IV (1153-65) granted marginal lands in the Laich to Flemings due to their reputation for draining marginal land and bringing it into cultivation. The incomers may have been enterprising agriculturalists rather than mercenaries (Ross, 2003, 209-10).²²⁴

²²² It held what RCAHMS describes as a Z-plan castle with rounded towers on the north east and south west angles measuring overall 12.0mx9.5m. Fraser (1869, Vol. 2, 77) says the island was besieged twice and that the MacFarlanes had been supporters of the Montrose uprising of 1644.

²²³ The castle occupies the south end of a natural island. It has a large south-facing first storey window offering views down the loch – there are also large windows at Clunie allowing good views from the hall. Surveys indicate a series of ancillary buildings on the island.

²²⁴ Ross (2003) adds that only 0.03-0.05% of the total landmass of Moray was granted away by the crown before the 1170s and that it is doubtful that this amounted to deliberate 'feudalisation'. The majority of the properties that were granted to families of foreign descent after c.1150 were close to marginal land, near the lochs of Spynie and Cotts (as well as the river Spey). This land was regularly prone to flooding, if not flooded on a permanent basis. Moray between 1130 and 1230 was largely divided among the bishops of Moray and the senior Gaelic kindreds (Ross, 2003, 226).

The Burnetts, who arrived from England and settled in Roxburghshire under David I (Bailey, 2000, 3) showed a willingness to settle on a loch island, perhaps regarding it as not terribly far removed from a ‘moated’ site. Alexander Burnard (and his Burnett descendants) were granted the Isle of Loch Banchory (later known as the Loch of the Leys) for supporting the Bruce dynasty (Duncan, 1988, 491-2; Bailey, 2000, 33).²²⁵ His son Symon appears to have developed mercantile interests in Aberdeen (Bailey, 2000, 34) and to have been succeeded by a long line of merchants, civic and royal office holders. In 1488 the family’s landholdings had grown and were united into a free barony, with the charter making specific reference to Loch Banchory and its isle (Bailey, 2000, 33-6). The accumulation of lands and wealth allowed the building of a comfortable new residence, Crathes Castle, in the mid to late-sixteenth century and may have brought the abandonment of the island (Wilson, 1851-4. 26-7).

The importance of islands could be as properties to grant to others, providing opportunities for patronage and influence. As such they could be of significance to more than one group or family at a time. This is the case with Loch Doon Castle and the Bruces and Kennedys. Robert de Bruce (d.1142), whose family moved north from England, was made lord of Annandale by King David I. As earls of Carrick the Bruces included a thirteenth-century 11-sided castle on an AI/MI in Loch Doon among their possessions.²²⁶ The Wars of Independence saw the site strengthened to become part of the Bruce military network against the English and the Comyns (Oram, 1992, 38).²²⁷ By this point it was in the Kennedy orbit. Its keeper Arthur, son in law of the Kennedy chief, Gilbert of Carrick, was disgraced by its surrender to the English in 1306, which brought about the capture of Robert I’s brother in law

²²⁵ A copy of a 1325 charter by King Robert I says Burnard was given the baronies of Tullibotill and Little Culter which formerly belonged to John de Walchope (NAS RH1/4/3).

²²⁶ The island was surveyed by this author in 2004 and may be an AI or an extensively modified natural feature. It is of irregular shape and consists of small and medium boulders. There is a central plateau which contains castle remains. This drops away at a sharp angle from north and east, with lower plateau extending to south and west. The island is roughly midway between north and south shores, on the edge of a drop-off to the south. The bathymetric survey (M&P, 1903) shows it in 6m of water. In 1935 large sections of the castle were moved to the shore in advance of the loch level being raised for a hydro scheme (RCAHMS).

²²⁷ McNamee (1997, 29) says it was intended for use as part of Robert I’s supply chain for reinforcements arriving from Ireland and the west and was provisioned from night raid on English stores.

Christopher Seton (Barrow, 2005, 388).²²⁸ It then performed the precise opposite function to that intended by the Bruces with an enemy garrison holding out until its recovery by Edward Bruce in autumn 1311 (Oram, 1992, 49). This was despite the efforts of David of Strathbogie, earl of Atholl, to relieve the garrison (Barrow, 2005, 251). Eventual success by Robert I in securing the crown and its resources meant the castle became a small part of vastly enlarged dynastic holdings. The site itself remained a valuable asset for the Kennedys, while still a royal castle. Its value as a point of local strategic control is demonstrated by its role in subsequent conflict. Wyntoun says it was one of just five castles to hold out for David II after the invasion by Edward III of England in 1333.²²⁹ Around 1446 the castle was seized by the Maclellans of Dumfries who opposed Black Douglas attempts to gain control of Carrick. It was besieged and surrendered to a force sent by William 8th earl of Douglas, including Alexander Livingston and royal officers (Brown, 2007, 276) and by 1450 was back in Kennedy hands. In 1510 it was besieged by William Crawford of Lochmores. There was fire damage which necessitated extensive rebuilding and a keep was added to the west wall (RCAHMS).²³⁰ It remained in Kennedy hands after they became earls of Cassilis with John, earl of Cassillis, lord Kennedy, ratified as heritable office of keeper of the Castle of Loch Doon in 1645 (APS, Vol. VI, P. 420. Doc. 220).²³¹ The decline in the castle's value to its holders is shown by RCAHMS records which include one from 1873 saying it had remained relatively complete until recent years when it was robbed of stone for a shooting lodge.

Even where sites had long traditions of occupation, active choices were sometimes exercised over their continued occupation, reoccupation or abandonment. When incomers displaced established authorities they did not automatically adopt the existing centres of power. Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 99 and 119) point out that the MacDonald Lords of the Isles left Inverlochry in ruins and handed other high-

²²⁸ According to ODNB (2007) the Kennedys were of Gaelic origin. John Kennedy of Dunure was head of the family in the late fourteenth century and his chief property was on the north-west coast of Carrick. In 1450 Loch Doon Castle was resigned by John Kennedy of Coif to Gilbert, 1st lord Kennedy, and later went to his son John. It then passed to John's son David who was made first earl of Cassilis in 1509.

²²⁹ The *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland* (partly taken from Barbour) says it was kept by John Thomason and a small garrison. It is described as a 'pele' suggesting that it was a minor strength.

²³⁰ In 1511 William Crawford of Lochmores, Alan Cathcart of Clowlynan, John Crawford of Drongane and five others were accused of the treasonable taking of the king's castle on Loch Doon from Sir David Kennedy (Pitcairn, *Trials*, 73-4).

²³¹ It is one of the few insular structures on Roy's military survey maps of 1747-55 (NLS 4/4 80).

walled castles to their vassals. A Palm Sunday fire at Priory Island in the first decade of the sixteenth century – attributed to careless servants – gave the Campbells of Glenorchy an opportunity to rethink where they wished to reside (BBT, 115). Sir Duncan then built a laich hall, great hall, chapel and chambers on the island (BBT, 16). Later in the century the Campbells of Glenorchy did decide to move and built Balloch Castle on land to the east.²³² According to McKean (2004, 106) the move was a celebration of Sir Colin Campbell, the 6th laird of Glenorchy's marriage into the powerful Gowrie family. These choices suggest that islands settlements were often actively desired and not merely a survival from past ages.

Repairs and the creation of new buildings at insular sites give a clear indication that they remained an important part of the social landscape. This is in contrast to the impression given by Macinnes (1996, 17) who writes of the Early Medieval use of AIs simply persisting into the early seventeenth century. The Clunie case study illustrates how Bishop Brown actively decided to establish a new island residence. Likewise a peel was built on a small AI in Lochwinnoch, possibly in the first half of the sixteenth century (NMRS NS35NE 5). Other relatively late insular building projects included:

- a small seventeenth century house in courtyard of Fraoch Eilean Castle which was later enlarged (NMRS NN12NW 4)
- Loch Dochart Castle c.1600 (BBT, 35)
- The Kennedy castle at Loch Inch c.1607 (Zeune, 1992, 121)
- the restoration of Loch Kinord Castle in 1648 (NMRS NO49NW 16)
- the sixteenth or seventeenth-century Inchgalbraith Castle (NMRS NS39SE 8)
- a possible seventeenth-century house at Loch Maberry, Dumfries and Galloway (Zeune, 1992)
- Martnaham Castle, East Ayrshire, in the sixteenth or seventeenth century (NMRS NS31NE 4)
- a Laird's House at Loch Moy in 1665 (NMRS NM62SW 1)
- new towers at north-east and south-west angles of Lochore Castle in the sixteenth century (NMRS NT19NE 1)

²³² Gillies (2005, 121) says the move was accomplished after Sir Colin evicted Gregor Douglasson from Balloch in 1555.

- the fortification of Eilean nam Faoileag, Loch Rannoch, (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 141). In 1563 (BBT, 206-8)
- the reconstruction at Priory Island before 1513 (BBT, 16)
- new buildings at Lochnaw in the seventeenth century (NMRS NW96SE 4).

Structures were created at many other sites at this time, and in preceding centuries, including the AI/MIs at Loch Banchory (Bailey, 2000), the Isle of Loch Earn, Loch Rusky (NMRS NN60SW 7), Loch Dornal (Zeune, 1992, 121), Lochinvar (Zeune, 1992, 121) and Loch Tulla. Overall the evidence points to extensive building activity during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in some cases it was on a relatively large scale. There were also enhancements or expansions at places like Inchgall (Appendix 3, 121) and by the Crichtons at Loch Clunie.

In order to understand the sorts of circumstances behind building and rebuilding at islands it is possible to look at events affecting specific sites or wider social developments. Eilean nam Faoileag, at Loch Rannoch, provides a good example of the former, while the development of Campbell interests in Glenorchy, along Loch Tay and into Rannoch shows the latter at work.

Eilean nam Faoileag

Rannoch had economic value due to its timber which was floated down the Tay to the Lowlands (Whyte, 1979, 119).²³³ Equally it was regarded as a remote and lawless area even towards the end of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth (MacInnes, 1996, 214).²³⁴ Eilean nam Faoilaig is closely associated with the MacGregors who MacGregor (1989, 173) says made a decisive thrust into the area from Glen Lyon around 1523. Dixon and Shelley's radiocarbon dates show that it may have been in earlier use between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries (Appendix 3, 109-10). Stewart's grant was not renewed and on 1 September, 1502 property including the Isle of Loch Rannoch, the lochs of Rannoch and Ericht (or possibly Errochty) and all lochs and islands within those lands were assigned to

²³³ The RD (129) records this happening in the sixteenth century when Sir James Henderson went to cut wood for the church at Tullelum. Payment was made to Sir Thomas Greig and some boys for towing wood over the loch.

²³⁴ As late as 1684 Sir Alexander Menzies was exempted from answerability for the behaviour of the people of the area as he could not effectively control them (Gregory, 1831).

Robert Menzies of that Ilk (RMS, Vol. 2, P. 566. Doc. 2664). Dawson (2007, 57) says this was because the result of a growing determination by the Crown to extract rent from its lands; Fortingall held the area rent free but Menzies of Weem was prepared to pay £60 a year. MacGregor tenancy of the island may have continued uninterrupted as the change of control did not translate into power on the ground (Dawson, 2007, 58).²³⁵

Janet, countess of Atholl, demanded that Robert Menzies expel the MacGregors for raids on her tenants. In 1523 Menzies told the Lords of Council that the task was impossible as a MacGregor force, which was too powerful for him to deal with, had entered Rannoch. The fact that Eoghain MacGregor, son of John MacGregor of Glenstray died on Eilean nam Faoileag on 31 July, 1526 indicates that their defence of the lands and island had been successful (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 54; BBT, 117. MacGregor, 1989, 192). The situation appeared to have been resolved in 1531 when (on the instructions of King James V (1513-42)) John, earl of Atholl, took the island and expelled the MacGregors. He called on the Crown to repay him the cost of recovering and keeping the island and for it to be reserved to his use (ALCPA, 367-8). When this was not forthcoming he left and the former occupants returned. Mutual toleration then developed and in 1536 the Menzies acknowledged MacGregor chief Eoin mac Eoghain mhic Alasdair as holder of the liferent of lands including the island, to which both would have access and for which they would share the expenses (MacGregor, 1989, 194).

During this period a conflict had developed between the Campbells of Glenorchy and the followers of Duncan Ladasach MacGregor (Campbell, 2004, Vol 2, 70). Duncan was eventually captured with his sons Gregor and Malcolm Roy. On 16 June, 1552 they were executed by Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, Duncan Roy Campbell of Glenlyon and Alexander Menzies of Rannoch (Gillies, 2005, 126). It was an event commemorated in the in the BBT (22-3) which describes Sir Colin as a great justiciar who conducted a long and deadly feud with the Clan Gregor. The association between the MacGregors and the island was reflected at the time in the Gaelic poem *Duncan Laideus' Testament* (BBT, 151-72), though this was only composed a generation after the events it purports to describe (MacGregor, 1989,

²³⁵ Dawson (2007, 58) emphasises the support of the Glenorchy Campbells for the MacGregors in holding the land.

127). It imagines Duncan regretting a life of crime on the night before his execution and includes (BBT, 169) the verse:

*Now fair weill Rannoch, with thy loch and ile,
To me thou wes richt traist baith evin and morne,
Thow wes the place that wald me nocht begyle
Quehen I haue bene oft at the kingis horne:
Yit may thou ban the houre I wes borne,
For vncourtuuslie I quite the thy hyre,
That left the birnand in ane felloun fyre.*

The heir to Glenstrae was a minor, named Gregor, who was in the care of the Campbells of Glen Lyon. The feud reignited when Gregor came of age and a request to Sir Colin Campbell for a tack for his family's traditional lands of Glenstrae was rebuffed (Campbell, 2004, Vol. 2, 71). This had direct ramifications for the Isle of Loch Rannoch. In 1563 Sir Colin ignored Menzies' landlordship and gave the £20 land of Rannoch with loch, isle and fishing to MacDonald of Keppoch. Keppoch was ordered to make it his chief residence, impose order and keep out the MacGregors (BBT, 206-8). The move drew a swift response from James Menzies of Weem and on 3 August, 1564 Queen Mary wrote to Glenorchy saying she had been informed that the house of the isle was being rebuilt and fortified, adding that she had been told that Keppoch was preparing to work the lands adjacent to the island (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 139). Concern was expressed that one group of broken men (those without a clan, or from a clan without land) was being replaced with another.

Glenorchy attempted to use legal means to fog the issue by claiming he had been awarded MacGregor possessions. On 28 October an order was issued for Glenorchy and Keppoch to stop occupying the Isle of Loch Rannoch which was declared the rightful property of James Menzies (RPS, Vol. 1, 289-90). In 1566 the queen asked Menzies to resettle the MacGregors in their former lands with reasonable tacks (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 139).

The Glenorchy pursuit of control of Rannoch was eventually successful. But there was a setback in 1652 when John Campbell the younger of Glenorchy sold the barony of Rannoch with loch, island and houses to John Campbell of Ferden (RMS, Vol. 11, P. 49-50. Doc. 96). Despite Campbell control of the area, it was the focus of a royalist muster in 1653 when an intelligence report from three informers to the Commonwealth authorities referred to it as ‘Maggrigor’s house’ (MacGregor, 1901, Vol. 2, 126).²³⁶

Textual evidence suggests a link between the MacGregors and Eilean nam Faoileag at least from the 1470s to the 1650s. But Menzies insisted he had never granted any tacks to the MacGregors (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 139). The conflict juxtaposed a Menzies laird with legal rights but a weak local following with a clan that lacked legal rights but enjoyed strong local loyalties. Key to the expression of the actual balance of power was control of Eilean nam Faoileag which gave, or was regarded as giving, control over the surrounding territory and resources.²³⁷ Sheer physical remoteness also played a role and helped the MacGregors to hold on to the island more effectively than some other lands. The island was the central point of de facto control for significant property and resources. It was also regarded as a stronghold and was successful in this role for as long as the MacGregors had sufficient armed men in the area to deter challengers. However, the taking of the island by Atholl and then Glenorchy underlines that it was ineffective against determined opposition.

Campbell of Glenorchy interests

In the fifteenth century the identities of the Campbells of Argyll and the clan’s next most senior branch, the Campbells of Glenorchy, were firmly anchored in Loch Awe. Their principal residences were the island castles of Innis Chonnell and Kilchurn respectively (the latter being largely or wholly surrounded by water).²³⁸ Innis

²³⁶ What structures were on the island is unclear, the queen just refers to Glenorchy and Keppoch as rebuilding the house her father had ordered destroyed in 1531 (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 139).

²³⁷ It is uncertain when the island fell out of use or when the existing folly tower was built but Leighton shows it as empty (1834).

²³⁸ Dorothy Wordsworth visited Kilchurn in 1803 (1981, 139) and described it as a ruin which occupied every foot of the island. Local informants said the water level was unusually high and added

Channel, among a small group of NIs and an AI, dominates the available ground on the upper plateau of a small rocky, natural island c.165mxc.40m. It is described by the RCAHMS as a small thirteenth-century castle which was extensively remodelled in the fifteenth century (NMRS NM91SE 2). The shoreside area is called Cruachan, which is the clan battlecry, suggesting it was a muster point. Those approaching from shore would have needed to cross the 60m (possibly more at that time) of water by boat as the loch in between reaches 3m in depth (M&P, 1903). Access is from a small beach on the south east shore with two large rock mounds rising to the left and right. A path leads through a narrowing gap to a flight of 13 stone steps which are 4.3m high. There is then a 4.4m rising path to a gateway and gatehouse area. The entrance has walls on both sides. The castle existed as much in reference to the loch as to the land and opposite the first entrance to the gatehouse is a second, 5.1m away, with a path and the remains of steps leading down to a landing place on the north-west shore.

The extent of Kilchurn's insularity is more difficult to interpret due to the lowering of water levels around 1817. It now dominates almost all the available ground on an artificially-shaped natural mound in an area of wetland surrounded by water on three sides (NMRS NN12NW 5). Pont 14 shows it as one of a group of three islands, including another which is occupied. Construction was in two broad phases, the first between 1432-1515 and the second between 1550-1616, but with substantial work taking place at other times (Dalglish, 2005, 246). Its main entrance faces the eastern end of Loch Awe, and the Glenorchy heartlands.

Innis Chonnel was already an established lordly residence when it came into Campbell hands, the situation at Kilchurn is less clear. Before the Wars of Independence the Campbells were a minor but well-established kindred with landholdings in the sherrifdom of Lorn, possibly around Loch Awe (Boardman, 2006, 10 and 12). In 1296 there was a brief period of greater prominence when Colin Campbell was bailie of Loch Awe and Ardscofnish which is likely to have brought him custody of Innis Chonnel and Fraoch Eilean (Boardman, 2006, 41). This was

that the castle could be reached by foot during exceptionally dry periods. Thomas Pennant (Vol. 1, 236) also refers to Kilchurn as an island following his visit of 1769.

lost and the area returned to the MacDougal lords of Lorn.²³⁹ Sir Neil Campbell²⁴⁰ became an unyielding supporter of Robert I and was a crucial ally in extinguishing MacDougal authority. In a much-quoted letter of 1308 or 1309 to King Edward II, John of Lorn stated that he held three castles on a loch – probably Loch Awe – that was 24 miles long, where he kept and built galleys and had reliable crews (CDRS, Vol. 3, P. 16. Doc. 80; 154; Fisher, 2005, 93). Two of these are likely to have been Innis Chonnel and Eilean Fraoch. Campbell of Airds (2002, Vol. 1, 33) suggests that the third was promontory castle of Fincharn but the Kilchurn site may be an alternative as there is some indication of occupation before the fifteenth century (Dalglish, 2005, 244).

The Campbells took Loch Awe and its castles despite Lorn's attempt to hold out in Innis Chonnel – which he eventually abandoned and fled into exile (Fisher, 2005, 93). The adoption of Innis Chonnel as the principal residence of the Campbells of Lochawe was a de facto demonstration that a new political order prevailed. This became de jure in 1315 when Sir Neil's son Colin was granted all the lands of Loch Awe and Ardscofnish in free barony (Boardman, 2006, 20 and 40).²⁴¹ The struggle for Loch Awe had been one in which the Campbells, renowned for their galley power, had defeated an opponent who also described his military strength in terms of ships. The manifestation of their new power was control of a site which identified them as much with the water as the land. As such, Loch Awe came to be regarded as the clan's ancestral home.

²³⁹ In c.1302 Neil and Donald Campbell received lands from Edward I including Lochmartnaham (Boardman, 2006, 22). Whether the loch settlement existed at the time is unclear but there are the remains of what is probably a sixteenth or seventeenth century insular castle (NMRS NS31NE 4).

²⁴⁰ He raised the galley force to take the king and his remaining adherents to Kintyre after the defeat at Methven in 1306 (Boardman, 2006, 9).

²⁴¹ In the early fourteenth century Campbell power expanded rapidly from Mid-Argyll to the south in Cowal and the sea lochs of the Firth of Clyde but not in Lorn (Boardman, 2005, 124) where this was only achieved later in the century. A charter issued by David II in 1369 confirms the then Campbell chief in the lordship of Loch Awe and elsewhere in Argyll (Boardman, 2006, 11). By the late 1370s Gill-easbuig Campbell was the leading magnate in Argyll. In 1382 Gill-easbuig and his son Colin were granted a hereditary royal lieutenancy putting them in the intermediate position between barons and king. The move from local to provincial dominance made it necessary to have new collection, storage and consumption points for renders in recently acquired lordships and suitable places to dispense justice (Boardman, 2005, 127). Boardman says Duncan Campbell's chieftainship (1412x1413-1453) saw the refurbishment of established Campbell power centres and the founding of new ones – secular and spiritual. This was continued by his successor and grandson Colin, 1st earl of Argyll (chief 1453-93).

The charter of 1432 in which Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochawe (d.1453) provided his son Colin (c.1395-1475) with the lands of Glenorchy and other properties, to establish the new Glenorchy branch of the family further strengthened its links with islands.²⁴² The new possessions included ‘Ellanelochtollyff’ (Isle of Loch Tulla) and ‘Ilankeilquhirn’, ‘Elanduffeire’ and ‘Elanwyr’ (Highland Papers, 1934, Vol. 4, 199).²⁴³ The lands of Glenorchy had belonged to the MacGregors of Glenorchy but passed into Campbell hands through the marriage of John Campbell to Mariota de Glenorchy (Campbell, 2002, Vol. 2, 38). Boardman says (2006, 133) the grant to Colin signalled his emergence as the second most powerful figure in the clan. Embedding the Campbell of Glenorchy sept involved imposing its presence in places that would allow it to administer its lands and dominate local society. Dalglish (2005, 251) argues that this involved the use of a relatively evenly-distributed chain of castles through which the family oversaw the existing inhabitants whom they sought to lead. It is a process which Dalglish says (2005, 243-66) eventually saw the building of nine castles on land and water and, after 1550, involved an increasingly direct and proprietorial form of lordship.²⁴⁴

One factor in the growth of Glenorchy power was the accumulation of increasing amounts of land to consolidate and extend the areas over which they held sway. As Boardman (2005; 2006) and Dalglish (2005) indicate this was not a smooth or continuous process but one which involved setbacks, as well as advances, over time and which ultimately saw a transformation in relations with certain other kindreds who went from allies or clients to obstacles or enemies. The conflict with the MacGregors is the most regularly cited example, though this tended to emerge as the Glenorchy Campbells sought to assert themselves more directly as landlords than as leaders of others (Dalglish, 2005). Indeed the MacGregors of Brackley were custodians of Kilchurn Castle until the late sixteenth century (MacGregor, 1989, 77; Campbell, 2002, Vol. 2, 39).²⁴⁵

²⁴² MacGregor (1989, 72) says the acquisition of the lordship of Glenorchy by the Campbells took place before 1407.

²⁴³ In 1433/4 a charter of sasine by ‘Dugall Campbell of Achym’ in favour of Colin Campbell includes ‘Elan dorrach’ on Loch Awe (Highland Papers, Vol. 4, 202).

²⁴⁴ A potential site which Dalglish does not discuss is Loch Tulla but which fits well into his analysis.

²⁴⁵ Duncan McGregor was keeper of a castle in Glenorchy before 1518 (OPS, 1851-5, Vol. 2, 145).

One significant development in the Campbell of Glenorchy expansion came when Sir Colin obtained a tack for Priory Island in Loch Tay (NMRS NN74NE 5; Appendix 3, 113-6) which lay outside the charter lands of 1432. Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (c.1443-1513), who was killed at Flodden, consolidated the family's hold on the island by obtaining a feu charter from James IV in 1488. The property was not large, nor of great economic importance, incorporating the island, port, some surrounding land plus fishing rights (RMS, Vol. 2, P. 442. Doc. 2091) and yet it was chosen as their main residence in the east, a function it fulfilled during four generations until around 1560, when documents begin to appear which are dated at Balloch Castle (BBT, 22).²⁴⁶

Priory Island is an AI with a single flat plateau of around 95mx60m and is some 90m from shore in 75cm-4m of water (M&P, 1902). Like the occupied AIs at lochs Rannoch, Tulla, Clunie and Earn its location is exposed. There is little to suggest that the Campbells of Glenorchy were in anyway compelled to use the site, especially as the port lands were available to them. Their choice to adopt the island may have been political, that it was a traditional centre of authority and to occupy it asserted their own position. But what is known of the island's past does not automatically confirm this interpretation. It appears in the record in c.1123 when it was granted to the canons of Scone by King Alexander I (1107-24) (RMS, Vol. 1, app. 1. P. 440, Doc. 27; Lawrie, 1905, 42). It remained in the control of Scone for some time, with charters of confirmation in 1163/4 (Barrow, 1971a, 263) and in 1326 under King Robert I (Duncan, 1988, P. 550, Doc. 291). In c.1389 the Crown assumed possession of the port and island, previously held by Duncan, earl of Fife, whose daughter Countess Isabella resigned her claims (Gillies, 2004, 407). The canons of Scone may have remained as tenants for some time as in the 1440s Bower (Vol. 1, 1993, 191ff) described it as containing a cell of canons of Scone though this is not known to be correct.²⁴⁷

The Campbell adoption of the island may have been for a variety of reasons. The counterpoise to exposure was visibility, making it ideal as a site for a substantial

²⁴⁶ According to Zeune (1992, 97) this is towards the end of era of widespread castle building. His research shows that more than 500 royal licences were issued for new castles from 1424 to 1567 and that despite a commonly held belief to the contrary the numbers rose rather than fell after Flodden.

²⁴⁷ *The Lands, Churches and Privileges of Scone Abbey* (1945, 1) repeats a tradition that there was a priory then a nunnery on the island.

settlement that would be a clear expression of power in the surrounding land and waterscape. Its location at the end of a 15 mile loch may have given it an important role in controlling communications, balanced by Eilean Ran (probably a semi-insular site) in the far west, which was occupied by the chiefs of the MacNabs. Nevertheless, the Campbells of Glenorchy had Finlarig on high ground overlooking the west of the loch which was developed into an important residence and burial place.²⁴⁸ The family's authority at both ends of Loch Tay is emphasised by the death of John Campbell of Glenorchy at Priory Island in 1550 which was followed by his burial at Finlarig (BBT, 124).

The Campbells of Glenorchy eventually gained the superiority of Eilean Ran, with the MacNabs as their tenants, and frequently used the residence there for issuing charters and conducting other administration.²⁴⁹ A few examples are the signing of a bond of manrent by James Stewart in the Port, binding himself to Colin Campbell of Glenorchy on 8 November, 1566 (BBT, 211). On 31 August, 1570 Colin Campbell of Glenorchy drafted a letter expressing a distinct lack of enthusiasm for a meeting due to take place between him and other nobles at the site (NAS GD112/2/45/1). On 20 May, 1584 there was another bond of manrent signed at Eilean Ran, this time between 'Dougall Denesone MacGregor' and Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (BBT, 227). Little is known of what was there as the only remains are a slight rise in the ground (NMRS NN53SE 16) but in 1591 there was a charter reference to the merkland of the port of Eilean Ran with bedchamber and garden in the island (RMS, Vol. 5, P. 643. Doc. 1901). Despite the proximity of Finlarig, Eilean Ran was regarded as a fitting and desirable place of business for the Campbells of Glenorchy, perhaps in part because of the ease of access along the loch to the east and through Glen Dochart to Argyll in the west.

Glen Dochart, with lands traditionally associated with the MacNabs and the Campbells of Strachur, held another significant island site. It, like Eilean Stalcair and Eilean Ran occupied a strategically important point between Kilchurn and Priory Island or later Balloch Castle. It was important not just for the control of lines of communication but, like Eilean Ran, for the convenience of the lairds getting from

²⁴⁸ See McKean (2004, 53) for an account of the expansion of Campbell of Glenorchy interests and changes in of residences.

²⁴⁹ Zeune (1992, 123) counts 13 documents from Priory Island between 1510-52 and 12 at Eilean Ran from 1561-86 in the BBT.

one landholding to another (a concept discussed by Creighton, 2002, 39-40). The NI in the central area of Loch Dochart measures c.90mx 35m, rising up to 4m above the water. The loch is very shallow, 75cm-1.3m, but with deep silt and occupies a narrow pass between steep rocky hills. The island holds the substantial ruins of a castle described by Zeune (1992) as a Z-plan tower house with special variants (NMRS NN42NW 3). The island was referred to as Garwhellane when it was granted to Robert, earl of Fife and Menteith, by Robert II in 1374 (RMS, Vol. 1, P. 219, Doc. 605; Boardman, 2005, 98) and was held from him by Arthur Campbell (NAS GD112/1/4). By 1550 superiority was in the hands of Archibald Campbell, earl of Argyll.

On 14 September, 1550 an instrument of sasine was issued in favour of Colin Campbell, brother and heir of the deceased John Campbell of Glenorchy, which underlines the importance of islands in his inheritance. It refers to the 'lands of Glenwrchquay with islands commonly called Elen Euir, Elen Duffyr [possibly Sailean Rubha Dubhairt NMRS NN12NW 30], Elen Quhupn with fortalice, and Elen Lochtoille, with 4d. land of Achakynna with island called Elen Dorcht ...' (NAS GD170/40). And in 1563 there is the confirmation of a charter for the Loch Dochart island to Charles Campbell, a member of the Strachur kindred (RMS, Vol. 4, P. 337-8. Doc. 1478). By 1598 the situation had changed with the Campbells of Glenorchy having retaken direct control when Sir Duncan, the 7th laird, paid the remaining 225 merks of 450 merks he owed to John Campbell of Ardkinglass for lands including Loch Dochart and its isle (MacGregor, 1989, 229; NAS GD112/1/351; Paton, Vol. 6, 65).

It is Black Duncan, laird of Glenorchy, who is credited with building the castle which remains on the site today in what Dalglish (2005, 258) regards as an attempt to assert his authority in the area.²⁵⁰ A survey by this author in 2004 found the site was generally as described by Dalglish (2005, 253) with a rectangular block that originally had two main floors and a garret plus the remains of three drystone structures of indeterminate type and age. Two other features are also worthy of note, one being the boat noost at the far east of the island which is formed from what appears to be a modified natural rocky inlet. The other is the location of the castle

²⁵⁰ A settlement appears to have stood on the island from at least the late fifteenth century (BBT, 113) as a Duncan Charlissoun is recorded as dying at Loch Dochart on 16 May, 1494.

itself at the edge of a cliff and steep embankment facing the south shore and the road. A prominent chimney block also protrudes from the shore-facing wall. The overall effect is to present an impressive façade, which is exaggerated by its location and possibly further emphasised by its reflection in the loch, in keeping with Johnson's (2003, 47) views on the potential uses of water in castle architecture.

By the time Loch Dochart Castle was built there had been significant changes in Campbell use of islands. Kilchurn was no longer the principal residence of the Glenorchy branch, having been displaced by Balloch Castle, and the earls of Argyll had moved their own main centre to Inverary in the late fifteenth century. These moves owed at least something to the growing wealth of Inverary and the expansion of Glenorchy interests in Lochtayside. The building of Balloch involved the displacement of an existing MacGregor chiefly residence (Dalglish, 2005, 258) and its replacement with a large, modern country home within its own extensive grounds. As Dalglish discusses, the changes of principal residence did not lead to the abandonment of Kilchurn or Innis Chonnel. Both remained in use with the former undergoing extension and improvement. Priory Island also remained in use, though with declining status, until the early eighteenth century.

Pont 18 shows Priory Island as holding a substantial structure, though Balloch is considerably grander. A series of charters show the continued transmission of the island and port through the Glenorchy family. In 1574 there is a confirmation by Colin Campbell of Glenorchy that his future spouse Jean Stewart would enjoy the liferent of the Port of Lochtay with island, manor, place, garden, orchard and fishings in the north of the lake (NAS GD112/2/135). In 1583 a charter was witnessed on the island by George Balfour (NAS GD112/2/18/13 and GD112/2/18/15). In 1598 there was an ultimately unsuccessful action by the Crown Comptroller David Seytoun of Parbroth against Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, which claimed that the island, port and associated lands had been annexed and should be vacated by the Campbells (Paton, Vol. 8, 142, 180, 122 and 322; NAS GD112/2/135). On 14 September, 1623 Colin Campbell of Glenorchy wrote to Lord Kilmaurs from the island about documents in his possession belonging to the family of Glencairn (NAS GD39/2/5). A series of other documents from before the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century also indicate the continued use of the island,

including the granting of its liferent to Dame Elizabeth Sinclair, widow of Sir Duncan Campbell (NAS GD112/2/135) and confirmation of its inheritance in 1642 by John Campbell, heir apparent to Glenorchy (RMS, Vol. 9, P. 391-4. Doc. 1058²⁵¹). These suggest it remained a valuable secondary residence that could be used to provide for heirs and dowagers. From 1659, when £50 Scots was paid for thatching and mending the house of the Isle of Loch Tay, its role may have declined rapidly as evidence for its occupation becomes thinner (NAS GD112/15/3). In 1663 signet letters authorised John Campbell the younger of Glenorchy and others to try John Dow McCorquodeall and McInleaster, son of Duncan McInleaster in Rannoch as robbers, describing them as prisoners in the house of Balloch and Isle of Lochtay (NAS GD112/1/593). Some maintenance continued as Robert McPharland, slater, was paid in July 1709 for mending houses in the Isle of Loch Tay and castle of Kilchurn the year before (NAS GD112/15/123). Yet when the travel writer Richard Pococke, bishop of Meath (SHS, 1887, 236), visited the island in 1760 he simply described ruins of what he thought was a chapel and James Stobie's 1783 map of Perthshire and Clackmannan (hereafter Stobie's map) shows the island with a ruin described as an old nunnery (NLS Maps).

Kilchurn, by contrast, underwent conversion by Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy, 1st earl of Breadalbane into a barracks in the 1680s-90s, giving every indication that it was intended to be of continued military use.²⁵² But by 1708 there is a sense of obsolescence when Breadalbane informs the government it is welcome to garrison the castle but says it 'will be useless and only a trouble and expense' (NAS GD112/41/2).²⁵³ Kilchurn was, though, used as a government garrison in 1715 and 1745 and in 1747 Lord Glenorchy wrote to John Campbell of Barcaldine to discuss its possible sale to the authorities (NAS GD87/1/24). Final abandonment came only in 1760 after severe damage from a lightning strike which caused the collapse of a turret.

²⁵¹ This also claims the Isle of Loch Rannoch and Eilean Molach on Loch Katrine.

²⁵² In 1685 there was a brief flurry of activity at the three castle islands of Loch Awe according to Campbell (2004, Vol. 3, 42-3) during the rebellion by Archibald Campbell, 9th earl of Argyll. MacLachlan of Craig shut himself up in Innis Chonnel, the wife of Campbell of Inverawe was kept on Eilean Fraoch, and Breadalbane gave orders from Kilchurn to shut down lines of communication by rounding up the loch's 18-20 boats and keeping them at the three islands.

²⁵³ In other correspondence he says the last garrison there, commanded by Captain Rollo, tore up the floor for firewood and used the gaps between the jests and plaster as toilets (NAS GD112/41/2).

Events at Kilchurn, Innis Chonnell and Priory Island indicate a shift away from islands as principal residences from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but they still retained a role which, as at Clunie, could persist as late as the eighteenth century.²⁵⁴ The story appears to be similar for Rubha na Moine which, by some point in the seventeenth century, had been replaced as the main residence of the Campbells of Lochnell by Lochnell House, in Ardchattan and Muckairn (NMRS NM83NE 2). Yet the active development of Loch Dochart demonstrates that the direction of change was not always towards reduced status.

Conclusions

Any choice of settlement location involves adopting a position within the land or waterscape. There is clear evidence to show that island sites, and their associated ports, were used for positive reasons, rather than simply being a lingering tradition from the distant past. This is underlined by the extensive use made of loch settlements by the Campbells of Glenorchy as they established and expanded their authority. The value of an insular location could be practical, providing access to food, resources or communications. It could also be symbolic, providing the opportunity for the powerful to display their authority with impressive buildings on sites that were detached from the rest of society. They could be a highly visible and intense presence in the waterscape, nailing the glen (to abuse an expression Creighton (2002, 66) picked up from Stocker). They gave ready access to clean water, fish and land and were sometimes on important lines of communication. They could also provide space for small gardens – or access to gardens on shore. Indeed, many insular settlements were on split sites, with some functions carried out at designated port areas on lands belonging to, and worked for, the island's proprietors and/or occupants.

²⁵⁴ The picture is less clear at other Campbell island sites like Caisteal na Nighinn Ruaidhe, Loch Avich, which is cited as an important early possession (Campbell, 2000, Vol. 1, 15) and has been dated to the fifteenth and possibly thirteenth centuries by the RCAHMS (NMRS NM91SW 1). Likewise there was the possible AI site of Caisteal Dubh (NMRS NN95NW 1) in the drained Loch Moulin, Perthshire, where Sir Neil Campbell of Lochawe built a castle in c.1326 which was reputedly abandoned in 1500 but about which little is known.

Occupied islands were widely distributed throughout those parts of Scotland with substantial numbers of lochs, large or small and of Highland or Lowland types. Their use reflects a ready adoption and use by people from a variety of cultural backgrounds over long and changing periods of time. With little evidence for fresh building of AIs during the period in question it seems that the vast majority were being reused. The time periods over which AIs were built and their distribution, not just throughout the mainland but in the western and northern isles and in Ireland, makes it hard to regard them as being the expression of any particular or individual culture. Like the settlements placed on them they were created and used by many different peoples and individuals of differing languages, identities, affinities, kingdoms, tribes and religions. This is even before natural islands are factored in.

Kings of Scotland used islands – such as Eilean Fraoch – as did regional rulers and their families such as the Lords of the Isles and the house of Fergus of Galloway. Conservative native earls used them in Lennox and Strathearn, so did incoming families with social and political aspirations such as the Bruces or Balliols. This suggests that they had broad appeal across different social groups and traditions and catered for the needs of a wide range of people, from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and throughout much of Scotland.

Chapter 5: Security and Social Change

Introduction

When Bishop George Brown was dying he went to Clunie to be somewhere he felt safe as he prepared his soul for the afterlife. This chapter examines the relationship between loch settlements and various forms of security. Many accounts of islands associated them with a desire for physical security and Morrison (1985, 1) among many others gave this as a reason for the initial construction of AIs. However security should not automatically be associated with ideas of military defence, though clearly the two are linked. It is argued that while islands were clearly used in a defensive role from time to time, and could even have some advantages over land sites, this was relatively unusual and not the prime reason for their use. More important was that some offered a visual expression of authority. In practical terms they could be a protection from banditry and low-level violence, but their capacity to provide refuge at times of social and political disgrace or danger was just as important.

Island strengths

The presence of buildings described as castles or fortified houses on some islands can reinforce the impression that a military function was a high priority. Some settlements certainly had features that would have been useful against attack and that were probably intended for that purpose. Equally, as argued by Johnson (2003) or McKean (2003, 3 and 40), a martial appearance need not directly equate to a military function and may be a symbolic expression of authority. Loch an Eilean Castle looks very well defended from the nearest shore, presenting a stone wall up to 6.5m high with a single small front entrance but to the rear there is no remaining sign of substantial walling.

Some loch settlements were regarded as places of strength and security. Inchgall was named as one of the four strongest castles in Fife at the time of the English invasion of 1547 (NMRS NT19NE 1). The appearance of strength may have

been as important as actual defensive qualities in deterring potential attackers.²⁵⁵ However, many island settlements lack any remaining archaeological evidence of defensive structures or features. One example is White Island, on Loch Moan, which is a low-lying NI of 118mx205m and has the remains of three buildings which were probably domestic or agricultural.²⁵⁶ White Island is relatively unusual because it can be reached by foot from the shore and as O’Conor (1998, 84) points out the simple fact of being out in the water normally makes an effective defence because access is difficult and attackers are vulnerable on the approach. He adds that many Irish lordly loch settlements were lightly defended, with palisades or wattle fences at the periphery that would be awkward for a small force to attack but were not designed to hold off a large-scale assault. One very late example of the security value of an island is at Eilean Mhic Phi on Loch Quoich. The island is not known to have had any additional defences²⁵⁷ just ‘a self-built bothy’ occupied by Ewen McPhee (c.1808-50) who used it to evade capture by the authorities who sought him as a deserter and sheep thief (Ellice, 1931, 79ff).²⁵⁸ McPhee, apart from offering a rare insight into a low-status loch settlement, also points to the physical security that might be gained by living on an island.

In the Late Medieval period those with the resources to choose a location and type of settlement would have been alert to the relative risks of banditry, feuding and occasional large-scale warfare (MacInnes (1996) discusses at some length the threat from cateran bands which lifted cattle and were blamed for house-breaking, fire

²⁵⁵ Campbell (2000, Vol. 1, 34) argues that the primary function of a castle was to deter attack and a siege could be seen as a mark of failure.

²⁵⁶ A survey by this author in 2004 identified three badly decayed rectilinear buildings with turf-covered dry stone walls of up to 1.3m thick and 60cm high. The largest has the remains of one well-constructed corner at the north east and is c.11.5m in length. The other two buildings were 8.5m and 7.4m long. The structures are consistent with Blaeu’s record of a settlement on the loch which is not on the mid-eighteenth century maps of William Roy or the OS map of 1856.

²⁵⁷The settlement on Loch Kennard is another example of a seemingly undefended domestic settlement. Stobie’s map (NLS Maps) shows an intact insular building and a roofed structure is shown on the OS six inch of 1867 (NLS Maps). The island was surveyed by this author in 2004. It is a small NI/MI where the edges may well have been built or reinforced. It stands a maximum of 1.5m above water level. A building stands on a small mound that dominates the north and west. The building runs generally south west. The south-west corner is 1.6m high and well built. Other walls remain to around 70cm. They are 1m thick towards the south west and 60cm-70cm at the north east. Much is tumbled but the lines are well enough defined to make out a structure of 7.9mx5.3m. The inside was c.5.8mx3.5m. There are no signs of an internal division. A possible entrance exists on the south east.

²⁵⁸ Ellice, the cousin of the landowner the Right Hon. Edward Ellice MP (d.1880), describes attempts by the authorities to capture McPhee who enjoyed celebrity status as Scotland’s last outlaw. Picture postcards were sold of McPhee and his family. One tale claims that two sheriff’s men were sent to the island by boat while McPhee was absent but his wife drove them away with a gun.

raising, assaults, blackmail, causing major problems in the seventeenth century). Social and political change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did, however, lead to a reduction in feuding and violence, though the process was very uneven (Brown, 1992, 92).²⁵⁹ There is some evidence to suggest that islands were regarded as useful against the threat of small-scale attack. In 1611 the Privy Council ordered an assault on a party of MacGregors who were on an island in Loch Katrine which they had fortified and where they had gathered food and weapons (RPC, Series 1, Vol. 9, 126).²⁶⁰ The BBT (41) says that severe snow forced the besiegers to retire but another account simply says they escaped and that John, earl of Tullibardine and William, lord Murray made no effort to pursue them (MacGregor, 1898, Vol. 1, 373). There is a story that Neill Houcheonsone held the Isle of Loch Assynt, near Lochinver, in 1585 against Mackay of Strathnaver until help arrived from Alexander, earl of Sutherland (Bannatyne Club, 1851, Vol. 2, 694; Gordonstoun, 1813, 181). Towards the end of the 1520s Alexander Gordon, Master of Sutherland, was said to be returning from a raid on Strathnaver when he met and engaged John Mackay of Strathnaver who was raiding Lairg (Fraser, 1894, 90) and that Mackay took refuge on an island called Murie in Little Loch Shin, Sutherland (Appendix 3, 77-8).²⁶¹ However, in the absence of corroborating documentary proof, the latter narratives should be treated with caution and are of most value for the concepts they express.

Cherry Island in Loch Ness was used as a place of refuge under slightly different circumstances.²⁶² Lady Katherine Grant is said to have fled there after seeing her husband Hugh Fraser, the 3rd lord Lovat, killed at Blar-na-leine (the Battle

²⁵⁹ The accession of King James VI and I to the English throne in 1603 brought a southward shift in political focus. The early years of the seventeenth century saw what Brown (1992, 93) calls a scramble for spoils by a Scottish aristocracy seeking pensions, lands and titles in the aftermath of the Union of the Crowns. Economic circumstances were generally positive and there were other gains, like the pacification of the border regions that had for so long been a zone of tension between rival kingdoms. These tended to defuse the potential for James VI's claims to absolute authority (Goodare, 2008, 32) to be a source of conflict. Indeed, new imperial confidence helped increase efforts to integrate the Highlands, dismantle clan society, eliminate feuding and force chiefs to act as 'responsible landlords' (Brown, 1992, 92). By this time, there was a perception that Scotland contained what Dawson refers to as two super-regions: the Highlands and the Lowlands (2007, 3). Their emergence had taken place over a period of centuries as more nuanced distinctions between smaller regions and localities faded or diminished in political potency.

²⁶⁰ The island has been assumed to be Eilean Molach but is named as Ilanvernak (BBT, 41). This could identify it as yl Vernaik (shown on Gordon 51) off the north shore at the west end of the loch.

²⁶¹ This is likely to be ylen Mewry (Pont 3 (2)) a small AI near Lairg surveyed by this author in 2004 and now called Eilean na Craoibhe (NC 58130 06350).

²⁶² The recorded history of the site is limited but around the time when Pont may have visited Fraser (1905, 184ff) says it was in the hands of a constable, Alexander McKtaus [MacTavish], in 1589.

of the Shirts) near Loch Lochy in 1544 (Fraser, 1894, 129) but ‘turnd hectick, and dyed’. Islands were also used as bolt holes during internal clan disputes. Simpson (1937, 60) says the first clear reference to the island castle of Loch an Eilean was around 1527 when James Malcolmson²⁶³ fled there after he murdered his kinsman, and chief of the Clan Chattan, Lachlan Mackintosh.

Islands were used defensively during larger scale conflicts from the Wars of Independence through to the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century, but tended to be the focus of small-scale military activity. The relief of Lochindorb on 15 July, 1336 by King Edward III is among the best-known examples of conflict involving an insular castle, though this is mainly because it was presented as a great act of chivalry as it involved the rescue of Lady Katherine Beaumont who was being blockaded by Sir Andrew Moray (Nicholson, 1978, 133; Brown, 2002, 102; Brown, 2004, 240).²⁶⁴ Sir Andrew withdrew his forces rather than engaging in a battle with Edward.

On one level it can be argued that castles in insular and watery locations played a significant role in the Wars of Independence and were seen by the various protagonists, English and Scottish, as a valuable military asset.²⁶⁵ Tabraham (2002, 4) suggests that the English fortified the castle island at Lochleven before 1300.²⁶⁶ In 1335 the castle was successfully held for King David II (1329-71) by a garrison led by its constable Alan Vipont against a siege by forces supporting Edward III under John Stirling. The castle at Loch Doon was also the focus of military activity. These, though, were relatively brief episodes in the far longer stories of the castles involved.

The history of Lochindorb suggests that its role was not primarily defensive, though was used as a stronghold when necessary.²⁶⁷ With sufficient advance warning of an enemy’s approach decisions would be made about whether its location,

²⁶³ Malcolmson and his supporters were captured and put to death.

²⁶⁴ The blockade had been in place since the previous November with the countess, widow of David of Strathbogie, earl of Atholl who had died in Edward’s service, trapped inside.

²⁶⁵ Master James de St George, a Savoyard, had a ditch cut to allow water to flow round the peel he built for Edward I at Linlithgow. The English replaced the existing castle at Lochmaben with a promontory peel (Watson, 1998b). Cornell (2008, 236) notes that Lochindorb was one of the few substantial stone fortifications in northern Scotland and also says it is unusual because there is little evidence that Robert I had it slighted, as he did with many other castles.

²⁶⁶ He also points to the site’s significance in holding one of Scotland’s oldest known ‘tower houses’, and suggests that parts of the courtyard perpetuate defences that existed there in 1300.

²⁶⁷ Watson (1998a, 180) says Lochindorb Castle was probably successfully besieged by Edward in 1303.

structure, supplies and resources were sufficient to resist the opposing force. Despite being among the most powerful figures in Scotland and controlling a series of castles, John 2nd Comyn decided that the wisest move was to submit to the large and powerful advancing forces of Edward I (Watson, 1998, 75b).²⁶⁸

The castle (NMRS NX49SE 1) stands on an AI/MI²⁶⁹ of 0.81ha around 250m from shore on the edge of a shallow plateau close to a drop off into 3.5m of water and is at 296m asl. Young (2005, 74) says that while it was not in Badenoch (it stands at NH 9745 3632 in the parish of Cromdale, Inverallan and Advie) it was important to the area's control. Ross (2003, 38 and 128) suggests that the dabhach of Braemoray, which included Lochindorb Castle, was attached to the lordship of Badenoch to protect one of the approaches from the east and states that the castle had been regarded as an integral part of the lordship since the thirteenth century.²⁷⁰

During that period the Comyns held both Badenoch and Lochaber – Young (2005, 74) says King Alexander II wanted them to control all the passes from the north and west Highlands into the basin of the Tay. The key castles were Ruthven (the Comyn caput in Lochaber) and Inverlochy, supplemented by Lochindorb.²⁷¹ Lochindorb was, however, seen as being of sufficient importance by Edward I to spend around a month there in 1303 while he accepted submissions from across the north. As such it was an effective operational base which allowed the king to achieve shortlived social and political control through the threat of force.²⁷² Shortly after 1336 it appears to have been back under Scottish Crown control (Ross, 2003, 38).²⁷³ Lochindorb was subsequently held by Alexander Stewart (1343-1405) whose father, King Robert II

²⁶⁸ Barrow (2003, 174) attributes the building of the castle to John Comyn the Red and notes that his son, John Comyn, Guardian of Scotland 1286-92, died there in 1303 (Young, 2005, 77 says c.1302). The Comyns were another family which had come north from England. They initially had grants of land in the south of the country. William Cumin (d.c1160) was chancellor of Scotland under King David I (ODNB, 2007).

²⁶⁹ Oram describes the island as natural (1996, 123). Cumming (1911-12, Vol. 46, 357-64) describes the island as at least partly artificial.

²⁷⁰ Grant (1993, 144) describes Lochindorb as the major stronghold of the Randolph earldom of Moray. This had started to be divided when the future King Robert II was granted Badenoch. Its loss explains why John Dunbar built the great hall at Darnaway.

²⁷¹ Ross (2003, 130-31) suggests that the caput of Lochaber was shifted from Keppoch Motte to Inverlochy by the end of the thirteenth century because the latter fortification also controlled the southern approach to the Great Glen route.

²⁷² The English may have added an outer court at Lochindorb (MacGibbon and Ross, 1887, 70-3).

²⁷³ Ross says (2003, 38) that if the crown did control Lochindorb after 1337, the lordship of Badenoch would also have been under its control. He suggests that John Randolph, earl of Moray, had divided his earldom, probably late in 1335, by detaching the two lordships of Badenoch and Lochaber and granting them to David de Strathbogie, the heir of John Comyn of Badenoch.

(1371-90), granted vast territories to his sons as a means of extending Crown authority.²⁷⁴ Alexander was exercising local lordship in Badenoch on behalf of his father from 1370 (Grant, 1993, 143). On becoming king, Robert made the lordship permanent and included what Boardman (1996, 73) sees as the ‘vital’ element of custody of Lochindorb.²⁷⁵ As royal lieutenant for the north, Alexander (who was also earl of Buchan from 1382) had responsibilities and personal interests from Loch Eil to Caithness and across to the east coast of Buchan (Boardman, 1996, 87). This was during a period of crisis in local lordship with few magnates willing, or perhaps able, to form effective relationships with local Gaelic kindreds or oppose those who did not act in accordance with the Crown’s designs (Boardman, 1996, Ch. 3). It was a role into which Alexander threw himself with energy. Without access to Lowland feudal levies he seemingly adopted local practices and made extensive use of native mercenary soldiers, known as caterans. Their activities brought complaint from other important figures in the north, notably the bishops of Moray and Aberdeen (the relationship between Alexander Stewart and Bishop Bur of Moray is examined in detail by Oram (1999c)). The exercise of power required bases from which to operate and Boardman identifies the principle strongholds under Alexander’s control as Dingwall, Urquhart, Ruthven and Lochindorb. This positioned Lochindorb as a significant, though not a primary, point of seignorial power, and an important part of the Stewart project to assert its authority across parts of the realm well beyond the monarchy’s traditional heartlands south of the Forth.²⁷⁶

Lochindorb’s final period of prominence was as a possession of the Black Douglases whose power was feared to rival that of the Crown and was broken by James II (1437-60).²⁷⁷ In 1445 in the aftermath of the king’s murder of the eighth

²⁷⁴ Grant (1993, 145) says his territory and offices made Alexander supreme in the north. He adds that Ruthven Castle dominated the main north-south route through the Highlands, Urquhart the middle of the Great Glen and Lochindorb, Strathspey. Oram (1999c, 201-2)

Argues that this was a fundamental shift from the reign of David II who had seen Bishop Bur as his chief representative – possibly promoting him to the bishopric because he was seen as trustworthy after a working as a clerk in royal service. The change of emphasis left Bur isolated.

²⁷⁵ Oram (1999c, 201) says that after the earldom of Moray had reverted to the crown David II granted ‘Lochondorb’ to his servant Simon Reed, Constable of Edinburgh Castle – Reed fled Scotland when Robert came to the throne.

²⁷⁶ Grant (1993, 157) sees Alexander’s career as ultimately a failure and regards him as having been weak and a failure as a Highland chief and as a Scottish earl.

²⁷⁷ Douglas support had earlier proved invaluable to the Bruce dynasty in helping destroy the power of Edward Balliol in Galloway (Brown, 2007). But they subsequently came into conflict with the royal house of which regarded them as a potential threat. The 6th earl was executed on trumped up treason

earl of Douglas, Archibald Douglas, as earl of Moray, strengthened both Lochindorb and the seat of the earldom at Darnaway Castle (McGladdery, 2005, 182). Black Douglas power collapsed following the defeat of forces loyal to James, 9th earl of Douglas in the battle of Arkinholm, Dumfriesshire, in 1455 and the earl of Huntly's move to seize Lochindorb and Darnaway castles (Brown, 2007, 308). The conflict showed the difficulty the Crown faced in exercising effective authority in the north if Lochindorb and Badenoch were not in reliable hands. As this had been impossible to guarantee James II ordered Lochindorb's slighting, though this may not have been carried out until 1458 when the Thane of Cawdor, was paid £24 for the job (McGladdery, 2005, 184).²⁷⁸

Major changes in weaponry and tactics had taken place by the wars of the mid-seventeenth century. But the emergence of increasingly sophisticated explosives, artillery and small arms did not automatically negate the military value of islands, which remained mixed. This was partly because artillery was not always available to attackers and the scale of military activity tended to be small, though sometimes with significant consequences. A prime example is the capture of the Isle of Loch Dochart by the supporters of James Graham, 1st marquis of Montrose (1612-50) in the winter of 1644 which allowed them to take Argyll by surprise and paved the way for the colossal defeat of Campbell forces at Inverary. Stevenson (2000, 147) describes how the royalists ravaged the lands either side of Loch Tay but were unable to challenge the garrison on Priory Island as they lacked artillery and were anxious to move on quickly.²⁷⁹ They ran into trouble further west as the guns of the castle on Loch Dochart dominated the narrow rocky pass leading to Argyll. John MacNab fiar of Bovain (a supposed Campbell ally and effective head of his clan) is said to have taken the island for the royalists by subterfuge (Stevenson, 2000, 149)

charges at Edinburgh following the Black Dinner of 1440. The 8th earl was murdered by King James II and his courtiers at Stirling Castle in 1452 (Tabraham, 2008, 30).

²⁷⁸ The ruins, with the outer walls remaining to near their full height, may have been reused as a lower status settlement. When Sir John Campbell bought lands from James, earl of Moray in 1606 they included the Loch of Lochindorb and the houses within it and adjacent sheilings (Highland Papers, 1914, Vol. 1, 131). Macfarlane also described Lochindorb as being useful in wartime as a place for people to hide their children and goods and which is easily defended (Mitchell, 1908, Vol. 3, 240-2).

²⁷⁹ Priory Island and the other Campbell strongholds such as Balloch survived unscathed but provided little protection to the populace. Stevenson (1994, 147) says 900 men may have been killed without a single battle being fought and that the Glenorchy estates suffered damage of £66,000 sterling. And yet the island garrison – by that time in place for four months – was felt to be of sufficient importance for parliament to pay monthly subsidies for its maintenance (APS, Vol. 6, P. 500, Doc. 89).

when a boat was sent for him and his men after he claimed to have important letters from the marquis of Argyll.²⁸⁰ The following year it was retaken by James Campbell of Ardkinglass but the castle was burned in the process (BBT, 101). The MacNabs continued in their support of the royalist cause and fought for Charles II (1649/60-85) at Worcester in 1651. *Mercurius Politicus*, a Commonwealth newsletter, reported how in June 1653 a Colonel Daniels and his men were fired on with bows and guns by the MacNabs but killed five including their chief (SHS, 1895, Vol. 18, 142). The residence at Eilean Ran was subsequently demolished and General Monck (1608-70) gave local commanders permission to help the Campbells confiscate MacNab property, though protection was given to John's widow (Gillies, 2005, 102).

Other incidents during this conflict included the taking of a fortified island in Loch Tromlee, Argyll and Bute, in 1646 and killing of the chief of the MacCorquodales of Phantisland (and possibly his sons) by the forces of Alasdair MacColla (d.1647) (Stevenson, 2000, 218).²⁸¹ In the north the Mackenzies were involved in a siege of the Isle of Assynt (Fraser, 1894, Vol. 1, 204) which was held by Donald Neilson, laird of Assynt (NMRS NC12NE 1). The siege was raised when news arrived that Charles I had handed himself over to the Scottish army (Gordonstoun, 1813, 534).²⁸² In 1648 Parliament showed its determination to eliminate potential points of resistance with an order for the razing of fortifications created by the earl of Huntly on Loch Kinord.

In 1654, as part of General Monck's manoeuvres to crush the royalist uprising of William Cunningham, 8th earl of Glencairn (1610/11-64), Colonel Morgan captured the small royalist garrison on Loch Tarff, east of Loch Ness (Dow, 1979, 126). The general had previously taken Priory Island and left a Commonwealth

²⁸⁰ The accounts received some archaeological support when a series of mid-seventeenth century finds were made, including 87 coins of Charles I (Place et al, 1905-06, Vol. 40, 358-69). Gillies (2005, 98) supports Stevenson's view that the MacNabs turned against the Campbells because they were aggrieved at the latter's success in gaining control of their traditional territories of Glendochart rather than just being allies torn apart by civil war. The conflict over Loch Dochart indicates strong underlying tensions which broke into open hostility when the opportunity and political differences arose. Gillies (2005, 97-8) gives an account of the gradual disposal of lands by the MacNabs to the Campbells of Glenorchy to try to pay off debts. In 1613 when Patrick MacNab renounced his lands of Bovain and Wester Ardnagaul to his brother Finlay, the 12th laird, who the following day granted them in wadset to Robert Campbell of Glenorchy. The same day saw the confirmation of the charter giving the Campbells of Glenorchy superiority over the MacNab lands.

²⁸¹ The island, Eilean Tighe Bhain, is traditionally regarded as the seat of the MacCorquodales and contains the remains of a possibly two-storey mortared building of 9m x 7.5m (NMRS NN02SW 13).

²⁸² Eilean Assynt measured c.30m x 15m with the remains of a crude retaining wall 1.5m in height.

garrison of 40 men under the command of a lieutenant (Akerman, 1896, 73). In that instance the key to success had been the threat of overwhelming force and the determination to use it. Monck had arrived in June with two regiments of horse and three and a half of foot (Dow, 1979, 125) to find the island occupied by a royalist garrison under Captain Donald Robertson (Firth, 1899, 134ff). The royalists were initially defiant, having seized all the boats in Loch Tay (Firth, 1899, 149; Gillies, 2005, 154-6). Their determination evaporated when the Commonwealth troops hauled boats upriver and prepared rafts to storm the island (Firth, 1899, 149).²⁸³

The preparations for conflict made in Campbell of Glenorchy lands during 1649 indicate the degree to which islands were regarded as potentially secure and defensible. On 14 March John Campbell of Stronmilchan wrote to his uncle John Campbell, laird of Glenorchy (d.1686), that the outer entrance to the house on an unnamed isle (perhaps Kilchurn) might be too wide for an iron yett and that a wooden gate was being built while a solution was found. There was also discussion of how the one for the Isle of Loch Dochart was built on site (NAS GD112/39/68/17). On 25 March a letter from Archibald Campbell of Glencarradale warned of a surprise attack and expressed concern that a petard could readily be used to blow the gates. He advised putting two artillery pieces on the Isle of Loch Tay, which he believed would then be Glenorchy's 'surest place' (NAS GD112/39/68/27).

The landing of Charles II in Scotland in June 1650 sparked a new period of tension. By September the Isle of Loch Tay was again being stocked with stores and weapons (NAS GD112/1/564). A letter of 23 December to Glenorchy says the treasurer depute of Perth was expecting trouble and wished to move his wife and bairns to the island (NAS GD112/39/95/16). The writer, Patrick Ross, begged for a little room for himself if he also needed to flee, further demonstrating its reputation as a place offering safety (not least because it meant the protection of a great and powerful man (Oram, pers. comm.)).

Islands sometimes provided security at times of social and political stress. In 1588 Simon Fraser of Lovat, recently returned from Ireland but in political disfavour, took refuge at Loch Bruicheach because he was in continual fear. The island (Fraser Chronicles, 1905, 197) is described as having a fort remote from any road. He was

²⁸³ Item three of the surrender agreement stated that the garrison would not damage the boats, buildings or defences of the island (Firth, 1899, 135).

there with his mother Lady Elizabeth Stewart (d.1594) ‘a great but not good lady’ who scandalised contemporary society with her sexual affairs (Fraser Chronicles, 1905, 197).²⁸⁴ Simon (1570-1633) spent his time hunting with his companions.²⁸⁵

Radford (1949-50, 41-6) recounts a story that Patrick Dunbar (d. before 1516) is said to have lived on an island at Mochrum until his succession as 4th laird of Kilconquhar in Fife, after killing Patrick McCulloch during a brawl in Wigtown for which he was granted remission in 1507 for a payment of £133 6s 5d.²⁸⁶ Sir John Buchanan fled to an island in an attempt to defy authority after refusing to make payments to his wife, Dame Annabel Erskine, despite an order by the Privy Council (RPC, Series 2, Vol. 4, P. 652, Doc. 153). The 17th lord of Buchanan had married Dame Annabel in 1629 but there had been a dramatic breakdown in their relationship. On 12 July, 1631 she asked the Privy Council to issue letters of treason as Sir John had withdrawn to an island within an unnamed loch ‘where he keeps himself close and obscure’ and had built himself a house. He also kept his boat ‘chained to his gate’ so no one could come or go without his permission. Possible locations include the AI known as The Kitchen 62m off Clairinsh (NMRS NS49SW 2), or Eilean Dharag²⁸⁷ on Loch Katrine. Such accounts indicate that islands could be used at times of crisis to create a physical and social gap between those facing political pressure and the outside world.

Social change and the shift to shore

Small islands proved well-suited to the needs of Late Medieval society and continued to be valued into the seventeenth and sometimes the eighteenth century and beyond. There was, however, a gradual shift to shore. This was not a simple, steady or one-

²⁸⁴ She was the daughter of the earl of Atholl and married three times, divorced one husband for impotency, and won notoriety for her extra-marital affairs

²⁸⁵ It is also recorded that the tenantry had ensured their lady’s island residence was well stocked ‘with all manner of provision fitt for a great family’.

²⁸⁶ Radford says that Castle Island held a later Medieval building of some importance and excavations revealed a wide variety of fifteenth to seventeenth century luxury wares (NMRS NX25SE 7). Long Island in nearby Mochrum Loch may be artificial and holds the foundations of three rectilinear buildings, the largest measuring around 12mx6m (NMRS NX35SW 13).

²⁸⁷ This island is shown – without building – as yl Verraik on Gordon 51. It is a small circular island with modern walling near the ferry terminal at Stronachlachar (NN 40570 10254). In 1662 it was granted to John Buchanan with the fishings of Loch Katrine and Eilean Molach (Ellen’s Isle, where Stobie’s map (NLS Maps) shows a ruin) with its tower (RMS, Vol. 11, P. 136, Doc. 266).

way process. While some people continued to upgrade, maintain and even move to islands their numbers were gradually outweighed by those doing the opposite. The underlying reasons emanate from interrelated changes in society and the means by which wealth and authority were expressed. Where communal violence and banditry declined there was less need for physical security and the shift among nobles from being leaders of men to landlords allowed changes in how they positioned themselves in relation to others.²⁸⁸ The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a fundamental shift from the Medieval practice which McKean (1995, 11) characterises as piling room above room in tall defensive towers. New styles of domestic and garden architecture emerged that emphasised space – one thing small islands lack – and comfort (MacKechnie, 1995, 15) and the desire to be based near tenantry was replaced by a wish to be removed from them.

Loch settlements came in various forms, with small islands having considerable flexibility to be adapted to the changing needs and circumstances of different types of occupants – as happened at Finlaggan and Clunie. Families which had arrived from England and the Continent in the thirteenth century had shown themselves ready to live on lochs and there is little evidence that loch settlement of itself was a cultural expression confined to groups from particular origins. A ready exchange of ideas and practices between natives and incomers might explain the substantial numbers in the south west (Oram, 2000, 222-3).²⁸⁹ Oram (2000, 218ff) suggests the absence of baileys, where armed forces could gather, at many mottes in the region suggests peaceful colonisation by incomers and also that mottes were used by native lords as well as incomers.²⁹⁰ Types of residence are not simply cultural phenomena but also represent a response to the opportunities offered by the local environment. In the north east there were fewer opportunities to create lordly

²⁸⁸ Gordonstoun's *Genealogy of the Earldom of Sutherland* illustrates how attitudes were changing among social elites in the seventeenth century. The Gordons wanted control of the lands of Strathnaver which were under the control of the Mackays. Gordonstoun (1813, 11) represents the Mackays and their followers as archaic and unfit to control resources. He accuses them of idleness and regarding labour as beneath them, only catching what they need for the day. It was a way of life he wished to end so Strathnaver could be made profitable with hardworking tenants and by maximising use of pastureland. His recommendation was to buy the land, turn the occupants' loyalty away from Mackay then start planting their own tenants (Gordonstoun, 1813, 346).

²⁸⁹ This could be interpreted as part of the process by which families with English, Norman and Flemish roots were assimilated into what Oram (2003, 65) and Neville (Neville, 2005, 186) call a distinctively Scottish aristocracy and culture.

²⁹⁰ Oram says there were 33 in the pre-1996 Stewartry area alone.

settlements on loch islands so other expressions of power and authority predominated. There were more lochs in the west and high-status island settlements were more common. To press the mottes parallel further, it is arguable that in some cases there was little difficulty in assimilating the unfamiliar ideas into ones own world view, with islands easily being regarded as mottes in the water. Indeed Inchgall, or the Isle of Foreigners (Taylor, 2006, 146), which is now landlocked, was interpreted as a possible motte site by the OS in 1959 (NMRS NT19NE 1).²⁹¹

In the south west, at sites like Loch Dornal, there tend to be more halls. The archaeological evidence from Argyll and much of the Highlands to the north is limited. Many islands lack visible remains of buildings and where they do exist, the surveys are often either old, limited or both. In some cases they point to relatively modest drystone structures like that observed at Loch an Daimh (NMRS NM81SE 2) and Loch a' Phearsain (NMRS NM81SE 3). In some cases such as Loch Tangy (NMRS NR62NE 7) or Loch Tromlee (NMRS NN02SW 13) the RCAHMS records describe settlements as being fortified. This may be the result of different cultural contexts, with some parts of the mainland, in the north and west, placing less emphasis on towers and castles.

McKean (2004, 97) argues that by the end of the 1530s the Scottish country residence was starting the long move away from the vertical plans favoured in the fifteenth century to horizontal plans. It was an evolution towards convenience and hospitality (McKean, 2004, 242). Many modernised residences incorporated old structures; some involved demolition but retained the site; a few saw a move to somewhere new. Simple towers can be found at a number of island sites such as Duke Murdoch's Castle, An T-Eilean and Inchgalbraith. Others may have existed at places like Loch Venachar and Elan-Rosdhu on Loch Lomond (NMRS NS38NE 3). Such sites simply would not have space for larger, more horizontally structured houses with large ornamental gardens. Some may have been abandoned for land simply because the increasing wealth and status of their owners meant they could afford somewhere larger. The process is made visible at Rosdhu, Loch Lomond,

²⁹¹ Taylor (2006, 146) links the castle of Inchgall with the Valence family. There are charter references to the castle in 1384, 1393, 1407, c.1410 and 1547. A barony of Lochorshire was created in 1511 (NAS GD214/312). The castle was probably in use at least into the mid-seventeenth century as it is shown on the Blaeu maps of Fife and West Fife (NLS, Maps) and was granted John Malcome of Baldebie in 1656 (RMS Vol. 10, P. 234. Doc. 556).

where a small AI/MI with a 9mx9m tower may have been exchanged for a shoreside tower overlooking the island in the fifteenth century (NMRS NS38NE 3). This island was among the lands granted by the earl of Lennox to Maldouen of Luss, before 1225 (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 36). In around 1368 the lands passed by marriage to Sir Robert Colquhoun of Colquhoun (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 36). The island, with nearby port, may have been the principal residence of the lairds of Luss throughout this period. On 22 February, 1457 King James II erected the lands into a barony in favour of Sir John Colquhoun, Chamberlain of Scotland (Fraser, 1869, Vol. 2, 36). This could have been the point at which the Colquhouns moved to shore (though others put the date at around 1541) and a new residence with a tower and more space for associated structures (FIRAT, 1995, 19; NMRS NS38NE 2). This then had a 'mansion' built on to its side but they were replaced by a classical villa in the eighteenth century (Tait, 1980, 279). All were within a few hundred metres of each other in what could be a deliberate attempt to maintain connections with the past and remind people of the family's longstanding rights to authority.

The process at Eilean Craggan is less clear, but may have seen a predecessor structure to the current Edinample Castle eclipse the island as the centre of the Glenample estate. The RCAHMS record (NMRS NN62SW 2.00) suggests the castle incorporates an earlier and smaller tower. This suggests a similar process to Rosdhu of a move to land that remains within sight of the island²⁹², and the eventual creation of a much larger and more comfortable residence. This was accomplished when Campbell of Glenorchy built the new castle which McKean (2004, 15 and 116) describes as a proudly expressive building exemplifying his notion of the Scottish Renaissance chateau, bursting out of the constraints of the traditional Medieval tower to create a large country home with a mock martial appearance.

A good source of information about loch settlements in the Late Medieval period is the *Scotichronicon* by the abbot of Inchcolm, Walter Bower (1385-1449). It provides a sweeping chorographic description of offshore and inland islands (the latter principally around Menteith) from the perspective of the mid-1440s (Bower,

²⁹² In this case both the island and the castle are close to the old south road which ran near the edge of the loch but has since been replaced by a route which runs higher up the hillside.

Vol. 1, 1993, 187ff).²⁹³ No distinction is made between AIs and NIs. Bower regards the abundance of islands as being among the defining characteristics of Scotland:

'In Menteith there are lochs containing the following islands: Inchmahome, where there is a priory of Canons Regular, Loch Ard, where there is a tower, Loch Katrine where there is a castle and it is twelve miles long, Loch Vennachar, six miles long, Loch Chon two miles long, Loch Dubh one mile long, Loch Drunkie, Loch Rusky, Arnprior, where there is a chapel of St Bean, Loch Gartur, 'Auchmore', 'Elanmolach', Loch Arklet. There are also many other islands in lochs in the kingdom, like Loch Tay, where there is a cell of the canons of Scone, Eilean Donan, where there is a castle, 'Loch Riane', Loch Awe, twenty-four miles long, where there are three castles, Loch Fyne, Inchcaillach, where there is a parish church, 'Inchecornze', 'Inchermonzie'. ... Similarly in Cowal there is a loch called Loch Riddon, in which there is an island called Eilean Dearg, where there is an impregnable castle of the lord of Loch Awe, and in Loch Awe there is the island of Inishail, on which there is a parish church. There is the island of St Servanus in Lochleven, where there is a cell of the canons of St Andrews in Fife.' (Bower, Vol. 1, 1993, 191ff).

Though there are problems with the interpretation of some names, the passage is valuable because it indicates that secular and ecclesiastical loch settlements were relatively common. While it is unsafe to conclude that each of the lochs had an occupied island in the 1440s, Bower thought this was so. In many cases there is evidence to support his claims²⁹⁴. The likely candidates for his sites are:

- Inchmahome, Lake of Menteith; Inchmahome Priory (NMRS NN50SE 4)
- Loch Ard, Stirling; island tower, possibly fifteenth-century (NMRS NN40SE 2)
- Loch Katrine, Stirling; Eilean Molach is shown with a tower on sixteenth-century maps (NMRS NN40NE 2).
- Loch Venachar, Stirling; island occupied in fifteenth century
- Loch Chon, Stirling; fifteenth-century charter references to island

²⁹³ Bower's work was based on Fordun's from the later fourteenth century, which in turn used thirteenth century accounts.

²⁹⁴ MacQueen and MacQueen (Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 349) also suggest that as an Augustinian canon making visits to Inchmahome he may have known the area well.

- Loch Dubh; may refer to Gleann Dubh, south west of Loch Chon (MacQueen and MacQueen in Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 349) at NN405030, which has no known history
- Loch Drunkie, Stirling; charter reference to island
- Loch Rusky, near the Lake of Menteith; has an island structure
- Loch Gartur, near Lake of Menteith; has a possible AI/MI, no known history (NMRS NS59NE 5)
- Arnprior, South east of the Lake of Menteith; no islands remain
- Auchmore; MacQueen and MacQueen (Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 350) speculate that it may refer to Loch Achray where there are two AIs (NMRS NN50NW 1 and NN50NW 2) of no known history and also a promontory which some maps and pictures show as an island
- Loch Arklet, Stirling; military map of 1718 shows an island with building (NLS Maps of Scotland)
- Loch Awe; has the castles of Innis Chonnel, Eilean Fraoch and Kilchurn (NMRS NM91SE 2, NN12NW 4, NN12NW 5. MacQueen and MacQueen, in Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 350)
- Inchcaillach; Inchcailloch on Loch Lomond, which held a church (NMRS NS49SW 1.00)
- Inhecornze; MacQueen and MacQueen (Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 350) believe this could be Inchcruin on Loch Lomond which has a drystone structure of indeterminate age (NMRS NS39SE 135)
- Inchermonzie; MacQueen and MacQueen (Bower, 1993, Vol. 1, 350) suggest this might be the Loch Lomond island of Inchmoan, alternatively it might be the Dry Isle (NMRS NN82SW 1) or the AI (NMRS NN82SW 15) at Loch Monzievaird
- Loch Awe; Inishail Medieval parish church (NMRS NN02SE 2.00)
- Lochleven; St Serf's Priory (NMRS NO10SE 3).

In some cases it is possible to not only identify what the *Scotichronicon* loch settlements were used for at the time, but follow their later histories and identify owners and/or occupiers. The text adds to the impression that loch settlements tended to be of a relatively high status. According the RCAHMS Loch Rusky (NMRS NN60SW 7; Appendix 3, 111-2) was associated with Sir John Menteith (d.c.1323), the second son of Walter, 5th earl of Menteith. The highly denuded structural remains

on the island (which is 90m from shore in a small loch where a rise in the water level has left most of it under around 50cm of water) are suggestive of a substantial building with walls at least 1m thick.²⁹⁵ Loch Chon and its island were also granted to the brother of an earl of Menteith. Earl Malise awarded the property to Walter Graham in 1494/5, with confirmation of the grant on 29 January, 1489 (RMS, Vol. 2, P. 393. Doc. 1862).²⁹⁶

For Bower to mention the Isle of Loch Venachar may suggest it was a place of some importance (NMRS NN50NE 2). There are extensive records referring to the island. Among the earliest is one of 1452 when Andrew Balfour was confirmed in possession of lands including the Isle of Loch Venachar (RMS Vol. 2, P. 126. Doc. 567; Appendix 3, 122-3).²⁹⁷ One of the latest is from 1643 Sir Robert Campbell, laird of Glenorchy, gave his second son Colin properties including the Isle of Loch Venachar and the Isle and port of Loch Dochart to his fourth son Alexander (BBT, 97-8).²⁹⁸ What kind of structure it held is unclear though in 1602 there is a reference to the island and a stronghold, mills (possibly Milton of Callander on the banks of the loch), fishings and woods (RMS, Vol. 6, P. 446ff, Doc. 1277). The island is an AI around 70m from shore, measuring c.47mxc.40m at its base, with a plateau (mostly submerged due to the damming of the loch) of c.20mxc.15m and no structural remains.²⁹⁹ Like many AIs in use in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods it is an exposed location and, in keeping with Eilean Craggan, Eilean nam Faoileag and others in Highland-type lochs it is towards one end.

²⁹⁵ A survey by this author in 2004 showed the island to be a probable AI of c.40m in length. An area of flat stones and boulders creates a solid platform around a drop off which ends in silt at about 2.5m. The slope varies in pitch and is in some places close to vertical. The area on top of the drop off forms an uneven plateau. A feature pointing towards the promontory could be the remains of a jetty. Beside this is a fragment of carefully constructed walling of thin, flat stones, rising four or five courses.

²⁹⁶ Loch Drunkie is more problematic. M&P (1899) show an island at NN 548 049 but it is now submerged following the construction of a dam. Stobie's map shows an empty island. There are references to the lands of Drunkie from 1426 (RMS. Vol. 2, P. 259, Doc. 1274) onwards and in 1623 there was a disposition by Robert Campbell of Drunkie, of lands including those 'of old extent of Noreis-Drongy with the loch and isle thereof' (NAS GD86/474).

²⁹⁷ There is an earlier possible reference under David II (1329-71) when a 'Portinelen' (the lands of the island were known as Portnellen) in Menteith was held by William Galbraith (RMS Vol. 1, App. 2. Index A. Item 1025 and Index B. (39)).

²⁹⁸ The previous year a charter confirmation (RMS, 391, 1052) highlighted the continued importance of islands in the Campbell of Glenorchy family properties referring to Loch Venachar, Eilean Ran, the Isle of Lochtay, the Isle of Loch Rannoch, 'Irroquhey with lakes and islands on the lands in between' and Ylen Mulloch.

²⁹⁹ Surveys by this author in 2004 or 2007 noted a possible boat noost in the north north east. The island takes advantage of natural rise in the loch bed. There are large timbers partially exposed or lying beside the island around northern quarter; one may be morticed.

The island's association with the Balfours was a long one and while there is little indication of whether it was occupied by them or tenanted it does help demonstrate how a loch settlement's place in a family's estates could change with their circumstances. In 1452 it came with the loch and its fishings plus a package of lands including Portbane³⁰⁰ and Dullater which is along the south east bank. Other charters add the lands of Portnellan (Port of the Island) which are along the north-east end of the loch and which connect to those of Dullater and of Mochaster (an alternative name for Bochastle, see NMRS NN60NW 15) just to the east (RMS, Vol. 2, P. 564, Doc. 2657; Vol. 3, P. 66, Doc. 296). The lands create a substantial bloc (of what is now generally rough grazing with some pastureland) taking in the eastern end of the loch and along towards Kilmahog, with the island standing at the heart of the lochside holdings.³⁰¹ Legal action by Janet Stewart, widow of Andrew Balfour, which resulted in Robert Balfour being ordered to give her liferent³⁰² might suggest the island was sometimes used as a dower house, or at least to provide the resources needed by the widow of the former head of the family. By 1502 it had passed to another branch of the family and the proprietor was David Balfour (son and heir of Michael Balfour of Burleigh, the owner of Burleigh Castle, c.1484-before 1531), an usher of hall at court (RMS, Vol. 3, P. 66. Doc. 296).

In 1576 the island was in the possession of Sir James Balfour of Pittendreich, in Fife, eldest son of Michael Balfour of Burleigh (d.1577). Liferent of the island, lands and mills were reserved to his father and Christian Beaton, his wife (NAS GD63/41).³⁰³ James had a remarkable career, made privy councillor in 1565 and knighted in 1566, and making a series of switches in loyalties and religious allegiance (ODNB, 2007). Among the many properties and incomes he acquired was the priory of Pittenweem. Despite raising the family to new heights of wealth and influence his involvement in political intrigue led to Sir James' forfeiture (a sentence

³⁰⁰ Where this Portbane is located is uncertain but NAS GD112/2/121 refers to all the lands as being in the lordship of Strogartnay, in the Stewartry of Menteith.

³⁰¹ They are on a route west through the Duke's Pass through the Trossachs and in easy reach of the routes north to Argyll and Glenorchy and east to Stirling, then Edinburgh.

³⁰² This appears to have been a naked attempt to deny Janet her rightful inheritance. Robert failed to appear at the hearing. Janet's position was doubtless bolstered as the action was in conjunction with her father, William Stewart of Baldorane, who appears as a witness to charters of the earls of Lennox (NAS GD 198/59; GD 198/60).

³⁰³ Michael and his three sons had been among those who joined the killers of Cardinal Beaton in St Andrews Castle in 1546 and held out against the earl of Arran. After the surrender in 1547 James was pressed into service, along with John Knox, as a French galley slave (ODNB, 2007).

that was only partially effective) in 1571. He eventually died in 1583 to be survived by his wife Dame Margaret, heir of Burleigh.³⁰⁴ His eldest son, Michael was created Lord Balfour of Burleigh in 1607. As such the Loch Venachar holdings represented an increasingly minor part of the family's fortunes, which were more focused on Burleigh in the parish of Orwell. In 1593 Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy completed payments to the Balfours of 9,000 merks for disposition of lands including Portnellan, Loch Venachar and the isle (NAS GD112/2/121). In 1605 the lands were again providing security for a spouse, in this case in an antenuptial agreement granting liferent to Isobel McIntosh in her marriage to Robert Campbell of Glenfalloch (NAS GD112/2/121). Subsequently the lands were included in a complex series of transactions, but documents make fewer references to the island and the emphasis shifts to Portnellan (Paton, Vol. 8, 326; NAS GD220/1/J/8/4/3). This lends weight to the comment in the OSA (Vol. 11, P614n) that there had formerly been a 'castle' on the island and that the inhabitants came ashore and made their 'stronghold' where the farm now stands; a farm continues to bear the name and is located a few hundred metres north west of the island.

Elsewhere there is also evidence of a gradual change in which islands went from being the domestic and administrative centres of estates, through lesser roles, to abandonment. At Clunie the island became an increasingly peripheral residence used for summer fishing expeditions. After the MacFarlanes of Arrochar moved to New Tarbet, Eilean na Vow remained in use either for habitation or storage until at least 1743, but was ruined by 1814 when William Wordsworth visited the area (Friends of Loch Lomond, 2001, 24). While the sources are not good, something similar may have happened at the Isle of Loch Earn which the Stewarts of Ardvorlich were said to have used as a granary, occasional residence and, in 1644, a place of refuge during their conflict with the Grahams (MacNish and Todd, 1925, 40; Fraser, 1880, Vol. 1, 403).

The chiefs of Clan Chattan remained on the Isle of Loch Moy until a relatively late date. A Laird's House was built on the island which the RCAHMS says had an inscription above the gate attributing it to Lachlan, the 20th laird of

³⁰⁴ RCAHMS records describe Burleigh Castle (NMRS NO10SW 1) as an early sixteenth-century tower with one wall and the south west tower of an enclosure wall built in 1582. The south-west tower bears the date 1582 and initials SIB and MB which is taken as representing Sir James Balfour of Pittendreich and Margaret Balfour.

Mackintosh in 1665. It is described as a domesticated structure with no castellated features and a substantial walled garden. This was superseded by Moy Hall at the north end of the loch in around 1700 (NMRS NH73NE 1.00). At Lochnaw the Agnews, hereditary sheriffs of Galloway, moved 420m from a fourteenth-century NI-based insular castle with a rectangular tower of 15.4mx10.1m to a residence on land in the sixteenth century (NMRS NW96SE 4). New lands or titles also provided families with reason and opportunity to relocate their main residences. Tabraham (2002, 6) notes that the family of Sir Henry Douglas remained lords of Lochleven Castle from the fourteenth century until it was sold to Sir William Bruce of Balcaskie in 1672. However McKean (2004, 53) says the castle was mothballed by the time Queen Mary was there in 1567, having replaced it with Newhouse, a substantial courtyard house on the shore. This was part of a wider set of events that had seen the importance of the castle begin to decline in the fifteenth century after the family was elevated to the earldom of Morton. Other properties, such as Aberdour Castle, were more appealing because they offered the space to extend the buildings and create extensive leisure gardens – a process that reached its height under James Douglas, 4th earl of Morton, regent of Scotland from 1572-8. By contrast the Robertsons of Strowan, chiefs of Clan Donnachie, lost rather than gained lands in the early part of the sixteenth century³⁰⁵ leaving An T-Eilean, an AI now located 100m from shore and 3m underwater, to remain their principal residence (NN85NW 1).³⁰⁶ The rate at which insular sites fell out of use is difficult to assess as there may have been change to less frequent or lower status occupation, which was less often recorded, rather than straightforward abandonment. There is also evidence of change of use to stores or gardens (see Inchmahome below). Nonetheless it is tentatively suggested that fewer than half the loch settlements identified as being in use between the fourteenth and early seventeenth centuries were still regularly occupied by the end of the seventeenth century. At this point the rate of decline sharpened further. In the

³⁰⁵ The Robertson's lands were erected into a free barony in 1451 after their involvement in the arrest of Robert Graham and the Master of Atholl for the murder of King James I. The lands of Strowan were later put in wadset and became the possession of the earls of Atholl.

³⁰⁶ The island was surveyed by Dixon and Shelley in 2004. It is a sub-circular mound of 3m in height consisting of small to medium boulders with a single plateau 16mx12.5m (base 31.5m x 22m) part of which has a flagstone floor. Stone steps lead to loch bed. A large section of mortared masonry, c.2m in height, which appears to be last remains of the tower lies on loch bed to the north. The island was submerged in a hydro scheme in 1913.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sites such as those at Clunie, Loch Kennard, Loch Arklet and Eilean Mhic Phi were, or may have been, functioning. But it seems likely that this accounted for less than 10% of the sites discussed, a figure which is probably heavily biased towards settlements on large islands like those in Loch Lomond (some of which are still occupied today) rather than the more typical smaller islands preferred in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods.

Conclusions

Small islands were ideally suited to compact structures such as towers or halls (with some additional buildings) or hunting/summer residences and farming settlements.³⁰⁷ This sometimes made them attractive as places of physical security, mainly from low-level violence and banditry. Some were also pressed into use as places of resistance in the face of substantial forces, though there is little to suggest that island residences were conceived primarily for defence. The social and physical separation they offered could also make them useful during times of political stress, creating a distance between the occupants and the rest of society. It is noticeable that loch settlements go into major and permanent decline as feuding and other sources of potentially violent conflict start to diminish. This corresponds to a period where those with resources begin to create residences with a larger footprint, a greater emphasis on comfort and set within increasingly large gardens. These were architectural and lifestyle tastes for which small island were ill-equipped to provide.

³⁰⁷ Caldwell and Ruckley (2005, 107) say a house enclosure or plot might be defined in many ways such as a battlemented stone wall, a turf dyke or by the limits of an island.

Chapter 6: Christian Loch Settlements

Introduction

Scotland has a long tradition of fresh and saltwater islands being used by Christians for religious purposes extending back to the monks who crossed from Ireland to spread their faith. There is also a theological link to the insular monastery of Lerins in southern Gaul (at least through familiarity with the writings of St Eucherius (d.c.449) (Wooding, 2007, 223) who withdrew there after the death of his wife) and to the Desert Fathers of Egypt.³⁰⁸ Scotland's islands had a resonance for a religion in which monasticism was a powerful formative force and where – despite ebbs and flows – religious houses survived until the aftermath of the Reformation of 1560. Insular sites expressed spiritual values held by the early church, possibly by the Celi Dei of the ninth century and beyond, and by enthusiasts for the rule of St Augustine in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – although whether these were common values is debatable (Wooding, 2007, 227).³⁰⁹ For the early Christian saints of Ireland and Wales (and probably Scotland) they could be regarded as places untainted by secular life (Wooding, 2007, 221).

By the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods a modest number of freshwater islands, and other wetland locations, remained in use for religious purposes. There were parish churches, chapels, burial grounds and religious houses. They were sometimes distinct from secular sites in terms of size, structure and location. This reflects differences in how they related to physical, human and spiritual geography.

³⁰⁸ The Catholic Encyclopaedia highlights the contacts between St Eucherius and John Cassian and the former's desire to join the anchorites of the east. Eucherius went to the neighbouring island of Lerona to live in a style similar to the Desert Fathers. While Wooding warns against diffusionist models suggesting a simple one-way migration of monasticism from east to west he says (2007, 223) that from the time of Eucherius the monastic island is represented as a place with a different environment: variously a microcosm of the world; a simulacrum of the unfallen paradise; a place of transition from this world to the next.

³⁰⁹ Islands had potential relevance at any point when Christians looked back to the Patristic Age for inspiration and identified with the examples set by those who sought a life of purity and faith through contemplation and physical detachment from the world of sin.

Among the sites in use were three houses of Augustinian canons at Inchmahome Priory (Appendix 3, 75-6) on the Lake of Menteith, the Priory of Lochleven (Appendix 3, 104-6) near Kinross, and Inchaffray Abbey (Appendix 3, 72-4) on a marsh island east of Crieff. There were parish churches at Inishail on Loch Awe, Kirk Kindar in Dumfries and Galloway and Eilean Fhianain on Loch Shiel. Chapels and other churches existed at places including Innis Errich, on Loch Awe. In many cases the islands had a history of religious use, with some undergoing change and renewal in the Late Medieval period.

The improved fortunes of certain religious islands were set against a decline in overall numbers. A withering of monasticism before the arrival of the reformed orders from England and continental Europe, which began in the late eleventh century, may have seen some islands fall out of use. Church and chapel sites may have disappeared due to the appropriation of lands and livings by cathedrals and the religious houses of the reformed orders. These houses themselves, several of them insular, eventually suffered from the appropriation of their own resources by even more powerful interests.³¹⁰ The Protestant Reformation sounded the death knell for monastic and other religious freshwater island sites as a specific feature of Scotland's social make-up. This was due to shifts in religious belief and practice and to changes in land ownership and distribution.

Origins

The disappearance of Scotland's insular religious houses ended a tradition which, in various forms, stretched back to the Eastern Roman Empire of the fourth and fifth centuries, where growing discontent with a church centred on urban bishops gave rise to a growth in monasticism.³¹¹ Holy men withdrew to the desert and an ascetic life which restored 'a touch of the angelic glory which Adam had enjoyed in the

³¹⁰ This was sometimes paralleled on salt water islands such as the priory on the Isle of May (Dilworth, 1975, 57-8).

³¹¹ Dilworth (1995, 1) identifies early monasticism in Egypt as characterised by life as a hermit or part of a loose-knit community which entailed celibacy and a degree of austerity. Greene (1992, 1) also points out that Egypt was where the idea emerged that a brotherhood of monks should have a set of guiding principles to govern their lives. Davies (1982, 156) argues that in Early Medieval Wales the term hermit may have included those living with companions in an unregulated group which was organised on a simple basis without the allocation of specialised roles.

Garden of Eden' (Brown, 2003, 174). The example set by the Desert Fathers of Egypt earned wide renown, being codified and popularised in the west by John Cassian (360-435), who spent many years among the most famous monasteries and anchorites before settling in Marseilles in 415. His works, *The Institutions of the Monastic Life*, written in 420, and *Conferences* in 426, described the lives and beliefs of the Desert Fathers in a way that allowed monks anywhere to emulate them. One such place was the island monastery of Lerins which had been founded just off the coast of southern Gaul, in 400 by St Honoratus.³¹² While Wooding (2007, 22) rejects Lerins (or sites like St Martin's hermitage at Isola d'Albenga in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the coast of Albenga) as models of island settlements in Britain and Ireland, established through direct contact, he adds that this does not lessen their likely influence upon insular theologies across a longer period.³¹³

Monks throughout the west would have been familiar with Cassian's emphasis on withdrawal from the world to commune with God in solitude (Cassian, 2000, 60). To do this meant moving from the world of men to spend time in the desert. The desert did not need to be a place of sand and scrub, but somewhere beyond the obligations and sinfulness of civic society (Brown, 2003, 173). It could exist near to towns or cities, and the division was one of life and practice and not simply of place (Brown, 2003, 174). At Lerins water provided physical separation from the world of men while the monastery was still sufficiently accessible to secular society to act as a beacon and a conduit of faith. Such ideas were paralleled by Christianity in Ireland and mainland Britain where fresh and saltwater islands played a role in the spreading, establishment and practice of the faith.³¹⁴

In Ireland the physically (but not necessarily socially) peripheral or marginal locations chosen for early monasteries are often indicated by the term disert

³¹² Brown (2003, 111-2) describes Lerins as an outpost of the Egyptian desert. It was noted for its searching asceticism where the worldly pride of young noblemen was broken in preparation for a life in the service of God (Brown, 2003, 111-2) and Lawrence (1984, 39) argues that Cassian's influence helped forge Ireland's strong anchorite tradition.

³¹³ Wooding (2007, 201) rejects the idea that islands were retreats generally indistinguishable from those of the Desert Fathers. And Davies (1982, 146) states that monasticism was known in Britain almost as soon as it was known in the west.

³¹⁴ This recognises that the use of islands was not simply about the inward movement of Christianity to new areas and their use as what amounted to bridgeheads (Wooding, 2007, 203).

(wasteland) – the same term was also used in Scotland (O’Sullivan, 1998, 148).³¹⁵ Irish monks felt that islands, and other wastelands, were a worthy equivalent of the Egyptian desert (Brown, 2003, 241). They could also play a role in the spiritually beneficial gradual withdrawal from known and familiar society (*Peregrinatio*) and from one’s origins to places of greater isolation and detachment (Wooding, 2007, 211 and 228). The Early Medieval Illaunloughan Island, County Kerry, is an example. Just c.40m long, exposed to gale force winds 120 days a year and with twice the rainfall of Dublin, it served as a hermitage for one or two men (Marshall and Walsh, 2005, 7-10).³¹⁶ Brown adds that monasteries and convents were ‘islands’ in themselves – places of divinely ordained order in a turbulent world (2003, 244). A process has been described in which monasticism spread as small parties of monks (or nuns) departed one monastery to set up new ones (Davies, 1982). The settings could vary but included loch and river islands.³¹⁷ The attraction was practical as well as spiritual, with islands giving access to moist and fertile land and being convenient for travel and protection (Bitel, 1990, 36).³¹⁸ They also provided ready access to fresh water (Greene, 1992, 57) and fish which were valued for spiritual as well as nutritional reasons. Island monasteries were rarely far distant from existing settlements (Bitel, 1990, 37) though Park (1984, 299) suggests that monasteries often colonised underdeveloped land.

As Christianity spread into Scotland from Ireland it made use of insular settlements,³¹⁹ with Columba’s foundation at Iona, in Scottish Dalriata, in 563, being perhaps the most celebrated. Sharpe’s translation of Adamnan’s *Life of St Columba* (1995) presents Iona as a place of detachment from society which was nonetheless closely linked with, and had influence over, the surrounding world of men. The ocean was both desert and highway, a mediated space where movement was only

³¹⁵ Wasteland was inevitably an ambiguous notion as Bitel points out (1990, 17) survival demands access to resources.

³¹⁶ The authors add that island sites, especially this small, relied on the surrounding lands and waters for sustenance.

³¹⁷ O’Sullivan (1998, 148) details some island sites used by early Christians including Lough Dearg, on the lower River Shannon. In the later Middle Ages Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1223) refers to an island church in Munster, venerated from the earliest times, and an insular chapel cared for by *Celi Dei* (Wales, 1982, 60).

³¹⁸ Davies (1982, 143 and 164) says most Welsh monasteries were small and had limited resources but were well-positioned with access to good land. Some maintained herds, such as the sheep kept on the Isle of Flatholm by the Llancarfan community.

³¹⁹ Davies (1982) also discusses the early use of saltwater islands by monastic communities in Wales.

possible by boat, and the island was a highly controlled space where the monastic community was able to determine who came and went, and under what conditions. By 574 Iona had a daughter house on the island of Hinba and later another on the Isle of Elen (Sharpe, 1995, 21).³²⁰

The use of islands remained a mechanism for the spread and the practice of Christianity through a wide network of interlinked communities into the lands of the Scots, Picts and Northumbrians. The Columban monastery at Lindisfarne was founded by St Aiden on a tidal island off the coast of the Northumbrian kingdom in 635. Bede describes how St Cuthbert, abbot of Melrose who then became abbot of Lindisfarne, made extensive use of a cell on Farne Island where he sought solitude and eventually died in 687. Chapter 28 of his *Life and Miracles of St Cuthbert Bishop of Lindisfarne* also refers to ‘a venerable priest of the name of Herebert, who had long been united to the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bond of spiritual friendship, and who... [led] ... a solitary life, in an island in the large marsh from which the Derwent rises ...’.³²¹ The interconnectedness of the kingdoms, their Christian communities and islands is further illustrated by St Colman who was a monk of Iona, bishop of Lindisfarne and founder of the monastery of Inishbofin, seven miles off the coast of Galway, where he died in 675. The evidence suggests that islands were used for a variety of reasons and under complex sets of circumstances – indeed ecclesiastical settlements need to be understood as having been founded by people with a purpose in a landscape full of meaning.³²² Far from just being arrival points at the margins of territories which were then penetrated and converted, they were also places of outward movement by religious figures pursuing their own spiritual goals (Wooding, 2007, 219-20).

³²⁰ One option for the location of the former is Eileach an Naoimh in the Garvelloch Isles (Sharpe, 1995, 325-6).

³²¹ St Herbert’s Isle is now entirely surrounded by Derwent Water and is listed as the site of a 7th century hermitage (NMRS NY 22 SE 32).

³²² Park (1984, 199 and 240) says churches are a physical imprint of religion on the landscape and the planning of churches and ecclesiastical buildings reflects an interplay between religious and secular objectives. Sennis (2006, 276) argues that sacred space was an intersection between the material and spiritual worlds and was therefore a place of power (Eliade made a similar point and argued that the sacred distinguishes itself from the profane and that the former is a place where the earth, heaven and underworld intersect (Spicer and Hamilton, 2005, 3)).

Christian insular sites in Scotland

Evidence for the initial settlement and development of freshwater Christian insular sites is often very limited.³²³ A series of smaller insular religious settlements did come to be associated with early Christian figures, but there is often little direct evidence for the presence of the saints themselves during their lifetimes. St Maelrubha, whose principle base is claimed to have been Applecross, became associated with a chapel and holy well on an island in Loch Maree and Ylen Mulroy on Loch Shin (OPS, 1851-55, Vol. 2ii, 697).³²⁴ At Loch Lomond, St Kessog, of the royal line of Munster and bishop of Luss, is reputed to have founded a monastery on Inchtavanach in the sixth century (FIRAT, 1995, 2-3). St Kentigerna, daughter of the prince of Leinster, holy widow and mother of St Fillan of Strathfillan, was supposed to have settled at Inchcailloch in the early eighth century for a life of solitude and contemplation (Anderson, 1990, 231n). St Mirren, the Irish abbot said to have established the first church in Paisley, is linked to the founding of a church at Inchmurrin (FIRAT, 1995, 2-3; OPS, 1851-55, Vol. 2ii, 32).³²⁵

Freshwater sites adopted by early Christians may have been positioned to displace pre-existing non-Christian religious practices and/or capitalise on their spiritual value.³²⁶ Christian shrines frequently related to natural features like groves, heights, water, caves or stones that had a particular significance. The demarcation of some space as sacred also provided a distinct territorial expression to religious belief and behaviour and a means of asserting order in a world of chaos (Spicer and Hamilton, 2005, 6 and 9; Park, 1984, 276 and 285). While sometimes detached or peripheral to the secular world, a Christian site, on even a very small island, possessed a spiritual centrality. Discussing monasteries, Davies asserts that there was

³²³ Wendy Davies however gives a vivid account of the evolution of a non-insular early Christian site in her 1998 pamphlet on Whithorn.

³²⁴ Henderson (1999, 80) says Maelrubha's work is significant in pointing out that it was not only Columban monks who were active at the time.

³²⁵ The name of St Mun (or Fintan Munnu) (d.675) was linked to Elanmunde in the salt water Lochleven in Argyll (Adamnan, 1874, 250).

³²⁶ Park (1984, 242) estimates that of 5,000 pilgrimage sites in Europe – many nearly 2,000 years old – some one in 25 were pre-Christian religious sites. He identifies 1100-1300 as the major period of shrine formation. Bitel suggests that monks made use of the efforts of earlier people to identify holy sites and that reoccupation may have been an acceptance and continuation rather than just an obliteration (1990, 44).

an asymmetric perspective which meant the sacred was automatically central to the surrounding physical world, the heart of the spiritual community and fount of God's authority (2006, 304). The presence of a monastic settlement acted to purge physical space³²⁷ which was important in a universe inhabited by demons and angels.³²⁸ This fits with Bitel's observation (1990, 63) that islands were valued because their shores provided a boundary for the sacred which might not then need to be defined by walls.³²⁹

In purely physical terms the early Christian island sites in Scotland may have been close to important points in the secular world. Bitel (1990, 37) points out that the Irish *disart* was rarely far from clustered settlements. The early sites in Scotland also appear to have been on lochs, like Lomond or Maree, which were on major lines of communication and may have been in areas of substantial socio-political importance³³⁰; they were often among island groups rather than solitary. This may have a bearing on whether an island was used as a base for conversion, the consolidation of faith, or as a retreat.³³¹ Bitel is sceptical about the extent to which Irish monks went into untamed and potentially hostile societies, throwing themselves on the mercy of God. She sees them as extending their existing social and political networks outwards from Ireland. There may have been a tendency to settle where kith and kin – or at least a friendly power – held sway. Safety may have been a consideration; in Davies, Halsall and Reynolds' 2006 work on sacred space in the Middle Ages Sennis recounts how Archbishop Boniface (c.742) rejected the monk

³²⁷ The sacred distinguishes itself from the profane and the latter is where the Earth, heaven and underworld intersect (Spicer and Hamilton, 2005, 3).

³²⁸ Sacred sites can be seen as gates in space providing links to other worlds (Park, 1984, 246).

³²⁹ It can also be important to distinguish between islands that were sacred, those with sacred places, and between degrees of holiness. A large island like Inchmurrin may not have been entirely the property of the church, certainly in the Late Medieval period there was also a castle. Even on small islands such as Isle Maree and Innis Errich there are boundaries around the graveyard and chapel sites. On land the full extent of a sacred space might be marked with an enclosing wall, or vallum, of earth, stone or wattle, often in conjunction with a ditch. They provided a legal property demarcation, protection from the elements and a spiritual bulwark to dissuade physical assault (Bitel, 1990, 58). Enclosures could be six acres, at Church Island it was just half an acre. Where possible it was curvilinear (Bitel, 1990, 59) as circles replicated the shape of the universe. Once the boundary was established the spiritual centre – oratory, church or cemetery – could be defined.

³³⁰ The saltwater Eilean Munde where a chapel was still in use until c.1653 (NMRS NN05NE 1.01) stood on the route through Glen Coe and into Lochaber and with easy access by water up Loch Linnhe to the Great Glen or out to the isles and Ireland.

³³¹ Davies (1982, 151-2 and 153) makes the point in a Welsh context that Bishop Dyfrig would retreat to Caldey Island at Lent. She characterises life there as far from uncomfortable. This is in contrast with the high levels of asceticism associated with the fifth century Samson and his companions.

Sturm's first suggested location for a monastery near the River Fulda, in Germany, because it was too close to the unchristianised Saxons (275-6).

With regard to the functions of religious islands, Bede's description provides three uses: bases for monastic communities, permanent homes of hermits, and places of temporary retreat. We may see an example of the last of these at the saltwater Eilean Mor (NMRS NR67NE 1) (reputed to have been a retreat for seventh-century Irish monk St Cormac) or Isle Maree which Hooper (2002, 3) identifies as a possible place of retreat from the monastery at Applecross.³³² Such places would allow a spiritual renewal by providing an escape from the cares, relationships and responsibilities of a main monastery (Bitel, 1990, 233). This offered the perceived benefits of exile but with the prospect of a return to duty. In other instances they could have been places of (semi-)permanent retirement, possibly of holy exile or white martyrdom, bringing separation from the support of the familia. As such they were a reminder that man had no true home on Earth; that all life was a pilgrimage, and that suffering was an effective and rapid route to God.

While Fawcett says few recognisable early monasteries remained in Scotland by the end of the eleventh century, religious communities and individuals continued to occupy mainland freshwater islands and attract the support of the powerful. Most references from around this time were to the Celi Dei (Vassals of God), secular priests who were the successors of an Irish reform movement that arrived in Scotland during the ninth century (Fawcett, 1985, 14).³³³ Among the places they had communities were Lochleven near Kinross. In 945 Lochleven came under the control of the bishop of St Andrews, and in 980 it took on the status of a priory (AoK).³³⁴ According to the *Liber Cartarum Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia* the community enjoyed the patronage of Macbeth (1034-57) and his queen Gruoch, who granted it land in 1045 in return for prayers and intercessions (Thomson, 1841, 114;

³³² The saint is also associated with St Ruffus' Island at Loch-an-tagart and Island-na-nuagh (OPS, Vol. 2, 404) which is discussed by Hooper (2002, 18).

³³³ In the eighth and ninth centuries the Celi Dei were complaining of a shortage of places of genuine isolation and of the moral degeneracy of some clerics (Bitel, 1990, 229, 236). The dating of communities in Scotland is difficult with Bradley (1999, 56) believing some were relatively late.

³³⁴ Veitch refers to Celi Dei reforms at Dunkeld and Cennrigmonaid in the early ninth century (1997, 644). The nature of the Celi Dei in Scotland and relationship to those in Ireland is debatable. Muirhead (1984, 6) argues that they had only a loose relationship as the term described an identifiable elite of ascetic monks who lived by the rule of St Carthage in Ireland whereas in Scotland it was a generic which encompassed a widespread and varied set of communities of secular clerics, sometimes married.

Donaldson, 1970, 15).³³⁵ Royal patronage continued in the reign of King Malcolm III (1058-93) with Queen Margaret actively supporting and endowing Lochleven and other communities of the native tradition (Thomson, 1841, 115; Bradley, 1999, 42).³³⁶

Change and continuity

The development of Christianity in Scotland in the later Medieval period has often been characterised as a conflict between an identifiable and distinctive Celtic Church versus new, alien, Romanised ideas.³³⁷ This has been comprehensively rebutted by the likes of Davies (1992) who presents a picture of churches across Britain, Ireland and the continent which had local variations but regarded themselves as orthodox. These were not static institutions even on a local level but had evolved and altered over time. The changes brought by the reformed monastic orders in the eleventh century and beyond were, nonetheless, immense as is reflected by events at certain island sites. Hall says what began in fourth-century north Africa as an attempt to escape the world ended up contributing greatly to its transformation (2006, 11). He also points to the creation of the parish system in the twelfth century as putting Christianity and the parish priest at the heart of everyday life. Oram (2005, 12) describes the reorganisation of the church in the early twelfth century as profoundly reshaping the social landscape of the kingdom. In some cases an organisational renewal may have been welcomed, satisfying spiritual and social aspirations. Veitch (2001, 165-6) believes there was a pro-reform party within the native clergy to whom change was welcome and seen as in keeping with the aims of earlier attempts at

³³⁵ Around 1048 the island began to be recorded as St Serf's. Macbeth also has an association in folklore with the AI in Loch Lundavra. Blundell (1912-13, Vol XLVII, 269) notes that the legend claims it was in that area, not at Lumphanan, that he was killed.

³³⁶ Turgot's (or Thurgot) account, from 1093, suggests that there was still a strong tradition of hermits who sought desert places to live the life of angels upon the Earth (Bradley, 1999, 41-2). Margaret also brought in the first colony of monks from a reformed continental order - Benedictines who arrived at Dunfermline around 1070 (Dilworth, 1995, 5).

³³⁷ Muirehead (1984, 7) describes the church in Scotland at the time as thoroughly Roman in its origins and creed. Bradley (1999) challenges the notion that the Celi Dei stood for a distinctive local Christianity which attempted to resist Romanisation and the rise of the reformed monastic orders that began in the late eleventh century. Veitch (1997) provides a detailed discussion of the influence and strength of the Columban church which challenges the notion of its decline after the Synod of Whitby and presents an evolutionary view of Christianity in seventh and eighth century Scotland.

renewal like those represented by the Celi Dei. In certain cases it is also open to question just how extensive the immediate changes were and the extent to which there was a comforting sense of continuity.

Even with a new parish system and the rapid expansion of reformed monastic orders, space remained for traditional practices.³³⁸ Insular hermits continued to attract patronage, such as one called John who, between 1172 and 1184, was granted the Isle of Loch Lunin (Moy) and half a ploughgate of land by Bishop Simon of Moray (Barrow, 1971b, Vol. 2, 214).³³⁹ Nonetheless, the appropriation of churches and chapels by monasteries and cathedrals may have reduced the resources available to some Christian insular sites as it did with those on land (Kirk, 1995, XL).³⁴⁰ Some island religious sites, however, experienced reinvigoration due to reform. One example may have been the chapel island of St Margaret's Inch at the Loch of Forfar which Adams (1998, 85) believes was a hermitage patronised by Queen Margaret.³⁴¹ In the first half of the thirteenth century it became a cell of Coupar Angus with two Cistercian monks, indicating a desire to build on its spiritual heritage.³⁴²

The Augustinian canons regular (secular priests living according to a rule rather than monks) had the best-recorded influence on ecclesiastical islands. This began, albeit in a faltering fashion, in the reign of King Alexander I. The king planned sites for them at Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth and Priory Island in Loch Tay – the former was already a religious site (Veitch, 2001, 146).³⁴³ Priory Island was granted to Scone between 1122 and 1124 so a church could be raised and prayers said for the soul of Queen Sybilla who died there or nearby, however it was never built (Cowan and Easson, 1976, 98).³⁴⁴ Inchcolm Priory eventually came into

³³⁸ The association of new religious sites with old ones was popular. By granting existing churches to new priories the founders could provide a ready-made patrimony and keep pace with new developments in European religious life (Veitch, 2001, 142).

³³⁹ Gibson and Ewan urge caution about the term 'hermit' as it retained a certain cache and might have been used as an honorific title which did not describe actual practice (Ewart et al, 1996, 475-6).

³⁴⁰ Fawcett estimates that 85% of parish churches were appropriated and many were ultimately only left with enough resources for a curate (1985, 25).

³⁴¹ This is partly on the basis of the dedication to the Holy Trinity which he says was normally an indicator of royal and episcopal links.

³⁴² The modified island now forms a peninsula. Cowan and Easson (1976, 81) opposed the idea of an earlier religious house. The monks and chapel of the Holy Trinity were funded by a grant from King Alexander II to maintain perpetual divine service on the island (Cowan, 1976, 14-7).

³⁴³ They were first introduced at the dry land site of Scone between 1114 and 1120.

³⁴⁴ Had Loch Tay developed it would have been just the second Augustinian site in Scotland. *The Book of the Thirds of Benefices* shows that in the early 1560s Scone still had lands around Loch Tay which were rented by the laird of Glenorchy for £21 8s 4d (Kirk, 1995, 56). The Carthusians also had

being under King David I, however.³⁴⁵ Augustinian priories were also founded on islands at Lochleven in 1150, Inchaffray in 1200 and Inchmahome in 1237, each of which was already in use for religious purposes.³⁴⁶

In some cases historians have identified possible disquiet among existing religious communities at the imposition of the Augustinian rule. When Lochleven was granted to the canons of St Andrews there was explicit provision for the expulsion of any *Celi Dei* who refused to accept the rule.³⁴⁷ Bradley believes the tone of the language shows that the existing community was seen as a nuisance and that this may have been indicative of wider tensions between reformers and established institutions (1999, 56).³⁴⁸ Half a century later a charter of Earl Gilbert of Strathearn turned what Cowan and Easson (1976, 91) describe as a community of brethren with monastic characteristics into the Augustinian priory of Inchaffray. Malise, presbyter and hermit (whose name suggests he was of Gaelic origin), was empowered to instruct anyone he wished in the rule of St Augustine, allowing him to keep those willing to adapt and expel those who were not (CAI, 177-9). Whether this means that resistance was anticipated, or was simply a precaution, is not clear. If there was unhappiness it was not automatically related to the new rule; at Lochleven it may have been perceived as an erosion of autonomy.

There is little evidence from Lochleven or Inchaffray to show whether there were major differences in the day-to-day lives of the community. Neville suggests that not much changed at Inchaffray and the old ways continued for another two decades until its head was replaced by a canon imported from Scone.³⁴⁹ Yet one of the most appealing features of the Augustinian rule for an existing community of secular priests was that it could retain that status and have flexibility over day-to-day

interests in the area as is shown by a 1558 contract between Colin Campbell of Glenorchy and Ellen Stuart, widow of John MacNab of Bovain, granting him the half merkland of Eilean Ran held from the house of Vallis Virtutis, near Perth (NAS GD112/2/117/2).

³⁴⁵ Inchcolm was previously reputed to have been home to a hermit (Cowan, 1976, 91 and 59). The promontory priory of Restenneth, in Angus (NMRS NO45SE 10.00) was also founded in c.1153 and developed from an earlier foundation (Dennison and Coleman, 2000, 11).

³⁴⁶ As with secular settlements, ecclesiastical ones sometimes made use of settings referred to as islands but that were linked to land.

³⁴⁷ Augustinians formed a cathedral community at St Andrews in 1124 and the abbey in 1144 (Cowan and Easson, 1976, 96).

³⁴⁸ As Lochleven was to be a dependent house with a prior supplied by St Andrews it may have been felt that more direct control would eliminate the causes of this irritation.

³⁴⁹ Bower, writing in the fifteenth century, accused the existing head of incompetence (2005, 134).

organisation. The rule, as Martin puts it, was about ideals not details (2003, 57), which potentially allowed for considerable continuity.

The promise of a more vibrant future as members of an Augustinian house may have been attractive to some at Lochleven and Inchaffray. So too might have been the prospect of being part of the Europe-wide move to spiritual renewal. The example set by the William of Champeaux and his colleagues in the early twelfth century in adopting the rule of St Augustine and leaving the city for a life of simplicity, prayer and contemplation had inspired many religious communities to follow suit. The emphasis on the need for an inner journey to discover God, the appeal of the wilderness, the admiration of the Desert Fathers, and the reverence for values handed down from the Patristic Age (Martin, 2003, 67, 77, 91 and 94) might have been highly appealing to members of island, and other, communities founded on similar visions and values. The emphasis on possible signs of resistance at Lochleven and Inchaffray could underestimate the appetite for renewal that had emerged among the religious and is reflected in works like Bernard de Cluny's *De contemptu mundi*. The poem encourages monks to look forward to the rewards that the religious will gain in a heaven of eternal springtime, sweet fragrances where there will be no toils or tumults (Pepin, 2000, 102-5). The insular priories should be seen as linked to the general move towards reformed practices that spread through Europe and Scotland over several generations and which may have been welcomed by some brethren but seen as a threat by others. As in the first wave of monasticism, which came from Ireland, the new reformed orders found that insular settings fitted well with their aspiration for a life of partial separation from the world for purposes of holy contemplation.

The three insular priories were established over a period of about 87 years within, or just beyond, the 1113-1230 period Dilworth (1995, 6) identifies as among the most impressive periods of monastic expansion ever seen, with 30 important, and more than a dozen lesser, foundations. All were developed on established religious sites, able to take up existing grants of lands, rights and revenues. Similarly they were able to build on existing, and possibly long-standing, spiritual associations and existed within a religious framework in which water symbolised purity and the giving of life (Liddiard, 2007, 212). This, combined with the fact that the brethren at

Lochleven and Inchaffray were given the opportunity to stay, emphasises the degree to which the Augustinians represented continuity as well as change. The use of secular priests living under a common rule, rather than monks, may have echoed the character of the Lochleven and Inchaffray communities making the transition as easy as possible. Indeed, Muirhead (1984, 7) notes that a series of Celi Dei, or similar communities became Augustinian houses and sees the process as a tidying up rather than a radical shift.

Altered values

Oram (2005, 10) states that the pioneering zeal which powered the monastic movement had largely faded by the end of the twelfth century. The founding of the priory of Inchaffray was at the end of this period while Inchmahome, founded by Sir Walter Comyn in 1237, may have belonged to an era with different motivations. Oram says extensive property and wealth demanded a new kind of leadership by managers and lords of men rather figures of inspirational piety. This is reflected in the creation of ever-more sumptuous architecture and the shift of priors and abbots away from communal living and into their own comfortable and purpose-built houses.

It would appear that the relatively modest churches of St John the Evangelist at Inchaffray, St Colman at Inchmahome, and the one at St Serf's were replaced by grander structures under the Augustinians.³⁵⁰ At Lochleven the new developments were part of the passion for reform exhibited by David I and resulted in a church which Fawcett (1994, 24) believes was probably a smaller version of the earliest part of that at Inchcolm.³⁵¹ Even though it was among the smaller monastic churches built for the king, it was a major shift from earlier simplicity. One contrast may have been the deliberate effort to create a church and associated buildings that were highly

³⁵⁰ Referred to in 1210 as *Insula Macholem*, or *Isle of my dear St Colman*, and as having a parson and church (Carver, 2003, 17). For a discussion of the building and development of monastic houses see Greene, 1992, Ch 3.

³⁵¹ Kerr says the church was turned into a shepherd's hut in 1834. By this time it was also difficult to get an impression of the original extent of the island, or that of Lochleven Castle, as the loch level had been lowered c.1.4m.

visible from the surrounding land.³⁵² This contrasts with what Easson suggests was an area on the north of the island which had been excavated to more than 3m depth to provide physical shelter for earlier monastic cells and ensure they could not be seen from afar. This was also made possible by a general advance in the availability of building materials and technology that is also reflected in secular building (Boardman, pers. comm.). Ewart's excavation of Inchaffray and the tentative reconstruction of its abbey church (1996, 514) shows a substantial abbey church at the heart of a complex of buildings. These were created to cater for the abbot, officials, canons and lay servants at the business core of widespread landholdings. At Inchmahome the priory evolved into a fine set of structures (described by Tabraham, 2003) with architectural echoes of even more splendid sites such as Dunblane Cathedral and Holyrood Abbey. Displays of corporate wealth through high-quality and aesthetically pleasing workmanship had come to be regarded as expressions of God's favour and an appropriate means by which to glorify his name.³⁵³

In many respects the architecture of the insular monasteries was in keeping with the norms across Scotland and beyond. Tabraham (2003, 11) says Inchmahome conformed to the plan first laid out by the Benedictines and refined by the Cistercians (for a full discussion see Fawcett, 1994). Yet there were inescapable differences. The earl and countess of Menteith and their household could not walk or ride from Inch Talla to worship in the priory church but had to arrive by boat. Boats were also the only way to reach St Serf's, though the situation at Inchaffray is not so clear cut. As with secular islands the need to cross water emphasised the social separateness of the religious house.

In some cases conventual boundary walls distinguished an area of divine lordship from the temporal world (Coulson, 1982, 72). The church could apply sanctions against those who breached the space and the brethren within it were free to follow the rhythms of monastic life unmolested. Walls also offered a degree of physical protection from thieves and robbers. As Oram points out (2005, 15) no monastery in Scotland was in a truly deserted place so enclosures and boundaries were necessary to preserve their exclusivity. Insularity also achieved these

³⁵² Churches have a role as visible imprints of Christianity in the landscape (Park, 1984, 199).

³⁵³ It is worth conjecturing that the need for greater space may have led to a decline in the attractiveness of small islands – a process paralleled in the secular sphere.

conditions, and the builders of Inchmahome and Lochleven seemingly did not feel the need to erect boundary walls. Evidence of a massive stone wall has been found at Inchaffray which Gater and Dockrill (1996, 490) say showed the need for stout defences against hostile armies in the late thirteenth century, but may alternatively just have been for protection against flooding. The latter explanation is more convincing, though the wall may well have been intended as a moral barrier, discouraging hostile forces by demarcating sacred areas, the abuse of which could attract sanctions from the church. The building of a wall may also reflect the fact that Inchaffray was a marsh rather than loch island and possibly had some access by land.

A further distinction between land-based and insular religious houses was the capacity for townships to grow up immediately outside their gates (Greene, 1992, 173). As economic magnets (Oram, 2005, 15) they attracted those who could provide services to the community within the monastic precincts. On the Augustinian islands this was not possible and such services could only be provided from onshore settlements. The situation at Inchaffray is unclear, but Portmoak and Port of Menteith may have fulfilled these roles at St Serf's and Inchmahome.³⁵⁴

Insularity proved satisfactory to the needs of Inchmahome, but less so at Lochleven and Inchaffray where it appears that separation from the world came to be regarded as more of an obstacle than an advantage. Each institution solved the problem in its own way. At Inchaffray there were efforts to improve communications and allow the easier movement of building materials, people, livestock and agricultural products. The canons used a specially-cut channel to get boat access to one three acre plot of land (CAI, 317). Robert I gave instructions for one drainage project (CAI, 317) and as late as 1488-9 James IV authorised the digging of a stank because neither men nor horses had safe access across the marshes and flooding meadows to the north (CAI, 240). St Serf's, while originating on the island, may have gradually become a split site with the emphasis eventually tipping to the mainland. Cowan and Easson note that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there was an increasing tendency to refer to the priory as being at Portmoak (1976, 93). This suggests that the port lands were of increasing significance. Yet the importance and sanctity of the island itself remained, as is indicated by its use in

³⁵⁴ That the revenues of the Kirk of Port are thought to have been donated to the priory (Tabraham, 2003, 19) could point to an earlier origin for the settlement, perhaps to serve Inch Talla.

1478 as the burial place of Patrick Graham, first archbishop of St Andrews, who had been a prisoner at Lochleven Castle. Kerr concluded (1881-2, 162) that the island was pre-eminent with a subsidiary chapel and additional burial ground at Portmoak. But the discovery of a cross-slab with similarities to tenth and eleventh-century examples at St Andrews Cathedral, plus corn drying kilns and 1,000 sherds of pottery many from the thirteenth century might suggest that Portmoak had a higher status than Kerr believed. Easson suspected that the canons eventually moved off the island to the port (1957, 78). There are, though, a variety of references to the priory on the island or at the port. While it was called the 'Priorie of Portmork' in 1562, mention was also made of the island (Kirk, 1995, 56). Portmoak chapel served as a place of worship after the Reformation until a new church was built around half a mile away in 1659 (NMRS NO10SE 6.00). The Portmoak burial ground was later abandoned and all but three tombstones removed to the new church site. This completed a centuries long migration from island to port and then inland. In both cases it may be that the move from insularity was a response to changing priorities as the growing wealth of the corporations shifted their perspective away from their early spiritual ideals.

New trajectories

There are many similarities between the three insular monasteries. They all fit within the generally eastern, southern and central distribution of Scottish religious houses, yet their physical situations are diverse. Inchaffray stood in marsh, Inchmahome on a small, mostly shallow loch of 252ha and 18m asl and St Serf's in a far larger loch of 1,371ha and at 106m asl. But all were natural and relatively substantial islands. Inchaffray and Inchmahome were in low country but on highland fringes, while St Serf's was on higher ground (106m asl) with hills nearby. Each also sat in areas of substantial pastureland.

All three establishments shared a roughly common trajectory after their foundation which saw initial growth in wealth followed by later attempts to divert or annexe their resources. The direction of travel may have been similar but the specifics were different. Despite David I's clear intention that St Serf's island should

be home to a conventual establishment its relationship to the priory of St Andrews made it vulnerable. Its dependent status was highlighted in 1268 when St Andrews declared it had the right to present new priors from its own chapter or that of Lochleven. In the case of the second recorded prior, named Simon, this may have been a satisfactory arrangement as he resigned from St Andrews in 1225 to take up the new post (Watt and Shead, 2001, 139). But at some point priorship became little more than a benefice and Dilworth (1975, 56 and 1986, 56) suspects that St Serf's had lost its community by 1421.³⁵⁵ One result of dependent status was that unlike many religious houses it remained in the hands of regular priors rather than commendators. From 1535 its living was held by John Winram, historian and sub-prior of St Andrews. Dilworth's description (1974, 28) of Winram as acting superior of a large monastic house and, while the prior was under-age, effective dean of the metropolitan chapter suggests he had little time to devote to St Serf's. Ironically it was Winram's status as prior of Portmoak that gave him a seat in the Reformation parliament which paved the way for the priory's demise. In 1570 the St Andrews chapter united St Serf's to St Leonard's College to fund a school to establish Reformation principles (Dilworth, 1974, 27). College heads continued to use the title of prior but the property later came to be held by Sir William Douglas of Kirknes who, in 1656, passed the island and the prior's boat to his children (RMS, Vol. 10, P. 216, Doc. 506).

Unlike Lochleven, the foundations at Inchaffray and Inchmahome were the work of noble patrons. There are a number of possible reasons for why and when they occurred. The evidence from Inchaffray does not indicate that its patrons, Earl Gilbert of Strathearn and his wife Maud d'Aubigny regarded *Insula Missarum* (the Isle of Masses) and its brethren as being in urgent need of reform. They saw change in positive terms, offering continuity as well as renewal. In 1195 the earl had granted the brethren a three-acre croft, in 1198 they were granted the church of St Cathan at Abruthven, and in 1199 the church of Madderty plus a tithe on cains.³⁵⁶ The burial on the island of Gilchrist, the couple's first son, indicates that they were satisfied that the intercession of the brethren provided the best available chance for his salvation.

³⁵⁵ So it is unclear whether Prior Andrew Wyntoun (c.1350-c.1422) produced his metrical chronicle of Scotland, completed around 1420, at St Serf's.

³⁵⁶ Some were confirmations of earlier grants by Earl Ferteth (d.1171) (Neville, 1983, 54).

Not only do they state that Inchaffray is somewhere they hold in high affection, but they intend it to be their own burial place. Neville (2002, 462) highlights that the founding charter of 1200 explicitly leaves governance in the hands of the priest and hermit Malise in whom the earl and countess have full confidence.³⁵⁷ They simply direct that newcomers should be instructed in the rule of St Augustine.

Given the close relationship between Earl Gilbert and the diocese of Dunblane it seems unlikely that Bishop John (d.1210) would not have had some involvement in the events at Inchaffray.³⁵⁸ The new arrangements may have appealed to the bishop because the canons, as priests rather than monks, would be subject to his episcopal supervision (Greene, 1992, 15). Gibson and Ewan point out that the founding charter contains a large element of regranting (Ewart et al, 1996, 472). This is in keeping with the observation that founding an Augustinian house was attractive because it required a relatively modest outlay, certainly less than for a Benedictine or Cluniac abbey (Burton, 1994, 55).³⁵⁹ At the same time the Augustinians continued to enjoy high esteem even as the more generalised enthusiasm for the new monasticism was waning. Burton's view that establishing a religious house was regarded as spiritual insurance can possibly be stretched further, with the changes at Inchaffray representing the upgrade of an existing policy.

The thirteenth century was a period of expansion and enrichment for Inchaffray. Its resources came to include extensive rights to fish and fowl; to collect wood; enjoy the chattels of executed criminals and control pastures, meadows, marshes and moors plus mills, stanks, tithes and churches – a total of 11 churches being granted by Earl Gilbert. In c.1220 the priory was elevated to abbatial status and the canons were granted the right to hold courts for crimes committed on their lands. Neville (2002, 463) believes this may have been the moment when the old Celi Dei traditions were finally lost as the new abbot was not from among the existing

³⁵⁷ The Bull of Innocent III in response to the petitions of J. hermit and the brethren of St John's of Inchaffray, taking them under his protection, especially the possessions given by Gilbert has been seen as an indication of resistance to the earl's plans by the Celi Dei but it was overturned (CAI, XXIV, XXV and 5).

³⁵⁸ Dunblane had become a territorial see in the twelfth century and the building of a cathedral begun, possibly under Bishop Laurence (1162-78) but left unfinished (Galloway, 2000, 46).

³⁵⁹ The Augustinians were also popular because as regular canons they could engage with rather than just withdraw from the world, allowing them to officiate in churches and chapels.

community but a canon imported from the royal abbey at Scone.³⁶⁰ Property continued to accumulate with Gilbert's new wife, Iseulte of Kinbuck, granting land in 1221-3. Gilbert died in 1223, perhaps confident that he had assured himself and his family a place in heaven and knowing he would have the prayers of the canons. Even though his house was of only moderate means within the context of Scottish nobility, his grants ensured the canons could be self-sufficient (Neville, 1983, 66-70).

The spiritual benefits from Inchaffray, along with material ones such as the ready supply of educated and literate men to perform administrative tasks like drawing up and witnessing charters, were appreciated by the new earl, Robert (d.1245) who confirmed his father's grants and continued to develop the house. The new earl and his successors were not so generous in grants of demesne lands, but added to the island's resources in other ways (for a discussion of this and their relationship with the diocese see Neville, 2005, ch 4). While the fortunes of Inchaffray were improving, those of the diocese had nosedived with Bishop Clement going to Rome at some point between 1235-7 with a list of complaints, including the complaint that much of its property had been alienated, that the cathedral church was roofless and there was no collegiate establishment (Galloway, 2000, 46). Even allowing for exaggeration the situation was severe enough to contemplate making Inchaffray the seat of the diocese (CAI, 250 and XXXV).³⁶¹ The new abbey attracted endowments from beyond Strathearn, including the church of Inishail in 1257 which was granted by Ath, son of Malcolm Macnaughton (CAI, 209). At this time the canons were enjoying a third generation of comital patronage from Gilbert's grandson, Malise II (d.1271). Ewart's excavations suggest that it was during his lifetime that the abbey underwent its most ambitious stage of building. This tied in with the granting of rights to take stone from the earl's quarry at Nethergask (Ewart et al, 1996, 487; CAI, 212-3). Around 1270, he further provided for a chaplain to celebrate divine service in an almshouse at Inchaffray (CAI, 214-5).³⁶² In 1274-5 the abbey's income was recorded as £246 12s 11d, placing it among Scotland's wealthier

³⁶⁰ Elphin appears to have been the unnamed prior whose removal was noted by Bower. Innocent arrived from Scone as prior in 1220 and later became abbot (Watt and Shead, 2001, 101).

³⁶¹ Bishop Clement revived the fortunes of Dunblane and reclaimed its lands and rights with considerable success. He demolished much of the existing cathedral and started again and was eventually beatified (Galloway, 2000, 46).

³⁶² Neville points out that excavation has not revealed any building specifically for the care of the sick and infirm (2005, 174).

Augustinian house, ahead of considerably larger establishments (Gibson and Ewan, 1996, 476; Neville, 2005, 136).³⁶³

The Wars of Independence brought a change in fortunes with Earl Malise III raising men at some time before 25 May, 1287, from among its tenants, ‘to uphold the peace and tranquillity of the realm of Scotland’ (Barrow, 2003, 24).³⁶⁴ The estates nonetheless suffered such severe damage that by 1303 Bishop Wishart of Glasgow granted the church of Balfroon to help compensate for the ‘plunderings, burnings and innumerable afflictions’ (CAI, 224). Inchaffray itself seems to have remained unharmed as Ewart found no indications of war damage (1996, 512).³⁶⁵ Around the time of Robert I’s inauguration at Scone in 1306 there is some suggestion that the abbey and its patron may have found themselves with divided – or mixed – loyalties. Earl Malise had initially refused to swear loyalty to the new king, had only done so under threat of his life and was swiftly reconciled with Edward II (Brown, 2004, 201; Barrow, 2003 358). But Barrow (2003, 207) argues that it is likely that the canons of Abbot Maurice (1304x5-22) helped him escape through Loch Earnside and into Glen Dochart after the defeat at Methven. Certainly a close relationship did develop between king and abbot, with the latter encouraging the troops before Bannockburn in 1314.³⁶⁶ Robert I subsequently founded a small religious house at Strathfillan which was granted to Inchaffray.

The abbey continued to attract endowments, but they became relatively rare and its wealth was eclipsed by that of other houses. The last recorded property to be given was the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in Uist along with (according to a charter of confirmation of 1389) the lands of Karynche and Ylara (Raven, 2005, 164; CAI, 236).³⁶⁷ In total it was granted 20 churches and chapels (CAI, XLI-XLVII). Other assets included the small island of Elinanabb where the abbot was said to retire in

³⁶³ The figures are from Bagimond’s Roll, collated for a papal tithe to fund crusades. Lochleven was expected to pay 3m (£2 Scots), Inchaffray £24 13s 3d, Inchmahome £6 13s 1d (SHS 1939, 3rd series Vol 33, 35 and 53). Gibson and Ewan (1996, 476) compared their wealth by compiling a table of 10 Augustinian foundations but urge caution as the canons were not above tax evasion.

³⁶⁴ Barrow is cautious about whether this was due to specific concerns for the lands or was part of a more general move to raise forces from places that would normally have been exempt.

³⁶⁵ Ewart speculates that damage was possible and may have prompted later developments that provided improved living quarters for a high official.

³⁶⁶ Robert I developed a close association with St Fillan, whose relics were in the care of Abbot Maurice and before whose reliquary the king was said to have prayed on the eve of battle (Yeoman, 1999, 91).

³⁶⁷ Its property interests extended as far south as Northamptonshire.

time of public calamities (CAI, 322).³⁶⁸ In the fifteenth century Inchaffray became closely associated with the Murray family with Abbot George Murray (1458-92) possibly proving a key character in the lead-up to the 1490 massacre of the kirk of Monzievaired. The raid by the Drummonds on Murray lands may have been revenge for sending his kinsmen, the Murrays of Ochertyre, to poind cattle on his behalf (and was part of an ongoing feud over the bailiary of the earldom of Strathearn (Boardman, pers. comm.) (ALHS, Vol. 1, Ci-CiV).

Shortly after Flodden (1513) Inchaffray passed into the hands of a series of perpetual commendators – men responsible for its administration – and allowed the enjoyment of its revenues without having to take on monastic obligations (Dilworth, 1986, 58).³⁶⁹ The first of these also had the distinction of being the first Scottish example of a commendatorship being granted to someone who could have taken the habit but didn't, rather than a person (like a bishop) who was prevented from doing so.³⁷⁰ In this case it was Alexander Stewart (the natural son of Albany and so of royal blood) who received Inchaffray in 1514 while remaining dean of Brechin (Dilworth, 1986, 56).³⁷¹ In 1565, five years after the Reformation, the commendator Bishop Alexander of Galloway, resigned the abbey which passed to James son of David, lord Drummond (NAS GD6/1189). Moves took place from c.1610 to erect Inchaffray into a temporal lordship but this only properly came into being in 1669 when it was held by William Drummond as lord Maddertie (Easson, 1957, 75).³⁷²

The development of Inchmahome took a different course, though like Inchaffray it was founded in a deeply conservative area.³⁷³ Neville (2005, 181) sees it

³⁶⁸ This may be the Abbot's Isles in Loch Etive, Argyll and Bute, which also had easy access to the sea (NMRS NM93SE 12). By 1650 'Ilanab' was reserved in liferent to a Katherine Stewart (Brown, W., 1933, Vol. 1, 111). It appears to have been an established practice to give the liferent of islands such as Eilean Ran, Eilean Craggan, the Isle of Loch Venachar and the Isle of Loch Tay to female spouses or widows as security.

³⁶⁹ Dilworth warns against the assumption that commendators were necessarily negative, pointing to the exemplary Alexander Milne at Cambuskenneth, though he says the daily work was probably carried out by the sub-prior John Winram (1986, 24). Dilworth (1986, 59) also takes issue with the suggestion that Scotland had lay commendators and claims that all were clerics of some form.

³⁷⁰ The date has been given elsewhere as 1495 which Dilworth (1986, 60) ascribes to confusion between Lord Oliphant and his son Laurence who was granted a commend of six months before becoming a regular abbot.

³⁷¹ In some cases commendatorships were awarded to children, such as John Hamilton (1547-51) who was presented to Inchaffray aged 12.

³⁷² Even in 1616 James, lord Maddertie, was using the title Abbot of Inchaffray, for a tack granting Inishail to Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (NAS GD112/15/3).

³⁷³ Oram (2003, 52n) regards the modernisation it represented as being highly significant.

in terms of an attempt by Earl Walter (d.1295) to introduce modern ideas. Comyn was establishing a new community while the native dynasty of Strathearn was enabling an existing one to evolve. Young (who describes Inchmahome as the finest visible expression of Comyn ecclesiastical architecture) says the earl was following his father's example in marking his elevation by founding a religious house (2005, 75). More prosaically it was part of the settlement of a complex dispute with the bishop of Dunblane over rights to local churches (see also Galloway, 2000, 46). It was fitting that great men like Walter Comyn or Earl Gilbert of Strathhearn should perform flamboyant acts of patronage – albeit by taking the economical option of reallocating an existing church site.³⁷⁴ They were indelible marks of their authority in the landscape while simultaneously being expressions of piety which would help cut the shortest possible path to heaven for them and their kin. His desire to be remembered as a man of Christian virtue is also clear from his elaborate tomb on which he is depicted entwined with his wife Mary, legs crossed to identify him as a crusader (Carver, 2003, 13). Nonetheless at this point the priory, which probably had a dozen canons (Carver, 2003, 25), had less than a third of the income of Inchaffray. Gibson and Ewan (1996, 476) say it was assessed for Bagimond's Roll as having an income of £66 11s 3d, compared to £23 6s 8d for Lochleven, placing them eighth and ninth on the Augustinian wealth table. This is in vivid contrast to the top two: St Andrews Priory with £906 18s 4d and Holyrood Abbey with £622 17s 6d.³⁷⁵ Over time the relative positions changed and by 1561 the annual income of Inchmahome (a minimum of £1,680 Scots) had overtaken that of Inchaffray (£667 2s 7d Scots) while St Serf's stood at £250 10s 7d Scots (Easson, 1957, 75-8). They were all still middle to bottom in terms of wealth with Ewart placing them 6th, 7th and 11th respectively out of 13 Augustinian houses for which information is available (1996, 478). Holyrood Abbey had an annual income of £5,600 9s 0d.

Despite its modest scale, Inchmahome enjoyed brief moments of historical significance. Robert I visited a number of times including shortly after his coronation, then again in 1308 and 1310. The future Robert II was on the island in

³⁷⁴ Fawcett (1994, 59) says that even though the religious orders were not the driving forces they once were, there were substantial numbers of foundations in the thirteenth century, often at the smaller end of the scale. This was often to the benefit of orders of canons as they could be attached to pre-existing churches.

³⁷⁵ John Bainekar reported in January 1422 that the fruits of St Serf's were £40 (Cameron, 1934, 85).

1358. In 1361 the comital title of Menteith passed to the Stewarts on the marriage of Robert II's younger son, also Robert, to Margaret, the widowed countess of Menteith, and with it patronage of the priory (Tabraham (2003, 23) details the earldom's subsequent return to the Grahams). Queen Mary was sent there for safety in 1547 following the Scottish defeat at Pinkie when Stirling Castle was no longer regarded as sufficiently safe.³⁷⁶ Despite being in the patronage of powerful and wealthy families and enjoying periodic royal favour, Inchmahome never ascended to abbatial status. In fact its status came under threat when it was annexed to the Chapel Royal at Stirling Castle, an ambitious foundation that ultimately had a bishop, dean and dignitaries after the pattern of a cathedral (Cowan and Easson, 1976, 12). The annexation was resisted and the union formally dissolved in 1529, though in practice it appears to have failed considerably earlier.³⁷⁷ At this point Andrew Ballon resigned, on the request of James V, and Robert Erskine was provided as perpetual commendator. Inchmahome remained in the family to the Reformation and beyond despite an attempted union which would have seen it become a cell of Jedburgh.³⁷⁸

There were still nine canons at Inchmahome in c.1562 (there may have been 11 in 1560 when Inchaffray reportedly had 14) and, like elsewhere, they were allowed to remain for the rest of their lives. This was a far from uncomfortable existence with each being granted 18 chalders of meal and 180m for their sustenance with 22 chalders going to the 'auld priour in pensiou' (Kirk, 1995, 548). In 1587 the monasteries and their lands were annexed to the Crown (Dilworth, 1995, 84) and in many cases they were raised into heritable lordships with the prelate or his kinsman becoming the first lord. David Erskine, is said to have used the profits from Inchmahome to transform his modest tower into the large and comfortable Cardross House in around 1598 (Watson, 1998a, 133; NMRS NS69NW 1.00). The priory, island and lands were, though, only erected as part of the lordship of Cardross for John Erskine, earl of Mar, in 1604 (Watt and Shead, 2001, 111; NAS

³⁷⁶ The child queen was subsequently sent west to Dumbarton before sailing to exile in France.

³⁷⁷ On 3 June, 1508, Pope Julius II annexed the priory to the Chapel Royal at Stirling. In 1517 Dean Andrew Ballon, former canon of St Andrews, was appointed co-adjutor (Watt and Shead, 2001, 109-10). In 1537-8 Inchmahome was taxed £20, and in 1539-41 £3 3s 4d, to help pay for royal projects at Stirling (AMW, 1957, Vol. 1, 267 and 200-1).

³⁷⁸ In 1536 James V wrote to the Cardinal of Ravenna resisting this proposal (Cowan and Easson, 1976, 92). Dilworth (1986, 59-60) states that before the Reformation the Erskine commendators resigned their commendatorships before getting married and adds that Robert, 1529-37, has previously been misidentified Robert, master of Erskine.

GD124/1/1001). Among the consequences of secularisation was that religious houses which had been the heart of estates became marginalised as the lord's residence/s were often elsewhere. They also proved a good source of materials for other buildings. At Inchaffray the neglected steeple is said to have collapsed during the reign of Charles II (Reid, 1897-8, 167). Inchmahome fared better, being favoured as a pleasure ground, with papers from 1707 naming John McQuirtin as 'gardener in the Isle of Monteith' (NAS GD22/1/521).

Other religious islands

In addition to the religious houses there were churches and chapels on islands in mainland freshwater lochs. Bower's *Scotichronicon* of the 1440s lists six insular ecclesiastical sites in and around Monteith and Argyll. They include parish churches on Inchcailloch and Inishail and a now unidentifiable island chapel of St Bean at Arnprior (Bower, 1993, Vol. 2, 187ff).³⁷⁹ Many island churches were dedicated to early saints, and may already have been long-established by the later Middle Ages.

The insular churches and chapels of the Late Medieval period were subject to a complex interplay of forces affecting their wealth and status as well as their relationship to secular authority.³⁸⁰ One example was St Findoca, on Inishail, which occupies the largest of a group of natural islands near the north-west fork of Loch Awe.³⁸¹ Its circumstances illustrate that like many churches, part of its income was diverted when it was appropriated – in this case in 1257 when it was granted to Inchaffray by Ath, son of Malcolm Macnaughton (CAI, 209).³⁸² The island's arrival

³⁷⁹ Watson (1926, 256, 312) says Arnprior means prior's portion – possibly of nearby Inchmahome – and refers to the supposed existence of a chapel to St Bean or Beathan. This may refer to the second abbot of Iona who was reputed to have preached among the Picts (Watson, 1926, 311).

³⁸⁰ The Christian origins of Inishail are obscure but Cowan and Easson (1976, 149) reject a tradition that there was a Cistercian nunnery. The RCAHMS records an early Christian decorated cross.

³⁸¹ St Findoca or Fyndoca is a relatively unknown figure mentioned in the Aberdeen Breviary (Douglas, 1911-2, Vol. 46, 433). An AI/MI lies less than 100m from the western shore of Inishail, above which stood the church. RCAHMS records a boat noost facing Inishail (NMRS NN02SE 20).

³⁸² The church was a valuable asset - in 1575 it was among the properties granted to Gavin Hamilton by James, bishop of Argyll, as security on a pension (Douglas, 1911-2, 434; Bannatyne Club 1851, 827). Fawcett (1985, 25) estimates that 85% of parish churches were appropriated to monasteries and cathedrals and many were only left with enough resources for a curate. Kirk (1995, XL) says that the main characteristic of the ecclesiastical structure in the late Middle Ages was the impoverishment of the parishes. An indication of its worth is that in 1630 it had teinds of £238 6s 8d (OPS, 1854, Vol. 2i, 129).

in the record corresponds to the earliest building phase of the royal thirteenth-century castle on Eilean Fraoch whose custodian in 1267 was Gillechrist MacNaughton. At this point the MacNaughtons were middle ranking lords whose writ extended through the parishes of Inishail and Kilmorich (Boardman, 2006, 12).³⁸³ This meant that two structures symbolising their power, the church on Inishail and castle at Eilean Fraoch, were on islands close to one another and outwith, but visible from, the mainland.

During the fourteenth century the Campbells emerged as the dominant power in the area and the MacNaughton estates were broken up (Boardman, 2006, 70). A significant incident in this eclipse occurred in 1375 when Colin Campbell, son of the lord of Loch Awe, bought half Inishail (Douglas, Vol. 46, 433-4). When Pont surveyed Loch Awe the church and island existed in a political landscape dominated by the Campbell earls of Argyll and their Glenorchy kindred (Pont 14; TNS/Pont). The manuscript map shows a series of occupied islands on Loch Awe, including Inishail and the Campbell castles of Innis Chonnell and Kilchurn. The text says of Loch Awe that there is ‘a church therin cald Inche-Ayle, ther is a castell on the southsyd of Loch-aw called Inche-Chonill, pertyning to the earls of Argyll. Another castell ther is at the east end of the loch perteyning to the Laird of Glen-wrquhy cald Castell Cheil-choirne’ (TNS/Pont). Together they were the three key political and religious structures of the area.³⁸⁴ Thus, while the status of Eilean Fraoch had diminished the centres of authority remained insular. St Findoca’s only lost its status as a parish church in 1618 after absorption into the parish of Glenorchy and regular services continued until 1736 when an onshore church was built at Cladich (NMRS NN02SE 2.00).

Inishail was not a one-off in hosting a parish church nor in retaining its status into the seventeenth century – nor even in being close to an AI. Kirk Kindar, Dumfries and Galloway, was a parish church until c.1633 and is located on a small

³⁸³ The resignation of both parish churches to Inchaffray was witnessed by Malise, earl of Strathearn, who was a driving force behind royal attempts to assert control over Argyll (Boardman, 2006, 20). The result was the confirmation of the status of the MacNaughtons as locally important native landholders who were tied into a new secular and ecclesiastical order.

³⁸⁴ The Pont text and map contain a number of problems like the absence of a large section of the loch including its north-west spur, and the difficulty in identifying some names like Inche-Traynich, which he calls the principal island. Grouped with Innis Chonnell on Pont 14 is ‘Incherry’ and nearby land settlement of Inscherry - the island is shown as empty.

island c.100m from an AI 16m in diameter (NMRS NX96SE 1; NX96SE 2).³⁸⁵ MacFarlane notes another parish church at Eilean Fhianain in Loch Shiel, Lochaber, which is a natural island of 200mx180m with no recorded AI nearby.³⁸⁶ The church, dedicated to St Finan, may have been linked to Alan MacRuaridh, a chief of Clan Ranald which used the island as a burial ground until the sixteenth century (NMRS NM76NE 1.00).³⁸⁷ While textual evidence for its history is limited, it was mentioned in a charter of 1392 (OPS, 1851-5, Vol. 2, 198).³⁸⁸ A further example of an insular parish church is on Loch Lomond, at Inchcailloch, where one existed that appears to date from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries.³⁸⁹ It may be significant that this is around the same period that charter references for Clairinsh begin to appear – the earliest surviving one is from 1225 when it was feued to Absalon, son of Macbeth, for a pound of wax each Christmas (FIRAT, 1995, 12; NAS GD220/2/1/4; GD220/2/1/5). Clairinsh, the traditional seat of the Gaelic Clan Buchanan, is within 200m and the two islands may have been twin seats of spiritual and temporal authority.³⁹⁰ In the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries the church was an independent parsonage in the patronage of the earls of Glencairn but was abandoned in 1621 (Cowan, 1967, 85).

At Loch Arkaig, Lochaber, the remains of the 11mx4.9m Chapel of St Columba and associated graveyard, stand on a highly exposed MI (NMRS NN18NE 1)³⁹¹. Within 70m of Island Columbkil is the possible AI/MI of An t-Eilean Beag.³⁹² The origins of the chapel are unknown, but in 1374-7 King Robert II ratified a charter to John of the Isles for Loch Arkaig and all its associated islands, lands and castles (RMS, Vol. 1, P. 219. Doc. 605). In 1415 the island of Loch Arkaig was where Donald, Lord of the Isles, made a grant of lands to Angus Mackay of

³⁸⁵ The bathymetric survey of 1905 showed it to be in shallows of less than 3m close to the shore (M&P, 1902-5). The kirk, has internal measurements of 13.45mx4.6m,

³⁸⁶ The reference is from one of the earlier sources in the collections (Mitchell, 1907, Vol. 2, 166-7).

³⁸⁷ The remaining Late Medieval structure measures 21mx5.6m and Late Medieval grave slabs have been identified.

³⁸⁸ A Bull for 'Laclaun Carneci' also refers to the parish church of 'St Fynan de Insula' in 1438 (Lindsay and Cameron, 1934, 120).

³⁸⁹ The ruins (orientated north east to south west) measure 21.8mx8m (NMRS NS49SW 1.00).

³⁹⁰ The Buchanans may have used a nearby AI known as the Kitchen as a council isle (NS49SW 2).

³⁹¹ The Gordon 4 manuscript map shows an island and possibly a building and the Pont text describes a church on 'Iland Columb-kill' (TNS/Pont).

³⁹² An t-Eilean Beag occupies the edge of the relatively shallow area of loch as little as 2.5m deep beside a sharp drop off to 25m-30m (M&P, 1902).

Strathnaver (Munro, 1986, 31), suggesting it may have been used for important business and civil ceremony.

A series of other known and possible sites reinforce the idea that insular churches were far from uncommon in the later Middle Ages. As well as Inishail, Loch Awe also had Innis Errich, which lies 1km from Innis Chonnel castle and holds the ruins of a fifteenth or sixteenth-century chapel of unknown dedication (NMRS NM91SE 2). It is easily accessed from its former port of Portinnisherich.³⁹³ At Loch Glashan Fairhurst's 1961 excavation of a small natural island revealed what he believes were the remains of a late thirteenth or fourteenth-century ecclesiastical settlement (1969, Vol. 1, 47-67).³⁹⁴ Fairhurst says the site invites comparisons with Donald's Isle in Loch Doon (1969, Vol. 1, 49).³⁹⁵ The distance to the mainland suggests that the choice of location was for insularity itself rather than physical security³⁹⁶ as the island's Late Medieval buildings stand on a partly artificial terrace, on the landward side, less than 10m from shore.³⁹⁷

While Fairhurst says there is nothing to indicate why the Loch Glashan site would have been adopted for religious purposes, an explanation is available for a possible chapel at Loch Monnairr, Strathnaver. Pont 2(1), which calls it Loch Monnairr or Shamsloch, shows an island and simple building topped by what may be a cross.³⁹⁸ The existence of a chapel would be consistent with the presence of a holy well, renowned for its healing properties, which RCAHMS says was in use until the nineteenth century (NMRS NC75SW 15).

³⁹³ In addition to the chapel itself, measuring 11.4m along the north wall and 6.1m along the east, a survey by this author identified the remains of a former landing area away from the modern jetty. This has walling arranged to create a protected area of still water and may have been useful for the unloading of bodies for burial.

³⁹⁴ This is based on the east-west orientation of one building, a semi-circular stone cut arch, and possible sculptured stone.

³⁹⁵ Both yielded coins and green-glazed pottery – indicating access to wealth perhaps contrasting to the humble nature of the domestic structures (Fairhurst, Vol. 1, 1969, 66).

³⁹⁶ Limited detachment is not restricted to islands and may also be relevant to promontory sites like that where Bishop Benham died in 1282 at Bishop's Loch, Aberdeenshire (NMRS NJ91SW 2).

³⁹⁷ Fairhurst, Crone and Campbell note that the NI is within c.45m of an AI. The only sign of Late Medieval activity on the AI was a dumping of stones that included some typologically late querns (Crone and Campbell, 2005, 117; NMRS NR99SW 4; NR99SW 1).

³⁹⁸ Local informants told this author that pilgrims still occasionally look for it and that in the twentieth century children would dive in the loch to retrieve coins.

Co-location and shared sites

Patrons often wanted a religious house or church to be close to their own residences. Burton (1994, 131-2) says 170 British monasteries stand near a castle. She argues that for Augustinian canons the position of a founder's castle was a major factor in determining the location of a new house. The Augustinian sites of Inchmahome and St Serf's are both close to insular castles. Tabraham (2003, 17) believes a deciding factor for the location of Inchmahome was proximity to Inch Talla, a main residence of the earl of Menteith (NMRS NN50SE 5.00). Little is known about the earlier history of Inch Talla and it is unclear whether it was a centre of secular authority before, or after, the establishment of St Colman's church on Inchmahome. At Lochleven Tabraham believes (2002, 4) that Edward I's forces may have fortified the castle island before 1300 but this may have been preceded by earlier high status settlements. In both cases the later Middle Ages saw the co-location of centres of temporal and religious authority on islands but in neither case is the chronology clear. It is possible that the co-location of some insular religious and secular sites reflected continuity from the past. Co-location was certainly significant at certain earlier land sites like St Vigean's where there were closely related Pictish royal and monastic centres (Yeoman, pers. comm.).

Park (1984, 197-8) describes landscape as a manuscript on which cultural history is written, adding that some religions set out to change landscapes seeing transformation as expressing meaning about human existence. He goes further to say that the planning of churches and ecclesiastical buildings reflect an interplay between religious and secular objectives (Park, 1984, 240). The same can be said of waterscapes. It may be that the co-location of insular religious and temporal power centres mutually reinforced a symbolic visual message that they were separate from and above ordinary society. To this extent it is significant that Blaeu's map, as a chorographic act of portraiture, shows Inch Talla and Inchmahome as twin structures in the Lake of Menteith and omits the other islands in the loch.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ The inverse may be true of Pont who has been noted for seemingly showing relatively little interest in churches and religious structures – something the might plausibly be to do with an immediate post-Reformation Protestant not wanting to highlight sites associated with the 'Popish' past.

There are several examples of centres of religious and secular authority existing on nearby, even neighbouring, islands, including Clairinsh and Inchcailloch, Inishail and Eilean Fraoch. Other possible co-locations occur at Loch Maree, Loch Ard, Loch Inch and the Loch of Forfar. At Forfar St Margaret's Inch shared the loch with a substantial structure on a nearby AI. The type of gabled building shown on Pont 26 and 29 may indicate a manor.⁴⁰⁰ The chapel island of Isle Maree, Loch Maree, stands beside the much larger Eilean Subhainn (cited by Munro (2005, 274) as a significant Mackenzie residence) which is said to have been occupied by John Glanich Mackenzie, 2nd laird of Gairloch, in the sixteenth century and Alastair Breac, the 5th laird of Gairloch, from about 1628 to 1638 (NMRS NG97SW 4). The fact that Eilean Ruaridh Beag is recorded as a 'manor place and gardens' when it was inherited by Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch in 1638 suggests that, as with Loch Awe, the islands which were high status or lordly centres of authority may have changed over time. Religious centres, as they occupied sacred sites, may have been less prone to relocation (as opposed to change of use) in the pre-Reformation period.

Another possible co-location is at Loch Inch, Dumfries and Galloway, where the formerly insular Castle Kennedy is close to an island of around 150mx90m and 32m from shore, which had a long association with the bishops of Galloway, and may have held a church before becoming a manor some time before 1433/4 (NMRS NX16SW 5).⁴⁰¹ Dispossessed in 1482, the bishops succeeded in regaining control of the island and leased it to temporal lords. In 1565 Bishop Alexander granted Gilbert, earl of Cassillis, a charter for lands including the isle, manse, church, loch and fishing for £1,000 a year Scots (NAS GD25/1/653).

There are repeated examples of the secularisation of islands with a formerly religious purpose or association. By 1569 St Margaret's Inch was referred to as the island 'of old' called Holy Trinity Chapel. It was feued by Leonard, commendator of Coupar Angus Abbey to John, earl of Atholl (NAS GD16/20/28) and by 1605 it was in the hands of Kentigern Murray, son of the lord of Tullibardine (FM 24/1/17). The

⁴⁰⁰ The inch belonged to Coupar Angus Abbey and in 1508 the chaplaincy was granted to Alexander Turnbull who was bound to live there, see to the repair of chapel and houses and preserve the abbot's interests.

⁴⁰¹ A seventeenth-century church may have been built in direct relationship to the island and stands 170m east of the island and could indicate a migration to land as happened elsewhere (NMRS NX16SW 5).

charter refers specifically to the island's gardens, trees and houses indicating that it was still inhabited and cultivated (RMS, Vol. 6, 590). The Forfar Muniments show the island, pasture and fishing continued to be a distinct but minor source of income to proprietors until at least the mid-eighteenth century. But by 1735 the loch may have been the principal source of value as it takes precedence over the islands – simply called the 'inches' – in a rental agreement (FM 163/2/5). And in 1767 the loch was of sufficient significance (probably for marl) for the earl of Strathmore to pay for drainage work (FM 148/4/31 and 148/4/43). By the later nineteenth century all upstanding buildings had gone (NMRS NO45SW 12.00). Another example is the Isle of Loch Moy which was granted to bishops of Moray (who used it as a hunting lodge in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries), but which also served as a hermitage for a period. By 1378 it was a principal residence of the chief of the Clan Chattan but a legal dispute saw its ownership by the diocese confirmed in 1457 (Fraser, 1905, 85; ER, Vol. 6, 376).⁴⁰² The move from religious to secular use may have had a number of causes, including a diminution in the spiritual value ascribed to insular locations or, as with Loch an Eilean, the active attempts by secular lords to take possession of desirable properties.

The occupation of separate islands was not the only model for relating ecclesiastical and secular sites in freshwater loch settings. Some shared insular or semi-insular sites and in other cases the church or chapel might be on the lochside. Tome-inche, described as a 'half-yland', held a seat and kirk which was dedicated to Columba's biographer St Adamnan (d.704).⁴⁰³ Inchmurrin in Loch Lomond holds the remains of a fourteenth-century castle of the earls of Lennox and a possible chapel site (NMRS NS38NE 7; NS38NE 7). At Finlaggan, on Islay, an NI, AI and the surrounding shores provided for different functions in a landscape of power dominated by the Lords of the Isles. A chapel, built or restored by John of Islay, Lord of the Isles (d.1386) stood on Eilean Mor along with the main residence of the MacDonald lords (NMRS NR36NE 5.00; NR36NE 6).

⁴⁰² The Isle of Loch Moy is c.100m to the AI of Eilean nan Clach (NMRS NH73SE 3).

⁴⁰³ RCAHMS records say the current church, built in 1792, retained a cast-bronze bell, possibly dating from the time of St Adamnan and an early stone font (NMRS NH80NW 3). The location of the first church is uncertain but largely insular Tom Dubh is one candidate.

Island locations and sizes

Island sites with religious associations were of various sizes and structures, existed in many parts of Scotland and were in Highland and Lowland-type lochs of many scales and altitudes. Nonetheless, the main concentration reached across the country from Argyll to Fife and Angus, with another grouping in the south west and a scattering north of the mouth. At least 10 were on lochs where there were possible contemporary temporal island settlements, though in cases like Loch Doon they were a long way apart and there is no necessary connection. There is also a notable preference for natural islands (11 of the 16 with identified structures) with only the chapel on Loch Clunie, which was secondary to the bishop's residence, being on an island that appears to be largely or wholly artificial. This is accompanied by a seeming preference for larger islands, the average length being 546.6m. Likewise there is a tendency to be in larger lochs (average 2,244.6ha) and at relatively low altitudes (average 61.6m asl). Breaking this down further some 12 are in lochs of 50m asl or less with four above 100m asl, and eight are in lochs of more than 1,500ha (including the very large lochs Awe and Lomond) while five are in ones of under 100ha. In cases like lochs Awe, Lomond, Leven, Forfar and Maree these were areas where there was likely to be considerable human activity on the water or nearby shore.

Caution must be used in interpreting the figures, not least because water levels have changed substantially at places like Lochleven and the Loch of Forfar, reducing their size while enlarging the islands. There is also the possibility that sites in more remote areas have survived less well and were not as likely to appear in the written record. The fact that ones such Innis Errich, Kirk Kindar, St Margaret's Inch were very close to shore (the average is 229m) and/or in small lochs reinforces the idea that insularity was a positive characteristic. None would have enjoyed any great additional security due to their location, though the inconvenience of crossing water (St Margaret's Inch and Kirk Kindar may have had causeways) should not be underestimated. The islands in larger lochs and further from shore were sometimes parts of archipelagos containing other inhabited islands, so again could be places of symbolic rather than physical detachment.

Many secular settlements were on artificial and small natural islands which were embraceable, possibly defensible and where there was little room for livestock or anything but a small garden, but religious islands tend in the other direction. The need for tight physical boundaries may not have been felt to apply on islands which could wholly, or largely, be defined as sacred space and which relied on spiritual rather than physical security measures. There may also have been a preference for places of sufficient size to keep animals. Other factors may have been important, with church and monastic islanders wanting to be able to bury the dead within a sanctified zone (often easier on a natural island, though there were burials at Clunie). What does seem clear is that in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods many sites existed near and related to, rather than withdrew from, secular society.

The decline of religious islands

The Reformation was decisive in the demise of insular chapels and churches as well as religious houses. Decline took place over a long period and was only partly due to theological changes. It also resulted from parish reorganisations as the reformed kirk, with fewer resources than its predecessor, attempted to create a network of ministers that could effectively cover the whole country. Site-specific factors could also be important such as the decision of the Campbells of Argyll to bury their chiefs at Kilmun rather than Inishail (Campbell, 2000, Vol. 1, 123). The enmity of the reformers to superstition and reminders of the Popish past meant the religious establishment no longer had an automatic interest in continuity or reverence for ancient practices and sites.

Events at Isle Maree illustrate how a weak kirk combined with strong popular attachments could create the space for folk religion to emerge and endure. In 1678 Roderick Mackenzie, minister of Gairloch, summoned Hector Mackenzie in Mellan, his three sons and grandson on accusations that they had sacrificed a bull in ‘heathenish manner’ on Isle Maree (Mackay, 1896, 338). The aim had been to cure Hector’s wife, Cirstane, who was ‘formerlie sick’. This was despite attempts in 1656 to suppress bull sacrifices, which took place around 25 August – St Maelrubha’s Day. A meeting of the presbytery in Applecross was told that people had been

rebuked and made to wear sackcloth for the sacrifices and also for circling ruined chapels (Mackay, 1896, 279). Boat owners were accused of taking ‘insane’ people in search of a cure to Isle Maree where there were ‘monuments of idolatry’ (Mackay, 1896, 282). Hooper (2002, 6) links these practices with the existence of a holy well on the island, which also has the remains of a votive tree with coins pressed into its wood. While the sacrifices ended, the island’s reputation as a holy place did not. Hooper cites accounts stating that the ‘insane’ were taken to the island in the hope of a cure in the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries and that the making of offerings also continued.

RCAHMS records show that burials probably took place at Eilean Fhianain into the eighteenth century. The former chapel site on a promontory at East Portnellan, Loch Katrine, remained a favoured burial ground of Clan Gregor with a lintel over an enclosure entrance dated 1781 (NMRS NN41SW 2).⁴⁰⁴ This is very much in keeping with the record of a burial ground with two enclosures, and a lintel stone dated to 1727, on a small island at the head of Loch Ederline, Argyll and Bute (NMRS NM80SE 45). At Loch Awe this author noted tombstones on Innis Errich dated 1974 and 1989. Inishail even returned to favour with the 12th duke of Argyll (d.2001) being buried there, and other interments as recent as 2005.

Conclusions

Strong links existed between Christianity and island sites which date from the arrival of the faith in what became Scotland and persisted to beyond the Reformation. This may often have been because of spiritual values associated with insularity. There is also evidence to suggest the co-location of secular and religious centres of authority on nearby or neighbouring islands. More broadly, as on land, religious and lordly sites were often close together – for example the chapel of St Blane on land near Eilean Craggan and the chapel of St Catherine on the Isle of Loch Clunie. While islands of many structures and sizes, in varied locations, were adopted for religious purposes there is also some evidence to indicate a preference for larger islands than

⁴⁰⁴ There is also the riverine MacNab burial ground on Innes Bhuidhe, Killin, with an eighteenth century enclosure containing the graves of chiefs (NMRS NN53SE 26).

those often used as secular sites. Some sites, like the religious houses of Inchaffray and Inchmahome, prospered during the Late Medieval period but others appear to have declined. While the Reformation brought the end of the insular religious houses, some churches and chapels continued in use for a considerable time to come.

Conclusion

This thesis has combined archaeological, chorographic and historical data to demonstrate that there was widespread use of freshwater loch settlements in many parts of the Scottish mainland in the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. The concentration on northern Stirlingshire, central and northern Perthshire, northern Angus, Loch Awe and Loch Lomond allowed a detailed examination of the use of sites in these areas and discussion of the roles they fulfilled for particular families and groups. It has highlighted that many occupied islands held settlements of middling to high status, with less evidence for their use as the dwellings of ordinary people living at subsistence level. Many were country residences held directly, or used by, landholders of some local, regional or national significance such as dominant local lords, bishops or earls. Some islands were the principal seats of families whose lands were concentrated in that area or who had other property nearby. Others were secondary residences, including ones used seasonally for hunting. There are also examples of island dwellings being granted to close kin by lords and prosperous landholders. A minority of islands were used for religious purposes holding priories, in one case an abbey, chapels, churches and burial grounds. This was part of a long tradition stretching back to early Christian times which seems to have gone into decline after the Reformation.

Far from being a hangover from Early Historic times, loch settlements were a vibrant part of the Scottish social landscape until the second half of the seventeenth century. During the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods there is little evidence for a distinction being made between artificial, natural or modified islands – or for the use of the word ‘crannog’ which appears to have been a nineteenth-century import to Scotland. Choice does seem to have been exercised over the size of islands utilised for habitation, with small ones often being preferred. This suggests that island dwelling should be seen as a single phenomenon without detaching the study of ‘crannogs’ as a discrete field.

In the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods there was often a preference for exposed locations at the farthest manageable distance from shore. This may well have contributed to the physical security such islands offered but defence does not

seem to be the primary reason for loch settlement use. Islands provided excellent opportunities to be seen to dominate the surrounding physical environment and establish a degree of social separation. Islands had a potency as places which allowed the visible expression of authority, and to which access could only be gained on specific terms and by particular means. Continued construction projects through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries showed the continuing desirability and value of island dwelling.

Loch locations had practical advantages, giving ready access to fish, fresh water and routes of communication. But the small size of many of the settled islands meant they could not be self-sufficient and inevitably existed in relation to the wider loch and landscape. This is underlined by the research which shows the existence of substantial numbers of designated port areas at least some of which were settled and all of which performed one (as a point of controlled access or egress) or more important functions for the island.

Decline appears to have coincided with the emergence of more peaceful conditions where there were fewer concerns about low-level raiding, violent feuding and banditry. At the same time new fashions emerged in which those with resources began to build larger country homes, with a larger footprint, and set within substantial gardens and plantings as is illustrated by the Campbell of Glenorchy move from Priory Island to Balloch Castle. This was fundamentally at odds with the attraction of small islands, which were suited to tight clusters of buildings and towers, with small gardens. In some cases families made a shift to shore that kept them close to the ancestral, or traditional, centre of power with new residences being built within a few hundred metres of insular sites.

Chorographic data, along with other sources, show that island dwellings were significant and distinctive features of society in Scotland during the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods. This, combined with the evidence for the range of uses they were put to, suggests that their further study can make a valuable addition to the understanding of Scotland's history. The present work was intended as a first foray into this subject and, it is hoped, has helped demonstrate that loch settlements were to some extent distinct in form from equivalents on land but performed many similar roles.

During the research for this thesis it became clear just how many exciting opportunities exist for future research. Complete studies of specific sites from their earliest origins to their latest periods of use would be of particular value. Places where this could be attempted include Loch Clunie, Eilean Craggan (where this author has been conducting ongoing research), Priory Island and the Isle of Loch Venachar. There may be considerable potential in the future investigation of ports and boats. The small amount of research into ports that was possible in the course of this thesis highlighted potential challenges in identifying exactly what existed at some ports, but documentary evidence might help to overcome some of these difficulties. While this study has considered the location of occupied islands largely in terms of relationships to land, there may well be much to learn about their relationship to water. One question that arose repeatedly during this study was why so many artificial islands are at the very edge of drop-offs into deeper water and would have required far less material to build them had they been just a few metres nearer the shore. As there is little evidence for the construction of islands in the Late Medieval and Early Modern period it is impossible to offer firm conclusions and it may have been an issue for the original builders rather than the later occupants. However, it may be worth speculating that the positioning of artificial islands had benefits for fishing. Similarly, it can be conjectured that causeways may not have simply been for access but also served as fish traps.

There remains a relative lack of survey data for the study of loch settlements used in the periods studied. What there is often lacks standardised detail – for example there are only upper surface measurements for many AI/MIs when their basal dimensions, height and relationship to the loch bed and shore need to be known. In addition to this there is clearly a great deal to do to gain a full understanding of the distinctions between how loch settlements were used and by whom in different parts of the country. This in itself needs to be placed within a broader framework looking at the interrelationship of settlements in watery locations internationally.