

# THE REFORMATION IN MORAY AND MR ROBERT PONT

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**Abstract.** The province of Moray, in the north of Scotland and on the fringe of the Gaelic highlands, is not noted for any early support for Protestantism though, after 1560 Moray's churches were staffed, in so far as they were staffed, with a conforming ministry. The General Assembly's commissioner in the province, 1563–74, was Mr Robert Pont, one of the 'most eminent' ministers of the early reformed church. His role in 'planting kirks', however, has not previously been assessed by studies of the Reformation in his province. This article reviews what can be gathered of the development of a reformed ministry in the burghs and parishes of Moray during Pont's time in the region.

**Keywords.** Moray, Robert Pont, Reformation, Protestantism, clergy

The province of Moray, in the north of Scotland and on the fringe of the Gaelic highlands, is not noted for any early support for protestantism, though after 1560 Moray's churches were staffed, in so far as they were staffed, with a conforming ministry.<sup>1</sup> The General Assembly's commissioner in the province, 1563–74, was Mr Robert Pont, one of the 'most eminent' ministers of the early reformed church.<sup>2</sup> His role in 'planting kirks', however, has not previously been assessed by

<sup>1</sup> John McCallum, 'Introduction' in John McCallum (ed.), *Scotland's Long Reformation. New perspectives on Scottish Religion, c.1500–c.1660* (Leiden, 2016), p.11.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Wodrow (ed.), *Collections upon the Lives of the Reformers and Most Eminent Ministers of the Church of Scotland* (Glasgow: The Maitland Club, 1834), i, pp.163–204, 373–84; James Kirk, 'Pont, Robert (1524–1606)' in David Cannadine (ed.) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). This article and all subsequent articles from *ODNB* were accessed via the on-line edition, September 2017: <http://www.oxforddnb.com>

studies of the Reformation in his province.<sup>3</sup> Pont had a long distinguished career yet in its earlier stages he met with only partial success as he struggled, first to channel and form developments that existed before his arrival, and then with the disruption of the civil war years. This article reviews what can be gathered of the development of a reformed ministry in the burghs and parishes of Moray during Pont's time in the region.<sup>4</sup> The measure of acceptance the reform achieved in this area is worth exploring for the light thrown on the development of the reformed church in Scotland.<sup>5</sup> Moray demonstrates that the reach of the Reformation in Scotland was indeed national. A 'slow ... process of gathering strength'<sup>6</sup> is how I see the two decades after 1560: to achieve a lasting settlement required determination from the committed and also acquiescence among those who held power in the localities.<sup>7</sup>

In December 1562 the General Assembly commissioned the minister of Brechin, Mr John Hepburn:

... to pass to Murray, and there to preache the gospell; and if it sall chance that he sall find anie qualified persons apt to be ministers, exhorters or readers, that he send them to the superintendent to be appointed for Aberdeen and Bamf, to be tried, and admitted to their offices respective: And it was ordained this commission sould endure till the nixt Assemblie.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Charles H. Haws, *Scottish Parish Clergy at the Reformation 1540–1574* (Edinburgh: Scottish Record Society 1972); Charles H. Haws, 'Continuity and change. The clergy of the diocese of Moray, 1560–74', *Northern Scotland*, 5 (1983), pp.91–8; James Kirk, 'The Kirk and the Highlands at the Reformation', *Northern Scotland*, 7 (1986), pp.1–22.

<sup>4</sup> A database of ministers, exhorters and readers serving in Moray 1563–91 was assembled in preparation for this article. The 'Register of Assignment and Modification of Stipends', NRS, E47.1 to E47.10, was the prime source used, covering 1576–1615. 1574 is held as MS Advocates 17.1.14 in the National Library of Scotland and was printed in David Laing (ed.), *Miscellany of the Wodrow Society* (Edinburgh: The Wodrow Society 1844), i, pp.319–96. Other sources include NRS, E48.2, 'Register of Ministers and their stipends'; printed in Alexander Macdonald (ed.), *Register of Ministers, Exhorters and Readers, and of their stipends after the period of Reformation* (Edinburgh: Maitland Club 1830) [RM hereafter]; J. Kirk, *The Books of Assumption of the Thirds of Benefices: Scottish Ecclesiastical Rentals at the Reformation* (Oxford, 1995) and G. Donaldson (ed.), *Accounts of the Collectors of Thirds of Benefices 1561–1572* (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1949) [TB hereafter]. A further article may discuss in more detail the pre-reformation precursors and the initiators of reform in Moray before 1563.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Lynch, 'Preaching to the Converted?' in A. A. MacDonald et al., *The Renaissance in Scotland. Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture* (Leiden, 1994), p.319. 'The task which confronts the modern historian is to try to reassemble, from contemporary evidence, the problems and stresses which bestrew the ongoing, hard work of evangelising a scattered population in a country which was distinctly localist, both in its power structures and its sense of place.'

<sup>6</sup> Alec Ryrie, *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation* (Manchester, 2006), p.121, places emphasis on the revolutionary, sudden and decisive victory of the Lords of the Congregation c.1560.

<sup>7</sup> Catherine Elizabeth McMillan, 'Keeping the Kirk: The Practice and Experience of Faith in North East Scotland, 1560–1610', University of Edinburgh, PhD thesis, 2016, pp.8–9, 12, places emphasis on the necessity of negotiation.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Thomson (ed.), 'The Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland,' *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland from the year M.D.L.X. collected from the most authentic manuscripts* (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club 1839), i, p.27–8: 29 December 1562.

Hepburn's selection for this task was no doubt influenced by the hope that he might obtain better assistance from the Bishop of Moray, Patrick Hepburn.<sup>9</sup> Brechin's minister was reappointed in June 1563 to Moray and Banff with extended, more realistic, authority to admit 'qualified persons' without reference to Aberdeen. As part of a deliberate programme of governance for the wider north, Mr Robert Pont was also commissioned 'to plant kirks in Inverness' and Mr Donald Munro in Ross-shire.<sup>10</sup> In December, however, Hepburn (described as 'Commissioner of the north') 'excused his not visiting be reason of his great sickness'; while Pont (then described as 'Commissioner of Murrey, Ennerness and Bamf') 'declared how he had travelled in these parts, but confessed his inability, in respect of the laicke of the Irish tongue, [Scots Gaelic] and therefore desired the Assemblie to appoint an commissioner expert in the Irish tongue.'<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, days later both men were reappointed, though their remits were again adjusted: 'Mr Robert Pont, to plant kirks from Nesse to Spey; to Mr John Hepburn, minister at Brechin, to plant kirks in Bamf, from Spey to Aithan, comprehending Strabogie land.' Pont 'accepted of the commission, bot with provision that he sould not be burthened with the kirks speeking the Irish tongue in the saids bounds.'<sup>12</sup>

John Hepburn, who remained minister at Brechin while serving as an acting commissioner, is sometimes, wrongly, credited with the relative success of the new church in staffing the (former) deanery of Elgin,<sup>13</sup> despite the Assembly's redefinition of his remit, at the very end of 1563, to that of Strathbogie. It remains doubtful how often – or even whether – he visited Moray, for in June 1564 the General Assembly believed it necessary to send John Knox north for six or seven weeks 'because the north parts were destitute of superintendents and commissioners.'<sup>14</sup> Pont was himself present at that Assembly, which appears to have equated 'the north' with the north-east, the lands of the earls of Huntly. In June 1565 the Assembly gave a new commission to Mr George Hay, sometime 'minister to the Privy Council,' 'to visite kirks, schooles and colledges from Dee to Spey, to plant, remove simpliciter, or for a reason, ministers; to eradicate idolatrie, etc till a Superintendent be admitted in the North, or at least till nixt Generall Assemblie.'<sup>15</sup>

Despite his lack of Gaelic, of the various commissioners with remits covering Moray Robert Pont's appointment to the province was the one that endured. A graduate of St Leonard's College within St Andrews University, Pont's vocation began with support for the Lords of the Congregation in 1559 as a member

<sup>9</sup> James Kirk, 'Hepburn, Patrick (c.1487–1573)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>10</sup> *BUK*, i, p.34: 26 June 1563.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.39: 27 December 1563.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.44: 30 December 1563.

<sup>13</sup> Haws, 'Continuity and Change. The Clergy of Moray', p.97.

<sup>14</sup> *BUK*, i, p.49 & p.51: 28 & 30 June 1564.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.63: 28 June 1565.

of the reformed congregation at St Andrews, that ‘perfyrt reformed kyrk.’<sup>16</sup> He was one of the first to be found qualified to preach by the General Assembly of December 1560. Having served briefly as minister at Dunblane, he demitted as minister of Dunkeld when appointed a northern commissioner. Even then he was a national figure, blending expertise in both theology and law; he was to be much involved in discussions between the church, the Regents and King James VI. While supporting the union of the crowns he opposed doctrines of royal supremacy and, upholding the presbyterian system for church government, he was for a time banished during 1584. Pont’s appointment to Moray brought north, during the second half of 1563, one of the ablest of the early leaders of the church: a man of principle, learning, dedication, aligned with the Calvinist faction of the new kirk. Before his death in 1606 as retired minister at St Cuthbert’s, Edinburgh, Pont served six times as Moderator of the General Assembly, and was also—uniquely for a minister—a senator of the College of Justice.<sup>17</sup> There may have been an ‘absence of any outstanding reformers in the north-east in the early post-Reformation years’<sup>18</sup> but Moray does need to be distinguished from the hinterland of Aberdeen in this and other respects.

Robert Pont was appointed a commissioner to ensure that a movement that had already taken root in Moray developed on the lines being laid down by the General Assembly. Although accounts of the 1559–60 Reformation crisis did not include Moray among the areas of protestant ‘fervencie,’<sup>19</sup> by 1563–4 his was not a task of initiation but of direction and control. The later conception of a ‘conservative north’,<sup>20</sup> slow to adopt the new faith, is in part caused by the overstated role of John Knox in Scottish historiography.<sup>21</sup> As neither George Wishart nor John Knox brought their preaching campaigns to the Highlands, Knox and

<sup>16</sup> Jane E. A. Dawson, ‘“The Face of Ane Perfyrt Reformed Kyrk”: St Andrews and the Early Scottish Reformation’ in James Kirk (ed.), *Humanism and Reform: The Church in Europe, England, and Scotland, 1400–1643. Essays in honour of James K. Cameron* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 418–19.

<sup>17</sup> Kirk, ‘Pont, Robert (1524–1606)’ in ODNB.

<sup>18</sup> Bruce McLennan, ‘The Reformation in the burgh of Aberdeen’, *Northern Scotland*, 2 (1976) p.143.

<sup>19</sup> ‘A Historie of the Estate of Scotland, from the year 1559 to the year 1566’ in *Miscellany of the Wodrow Society*, i, p.54; cited and discussed: G. Donaldson, ‘Scotland’s Conservative North in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 16 (1966), p. 68; Ian B. Cowan, *The Scottish Reformation, Church and Society in sixteenth-century Scotland* (London, 1982), p.108. See also Ryrie, *Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, pp.119–21.

<sup>20</sup> Donaldson, ‘Scotland’s Conservative North’; McMillan, ‘Keeping the Kirk’, pp.8–10.

<sup>21</sup> Kirk, ‘The Kirk and the Highlands’, p.2 discusses a broader historiographical tradition of ignoring the Highlands, as does Alison Cathcart, *Kinship and Clientage, Highland Clanship 1451–1609* (Leiden, 2006), pp.1–4. On history viewed through John Knox’s eyes: Michael Lynch, *Edinburgh and the Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1981), pp.219–20; Alan R. Macdonald, ‘James VI and the General Assembly, 1586–1618’ in Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (eds), *The Reign of James VI* (Edinburgh, 2008), p.171; and Pamela E. Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland 1548–1560. A Political Career* (East Linton, 2002), p.124.

his followers had nothing whatsoever to say about Moray.<sup>22</sup> Certainly neither Elgin nor Inverness were among the burghs Knox reported to have an established ministry in 1559.<sup>23</sup> Yet evidence exists to show that the province of Moray was not isolated from the debates of the years before 1560.<sup>24</sup> A leading preacher of the 1540s had been a friar at Inverness;<sup>25</sup> the spread of Lutheran and other heresies had aroused hostility at Kinloss Abbey;<sup>26</sup> Moray's church leaders made provision against aggression;<sup>27</sup> sacrilege (however motivated) occurred in royal burgh of Forres<sup>28</sup> and in Elgin Cathedral.<sup>29</sup> This is little enough to go by, yet is sufficient to show parallels in Moray with trends elsewhere in Scotland. Evidence of a renewed catholicism can also be found in Moray:<sup>30</sup> renewal and reform are not necessarily polar opposites.

<sup>22</sup> 'Moray' or 'Morayshire' occurs once only in the exhaustive index to Croft Dickinson's critical edition and that refers to a single sentence in 'Book V', the section added to Knox's own unpublished work by an anonymous 'continuator': William Croft Dickinson (ed.), *John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland* (London, 1949), ii, p.135, p.465; i, pp. xciii–xciv.

<sup>23</sup> 'XXXIV, Knox to Mrs Anna Lock, 2 September 1559' in David Laing (ed.), *The Works of John Knox* (Edinburgh, 1845), vi, p.78. Knox listed 'Edinburgh, Sanct Andrewes, Dundie, Sanct Johnstoun, Brechin, Montrose, Stirlie, Aire. And now . . . in Jedburgh and Kelso.'

<sup>24</sup> Kirk, 'The Kirk and the Highlands', p.14: 'It is clear that parishioners in Highland areas were fully conversant with ecclesiastical developments in the south.'

<sup>25</sup> On Thomas Guillaume / Gwilliam / Gilyem: Thomas Thomson (ed.), *Calderwood's History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Edinburgh: The Wodrow Society 1842), i, p.155–6; *John Knox's History*, i, p.42; James Kirk, 'The Religion of Early Scottish Protestants', in James Kirk (ed.) *Humanism and Reform: The Church in Europe, England and Scotland 1400–1643, Essays in Honour of James K. Cameron* (Oxford, 1991), p.380, p.402; Margaret H. B. Sanderson, *Cardinal of Scotland: David Beaton, c.1494–1546* (Edinburgh, 1986), p.81; John Durkan, 'Heresy in Scotland: the second phase, 1546–1558', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 24 (1992), pp.339–40; John Durkan, 'The Cultural Background in Sixteenth-Century Scotland', *Innes Review*, 10 (1959), p.404; Rylie, *Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, p.57.

<sup>26</sup> John Stuart (ed.), *Records of the Monastery of Kinloss* (Edinburgh, 1872), p.85.

<sup>27</sup> William Cramond (ed.), *The Records of Elgin* (Aberdeen, 1903), i, p.78: 1 October 1543; C. Innes (ed.), *A Genealogical Deduction of the Family of Rose of Kilravock, written in 1683–4 by Mr Hew Rose, minister of Nairne, continued by the Reverend Lachlan Shaw, minister of Elgin in 1753. With Illustrative Documents from the Family Charter Room* (Edinburgh: The Spalding Club, 1848), pp.211–13; William Fraser, *The Chiefs of Grant, vol. iii Charters* (Edinburgh, 1883), p.114: letters by Robert Bishop of Orkney and Walter Abbot of Kinloss, appointing John the Grant of Freuchie 'oure principale baillie of Kinlos', 30 October 1554.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Pitcairn (ed.), *Criminal Trials in Scotland . . . compiled from the original records and mss* (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club 1833) volume first part first, p.393–4.

<sup>29</sup> Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, i, p.376.

<sup>30</sup> On Kinloss Abbey: John Durkan, 'The beginnings of Humanism in Scotland', *Innes Review*, 4 (1953), pp.5–24; J. Durkan, 'Giovanni Ferrerio and religious humanism in sixteenth-century Scotland', *RSCHS*, 17 (1981), p.183; James Kirk, 'Reid, Robert (d. 1558)' in *ODNB*. On Pluscarden Priory: Augustine Holmes, 'Sixteenth-century Pluscarden priory and its world', *Innes Review*, 58 (2007), pp.35–71. Burgh of Inverness: Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, *Invernessiana, Contributions towards a History of the Town and Parish of Inverness from 1160 to 1599* (Inverness, 1875), pp.225–6; William Mackay & Herbert Cameron Boyd (eds), *Records of Inverness. Burgh Courts Books 1556–86* (Aberdeen: New Spalding Club, 1911), i, p.7. The originals from which these volumes were transcribed are held at The Highland Archive Centre, Inverness, under reference B/1/1/1. Burgh of Elgin: *Records of Elgin*, i, p.103, p.105.

Whatever the trends of theological opinion, the attitudes of local lords and lairds were critical in promoting or permitting the Reformation.<sup>31</sup> While the earls of Huntly had the reputation of being ‘cocks o’ the north’, the way George Gordon, fourth Earl,<sup>32</sup> handled his affinity in Moray led to its dissolution. His national influence waned during the 1550s when Mary of Guise (temporarily) stripped Gordon of authority: he was fined, imprisoned, lost control of the earldom of Moray and was required to pass on the Great Seal to one of the Regent’s French inner circle, De Rubay.<sup>33</sup> Huntly’s conviction (and execution) (1550) of William Mackintosh, captain of Clan Chattan, was overturned and Lachlan Mackintosh was restored to his hereditary estates in Badenoch and Lochaber.<sup>34</sup> When, during 1555, Huntly attempted to use his power as sheriff of Inverness to prevent the infeftment of John Grant, fourth laird of Freuchie, in Tullochgorm, Grant obtained the support of the Queen Regent and the Lords of Council to overrule him.<sup>35</sup> Gordon influence in Moray was in any case diluted because, while they held lands in Strathbogie and the lordship of Badenoch,<sup>36</sup> their control of the west was less direct. They maintained their affinity via bonds of manrent and by marriages;<sup>37</sup> they garrisoned Inverness Castle and held superior powers of justiciary from the crown.<sup>38</sup> Support for the national ‘authority’ was the glue that bonded ambitious lairds like Freuchie to the Gordons. Quite apart from the action of the crown, Huntly’s domineering and princely demeanor<sup>39</sup> outside the Gordon north-east became counter-productive.

The lairds of the Moray coast, moreover, had other connections, several with protestant-aligned powers. Andrew Leslie, fifth Earl of Rothes, joined the

<sup>31</sup> Ian B. Cowan, *The Scottish Reformation. Church and society in sixteenth century Scotland* (London, 1982), p.117 (Ayrshire); p.119 (influence of lairds on burghs); more generally, G. R. Elton, *Reformation Europe 1517–1559* (London, 1963), p.124: ‘The Word could not after all do it alone; policy and power determined where it should get a hearing.’

<sup>32</sup> Allan White, ‘Gordon, George, fourth Earl of Huntly (1513–1562)’ in *ODNB*.

<sup>33</sup> Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland*, p.164–5.

<sup>34</sup> R. W. Munro, Jean Munro, ‘Mackintosh family (per. c.1491–1606)’ in *ODNB*; Cathcart, *Kinship and Clientage*, pp.184–190.

<sup>35</sup> Fraser, *The Chiefs of Grant vol. i, Memoirs*, p.131.

<sup>36</sup> David Taylor, *The Wild Black Region. Badenoch 1750–1800* (Edinburgh, 2016), pp.16–18.

<sup>37</sup> Cathcart, *Kinship and Clientage*, pp.159–69; White, ‘Queen Mary’s Northern Province’, pp.54–7; ‘Bonds of Manrent, friendship, and alliance’ / ‘Papers from the Charter Chest of the Duke of Richmond at Gordon Castle’, John Stuart (ed.) *The Miscellany of the Spalding Club* (Aberdeen: The Spalding Club, 1848), iv, pp.179–215. This collection includes copies of bonds from John Grant of Freuchie (1509, 1546) and his heir, James (1546); from Hugh, Lord Fraser of Lovat (1543), Hector Macintosh of Clan Chattan (1543), William Macintosh of Dunnechtan (1543), Alexander Dunbar of Cumnock (1544) and Robert Munro of Foulis (1550). A ‘General bond by the noblemen and barons of the north’ probably dated 1544, had 39 subscriptions including James Grant of Freuchie, Fraser of Lovat, Mackenzie of Kintail, Cumming of Altyre, Munro of Foulis, Rose of Kilravock, and Innes of that ilk.

<sup>38</sup> ‘XV. Ane discharge of George erll of Huntlies, of the biggin of the castell of Eneuerness, induring the tyme of the warde – 1532’, in ‘1. Miscellaneous Papers’ / ‘Papers from the Charter Chest of the Duke of Richmond at Gordon Castle’, *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, iv, p.152–53.

<sup>39</sup> Allan White, ‘Queen Mary’s Northern Province’, *Innes Review*, 38 (1987), p.56–7.

Congregation in 1559;<sup>40</sup> though Leslie strength then lay in Fife, they retained holdings in Moray. When the male line of the ancient house of the Thanes of Cawdor came to an end in 1498, Muriel, the infant heiress, was given in ward to Archibald Campbell, second Earl of Argyll. At the age of 12 she was married to Sir John Campbell, a younger son of the earl. From 1524 the couple were usually resident at Cawdor, bringing with them the strong clan and political affinity of Argyll.<sup>41</sup> Muriel's paternal family, the Roses of Kilravock, entered a mutual bond of maintenance with the earl c.1499/1500;<sup>42</sup> this was renewed in 1523.<sup>43</sup> In 1556, Argyll (as Justice-General of the Kingdom) appointed Kilravock Justice-Depute in Nairn; in 1558, he gave him letters of bailliary in Cawdor, the second Campbell laird having died in 1551; these powers were renewed to 'our traist cousin' in 1561.<sup>44</sup> Moreover Sir John Campbell's eldest son, Archibald, married Isobel, eldest daughter of James Grant, third of Freuchie, before 1543: her sisters married into the local houses of the Cummings of Altyre and the Sutherlands of Duffus. Sir John's daughter Janet (or Jane) married Alexander, sixth Lord Fraser of Lovat.

Meanwhile the tenth laird of Kilravock had married Katherine, daughter of David Falconer, of Halkerton in the Mearns: a family connected with Douglas of Glenbervie and linked with the Erskines of Dun.<sup>45</sup> Janet Falconer, Katherine's sister, was married to Sir John Wishart of Pittarow: hence Kilravock was related via his wife to a man who had been a leading protestant activist since the 1540s, a leader of the Lords of the Congregation, and after 1562 (until 1565) royal Comptroller and Collector of the thirds of benefices as a particular protegee of Lord James Stewart, Earl of Moray.<sup>46</sup> Pittarow can be found, with Falconer of Halkerton, acting as a witness for Kilravock contracts, so their relationship was more than nominal.<sup>47</sup> John Erskine of Dun, during the period when he was hosting John Knox at Dun and yet was also in favour with Mary of Guise, headed a royal justice ayre at Forres and Elgin 17 August to 17 October 1556.<sup>48</sup> The Douglasses of Pittendreich were Elgin's close neighbours, and they too were well-connected, for the parents of James Douglas, fourth Earl of Morton, Regent of

<sup>40</sup> G. R. Hewitt, 'Leslie, Andrew, fifth Earl of Rothes (c.1530–1611)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>41</sup> Andrew Mackillop and Jean Munro and R. W. Munro, 'Campbell family of Cawdor (per. 1511–1821)', in *ODNB*; Jane A. E. Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the age of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.81–2; J. Dawson, 'The fifth Earl of Argyle, Gaelic lordship and political power in sixteenth-century Scotland', *Scottish Historical Review*, 67 (1988), pp.1–27; Cathcart, *Kinship and Clientage*, p.106.

<sup>42</sup> C. Innes (ed.), *The Book of the Thanes of Cawdor: a series of papers selected from the charter room at Cawdor, 1236–1742* (Edinburgh: The Spalding Club 1858), p.102; cited in Jenny Wormald, *Lords and Men in Scotland: Bonds of Manrent, 1442–1603* (Edinburgh, 1985), p.177.

<sup>43</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, pp.50, 70.

<sup>44</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, pp.221–2; 223–4; 225–6.

<sup>45</sup> Kirk, 'The Kirk and the Highlands at the Reformation', p.49.

<sup>46</sup> Sharon Adams, 'Wishart, Sir John, of Pittarow (d. 1585)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>47</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, pp.235–6: 14 September 1562.

<sup>48</sup> Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, i, p.389.

Scotland 1572–8, were both of the family of Pittendreich in Moray, and Morton may himself have spent time there as a young adult.<sup>49</sup>

As to leadership in the pre-Reformation church in Moray, from 1557 the dean of Moray was Mr Alexander Campbell, brother of Archibald, fourth Earl of Argyll.<sup>50</sup> Before his monastery of Scone was pillaged by protestants, Patrick Hepburn the Bishop of Moray (scion of another national kindred) was reported as minded to support the Reformation.<sup>51</sup> At Kinloss, to which was annexed Beaulieu, Mr Walter Reid was abbot from 1553 in succession to his uncle Robert. Reid, who was still a student at Paris in 1558, married Margaret Collace, of the Angus house of Balnamoon:<sup>52</sup> her brother John, son and heir of Robert of Balnamoon, was contracted in 1557 to marry Elizabeth, daughter of John Erskine of Dun. Walter Reid thus had personal connections with the protestant lairds of Angus.<sup>53</sup> He joined the Lords of Congregation in 1559 at an early stage of the revolt. While Moray was, of course, distant from Edinburgh, and the military action of the Reformation crisis took place elsewhere, messengers kept its lairds and burghs in close touch:<sup>54</sup> they participated in the intellectual world of their time and responded to the changes inaugurated in the south.

Inverness was singled out in the various Assembly remits as at the core of Pont's commission. The royal burgh was a focal point for northern trade, and progress there was important for the new church to achieve national recognition. During the summer of 1559 the friars of Inverness had placed their 'geir'—sacramental chalices and spoons, 'a litill reliquik of silver', charters and vestments—in the safekeeping of the provost, Cuthbert of Auld Castlehill, and bailies of the burgh.<sup>55</sup> A similar process was happening in other burghs in response to the protestant

<sup>49</sup> G. R. Hewitt, 'Douglas, James, fourth Earl of Morton (c.1516–1581)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>50</sup> James K. Cameron (ed.), *The First Book of Discipline* (Edinburgh, 1972), p.211.

<sup>51</sup> Kirk, 'Hepburn, Patrick (c.1487–1573)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>52</sup> *Records of the Monastery of Kinloss*, p. lvi.

<sup>53</sup> F. D. Bardgett, 'Faith, Families and Factions: The Scottish Reformation in Angus and the Mearns', University of Edinburgh, PhD. Thesis, 1987, ii, p.290: part published in F. D. Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed. The Reformation in Angus and the Mearns* (John Donald, Edinburgh 1989). Wormald, *Lords and Men*, p.97 described 'the marriage contract' as 'the weakest form of alliance.' Yet marriage at any rate facilitated the transmission of news and ideas; moreover, faced with conflicting ties of kin, land, bonds and marriage, individuals may have had greater freedom (or need) to choose for themselves: Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed* p.14. Jane A. E. Dawson, *Campbell Letters: 1559–1583* (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1997), discusses the role of marriage, pp.11–12.

<sup>54</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, pp.228–9: 10 August 1559 and 9 September 1559: Mary of Guise, Regent, to Rose of Kilravock: 'Praying you to haif yourself, your kin and freindis in reddines to cum to ws, as ye wil be aduertist be proclamatioune, in cais the Congregatioune assemble thame selfis for ony purpos aganis ws'. *Ibid.* p.230: 5 September 1560, Argyll to Rose of Kilravock, 'Forsamekle as our cousing and seruitour Maister Alexander Campbell, hes schawin ws of your guid mynd towartis him in sundre caces, and guid consall . . . for the quihilk ye sall haue our guid mynd and kyndnes efter as ye haue ado.'

<sup>55</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, p.226–7. The burgh court would later record inconclusive proceedings by the Council seeking to recover the items from the provost's heirs, following his death: *Records of Inverness*, i, p.73: 24 January 1562.



ultimatum, ‘the Beggars’ Summons’, that called upon all friars to ‘quit’ by Whitsunday. Inverness sent a representative to the Reformation Parliament of 1560, and (initially at least) took measures to prevent the payment of annual-rents due to ‘kirk men’;<sup>56</sup> the various customary parochial fees were also withheld 1559–61.<sup>57</sup> A new provost, Jasper Waus of Lochslyne, having taken office in autumn 1560, in January 1561 the burgh court instructed that a stipend should be paid to their new minister,<sup>58</sup> David Rag, a former Dominican friar.<sup>59</sup> Although conclusive local evidence has yet to be discovered, this early adoption of the beginnings of the new polity suggest that at Inverness, as in other burghs, Reformation was ‘partly due to the pre-1560 existence of protestant support.’<sup>60</sup> Neither is there evidence of active resistance to the changes in Inverness, as there was in Kirkwall.<sup>61</sup>

Huntly’s decade-long failure to manage his relations with Mary of Guise and with Mary, Queen of Scots, and also with his Moray and Highland affinity, opened a door in the north to the reformed church.<sup>62</sup> Lairds from western Moray – Grant of Freuchie, Lachlan Mackintosh of Dunachton, Fraser of Lovat, Fraser of Struie, Munro of Foulis, Kenneth Mackenzie of Kintail – defected from their previous alliances with Huntly during the crisis of 1562 that involved the seizure by the crown of the castle of Inverness and the subsequent battle of Corrichie, the death of the fourth earl, a committed catholic, and the forfeiture of the Gordons.<sup>63</sup>

During the 1562 crisis Queen Mary’s protestant half-brother, Lord James Stewart, was recognised as Earl of Moray: he appointed Innes of Drainie as his local bailie.<sup>64</sup> Having also been appointed Sheriff of Inverness in Huntly’s place after Corrichie, Moray (as he then was) held a sheriff’s court in Inverness in October 1563 that affirmed free travel on Loch Ness, increased the powers of the burgh over the timber trade, and took measures to limit damage to the forests

<sup>56</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.463.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* p.483 (Vicarage of Inverness); Kirk, ‘The Kirk and the Highlands’, p.14.

<sup>58</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.50.

<sup>59</sup> Haws, *Scottish Parish Clergy*, p.303; Haws, ‘Continuity and change’, p.96.

<sup>60</sup> Slonosky, ‘Burgh Government and Reformation: Stirling c.1530–1565’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation*, p.49.

<sup>61</sup> J. B. Craven, *History of the Church in Orkney 1558–1662* (Kirkwall, 1847) p.6; cited Frank D. Bardgett, *Two Millennia of Church and Community in Orkney* (Edinburgh, 2000) p.57.

<sup>62</sup> Barry Robertson, *Lordship and Power in the North of Scotland: The Noble House of Huntly, 1603–1690* (Edinburgh, 2011), tends to smooth over the difficulties of the fourth earl: pp.13–23.

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Bain (ed.), *Calendar State Papers Scotland*, vol.1 (1898), p.651 no.1138; *A Diurnal of remarkable occurrences that have passed within the country of Scotland since the death of King James the Fourth till the year M.D.LXXV* (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club 1833), p.73; Appendix no. XXVI ‘Diary of Queen Mary’s Journey North, 1562’ in E. C. Batten (ed.) *The Charters of the Priory of Beaulieu with notices of the Priors of Pluscardine and Ardchattan* (Edinburgh: The Grampian Club 1877), p.234 and p.321; John Anderson, *Historical Account of the Family of Frisel or Fraser, particularly Fraser of Lovat etc* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.87; Alexander Mackintosh Shaw, *Historical Memoirs of the House and Clan of Mackintosh and of the Clan Chattan* (London, 1880), p.226; Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. ii, *Correspondence*, p. 3; Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. i, *Memoirs*, p.133–4.

<sup>64</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.454.

belonging to Fraser of Struie, Lord Fraser of Lovat and the laird of Grant.<sup>65</sup> Clerk to the court was Mr Martin Logie, notary and sometime under-schoolmaster in Inverness, who would tell the burgh court he was 'fra hame on my Lord of Morray seruice' in January 1565.<sup>66</sup> We can speculate that Robert Pont, too, may have had connections with Lord James Stewart, who was Prior of Saint Andrews at the time of the Reformation there. Acceptance in Moray of the Reformation to which Lord James Stewart was personally committed must have been underpinned by his prestige as Queen Mary's trusted half-brother (1562–4) and the authority of his earldom. Moreover Moray was married to Lady Annas Keith, a daughter of William Keith, third Earl Marischal, and maintained close relations with the Douglas earls of Morton; the Douglasses and the Keiths were significant affinities along the Moray coast.<sup>67</sup>

While Innes of that ilk had been provost of Elgin in the 1540s and attended the Reformation parliament, neither Elgin nor Inverness were normally controlled by powerful lairds as their provosts in the 1550s and 1560s. In January 1560 Inverness deliberately refused to admit as a burghess Thomas Baillie, one of Huntly's deputy sheriffs.<sup>68</sup> The burghesses, whose governing coteries had multiple kinship and commercial ties to the lairds of their hinterlands,<sup>69</sup> retained a formal independence by delicate balancing acts and yet enacted policies that followed a broad consensus.<sup>70</sup> Further measures in the direction of reform were taken at Inverness following Corrichie under the new 1562–3 provost, burghess John Ross, who was a kinsman of the laird of Kilravock—the two distinct spellings of 'RoS' developed somewhat later.<sup>71</sup>

Ross's programme under nine heads (the *First Book of Discipline* also had that structure) was approved by the Head Court on 17 October 1562.<sup>72</sup> The proposals addressed long-standing concerns and attempted to reform life in Inverness, in the sense of achieving practical and necessary results. Perhaps as a response to

<sup>65</sup> '123. Act against stopping the passage of Loch Ness, and against the cutting and carrying off of green wood and growing timber from the woods belonging to John Grant of Grant and others. 17th October 1563' in Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. iii, *Charters and Miscellaneous Writs* p.128–9.

<sup>66</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.119: 13 January 1565.

<sup>67</sup> Mark Loughlin, 'Stewart, James, first earl of Moray (1531/2–1570), regent of Scotland' in ODNB.

<sup>68</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.32 and p.66.

<sup>69</sup> For example, see William Mackay (ed.), *Chronicle of the Frasers. The Wardlaw Manuscript entitled 'Polichronico seu Policratica Temporum, or, The True Genealogy of the Frasers' 916–1674 by Mr James Fraser* (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1905), p.171. The seventeenth-century 'Wardlaw Manuscript' of Mr James Fraser, minister of Wardlaw (and son of a minister of Inverness, 1649–59), claimed that in 1574 'The provost [of Inverness] Thomas Paterson, a gentleman of parts and courage, owned my Lord Lovat as his cheefe, for most of the Patersons acknowledge themselves Frasers.'

<sup>70</sup> Compare: Michael Lynch, 'Introduction', in Michael Lynch (ed.), *The Early Modern Town in Scotland* (London, 1987), p.19: 'The Reformation, which for most burghs—outside Dundee and Perth—took the form of a minority movement imposed, with varying degrees of co-operation, from outside.'

<sup>71</sup> *Genealogical Deduction* p.10.

<sup>72</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, pp.93–4: 17 October 1562.

underlying religious or factional divisions, Ross also demanded burgh unity: better enforcement of burgh law and fuller obedience to burgh authority. He threatened that disobedience could lead external intervention, as the provost would be entitled 'to meyne to the authoritie on the mysordour of the inhabitantis of the towne.'<sup>73</sup> More positively, two new Masters of Work were to be appointed: one for the bridge across the Ness, on which (with the harbour) the burgh's trade depended; and one for the burgh Kirk. Two buildings central to the community life of the burgh would thus be improved as well as its trading standards and the tone of community life.

Head of Ross's list came a novel demand:

In primis, to the glorie of God, desyris that thair be eldaris and deaconis chosin to oursie and cause puneiss the faultis contrar the law of God, sic as fornication, adultrie, drunkardis, bakbyttaris, commoun sklanderaris, and all wther sic wycis as contrar the command of God, and that the almes may be collectit be the deaconis and distribute efter thair conscience to the natyve puyeris of this burgh quha may nocht conqueiss thair lewyng wtherwais.<sup>74</sup>

That elders and deacons should be appointed in each congregation of the church was spelled out during the development of the 'Book of Discipline.' By some thought essential from the start,<sup>75</sup> this model of church government was adopted by the national leaders of the Kirk by December 1560.<sup>76</sup> How far, where, and how soon, this direction was observed across Scotland is unknown: only at St Andrews does a complete Kirk Session record exist from 1560 onwards.<sup>77</sup> In rural Monifieth, close to Dundee and dominated by the firmly protestant Durhams of Grange, the first extant evidence for a reformed ministry comes from January 1563.<sup>78</sup>

Following Queen Mary's campaign against the Earl of Huntly, the required elders and deacons were created in autumn 1562 at both Inverness and Aberdeen.<sup>79</sup> The timing is suggestive of, at least, a local response to a changed national and regional balance of power. At Inverness the innovation was presented

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.94.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.93.

<sup>75</sup> Slonosky, 'Burgh Government and Reformation' in *Scotland's Long Reformation*, p.51 and note 11.

<sup>76</sup> *The First Book of Discipline*, pp.34–9; *BUK*, i, p.5.

<sup>77</sup> Lynch, 'Preaching to the Converted?' p.321.

<sup>78</sup> F. D. Bardgett, 'Monifieth Kirk Register', *RSCHS*, 22 (1988), p.178.

<sup>79</sup> John Stuart (ed.), *Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen: The Spalding Club 1846), p.3: 'The electioun of elderis and deaconis of the congregatioun of Cryst his peple, within the burgh of Aberdene, maid in the parochie kirk of the same, in tyme of preching, the day [blank] of Nouember, yeir of God 1562, namit and pronuncit be the minister vndervrittin, admittit be the hail congregatioun present for the tyme, and acceptand the charge and office forsaid vpon thame for this present yeir, to do vse, and exercise the samen during thair office, as thai vill ansuir to God.'

as part of Ross's package to improve burgh life as a whole and in practical ways: the elders would improve the moral life of the burgh, and the deacons would care for the indigent poor. The connection between the church and the enforcement of morality had earlier been made by the General Assembly; and was, indeed (in principle) uncontroversial.<sup>80</sup> Implementation at Inverness was not for or by any self-standing congregation but rather for the whole Christian commonwealth: the Council of the Royal Burgh enacted the reform. The burgh court recorded the requisite 'election' on Sunday 21 October,<sup>81</sup> some of the formal wording paralleling the process at Aberdeen. It is dubious, however, what actual procedure was followed. It is just possible that a report of an election that took place earlier in the church was being engrossed. Whoever did the 'electing and choosing', named as elders were provost John Ross; burgh clerk William Cumming (who was clerk in 1556 when the surviving record-sequence begins);<sup>82</sup> councillor and treasurer James Paterson; and James Duff, one of the leading 'nychtbouris' whose attendance validated burghal ordinances. The deacons, too, represented the leading Waus, Dempster and Cuthbert families.<sup>83</sup> The official magistrates were very much in charge. Any influence of 'outside forces' was indirect or concealed, though Lord James Stewart's connection was surely preeminent in the region.<sup>84</sup>

Robert Pont, on arrival in Moray, was thus not presented with a blank slate. Indeed, beyond Inverness, it is suggested that there were some 'three-dozen' clergy named to congregations in 1561–2, given that the 'Accounts of the Thirds of the Benefices' showed some £1,241 set aside for stipends.<sup>85</sup> The diocese of Moray, nominally, contained 77 parishes. These appointments, such as they were, would have been local initiatives, sourced from the existing clergy, whose motivation no doubt ran on a spectrum from those who simply wished to continue in place to those who, caught up in the radical spirit of the time,

<sup>80</sup> *BUK*, i, p.51: 'December 27, 1560. The kirk appointit the electioun of the minister, elders and deacons, to be in the publick kirk, and the premonition to be made upon the Sondag preceeding the day of the electioun. The kirk appointed that to the punishment of fornication, the law of God be obiervit: Publick repentance to be made be them that sall use carnall copulation betwixt the promise and solemnization of mariage.' See also Cameron (ed.), *The First Book of Discipline*, p.166 note 10; David Patrick (ed.), *Statutes of the Scottish Church 1225–1559* (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society 1907), p.39, p.64, p.91, p.96 for the Provincial Council of 1549.

<sup>81</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, pp.94–5: 21 October 1562: 'Johne Ross, William Cuming, James Paterson, and James Duff ar electit and chosin eldaris for the space of ane yeir; Martyne Waus, Thom Waus younger, Jasper Dampster, and William Cuthbert ar electit deaconis for ane yeir, and the foirsaidis personis acceptit the said office on thaim as thai will ansuer befor God. Martyne Waus is electit and chosin maister of wark to the brig. Thomas Flemyng was electit maister of wark to the kirk, wha acceptit the samyn on him.'

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.3: 27 December 1556.

<sup>83</sup> Fraser-Mackintosh, *Invernessiana*, p. 220: 19 March 1545, listing of provost, bailies and councillors.

<sup>84</sup> Lynch, 'Preaching to the Converted?' p.322–3: 'If a general urban pattern existed, it resembled some aspects of the late city reformation in Germany, where religious reform also tended to come from the magistrates above rather than the people below, and to be linked to outside forces.'

<sup>85</sup> Kirk, 'The Kirk and the Highlands', p.13.

wanted above all to further the reforming cause. John Philp, one of the monks of Kinloss, was a Moray-bred enthusiast, to judge by the vocabulary he used.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand the vicar of Birnie, John Stanis, somewhat implausibly claimed to be serving as ‘vicar and minister of the said kirk and reader and exhorter in the said kirk.’<sup>87</sup> An important aspect of Pont’s commission was to approve or reject such claims and the December 1563 Assembly had suspended an unknown number of ‘ministers, exhorters, or readers, of the north’ pending trial of their abilities by a commissioner. That Assembly also admonished the minister of Forres: he would be replaced by 1568.<sup>88</sup>

At Moy, the parson, a canon of Elgin Cathedral, had conformed, sir William Sutherland being named as an exhorter. Like that of Stanis, Sutherland’s return in the books of Assumption showed a certain vagueness in support of the new arrangements. He sought rebates from his ‘third’ to supplement a minister’s stipend and to continue paying ‘the stallar that makis dalie residence in the cathedrall kirk of Murray’ though such service would find no place within the reformed church.<sup>89</sup> Sutherland also sought a rebate from his ‘third’ for 10 merks spent ‘the kin [thatching/roofing] of the queir of Murray and uther reformatioun within the samyn’, whatever – repair, rebuilding, redecorating, reorganising? – was intended by ‘reformatioun.’<sup>90</sup> Certainly the painted rood screen was still intact in 1640,<sup>91</sup> so the cathedral was not ‘reformed’ as Holy Trinity, St Andrews, had been – screen and altars removed, walls whitewashed.<sup>92</sup> The bishopric’s own return of its income claimed a rebate for ‘thre childir sangstarris in the quier’, suggesting that some traditional-style worship continued for a time in the cathedral.<sup>93</sup> The burgh of Elgin is first listed in national sources as having a minister, Alexander Winchester, in 1566.<sup>94</sup> Before 1560, Sutherland had, however, while technically celibate, been living with Isabel Christison. They had a daughter. The household continued after the Reformation. Commanded to marry Isabel ‘with whom he befor had committit fornication’ and to appear before the June General Assembly of 1564, Sutherland did neither

<sup>86</sup> J. H. Burton and others (eds), *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1877), i, p.680–1: John Philp related his experience to the Lords of Council: ‘Nochtwithstanding he wes ane of thame that thair remanit in tyme of papistre and rage of the antichrist, and fra tyme it plesit the Almichtie to brydill and musall up the mouth of Sathan, the said Johnne left the said place and enterit in the Lordis wyneyaird, planting the Gospell of trewth. . . .’

<sup>87</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.487.

<sup>88</sup> *Calderwood’s History*, ii, p.247.

<sup>89</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.470–1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* p.470.

<sup>91</sup> Lachlan Shaw, *The History of the Province of Moray vol.iii* (Glasgow,1882) p.291; David McRoberts, ‘Material Destruction caused by the Scottish Reformation’, *Innes Review*, 10 (1959), p.155

<sup>92</sup> Dawson, ‘Ane Perfytt Reformed Kyrk’ p.418–19.

<sup>93</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption* p.466.

<sup>94</sup> *TB*, p.193.

(public repentance would also have been required) and he was deprived for contumacy.<sup>95</sup> ‘The Commissioner of Murray’ had bought the complaint against him. Pont may have understood his initial task to be to reduce the number of those claiming to serve in the ministries of the new church.

Between 1563 and 1565 Mr Thomas Howieson became the minister of Inverness in place of David Rag. A public notary,<sup>96</sup> he was appointed one of the Common Clerks of the burgh in October 1561 when he must have been a young man—he lived to 1605 and had a forty-year ministry in Inverness. He was (already) master of the grammar school by 1 August 1562, when he asked the council what they intended after his contract expired on ‘Alhallowmes nixt’ – 1 November. A new contract for a further year, for 50 merks stipend and a system of taxation to fund the post, was agreed.<sup>97</sup> By 9 June 1565 Howieson was described as minister of Inverness,<sup>98</sup> while Mr Martin Logie was described as ‘Maister of Scule’ on 4 October 1564.<sup>99</sup> Howieson’s designation as minister did not, nevertheless, remove him from his supervision of the school for the burgh records show an intention to appoint assistant or under-masters there, Howieson entering a formal obligation to find ‘ane sufficient doctor for teching under him’ in November 1565.<sup>100</sup> Putting this jigsaw together suggests that Howieson’s call to be minister came during 1564, and that the arrangement therefore had been approved following Robert Pont’s arrival in Moray.

On 18 March 1564 Robert Pont’s authority facilitated a new stage of the Reformation at Inverness. Attendance at kirk each Sunday was compulsory, by act of the provost (John Ross), bailies and council, as was (with limited exceptions) presence at the Friday preaching:

Euerie inhabitant of this burgh, cheifle the gudeman and gudewyiff of ewerie houshald and also thair serwandis and famele so mony as may gudle, sall resort and conveyne to the parochie kirk euerilk Sundaye to the exhortationis and catechise befor nowne at ten howris and efter nowne at thre howris.<sup>101</sup>

This pattern of worship, first exhortation and then catechising, was followed at St Andrews.<sup>102</sup> Sunday became a no-trading day; regulations for the election of elders and deacons were tightened. After a census the burgh was to be divided into quarters—as was St Andrews<sup>103</sup>—to define districts for the kirk’s officials to oversee. Their duties included ensuring the proper education of children and

<sup>95</sup> *BUK*, i, p.51.

<sup>96</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.105: 26 August 1653.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.92–3: 1 August 1562.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.125: 9 June 1565.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.116: 4 October 1564.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.131–2: 2 February 1566, citing the 1565 agreement.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* i, pp.113–15.

<sup>102</sup> Dawson, ‘The Face of Ane Perfyt Reformed Kyrk’, p.424–5.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* p.426–7.

the care of the poor. Meanwhile the Council was to implement more rigorously national regulation of begging. Rebuilding the wall around the churchyard would show respect; and due obedience to authority, moral and legal, would be required by both church and burgh courts: 'It is statutit and ordanit that na persoun within the towne leid ane vicious and sklandrous lyfe in incest adulterie nor fornicatioun, and that na man opynle blasphemye God His Word and ministeris, the Quenis Maieste nor hyr officiaris of justice.'<sup>104</sup> The burgh council took care to spell out penalties for non-compliance. Non-attendance at church would be met by fines (for the benefit of the poor) increasing with each failure.

The preamble to these enactments specified that they had been drafted 'being ryplie awysit wyth assistance of the commissioner of Murray and minister of Invernes' and Pont's legal mind may be detected behind the level of detail, of which the burgh court minute only purported to contain 'the tennour.' The legislation suggests that Pont was then living in the burgh and taking a leading part in the life of the congregation, for the elders and deacons were instructed to meet weekly:

... quha sall owklike conveyne wyth the minister and commissioner or superintendant and assist thame in ordouring of publict effaris of the kirk and executioun of discipline euerie Furisdaye at tuay houris efter none in the paroche kirk of this burgh.<sup>105</sup>

The influence of the Assembly's commissioner thus sought to bring Inverness further into line with the priorities and structure of the 'Book of Discipline.' The programme, indeed, could have given the burgh a claim (if church records were still extant to show how the programme was implemented) to be among the 'best reformed kirks' in Scotland.<sup>106</sup> At Aberdeen, near-universal attendance at reformed Sunday worship was not attempted before 1573.<sup>107</sup>

Some evidence of the workings of the parish church can be found in the minutes of the court of Inverness. Before 1560 the court could sentence parties found guilty of personal offences publicly to seek the forgiveness of the victim: in 1556, Thomas Stuart was ordered 'to ask forgyfnes in presens of the communitie at the sayd Mathow', being found guilty of public contempt of bailie Matthew Paterson.<sup>108</sup> In 1557 John Skinner, having sounded off against three of the official

<sup>104</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.114.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.113.

<sup>106</sup> James Kirk, *Patterns of Reform: Continuity and Change in the Jacobean Kirk* (Edinburgh, 1989), pp.334–67; Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven, 2002), pp.31ff discusses the compulsory nature of church attendance at a somewhat later period. The Provincial Council of 1551–2 had also enacted that the population should attend 'the parish mass on days of obligation' and 'the sermon when preached in their parish church': *Statutes of the Scottish Church*, p.139.

<sup>107</sup> McMillan, 'Keeping the Kirk', p.50, p.131.

<sup>108</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.2: 21 November 1556.

trading-standards ‘tasters of ale’ was ‘desernit to pass to the mercat croce, and thair opynle sit on his kneise and ask tham forgyfnes.’<sup>109</sup> A variant, used after quarrels between women, was to instruct that, at the Market Cross, the culprit should ‘sit on her knees and say, “False Tongue, she lied”’.<sup>110</sup> As the Reformation progressed, such public repentance might take place in the parish church at a time of worship. A husband who, in 1562, accused minister Rag of adultery with his wife was ‘decernit to cum in presens of the Congregatioun on Sundaye and thair in tyme of prayaris confess opynlie his offense and aske forgyvenes at our said minister for God saik.’<sup>111</sup> Following a brawl between William Donaldson and John Dempster, who were both burgesses, Donaldson was ordered ‘to cum in presens of the congregatioun the nixt day heirefter being the thred day of Junij [1565], and thairin in the parochie kirk in tyme of preching publiclie confess his offensis and ask his brother forgyfnes for God saik.’<sup>112</sup> For such sentences to be effective, an audience was needed. The move from the public space of the Market Cross to the church during public worship suggests that good attendance was expected. Repentance ceremonies had, however, on occasion taken place in burgh churches while they were still Roman Catholic,<sup>113</sup> so these episodes, while attesting the expected audience, are evidence that church reform was expected to support burgh discipline, and not of radical innovation.

During 1567 a national ‘Registre of Ministers and their stipendis’ was compiled. It was so organised that ‘Murray’ comprised most but not all of the parishes of the bishopric: the reformers, organising oversight via superintendents and commissioners, were not committed to the former diocesan structures.<sup>114</sup> ‘Murray’ thus included Inverness, Elgin, Forres, Rothes and Keith but not Banff, which was listed with Aberdeen. The Strathbogie parishes of Aberchirder, Botarie, Drumdelgie, Dunbennan and Kinneir, and Gartly, were listed under ‘Aberdeen and Banff’; while Rhynie was listed under ‘Mar.’ Mr Robert Pont, Commissioner, headed the section in the 1567 Register listed under ‘Murray.’ His remit therefore covered, in essence, the three former deaneries of Inverness, Strathspey and Elgin and extended to Glenmoriston in the west, Laggan in the south and Kilmorack and Kiltarlity in the north, by the river Beauly. In the east, the river Spey marked the border between ‘Murray’ and ‘Abirdene and Banff.’<sup>115</sup>

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.15–16: 10 November 1557.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.33: 10 July 1559.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.71: 13 December 1562.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.125: 2 June 1565.

<sup>113</sup> *Records of Elgin*, i, p.74–5, 9 April 1543: William Sadler (and his wife) was instructed to ‘cum on Sondag nyxt cumis in tyme of the confiteor of the hee mess and thair in presens of the hail parochine beand present for the tyme sall ask the said Master Thomas forgyffnes. . . .’ The man insulted had been the parson of Mortlach, which may be why forgiveness had to be asked in a church.

<sup>114</sup> The four pre-Reformation Deaneries of the Diocese of Moray – Elgin, Inverness, Strathbogie and Strathspey – provide a useful means of describing and analysing the changes in the clergy serving the parishes after 1560 as practical geographical and social realities underlay the arrangement.

<sup>115</sup> *RM* p.58, p.63.



Beyond the burghs of Inverness and Elgin, another seven ministers were in place in 'Murray' in 1567. Mr Andrew Brown at Edinkillie and Mr Patrick Balfour at Alves had charge of single parishes. The remaining five had responsibility for more than one parish, a pattern general across rural Scotland. Of the nine ministers in the province, seven were graduates and of these three, it seems, had recently studied at St Andrews: Robert Pont's brother James held office there, so was in a position to have assisted with these placements.<sup>116</sup> Besides Brown and Balfour, Mr Andrew Simpson was at Forres linked with Altyre; and Mr John Keith, a son of the Earl Marischal, was at Duffus and Kinnedar. The Keiths were an important north-eastern protestant affinity.<sup>117</sup> Another Keith, Robert, at Urquhart, Lhanbryde and Essil had previously been a friar at Elgin. At Rafford and Kinloss, Alexander Urquhart's origins are unknown: in 1567 he was warned to 'awayit upoun his office in tymes cuming, and use himself without sclander.'<sup>118</sup> The remit given to commissioners in this period, before it was agreed that minor benefices should be presented to reformed clergy, was 'to plant, remove simpliciter, or for a reason, ministers.'<sup>119</sup> Robert Pont's active agreement (at the least) to these appointments must be assumed: they could not otherwise have been listed in the national Register.

In addition to these ministers, ten exhorters (who were also authorised to preach) were recognised in 1567. Half of these also had charge of multiple parishes. Only two of these men were graduates, but several had served in the pre-Reformation church, whether as parsons, vicars, chaplains, curates, friars or monks. James Johnston was exhorter at Birnie: he had been a notary<sup>120</sup> and a chaplain in the cathedral.<sup>121</sup> The church had been held in common by the canons, but Robert Pont was presented to its parsonage and vicarage in January 1568, and Johnston then had his stipend increased to allow for his responsibilities as 'Scribe to the Assembleis in Murray':<sup>122</sup> Johnston also served as clerk for the Head Court in Elgin in 1572 and 1573.<sup>123</sup> Pont's influence was thus not confined to Inverness. In 1572, the master of Elgin's burgh grammar school was the minister of neighbouring Alves, Mr Patrick Balfour, an arrangement paralleling Mr Howieson's oversight of education in Inverness.<sup>124</sup> The predominance of graduates in the list of ministers in 'Murray' (by contrast to their scarcity in the list of exhorters) could suggest Pont's approval of the newer, younger, educated, 'St Andrews' style of minister.

<sup>116</sup> Kirk, 'Pont, Robert (1524–1606)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>117</sup> Michael Wasser, 'Keith, William, third Earl Marischal (c.1510–1581)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>118</sup> *RM*, p.58.

<sup>119</sup> *BUK*, i, p.63: 28 June 1565.

<sup>120</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.492.

<sup>121</sup> Haws, *Scottish Parish Clergy*, p.284.

<sup>122</sup> *RM*, p.60.

<sup>123</sup> *Records of Elgin*, i, p.132: 6 October 1572; p.143: 5 October 1573.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.133: 3 November 1572.

In 1567 the nine ministers and ten exhorters of the province of 'Murray' were supplemented by a further eleven readers, 'the foot soldiers of the kirk' in its first generation.<sup>125</sup> This was a relatively high proportion of preachers to readers: 63 per cent of all appointments sustained. In 1574 the national ratio would be 40 per cent. How adequate this coverage was depended, of course, on what expectations were held of a reformed ministry. If the intention was to replace a curate saying mass in Latin with a reader reading Scripture and leading prayers in English, supplemented by occasional preaching, then this may well have been achieved quite widely.<sup>126</sup> For many of Moray's rural parishes it would have been whatever Sunday services and/or pastoral duties were conducted by the readers that represented 'the face of the kirk.' Outside of burghs, however, the 'St Andrews' model for Reformation, based on a weekly gathering of the population for preaching, worship and discipline, struggled against the realities of rural life—including 'the quality of tracks between parishes, and ministerial levels of horse-ownership.'<sup>127</sup> Even in Fife's landward areas 'the marks of the true Church [preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and church discipline] were barely visible.'<sup>128</sup> Reformers of Robert Pont's mindset nevertheless held weekly preaching to be critical: this debate would challenge the church nationally in the 1570s.<sup>129</sup>

Charles Haws concluded that in the deanery of Elgin 'the beginnings of a reformed ministry became well established as early as 1563–7.'<sup>130</sup> Including Knockando, a pendicle of Inveravon, in the count, of the 28 parishes in this deanery all but four had some form of (usually shared) reformed ministry by 1567, and of these Pluscardine (appropriated to Pluscarden priory) may have been served from Elgin,<sup>131</sup> while Ardcloch had William Brown, a former monk of Kinloss, appointed as reader in 1569. In 1567 the Elgin deanery was supplied with eight ministers, six exhorters and seven readers: a high proportion of men authorised to preach. Some parishes—Birnie, Invernairn, Rothies, Spynie—had the services of an exhorter to themselves; Dallas, Dyke, Moy and Ogston had only a reader each. Ministers regularly served linked parishes, sometimes with the support of a reader. Mr Andrew Simpson was thus minister of Forres and Altyre,

<sup>125</sup> Lynch, 'Preaching to the Converted?' p.310.

<sup>126</sup> The demands made in 1560 by the Lords of the Congregation to Donald Campbell, Abbot of Coupar, give some indication of a minimum programme: remove idols; end the mass and other monastic services; 'na prayaris to be usit in the kirk but in the Inglishe tounge. And thai according to the scriptouris of God.' Cited Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed*, p.73.

<sup>127</sup> John McCallum, 'The Reformation of the Ministry in Fife, 1560–1640', *History*, 94 (2009), pp. 313–14.

<sup>128</sup> Dawson, 'The Face of Ane Perfyrt Reformed Kyrk', p.433; and see John McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish: The Reformation in Fife, 1560–1640* (Farnham 2010) p.47.

<sup>129</sup> F. D. Bardgett, 'Four parische kirkis to ane preicheir', *RSCHS*, 22 (1986), pp.195–209 and esp. p.202–3; Lynch, 'Preaching to the Converted?' pp.306–14.

<sup>130</sup> Dawson, 'The Face of Ane Perfyrt Reformed Kyrk', p.433.

<sup>131</sup> *TB* p.218 shows Alexander Winchester as minister of Elgin and Pluscardine in 1568 and 1572.

assisted by sir John Paterson, the former vicar pensioner, as reader at Forres. The linked parishes of Urquhart, Lhanbryde and Essil had a team ministry supplied by three former friars from Elgin: Robert Keith as minister, Andrew Stronach as exhorter and John Blindscheil<sup>132</sup> as reader.

The issue of language impacted on the adequacy of the reformed ministry in Moray, in whose highlands reformed worship had to be conducted in Gaelic to achieve its purpose of congregational involvement. At Cawdor, where even by 1839 ‘the population, till recently, [was] speaking the Gaelic language’,<sup>133</sup> Allan Macintosh (Braavan & Brachlie) was listed as ‘exhorter and reader in the Irish tongue.’ The former chaplain of St Peter’s altar in the Inverness burgh church, Andrew Brabner, was listed as exhorter at neighbouring Petty in 1567, and his stipend was increased in 1568, when ‘the Yrische kirk of Inveres’ was added to his charge.<sup>134</sup> A century further on, it could be said of Inverness that ‘one halfe of the people understand not one another’<sup>135</sup> and clearly there was an attempt to offer ministry in the burgh in both languages in the later 1560s.

‘Brabner’ was Andrew’s chosen Scottish name or pseudonym. The noun signified ‘weaver,’ and so could be a nickname suitable for the traditional transmitters of Gaelic culture: Macphail, a sept of Clan Chattan, was Andrew’s Gaelic family.<sup>136</sup> He was a grandson of Paul Gow, of Clan Macphail, and he prepared a manuscript ‘History of Clan Chattan.’<sup>137</sup> In 1571 Campbell of Cawdor would make a manrent bond with Macphail of Muckairn and Jane Dawson comments that the ‘interconnection between kin, clan and Kirk’ can be ‘seen very clearly’ in links later in the century between Cawdor and the Macphails, ‘members of the learned orders [that is, of Gaelic society] who specialised in serving the Church.’<sup>138</sup> That two of the exhorters nearest to Cawdor (Cawdor being an alternative name for Braaven)<sup>139</sup> were known as Gaelic-speaking cannot be coincidental. Both the fourth and fifth earls of Argyll gave very considerable personal support and ‘lavish endowment’ to John Carswell, superintendent of Argyll and translator of the *Book of Common Order* into

<sup>132</sup> *Records of Elgin*, i, p.131: 3 September 1572: ‘Jhone Blindschein, sumtyme ane of the freiris predicatouris of Elgin.’

<sup>133</sup> John Grant, ‘Parish of Pettie’ in *New Statistical Account*, vol. xiv, *Inverness—Ross and Cromarty* (Edinburgh, 1834), pp.373, p.383–4, p.377.

<sup>134</sup> *RM* p.60; *TB* p.217.

<sup>135</sup> Mackay, *Life in Inverness*, p.9; and on the general use of Gaelic, pp.7–9.

<sup>136</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.81: 18 July 1562: ‘Andro McFaill alias Brebnar notar public is requerit in jugement to produce his prothogoll’. *Ibid.* i, p.229 in July 1573 described him as ‘Androw McPhaill, minister in the Erse toung of Innernis and Pettie.’

<sup>137</sup> ‘Andrew Macphail’, Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotticae, Volume vi, Synods of Aberdeen and Moray*, new edition (Edinburgh, 1926), p.411.

<sup>138</sup> Jane Dawson, ‘Clan, Kin and Kirk: the Campbells and the Scottish Reformation’ in N. Scott Amos and others (eds), *The Education of a Christian Society: Humanism and the Reformation in Britain and the Netherlands* (Aldershot, 1999), p.236–7.

<sup>139</sup> Kirk, *Books of Assumption*, p.485.

Gaelic.<sup>140</sup> Again, however, Robert Pont's insistence to the General Assembly that his influence as commissioner would be lessened by his inability to speak Gaelic<sup>141</sup> paradoxically shows his understanding that the reformed church ought to make the scriptures available in the language of the hearer: that a Gaelic ministry was needed for Gaels. Ideally, commissioners and superintendents were expected to itinerate, to visit and to preach;<sup>142</sup> Pont's lack of Gaelic must, as he recognised it would, have substantially limited his effectiveness. In the former deanery of Inverness a nominal total of 18 parishes had for staff in 1567 only one minister (Mr Howieson in Inverness itself), three exhorters and three readers. A number of parishes – Conveth, Dalarossie, Dalcross, Farnua, Kiltarlity, Wardlaw – would not be included in the national registers of clergy until 1574, and then only in large linked charges.

The worst served deanery of the diocese of Moray, 1560–7, Charles Haws noted, was that of Strathspey.<sup>143</sup> Available evidence, however, makes it difficult to know who actually was serving Strathspey's parishes before the Reformation,<sup>144</sup> and if few men were in place before 1560, evidently what was elsewhere a major source for reformed recruitment did not exist in this deanery. Only two staff, serving four parishes, were listed in 1567.<sup>145</sup> Technically 13 parishes existed, though Kingussie and Insh were a joint prebend of the cathedral. So too were Cromdale and Advie, while Abernethy, Alvie, Kincardine and Laggan were held in common by the canons. Duthil, Inverallan and Rothiemurchus were mensal, appropriated to the Bishop of Moray. Inveravon was linked with Urquhart as the prebend of the chancellor. Curates, at the least, should have served locally: Mr James Farquharson, curate of Cromdale and notary, wrote the testament of James Grant, third of Freuchie, in 1553.<sup>146</sup> It seems possible, however, with this diffusion of responsibilities, that the buildings themselves were small and in poor repair.<sup>147</sup> When Grant of Freuchie chose a building in which to hold a family meeting he preferred Cromdale Church, despite the fact that his castle, Balnachastell, was closer to Inverallan and on the other side of the Spey from Cromdale.<sup>148</sup> The former friar of Elgin, William Simson, was reader jointly (and so untypically) at Cromdale and Inverallan in 1568: it seems possible that Inverallan had fallen out of use before 1560. As in the deanery of Inverness, some of the smaller church buildings of Strathspey – Kincardine, Insh, Advie – may

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* pp.229–33.

<sup>141</sup> *BUK*, i, p. 44: 30 December 1563.

<sup>142</sup> Dawson, 'The Face of Ane Perfyt Reformed Kyrk', p.433.

<sup>143</sup> Haws, 'Continuity and Change. The clergy of Moray', p.97.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* p.94.

<sup>145</sup> *RM* p.61–2: John Glass, 'reidar and exhorter in the Irsche toung' at Abernethy and Kingussie; Alexander Clerk, reader at Laggan and Alvie.

<sup>146</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. iii Charters*, p.111.

<sup>147</sup> See, Anonymous, 'The Lamentation of Lady Scotland', in J. Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society 1843), i, p.232, with reference to rural Angus. Discussed Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed*, pp.106–7.

<sup>148</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. iii Charters*, p.157.

have had only occasional use or have been physically unsuited for the sort of congregational worship postulated by the Reformation.<sup>149</sup> The parsonage of 'Kincardine in Strathspey' was granted during Moray's regency to Alexander Stewart, a student for the ministry at St Andrews, rather than to support a locally active ministry.<sup>150</sup> Strathspey may have lacked both suitable church buildings and available clergy before and after 1560.<sup>151</sup>

The use of military force that accompanied the political instability following Queen Mary's marriage to Darnley took place, on the whole, south of Moray. Nevertheless it had its impact in the north as Mary restored George Gordon to his earldom after he had brought 'the whole force of the north' to support her in opposition to Moray and his allies.<sup>152</sup> As the fifth earl, however, was—unlike his father and his own heir—a nominal protestant,<sup>153</sup> the renewed ascendancy of Huntly as Chancellor in 1566 did not inaugurate a counter-Reformation in Moray. Rather, the Queen's lords sought to exploit the church's wealth and prestige.

George Gordon, fifth Earl of Huntly, had a ready-made affinity waiting to be reactivated. John Grant of Freuchie was noted as fighting in Huntly's company at Holyrood when David Riccio was murdered in March 1566.<sup>154</sup> On his side, Huntly confirmed Grant's possession of Rothiemurchus by charter during 1566.<sup>155</sup> In February 1569 Huntly also (purported) to award the commendatorship of Kinloss to Grant, Walter Reid having been proclaimed a rebel.<sup>156</sup> Mackintosh of Dunachton, too, renewed relations with the Gordons and may have fought with them at Langside; he would obtain grants of land from Huntly in 1568.<sup>157</sup> During the rapidly-changing political fortunes of 1567—the recall of Moray and the 'Chaseabout lords', the murder of Darnley, Mary's marriage to James Hepburn, fourth Earl of Bothwell, their defeat at Carberry in June 1567 and her imprisonment at Loch Leven—once more the main military action took place in the south. Huntly consistently supported the Queen, though not Bothwell, and before Carberry a number in the north-east felt the cost

<sup>149</sup> Dawson, 'The Face of Ane Perfyt Reformed Kyrk', pp.420–1; McMillan, 'Keeping the Kirk', p.44; p.145.

<sup>150</sup> RSS, vi, 679.

<sup>151</sup> Compare: Elizabeth Rhodes, 'Property and Piety: Donations to Holy Trinity Church' in *Scotland's Long Reformation*, p.48.

<sup>152</sup> CSP Scot, ii, p.221; cited in White, 'Queen Mary's Northern Province', p.65.

<sup>153</sup> White, 'Queen Mary's Northern Province', p.65.

<sup>154</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. i Memoirs*, pp.136–8, citing 'A relation of the death of David Rizzi ... written by the Lord Ruthen' in George Innes (ed.), *Tracts illustrative of the traditional and historical antiquities of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1836), pp.345–6.

<sup>155</sup> Cathcart, *Kinship and Clientage*, p.152.

<sup>156</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. i Memoirs*, p.140.

<sup>157</sup> Alexander Mackintosh, *Historical Memoirs of the House and Clan of Mackintosh and of the Clan Chattan* (London, 1880), p.228.

of opposing the Gordons.<sup>158</sup> Mary's abdication having been secured/compelled, however, her infant son James was crowned King with Moray as Regent in July 1567. Meanwhile Huntly was conferring with his friends in the north by means of a confidential agent.<sup>159</sup>

Following Mary's escape from Loch Leven in May 1568, nine earls, including Huntly, Argyll and Rothes, and a large number of other notables signed a bond to re-establish her sovereign authority.<sup>160</sup> During September she again appointed Huntly as her lieutenant in the north, and he signed a bond of alliance with the northern lairds to uphold her legitimate rule. On his part, Huntly also promised better management 'faithfully never to take agreement, concord, nor dreiss with nane now disobeyers of the queens majesties autoritie, but be the advyse of the noblemen and barrens under subcryvand.'<sup>161</sup> John Grant of Freuchie headed the list of 46 subscribers to this bond. Besides 15 Gordons they included Sir Alexander Dunbar of Westfield and Cumnock, Ross of Balnagowan, Monro of Foulis, Mackintosh of Dunachton, Cheyne of Essilmont, Rose of Kilravock, Cumming of Altyre, Innes of that ilk, Barclay of that ilk, Fraser of Struie and five Leslies but no Keiths. The fifth Earl of Huntly had restored the Gordon affinity in Moray and he remained, 1568 to 1572, a major power across northern Scotland. Working in alliance with, especially, Argyll, Huntly's bond was framed in constitutional and not religious terms. As in the later sixteenth century, in Moray 'it was unusual for men . . . to be motived to act from religious conviction alone.'<sup>162</sup>

During the remainder of 1568 therefore, under Huntly's direction, forces loyal to Queen Mary secured control of both Inverness and Aberdeen, and of all lands between these two major royal burghs, and ventured south into the Mearns and Angus. A 1569 precept issued under the authority of the King's Regent would describe and date these actions of the year before, explicitly naming Inverness and Aberdeen as locations of 'thair tressonabill taking of armes and cuming to the feildis with displayit baneris.'<sup>163</sup> At Aberdeen, armed force had been used in August 1568 to secure the burgh for the Queen: the provost's house was, for a

<sup>158</sup> Gordon Donaldson, *All the Queen's Men: Power and Politics in Mary Stewart's Scotland* (London, 1983), p.82.

<sup>159</sup> *Genealogical Deduction* p.249: 15 July 1567. 'Rycht trest freind, efter maest hertlie commendatioun; forsamekill as I . . . hes send this berar to yow to declair yow forther of my mynd, desyryng ye will declair your mynd towartis me to him, . . . Gif ferm credence to the berar, with quhome I desyre your ansuer; and God be your keipar. Off Bog of Geycht the xv day of Julii 1567. Your guid freind Huntlye.'

<sup>160</sup> Donaldson, *All the Queen's Men*, p.90–1 and appendix E, p.165.

<sup>161</sup> 'XVIII. Copie of ane band for the Queen's service–1568'[undated beyond 'at [blank] the [blank] dayes respective 1568'], / 'Papers from the Charter Chest of the Duke of Richmond at Gordon Castle', *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, iv, pp.156–7.

<sup>162</sup> Ruth Grant, 'George Gordon, sixth Earl of Huntly and the Politics of the Counter-Reformation in Scotland, 1581–1595', University of Edinburgh, PhD thesis, 2010, p.20.

<sup>163</sup> '133. Precept for a Remission to John Grant of Freuchie and others, for accession the Earl of Huntly's rebellion. 3 July 1569' in Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. iii Charters*, p.137.

time, besieged.<sup>164</sup> Details of any similar actions at Inverness are unknown, but the irregular promotion of Alexander Baillie to provost was contemporary with Huntly's campaign.<sup>165</sup> During the autumn the burgh court framed accusations of various civil crimes against those who troubled 'the Queen's leiges'.<sup>166</sup> Military action in March 1569 found an echo in the Inverness court, when two men 'troubled the town . . . and rasit the towne in feayr be resson of this trublous wardill and the feyr that this towne standis in instantle.'<sup>167</sup> At least one of the burgesses had been away in the Queen's service; he complained a neighbour had taken over some of his land in his absence.<sup>168</sup>

During summer 1569, Huntly and his affinity came to terms with James Stewart, Earl of Moray. Defeated at Langside in May 1568, Queen Mary had fled to England. Moray followed her to seek Queen Elizabeth's support for his regency. After much diplomacy and the purported English quasi-judicial investigation into Darnley's murder, Moray returned to Scotland in January 1569 as Regent while Mary remained under detention in England. On 24 April Moray sent out a summons to gather supporters in Inverness on 1 June under the command of the Earl of Caithness and Lord Fraser of Lovat.<sup>169</sup> The Regent wrote to Rose of Kilravock (whom he had on 7 October 1566 appointed as bailie of his lands in Strathnairn)<sup>170</sup> to insist that by coming to Inverness, Rose would 'declair your self ane earnist fauorare of the King our soueranis auctorite, to the obedience quhairof in the end all men man be brocht.'<sup>171</sup> Moray's heavy hand imposed heavy fines and brought immediate results, as the author of the *Diurnal* reported:

And thairefter he past to Elgin and Innernes, quhair in lyikwyse the assistaris of the said erle of Huntlie wer callit; . . . thair wes nane within the boundis of the north bot thai wer subdewit to the kingis auctorities, and wer compellit to acknowledge the samin.<sup>172</sup>

A 'Band to the King' was signed in April 1569 by 65 lords and lairds, headed by Huntly and including John Grant of Freuchie, Colin Mackenzie of Kintail, Alexander Ross of Balnagowan, Lachlan Mackintosh of Dunachton, Robert Munro of Foulis, Alexander Sutherland of Duffus and Hugh Rose of Kilravock. The 'Band' to acknowledge the rule of James VI and his Regent was expressed in as forceful language as might be devised,<sup>173</sup> and the local leadership of Grant of

<sup>164</sup> White, 'Queen Mary's Northern Province', p.67.

<sup>165</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.309.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.167: 2 November 1568.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.175: 12 March 1569.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.175: 31 March 1569.

<sup>169</sup> *RPC*, i, p.657.

<sup>170</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, p.246-7: 7 October 1566.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* p.250: 24 April 1569.

<sup>172</sup> *Diurnal*, p.144-5.

<sup>173</sup> *RPC*, i, p.653-4.

Freuchie was recognised by the requirement that he offer a hostage and sign an additional personal submission, humbly desiring 'mercie and pardoun' from the Regent on 7 June 1569.<sup>174</sup> The bond of 1568 had, for the time, been entirely overturned.

During his presence in Moray, the Regent took measures to restore the finances and authority of the reformed church. Of the ten presentations (1567–74) of parsonages or vicarages to ministers, exhorters or readers within Pont's province, and directed to the commissioner (or superintendent) of Moray, five were dated within this period of James Stewart's ascendancy as Regent.<sup>175</sup> At Elgin, on 24 June, the Lords dealt with a complaint from the Collector of Thirds in Moray, that the third from the priory of Pluscarden had not been paid since 1567. Process was also begun against James Annand, provost of Elgin and his bailies, for not enforcing legislation against Sunday markets and that required burghs to expel 'all sic personis as war knawin commoun huris and harlottis.'<sup>176</sup> Once more, the enforcement of morality was singled out for attention; and, again, Elgin was apparently considered to be unacceptably unenthusiastic.

Yet further reversals occurred following the murder of James Stewart, Earl of Moray and Regent, in January 1570. When the Earl of Lennox claimed the Regency with English support in July, Huntly and Argyll resumed lieutenancies in the north and west on the exiled Mary's behalf, in support of her appointment of the Hamilton Duke of Chatelherault as her Regent. The 'Band' of April 1569 had died with Moray. Fraser of Lovat, one of the deceased Regent's more consistent allies, now settled with Huntly, receiving a promise of the priory of Beaully and exchanging a mutual bond of service.<sup>177</sup> During the civil war that followed, Huntly based himself in the burgh of Aberdeen while Adam Gordon of Auchindoun controlled Moray on his behalf. Argyll, however, returned to the King's party during the summer of 1571. The accession to power of James Douglas, fourth Earl of Morton, following the death of Lennox in a skirmish (September 1571) and the subsequent regency of John Erskine, Earl of Mar, led to a slow defeat of Mary's supporters. On Mar's own death (October 1572) Morton took over the regency for James VI. Chatelherault, Huntly and other Marian magnates signed the Pacification of Perth in February 1573, once more accepting the authority of King James. Auchindoun was driven into exile and the King's government resumed control of Moray. George Gordon, fifth Earl of Huntly, died in 1576;<sup>178</sup> his heir, George the sixth earl, would not return to Scotland from

<sup>174</sup> '132. Submission and obligation by John Grant of Freuchie to the Regent Murray, seventh June 1569' in Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant vol. iii Charters*, p.136.

<sup>175</sup> RSS, vi, nos. 112, 644, 653, 659, 670, 810, 978, 1505, 1727, 1894.

<sup>176</sup> RPC, ii, p.64.

<sup>177</sup> 'Appendix XXXI, Contract Betuix My Lord Huntly And Lord Lowet, 1570, Aberdeen 26 July 1570' in Edmund C. Batten (ed.), *The Charters of the Priory of Beaully with notices of the Priors of Pluscardine and Ardochattan* (Edinburgh: The Grampian Club 1877), p.264, p.323.

<sup>178</sup> White, 'Gordon, George, fifth Earl of Huntly (d. 1576)' in ODNB.



France until 1581 and took time to develop his personal, national and regional strategies.<sup>179</sup>

During this period when the right to rule was disputed between the King's and Queen's regents, pressure was placed on Moray's ministers to decide which side they would support. Huntly's administration intercepted the payments of the thirds of the benefices from which many ministers and readers were paid. The [King's regents'] accounts of the collectors of the thirds thus show sums of hundreds of pounds as 'intromitted with by George, erle of Hunthlie' in 1568 and 1572; others 'at the horn' for non-payment of thirds to the King in this period included Grant of Freuchie, Cumming of Altyre, Rose of Kilravock and Dunbar of Cumnock.<sup>180</sup> Financial pressure could thus be brought to secure the loyalty of the protestant clergy for the Queen. Judicial pressure was also applied. In December 1571, the minister of Elgin, Alexander Winchester, wrote to Robert Pont formally to seek his advice, perhaps actually to excuse himself in advance.<sup>181</sup> Huntly's lieutenant in Moray, Adam Gordon of Auchindoun, together with the hereditary sheriff of Elgin and Forres, Dunbar of Cumnock, was holding a justice ayre in the name of Mary, Queen of Scots, and had summoned Winchester and other ministers for treason, as they had failed publicly to pray for the Queen as her government had instructed. The 1570 General Assembly, of which Pont was Moderator, had instructed ministers to pray for the King.<sup>182</sup> Pont's answer to Winchester has not survived. Paradoxically, the incident reveals the value placed by the Queen's government on the public support of the parish clergy.

At Inverness, James Paterson had been chosen provost in 1564, 1565, 1566 and 1567; he was provost again in 1570, 1571 and 1572; and again in 1576.<sup>183</sup> This was the man whose 'election' as an elder of the burgh kirk had been recorded in 1562, while provost in 1569 was William Cuthbert, one of the deacons of 1562.<sup>184</sup> In December 1570 Paterson was described as 'James Patersone prowest of the burcht of Innernis, procurator for ane nobill and potent Lord George Erie of Huntle Lord Gordoun and Baidyenocht, schiref principall of Innernis.' The action was to enforce an earlier (undated) decision of a sheriff court held 'befoir Williame Cuthbert prowest of Innernis and juge dirigat be our Soueranes commissioun' that had convicted 'Donald Farquharson and Margret Nykeachin his sister wyth the rest of thame quha was convictit of the violence.'<sup>185</sup> What 'the violence' was,

<sup>179</sup> Grant, 'George Gordon, sixth Earl of Huntly', pp.35–50, p.63.

<sup>180</sup> *TB*, pp.213–17.

<sup>181</sup> *Collections upon the Lives of the Reformers and Most Eminent Ministers*, i, p.169–70.

<sup>182</sup> *Calderwood's History*, iii, p.3: '5. It was ordeanned, . . . that ministers, after their publict sermons, pray publictlie for the preservatioun of his Majestie's persoun and autoritie; with certificatioun, that all suche as sall be found negligent or disobedient sall be punished, as the Assemblie sall thinke expedient;' *Ibid.* p.9: '9. Ministers sall pray for the king's Majestie, according to the act made in this Assemblie, and for revenge of the regent's murther, notwithstanding they be charged by anie privat men to desist.' 5 July 1570.

<sup>183</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.309.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* i, pp.94–5: 21 October 1562.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.197: 13 December 1570.

however, was not specified: the process involved establishing the value of fines relative to the post-harvest prices of food. Clearly the Queen's justice was being upheld by both provosts Cuthbert and Paterson; equally Paterson was able to serve as provost under a variety of regimes: not just Huntly but, earlier, Moray and, later, Morton.<sup>186</sup>

In December 1569 the Inverness burgh court recognised the validity of a divorce obtained by Jonat Cuthbert (on the grounds of adultery by her husband) pronounced by authority of Mr Robert Pont and Mr Alexander Douglas, 'commissaris of Elgin.'<sup>187</sup> Pont's authority was again recognised in October 1570 when the burgh court instructed that 'It is statut and ordanit be the prowest bailies and cunsall that the superintendent and minister elect and cheis four honest men of this burcht eldaris and deaconis and that for ordour putting to the fornicatouris.'<sup>188</sup> The description of Pont as 'superintendent' was realistic, if not entirely accurate; neither was the process of 'election' of the kirk's elders, as described, apparently orthodox. How far the ordinance was restoring lapsed practices or innovating is also unclear. It came in the record together with recognition by the court of the rights of the cordiner and skinner crafts to elect their own deacons.<sup>189</sup> The jurisdiction of the crafts within the overall framework of burgh life<sup>190</sup> seems to have been accepted as a suitable parallel for the moral jurisdiction of the church's own officebearers over the inhabitants of Inverness. Howieson and his elders followed up their moral remit. In February 1571 he appeared before the burgh court: 'Mr. Thomas Howesoun minister of Innernis productit in jugement ane decretit gewin and grantit be the minister eldaris and deaconis contrar all the fornicatouris of this burcht, desyrand the jugis to interpone thair autorite thairto and to put the said decretit to executioun in all pointtis.'<sup>191</sup>

Next, Robert Pont himself took up the issue, requesting that the burgh court give not nominal but actual, practical, support for the church in Inverness—for both its moral authority and its building.<sup>192</sup> The incident demonstrated the negotiation by Inverness's burgh coterie of the various claims made upon them. During 1571 they recognised the claims of the fifth Earl of Huntly to be Queen Mary's lieutenant in the north and sheriff of Inverness-shire. They also recognised as legitimate the authority of Robert Pont as the senior churchman in their burgh,

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.248: 30 April 1576.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.181: 23 December 1569.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.195: 28 October 1570.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.194: 28 October 1570.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.195: 30 October 1570.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.198: 10 February 1571.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.201–2: 2 June 1571: 'Comperit in jugement Mr. Robert Poynt superintendent of Murraye and proponit to the prowest and baillies his formar petitioun concernyng the fornicatouris and reparaling of the kirk, and desyrit thame to mak actis bayth concernyng the tane and the tother ... And inlykewais concernyng the kirk as thai that promest to reparaill the samyn sasone as thai mocht, and the said superintendent hes promest to laubour McIntoische to get his kyndness of the ruff of the Freyouris kirk to reparaill the ower kirk callit the parochie kirk.'

holding his appointment from a church that had crowned King James VI. They were aware, too, of the practical power of their neighbours, the lairds of the province. Lachlan Mackintosh, captain of Clan Chattan, held lands both south and east of Inverness.<sup>193</sup> It appears he controlled the building materials that might be removed from the (former) friars' church in Inverness and used to refurbish the burgh kirk.<sup>194</sup>

Between 1554 and 1583 only three men are known to have served as provosts of Elgin: William Gaderar (1557–8); Mr. Alexander Douglas (1554–7, 1559–61, 1568–9 and 1574–5); and John Annand 'of Morristoun' (1565–8, 1569–74, 1575–83).<sup>195</sup> If a pattern can be seen from these dates, the years when Douglas was provost could be years when the influence of James Douglas, Earl of Morton, was rising nationally. Conversely, Annand was provost when the influence of the fifth Earl of Huntly was strong in Moray. Annand had, earlier, been common clerk of the burgh in 1550<sup>196</sup> and of the Bishop's court in 1552.<sup>197</sup> It may be that he was suitably pliable, able to cooperate—as his counterparts in Inverness did—with both sides. Elgin, it has been suggested, frequently had notaries as provost, men of some wealth, valued for that and for their abilities rather than for 'any great power or influence.'<sup>198</sup> Head Courts with John Annand as provost enacted programmes of ordinances but, unlike Inverness in the 1560s, these were confined to practical matters: trading standards, prices, locations for booths. A measure of cooperation between the council and the kirk was indicated by the listing of the minister, Alexander Winchester, among the officials presiding at the Head Court of October 1571.<sup>199</sup> In 1572 the wife of George Skadkail was condemned to undergo a public repentance ceremony in the burgh church: 'in presens of the minister and congregatioun within the parochie kirk of this burgh.'<sup>200</sup> James Johnston, clerk to Pont's superintendent's court, was also an Elgin burgh clerk in 1572. Life in the burgh appears to have been, as far as possible, a matter of business as usual, though not of progress towards a deeper Reformation.

Having to draw conclusions about the impact of the Reformation in Inverness and Elgin from the minutes of their burgh courts constricts hindsight almost exclusively to the purposes and remit of those courts, which included oversight of the public morality and especially the honesty of speech and of sexual relations. Public slander could lead to breaches of the peace; uncertain paternity threatened succession to property and burgess rights. Yet, while recognising the limitations of available evidence, improving the enforcement of morality does seem to have

<sup>193</sup> R. W. Munro, Jean Munro, 'Mackintosh family (*per. c.* 1491–1606)' in *ODNB*.

<sup>194</sup> Above, n.192.

<sup>195</sup> *Records of Elgin*, ii, appendix N, p.475–6.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.103: 6 October 1550.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.115: 13 June 1552.

<sup>198</sup> Jane E. Thomas, 'Elgin notaries in burgh society and government, 1540–1660', *Northern Scotland*, 13 (1993), p.27.

<sup>199</sup> *Records of Elgin*, i, p.128.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.131: 23 June 1572.

been a priority in Reformation Scotland. The December 1567 Parliament that re-approved the 1560 Confession of Faith also enacted stringent measures against 'the filthy vice of fornication.'<sup>201</sup> Reformation history is often focused on theology; for the leading burgesses of Inverness, however, their adoption of reformed practice was cast in terms of its practical effectiveness in upholding and enforcing communal order and social discipline. Contemporaries may have assessed the changes in church ritual and procedure accepted at Inverness after 1560 (and sometime later, it seems, at Elgin) by more utilitarian criteria than enthusiasts preferred.<sup>202</sup>

One impact of the civil war on Moray was an increase of local conflict between the lairds, lacking effective authority to restrain them. Perhaps following a policy of divide and rule, Huntly had entered contracts with both Grant of Freuchie (in July 1567) and Mackintosh of Dunachton (in March 1569) for Rothiemurchus.<sup>203</sup> Grant remained in possession, however, and in August 1569 obtained a commission of justiciary from the King's regent Moray to hang a number of Gaelic-named raiders of the lands of Rothiemurchus and Glencairnie.<sup>204</sup> John Grant of Freuchie infeft his son Patrick in Rothiemurchus around 1574.<sup>205</sup> By 1584, however, when John of Freuchie made his will, he left 'the haill guidis, geir' etc to Patrick because his son 'had been much inquietit in the possession' of his lands and 'to support the said Patrick in his trubillis.' Mackintosh would only finally surrender his claim to Rothiemurchus in 1586.<sup>206</sup>

Other land-related disputes also resulted in local violence. Mackenzie of Kintail, supported by Grant of Freuchie and Mackintosh of Dunachton, claimed the castle and chanonry of Ross on the Black Isle by right of a charter from the Bishop of Ross; Munro of Foulis, supported by Fraser of Lovat, counter-claimed rights awarded by Regent Moray.<sup>207</sup> Colin Campbell, Lord of Lorn and heir of Argyll, intervened in 1573 to instruct Rose of Kilravock to notify Lorn's Strathnairn tenants they should not answer a call from Mackintosh to

<sup>201</sup> *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, K. M. Brown and others (eds) (St Andrews: online 2007–2017), A1567/12/13: *The Actis of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh: R. Lekpreveck 1568), ff.13r–v.

<sup>202</sup> Elizabeth Rhodes, 'Property and piety: donations to Holy Trinity Church, St Andrews' in *Scotland's Long Reformation*, p.48: 'This paradox of denominational change combined with a striking continuity of a strong religious identity raises the question of whether confessional loyalties were actually the most fundamental aspect of a town or parish's religious experience.' Slonosky, 'Burgh Government and Reformation' in *Scotland's Long Reformation*, p.53.

<sup>203</sup> *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, iv, p.226; Mackintosh, *The Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan* p.229.

<sup>204</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant i Memoirs* p.155; *iii Charters* p.139–40: '135. Commission of Justiciary to John Grant of Freuchie and Duncan Grant his son, for the trial of George McYntagart and others. 16th August 1569.'

<sup>205</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant i Memoirs* p.153; *Chiefs of Grant iii Charters* p.139–40.

<sup>206</sup> Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. i, *Memoirs* p.152: will dated 24 November 1584; '150. Agreement between John Grant of Freuchie and Lachlan McIntosh of Dunachtane. 14th June 1586', Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant iii Charters* p.158–9.

<sup>207</sup> Mackintosh, *The Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan* p.232.

support Mackenzie.<sup>208</sup> Mackintosh also sought possession of the bishopric lands of Ardersier. Mackintosh and Campbell of Cawdor agreed jointly to harry the tenants, but Cawdor then acquired the lands for himself and found himself harried by Mackintosh raids through the 1570s.<sup>209</sup> By 1573 it was arranged by the King's government and the Earl of Huntly that Alexander, the new Earl of Sutherland, should be invested in his Inverness-shire lands by a process held not at Inverness but in Aberdeen, because 'many barons and gentlemen of the sheriffdom . . . were at deadly feud among themselves.'<sup>210</sup>

Suppressing such local feuding was not assisted by the fact that the sheriff of Elgin and Forres, Alexander Dunbar of Cumnock, was one of the offenders. A complaint raised against him with the Privy Council in early 1574 narrated:

That quhair it is notourlie knawin to my Lord Regentis Grace and Lordis of Secreit Counsall that Alexander Dunbar frank tenementar of Cumknok, Sheref of Elgin and Fores, hes during all the tyme of the lait troublis plainlie rebellit aganis oure Soverane Lord and his autoritie, and as yit hes not subject himself to his Majesties obedience, nor ressavit his Hienes favour; bot plainlie contempnand all gude lawis and ordinances, hes usurpit ane tyrannical jurisdiction of the said Schereship and of the Provestrie of the Burgh of Fores, drawand ane greit nowmer of our Soverane Lordis meane subjectis to a rebelloun aganis his Majestie and his autoritie, and to a plane seditioun in the cuntrie quhair he dwellis.<sup>211</sup>

This narrative being compiled by Dunbar's accusers, it no doubt overstated its case. Nevertheless, its general accuracy as to the fragmentation of power in Moray in the years before 1574, and of Dunbar's control of the burgh of Forres, may be accepted. Mr Andrew Simpson, however, remained minister of Forres (in a variety of parish groupings) from 1568–80.

As the civil wars came to an end and a unitary government was restored, the Inverness burgh court was able to demand better obedience: whether to itself, local trading standards, or the kirk. William Cuthbert, provost 1573–4, made a resumption of burgh discipline the hallmark of a proclamation of 12 December 1573.<sup>212</sup> On 23 January 1574, notice was given that fornicators and adulterers would not be heard by the court—and so would be unable to defend their own interests—to the tyme thai be reformit.<sup>213</sup> Then on 3 February came an edict that 'all the inhabitantis of this burcht to cum to the kirk vpon the Sabot day'—a

<sup>208</sup> *Genealogical Deduction* p.262–3: 28 June 1573.

<sup>209</sup> Mackintosh, *The Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan* p.233–4.

<sup>210</sup> *Origines Parochiales Scotiae. The Antiquities Ecclesiastical and Territorial of the parishes of Scotland, volume second. In Tivo Parts. Part ii* (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club 1855) p.668.

<sup>211</sup> *RPC*, i, p.353: 27 April 1574.

<sup>212</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.232: 12 December 1573.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.233: 23 January 1574.

re-enactment of the 1564 requirement but with steeply increased and increasing fines for disobedience.<sup>214</sup> On 6 November 1574 the minister of Inverness demanded these ordinances be further strengthened by giving notice that couples who, after due warning, failed to show repentance and to marry, would have their houses, owned or let, demolished.<sup>215</sup> Processes against sexual offenders continue to occur in the records of the burgh court of Inverness with increasing stringency into the 1580s.

Robert Pont's presence in Moray was limited during the civil war. He was Moderator of the General Assembly held in Edinburgh in July 1570 and was commissioned, 'with the assistance of the kirk session of Elgin' to proceed 'after due admonitions, to excommunicatioun against Patrik Bishop of Murrey.'<sup>216</sup> New, southern, responsibilities came his way: he was now regularly chosen a member of deputations to confer with Regent Morton on church matters and was given exceptional permission to become a senator of the College of Justice while remaining a minister.<sup>217</sup> In January 1572, however, he reported to the Assembly that 'through the troubles raised in the north' 'he was not able to travell there in his commissiounary.'<sup>218</sup> That month he was appointed to the Provostry of Trinity College, Edinburgh – it was potentially a ministerial post in a former collegiate church, but the move was presumably designed to secure him a southern-based income.<sup>219</sup> The Assembly of March that year gave temporary authority to a Moray man, Mr John Keith, parson of Duffus.<sup>220</sup> By March 1573 Pont was again commissioner for Moray,<sup>221</sup> but he was accused in August 1573 – presumably by a minister from his own area – of failure to do his 'day-job.' Perhaps, too, there was resentment that the commissioner had not borne the 'heat of the day' with his subordinates:

Mr Robert Pont, Commissioner of Murrey, was delated for non-residence in Murrey; for not visiting kirks these two yeeres bygane, except Innernesse, Elgine, and Forresse; for not assigning manses and gleebes, according to the act of parliament. He alledged, he had no leasure.<sup>222</sup>

The accusation does add further weight to the conclusion that the 'St Andrews' style of Reformation pursued by Pont as commissioner was more suited to the

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.233: 3 February 1574.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* i, p.240: 6 November 1574.

<sup>216</sup> *Calderwood's History*, iii, p.6.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.* iii, p.38, p.168, p.169, p.171, p.219, p.220, p.274, p.275, p.277.

<sup>218</sup> *BUK*, i, p.205.

<sup>219</sup> *RSS*, vi, 1456.

<sup>220</sup> *BUK*, i, p.239.

<sup>221</sup> *BUK*, i, p.263.

<sup>222</sup> *Calderwood's History*, iii, p.289.

main burghs and that his direct impact elsewhere, in the rural, Gaelic, parishes was small.

Meanwhile, Robert Pont was concerned about the closeness of the reformed church's ministers to the lairds who controlled the parishes in which they served. In 1575 the burgh court of Inverness recorded an act of the General Assembly,<sup>223</sup> one not elsewhere minuted in such detail.<sup>224</sup> The Act was brought before the court when one party in a case objected to their opponents having a minister as their procurator: they produced the Act, which Robert Pont while 'superintendent' had had circulated to all ministers in his province, to support their position. It, however, had a wider scope. Besides prohibiting ministers from acting as procurators or scribes in civil courts, they were also prohibited from acting as notaries, unless for spiritual reasons: 'concernyng the promoting of religioun, or for the relieff of the puir.' The intent being that 'ministeris mell nocht wyth wardlie efferis,' the Assembly instructed 'that thai be nocht serwandis to gentill men.' The distinction between a minister being a 'servant' to a 'gentleman' and a minister accompanying, for example, the household of the Earl of Argyll,<sup>225</sup> might not have been easily detectable. When, for example, John Grant of Freuchie, the single most influential laird in Strathspey, made a significant agreement with Colin Mackenzie of Kintail in 1572, the minister at Cromdale, Mr Thomas Austean, was one of the witnesses and notaries present.<sup>226</sup> When, on 24 November 1584, the laird of Grant made his will, the principal witness was Duncan Macphail, reader at Cromdale.<sup>227</sup> However they performed their ecclesiastical duties, these men had clearly won the trust of the laird of Grant; but perhaps this acceptance had been won at a cost that Robert Pont would have deprecated.

During the 1570s some in the General Assembly complained that the difference between the graduate, gentlemen ministers and the old vicars was not sufficient. Three Moray ministers—Mr John Gordon (Petty and Brachlie),

<sup>223</sup> *Records of Inverness*, i, p.245–6: 3 December 1575.

<sup>224</sup> As Pont demitted as commissioner in 1574, the Assembly whose Act he circulated must have preceded that year. The Assembly of March 1572 seems the most likely. It took place at St Andrews, and was not given much attention in *Calderwood's History*, iii, pp.208–12. *BUK*, i, p.263 records Pont's presence as commissioner for Moray. *BUK*, i, p.265 records an instruction that Acts should be circulated 'to every Exercise, to the end that every Minister may have knowledge what order to observe in their proceedings'; and *BUK*, i, p.267 noted a question on 'Whither be the word of God in New and Old Testament it is lawfull, That the two charges of function, to wit, the special administration of the Word and Sacraments, and the ministration of the Criminall and the Civill Justice in Judgement, be confounded, so that one person may occupy both cures.'

<sup>225</sup> Dawson, 'Clan, Kin and Kirk: The Campbells and the Scottish Reformation.' p.229; Jane Dawson 'Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland' in Andrew Petegree and others (eds), *Calvinism in Europe 1540–1620* (Cambridge, 1994), p.249.

<sup>226</sup> '142. Agreement between John Grant of Freuchie and Colin McKenzie of Kintail, with reference to the lands of Lochbroine. 26 April 1572', Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. iii, *Charters*, p.150. See also: '143. Bond of Manrent between John Grant of Freuchie and Colin McKenzie of Kintail. 26 April 1572', *Chiefs of Grant* vol. iii *Charters* p.151.

<sup>227</sup> '249. Testament of John Grant, fourth of Freuchie. 24 November 1584. Confirmed 15 March 1586', Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*, vol. iii, *Charters*. p.292.

Mr Patrick Douglas, 'Treasurer of Murrey' (Kinnedar & Essil) and Mr Alexander Gordon, 'Chancellor' (Kirkmichael, Inveravon, Knockando)—it was said 'await not on their cure' and in 1575 they were 'delated for not making residence at their kirks, and for wasting and dilapidation of their benefices.'<sup>228</sup> Reformed ministry in the hinterlands of Inverness, as in Badenoch and Strathspey, remained somewhat nominal, and perhaps was mainly of service to the land-holders rather than the wider population. When Hugh Rose, tenth of Kilravock, made his will in July 1597, besides a number of other lairds, servants and friends as witnesses, the notary was the minister of Inverness itself.<sup>229</sup>

In March 1574 Pont's demission as commissioner of Moray was accepted, for George Douglas had been nominated bishop for the province.<sup>230</sup> Between August and December 1574, a total of nine presentations of benefices to reformed clergy were directed to the bishop of Moray, a number suggestive of a back-log being addressed and only one short of the total number processed during the whole period of Pont's commission.<sup>231</sup>

Once Morton had government securely in his hands, and following agreement with the church, a new register of ministers was drawn up during 1574, the 'Register of Assignation and Modification of Stipends.'<sup>232</sup> From this it can be assessed how many of the clergy in place in 1567 were, like Mr Thomas Howieson, still serving in the province at the end of the wars. Once again it is helpful to use the former deaneries as distinct areas for analysis. The Moray coastal region, the former Elgin deanery, had had the most developed reformed ministry in 1567, and its retention rate was also strong. From a total of 21 staff in all, 17 were still active in the area, though often in different combinations of parishes. Moreover the former friar John Blindsheil, who had been reader at the Urquhart, Lhanbryde and Essil linkage, had moved 'deaneries' to take up position as reader at Inverness, while the minister for the same triple linkage, Robert Keith, had moved to the united charge of Dunbennan and Kinneir, in Strathbogie. Of the only two men of 1567 altogether missing in 1574, one was Alexander Urquhart, the minister of Rafford, whose original entry had been annotated: 'providing he awayit upoun his office in tymes cuming, and use himself without

<sup>228</sup> *BUK*, i, p.336: August 1575. The *BUK* record seems to contain a confusion. While its text allocates Spynie and Keith to Mr John Gordon, when it continues with the responses of the men concerned, it reads: 'Mr Andrew Young denied that he served the kirks contained in his roll. Mr Patrick Douglas granted he made no residence...' According to the registers of 'Assignation and Modification of Stipends' Mr Andrew Young was minister at Spynie and Keith in 1574 but not in 1576, while Mr John Gordon was minister at Petty and Brachlie, which is where I have re-allocated him. For sources see note 4 above.

<sup>229</sup> *Genealogical Deduction*, p.285.

<sup>230</sup> *Calderwood's History*, iii, p.304. Described as a Senator of the College of Justice Pont was granted an income of 300 merks a year from the Kirk's third from Moray (assigned to that of the Treasurer and the Bishop's third of Spey salmon) 'ay and quhill' he was not otherwise provided for: *RSS*, vi, 2184.

<sup>231</sup> *RSS*, vi, nos. 2648, 2649, 2650, 2676, 2692, 2693, 2722, 2780, 2781.

<sup>232</sup> Above, note 4.



sclander.<sup>233</sup> Still, old age, illness and death must impact on retention statistics, besides any social, financial and political discouragements. Taken as a whole, the stability of the ministry of the Elgin deanery, 1567–74, is impressive and, in its way, reflects well on Robert Pont's judgement, as exercised in his approving the original appointments.

In Strathspey retention was also strong between 1567 and 1574. The Gaelic speaking John Glass, 'reader and exhorter' at Abernethy in 1567 was minister at Alvie, Rothiemurchus and Kingussie in 1574. Alexander Clerk, reader at Alvie in 1567 and exhorter in 1569, was minister at Laggan in 1574. These two had been joined in 1568 by a former friar of Elgin, William Simson, who was reader at Bona (Inverness deanery) in 1567, and in Strathspey at Grant of Freuchie's parishes of Cromdale and Inverallan in 1568. By 1574 he was reader at other Grant-dominated parishes, Duthil and Kincardine, while the Cromdale / Advie linkage had a minister of its own, Mr Thomas Austean, the man noted above in company with the laird of Grant. The reformed ministry in Strathspey was still not numerous, but the original men were still present and had been joined by others; and more secure incomes were becoming available.<sup>234</sup> The pattern in Inverness deanery was much the same. Of a total of seven staff—one minister, three exhorters and three readers—five were still present and William Simson, who had moved to Strathspey, was one of those who had left. Only Mr James Farquharson, exhorter at Urquhart and Glenmoriston, did not reappear at all in the lists of 1574. Mr Howieson at Inverness itself, of course, remained and was joined by former friar John Blindsheil as reader. The Gaelic-speaking Andrew Macphail / Brabner was still reader at Petty, as he had been in 1567, though during the civil war period he had also been described as a Gaelic minister in Inverness. Another Highlander, John Dow McConoquhy, had been placed as reader at Daviot in 1569, and was reader at 'Tallaracie' (Dalarossie) and Moy in 1574.

In Strathbogie, by contrast, there were significant losses during the civil war. Of a total of eight in 1567 (a minister, an exhorter and six readers), only two were still present in 1574. Margaret Sanderson emphasised that, even in normal times, for the early ministry 'The greatest difficulty of all was that of having enough to live on.'<sup>235</sup> The loss of readers from Strathbogie suggests that, their office

<sup>233</sup> Haws, *Scottish Parish Clergy*, p.318 counts one 'Alexander Urquhart', assimilating together all appearances of this name with a former canon of Ross-shire's Fearn Abbey. It seems equally possible to envisage two separate men with coherent careers. (1) Moray's Alexander Urquhart, perhaps an unskilled local enthusiast, noted in *RM* as at Rafford in 1567 and Alves in 1568 and 1572—whose known inconsistencies could have ended his ministry. (2) The former monk who served first at Tarbet, a Ross-shire parish appropriated to Fearn, in 1572 and then moved to be minister at Thurso and Orlig in Caithness in 1574. A 'second wave' of 'conformity' is noted 1572–4. For the purposes of this article, however, 'Alexander Urquhart' was no longer in the ministry in Moray in 1574.

<sup>234</sup> Glass obtained the parsonage of Alvie in March 1573; Austean was presented both to the parsonage of Advie and to the parsonage and vicarage of Advie and Cromdale in August 1574; Clerk obtained the parsonage and vicarage of Laggan in September 1574. *RSS*, vi, 1894, 2648, 2650, 2692.

<sup>235</sup> Margaret H.B. Sanderson, 'Service and Survival: The clergy in late sixteenth-century Scotland', *RSCHS*, 36 (2006), p.30.

being in any case poorly paid, lack of local support and possible hostility from the Queen's government had forced them out. If this analysis is persuasive, then the high retention rate in Pont's areas of responsibility also suggests that, despite any interruptions to their sources of income caused by the uplifting of the thirds by the Queen's agents, the reformed staff had sufficient local support to remain in place during the uncertainties of the civil war. Like the lairds of Angus and the Mearns, the lairds of western Moray were prepared to accept and work with the reformed church. They, after all, gained from the changes in land-holding that accompanied the Reformation.<sup>236</sup>

From 1574 it is possible say that a reformed ministry had been 'planted' in Moray; Moray was, at any rate, at a level comparable to the rest of Scotland (excluding Argyll). The 'Register of Assignation and Modification of Stipends' listed a total of 988 parishes in all, arranged in 303 grouped charges, and served by 289 ministers and 715 readers,<sup>237</sup> although of these totals 'sindrie are pendicles and small parochines, and many kirks demolisit',<sup>238</sup> and hence strict numerical comparisons are unattainable. Moray's 77 parishes, organised in 28 groups across the entire reconstituted diocese, were served by 26 ministers and 49 readers. In general terms the province had a higher proportion of ministers than the national pattern and therefore a lower number of readers. Moray's ratio of ministers to parishes was, in fact, very much the same as that achieved in 1574 in the province of Angus and the Mearns,<sup>239</sup> whose superintendent was the national figure John Erskine of Dun and where (some) pre-Reformation 'fervency' had been recognised. Allowing for vacancies and other such local difficulties, the 1574

<sup>236</sup> The article lacks space fully to develop this point. Bishop Patrick Dunbar had extensively feued the episcopal lands before the reformation. Lachlan Shaw, *The History of the Province of Moray*, new edition by J. F. S. Gordon (Glasgow, 1882), p.362 offers a summary of the eighteenth century rental: feu-duties were then paid by the laird of Grant, Grant of Ballindalloch and other Grants; by the lairds of Mackintosh, of Calder, of Kilravock, of Altyre; by Frasers and Baillies and Cuthberts. At Kinloss Abbey, Walter Reid issued some 104 feu charters whose details are still known, the largest (most of Strathisla) to his mother, Euphemia Dundas; another portion went to his brother in law, Mr Alexander Dunbar, dean of Moray. Margaret Sanderson calculated that while 'more than half of the feuars of Kinloss were occupants' they received only some 34% of the land. Margaret H. B. Sanderson, *Scottish Rural Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1982) pp.81-9. When Reid died in 1589, his widow Margaret Collace and a Mr Edward Bruce both claimed contractual rights in Kinloss. Bruce was granted a secular lordship and barony of Kinloss. *Records of the Monastery of Kinloss*, pp.lvi-lviii. Of Pluscarden, Augustine Holmes commented on the 'web of power and patronage into which the monastery . . . was firmly entwined. Both local kin groups, such as the Dunbars, Inneses and Douglasses, and national influences, in the shape of the Setons and the Douglasses, fought to control the rich benefice of Pluscarden priory.' Holmes, 'Pluscarden Priory', pp.40-4; p.61. The lords Fraser of Lovat secured the lands and revenues of Beaully Priory. Edmund C. Batten (ed.), *The Charters of the Priory of Beaully with notices of the Priors of Pluscardine and Ardchattan* (Edinburgh: The Grampian Club 1877), pp.264-74.

<sup>237</sup> Above, note 4.

<sup>238</sup> *Miscellany of the Wodrow Society*, i, p.327 citing a report to the General Assembly of 20 April 1581.

<sup>239</sup> See Table 5.1 in Bardgett, *Scotland Reformed*, p.90.

**Table 1.** Parish staffing in Moray.

	1574	1576	1578	1579	1580
<b>Groups</b>	28	26	26	27	28
<b>Ministers</b>	26	26	26	27	27
<b>Readers</b>	49	50	50	51	47

national scheme provided either a minister or a reader for every parish; and Moray, too, was at almost full quota on that basis.

The pattern of ministry in Moray from 1574 through to 1580 (and beyond) can be followed via the successive registers of ‘Assignation and Modification of Stipends.’ A generally stable picture emerges, as the parish staffing table shows, with the groupings of parishes subject to occasional tinkering. The majority of charges were unaffected.

Further, there was also a low rate of staff turn-over during this period. Of the 27 ministers in place in 1580, 21 had been in Moray in 1574 (some of them as exhorters). Twelve had been present since 1567. One post (Urquhart in Strathbogie) was vacant. 29 of 1580’s 47 readers had been in Moray in 1574, though not necessarily in the same parish. A stable ministry was likely to be a more effective ministry.<sup>240</sup>

This level of stability also argues that the lairds who controlled the parishes accepted the personnel serving the church in the 1570s. Should a local power-broker turn hostile, a minister’s position was untenable. Despite support from within the burgh, the minister of Elgin, Alexander Winchester, could not endure the opposition of James Dunbar of Cumnock, hereditary sheriff of the shire of Elgin and Forres (‘of Moray’). At one stage the sheriff’s men cut and removed the standing corn on the glebe, removed fodder from the glebe’s barns, and also would have harvested the minister’s sureties’ fields, had they not paid over a total of 200 merks: Winchester’s 1579 complaint to the Privy Council about judicial misconduct, however, was unsuccessful.<sup>241</sup> 1580 was the last year Alexander Winchester was listed as minister at Elgin. Lairds and lords in Moray, acknowledged to be distant from the national centres of power, must have had many opportunities to remove ministers of whom they disapproved. The stability achieved 1574–80 is the more significant.

Alec Ryrie rejected the view that the Reformation came in Scotland as ‘the result of a slow and inevitable process of gathering strength, a wave which suddenly crested in 1559–60’, seeing instead the victory of a militant minority,<sup>242</sup> contingent on a temporary conjunction of the international relations (dynastic, political and military) of Scotland, England and France that resulted not just in victory for the rebel, protestant, Lords of the Congregation but also in a new

<sup>240</sup> McCallum, ‘Reformation of the Ministry in Fife’ p.326.

<sup>241</sup> *RPC*, i, p.68, 440–2, 666–9; ii, pp.91–2.

<sup>242</sup> Ryrie, *Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, p.121.

and lasting national settlement.<sup>243</sup> He argued that the revolutionary changes then inaugurated though ‘unexpected’ and ‘unpredictable’, were yet so ‘profound’ as to be ‘not reversible.’<sup>244</sup> The language of ‘minority’ for the Lords of the Congregation, however, while no doubt numerically accurate, tends to suggest an unhelpful bipolar theological division: minority-protestant versus majority-catholic.<sup>245</sup> This divide has a long history: it featured in John Knox’s eschatology, which saw the ‘godly’ as a persecuted minority.<sup>246</sup> Yet study of the Reformation in Moray displays a more nuanced picture. Traditional spirituality imbued popular culture for years after 1560,<sup>247</sup> but identification of prominent Roman Catholic activists in Moray after 1560 is as problematical as finding radical protestants before that date. (The ‘parson of Unthank’, sir John Gibson, could be described as ‘a papist’ at Inverness in 1571.)<sup>248</sup> A more descriptive image for the militant Congregation of 1559 would be that of a vanguard,<sup>249</sup> of whom Robert Pont was one, behind whose leadership gathered an army of others. There were also the camp-followers of the protestant cause: self-interested, with the practical reasons of the less (or un-) ideological. Among these it seems possible to number the burgesses of Inverness and Elgin, and the lairds of Moray. In the years following 1560, the disbursing of the wealth of the church gave more and more sections of society vested interests in the new settlement: and the more powerful tended to gain the most from the process. The number of camp-followers grew in time: a tide, indeed, coming in across the nation after 1560. The acceptance of the reformed church structures by the burgess-coteries of Inverness and Elgin, and by the major landed families of Moray, has been described: an adoption that took time and which, while drawing on people active from before 1560, bore few traces of marked enthusiasm except (in the case of Inverness) for the enforcement of moral discipline. Institutional change was certainly achieved, the necessary condition for a reformed worship and ethos which retained a continuing sense of

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.* pp.196–204.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.* p.198.

<sup>245</sup> See, among others, Lynch, ‘Introduction’, in Lynch (ed.) *The Early Modern Town in Scotland* p.19: ‘The Reformation, which for most burghs – outside Dundee and Perth – took the form of a minority movement. . . .’ Timothy Slonosky, ‘Burgh Government and Reformation: Stirling, c.1530–1565’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation* p.49, asked the question ‘How this Protestant minority was able to impose such profound religious change so rapidly through the country.’

<sup>246</sup> Jane E. A. Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed 1488–1587. The New Edinburgh History of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2007), p.234.

<sup>247</sup> The records of the Kirk Session of Elgin (available from 1585) show that ‘going in pilgrimage to the Laidie Chepall’ remained part of popular culture for many years. *Records of Elgin*, i, p.164–5: 5 February 1582; *Records of Elgin*, ii, p.10: 18 September, 31 October and 20 November 1588; and see footnote.

<sup>248</sup> Holmes, ‘Sixteenth-century Pluscarden priory and its world’, p.61; *Records of Inverness*, i, p.209: 20 November 1571. ‘Unthank’ was a chaplaincy, not a parish.

<sup>249</sup> Slonosky also uses the term ‘vanguard’ as part of his broader conclusions that the success of the reformation in Scotland as elsewhere in Europe depended on ‘the existence of a large group of uncommitted believers, interested in Protestantism but not firm adherents of the cause’: ‘Burgh Government and Reformation’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation*, p.67–8.

the numinous.<sup>250</sup> Cultural and ideological transformations, however, lagged well behind.<sup>251</sup> Yet the progress of the ‘soft’<sup>252</sup> – pragmatic and realistic – Reformation in Moray should serve as a caution against any assumption that acceptance of change was geographically confined to only a few key centres. The national reach of the reform was real, if also locally varied.

Widespread acceptance was not without cost to the ideals of the vanguard. McMillan’s account of the troubled ministerial vacancy at Peterhead after 1604 demonstrates the problems of reconciling congregational choice and Presbyterial oversight with the preferences of ‘a powerful patron’, George Keith fourth Earl Marischal, an undoubted protestant.<sup>253</sup> By the early 1580s holding the position of minister in the church in Moray had become an acceptable vocation for men of the major kindreds, whose leadership no doubt promoted and sustained them. Alexander Winchester was replaced as minister at Elgin by Mr Alexander Douglas: both the minister and the reader for Elgin were therefore Douglasses. Mr Patrick Douglas was minister at Kinnedar and Essil. Donald ‘Dow’ Fraser was minister at Wardlaw, Kilmorack and Kiltarlity, and Mr John Fraser at Conveth and Comar. Alan Mackintosh was minister at Braaven (or Cawdor), Croy and Dalross, and William Mackintosh was minister at Rothiemurchus, Kingussie and Alvie. William Dunbar was minister at Petty and Brachlie. Further to the east, Mr Alexander Gordon had charge of Kirkmichael, Inveravon and Knockando while Mr John Keith was minister at Duffus and Ogston and Robert Keith at Dunbennan, Kinneir and Ruthven. Mr Alexander Leslie was minister at Botarie, Elchies and Glass in 1580, and at Elchies and Rothes in 1585. During 1585 Patrick Grant became minister at Abernethy – the first of a very long line of Grant ministers in the parishes of Strathspey.

The first two decades of the Reformation were indeed a ‘slow ... process of gathering strength.’ Success was by no means inevitable after 1561, for if history tells of revolutions it also knows of counter-revolutions. The survival of the Reformation during the 1560s depended on numerous contingencies: the personal, political and dynastic choices of Mary, Queen of Scots; the survival of Elizabeth of England; the eclipse and death of the fourth Earl of Huntly. Had a counter-Reformation authority taken power in Scotland in those early years, we can speculate that Moray could have cooperated: the ‘geir’ of the Inverness friars might have reappeared. Had a ‘reformed’ Catholicism been available, again

<sup>250</sup> Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in early modern Scotland*, p.360: ‘This transformed culture was emphatically not desacralized.’

<sup>251</sup> McMillan, ‘Keeping the Kirk’, p.16: ‘Whilst religious reform in Scotland was achieved, the religion as lived by Scots was nuanced and polychromed.’ See also Elizabeth Rhodes, ‘Property and Piety’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation*, p.48; Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in early modern Scotland*, pp.1–3, 359–60.

<sup>252</sup> This article was finalised during 2018, when distinctions between a ‘soft’ and a ‘hard’ Brexit were commonplace.

<sup>253</sup> McMillan, ‘Keeping the Kirk’, pp.147–56.

it is possible to speculate that Elgin could have retained or restored the mass.<sup>254</sup> The reformed settlement, the process of 'planting' kirks before 1574, was fragile. The available resources were massively inadequate, given the vast geographies of the rural parishes, the physical infrastructure and the linguistic divide. Robert Pont's ideal of a 'St Andrews' style discipline and preaching ministry was an impossible dream for tracts of the country in the 1560s and 1570s, though the burgh of Inverness took steps towards it. Given, however, that the reformed church's legal and financial basis under Queen Mary had a provisional nature, and that its northern staff had to cope with the conflicts of the civil war, the parish coverage achieved after 1574 was a significant achievement.<sup>255</sup> When the General Assembly, in 1572, complained that 'thair is Mess said in certane places of this cuntrie' neither Elgin nor Moray as a whole was listed for condemnation alongside 'auld Abirdene, Dunkeld, Paslay, Eglingtoune'.<sup>256</sup>

Gordon Donaldson wrote that 'Protestantism in Scotland was not, in its early days, a southern phenomenon but . . . an east coast phenomenon, with no break at the Tay'.<sup>257</sup> This study of Moray offers some support for this, at any rate for his rejection of an early north-south divide. There were enthusiasts for reform in the province. That the lives of the lairds of Moray were interwoven with national affinities has been demonstrated; the institutional development of the new church followed patterns little different from, say, those of Angus and the Mearns. The prime cause of the growing geographical division suggested by Donaldson is more questionable: it seems likely that more than one factor was involved. He proposed that southern Scotland's contacts with English protestantism from the 1540s promoted the process.<sup>258</sup> Certainly Moray was spared English occupation during the wars of 'Rough Wooing,' but another major factor missing from the province before 1560 was the active evangelism of such figures as Wishart and Knox. It is possible to reject Knox's writings as 'poor history'<sup>259</sup> and yet to accept the historical importance of Knox as a charismatic leader,<sup>260</sup> whose visits, influence and preaching brought to conviction the original national leaders of the Lords of the Congregation, the men whose determination carried through the revolution of 1559–60. If the holders of power in Moray were—as it seems they were—lacking the fervency of some of their associates further south—was this difference also contingent on the itineraries followed by John Knox?

That the structure and staffing of the church in Moray by 1574 was no less adequate than that in the rest of Scotland can be credited, as far as his office allowed, to Mr Robert Pont. Pont's work alone, however, is not a sufficient

<sup>254</sup> Slonosky also argues against accepting nation-wide reform as inevitable after 1560: 'Burgh Government and Reformation' in *Scotland's Long Reformation*, p.68.

<sup>255</sup> Compare: McMillan, 'Keeping the Kirk', p.195.

<sup>256</sup> *BUK*, i, p.254: 20 October 1572.

<sup>257</sup> Donaldson, 'Scotland's Conservative North', p.77.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.* p.77.

<sup>259</sup> Rylie, *Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, p.4.

<sup>260</sup> Sanderson, 'Service and Survival' p.96.

explanation of the nuanced success of the Reformation in his province. Beyond the processes he administered, his personal influence was mainly exercised in the burghs, restricted by his lack of Gaelic and by his personal ecclesial and political allegiances. Yet reformed ministries were in place before he arrived, and more took hold across the region as the support of significant lairds and kindreds allowed. The early adoption of the Reformation within Moray, its endurance 1567–72 and eventual growing parochial strength from 1574, all suggest a widespread practical acquiescence in an area geographically beyond the heartlands of ‘fervencie.’ Mapping the national picture of the Scottish Reformation cannot neglect such areas of acquiescence.<sup>261</sup> The Reformation in Moray, as that at Stirling, demonstrates that the eventual success of the new polity was due not just to the minority of enthusiasts but also to broad support among those who held power in the localities.<sup>262</sup>

<sup>261</sup> See map ‘Scotland at the time of the Reformation’, Ryrie, *Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, p. xiv. Slonosky, ‘Burgh Government and Reformation’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation*, p.49: ‘The co-operation or acquiescence of the localities, therefore, was a vital factor in the success of the Scottish Reformation.’

<sup>262</sup> A similar argument is presented by Slonosky, ‘Burgh Government and Reformation’ in *Scotland’s Long Reformation*, p.68.