

1534

10 Hand E Obitus Daudis Dunowne qui obiit apud Cathboll anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo trigesimo quarto vigesimo septimo die mensis Septembris.

Possibly a brother of John Denoon of Davidston (128). For family of Denoon see 14.

1538

11 Hand F Quarto die mensis Martii anno Domini M^o quingentesimo trigesimo septimo obiit honorabilis vir Willihelmus Ross Macolmi quondam burgensis de Tayne.

Reid, 9, suggests William Ross was a son of Malcolm son of John Ross V of Balnagown and Christian, daughter of Torquil Macleod of Lewis, but evidence is lacking. William does not appear in surviving contemporary records, but John Ross Malcolmson is found between 20 October 1541 (SC29/1/1, 7r-v) and 17 November 1559 (GD297/227/10).

1539

12 Hand E Obitus honorabilis viri Moritii Gillecalum . . . Kindeis xv Aprilis anno Domini M^o quingentesimo xxxix^{mo}.

Morris McGillecallum was custumar of Ross, 9 January 1517 (*ADCP*, 73-4).

1540

13 Obitus Alexandri McCulloch fili Angusii McCulloch qui obiit apud Terrel x^o mensis Februarii anno Domini M^o v^o xxxix^o.

See 52.

1541

14 Obitus bone memorie quondam Donaldi Dunnone abbatis de Ferne qui obiit infra monasterium eiusdem nono die mensis Februarii anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo quadragesimo cuius anime propiciatur Deus. Amen.

Donald Denoon, canon of Ross, was provided to Fearn on the resignation of the absentee Patrick Hamilton, for whom a pension was

reserved (ASV, Reg. Supp., 1882, 207v, 7 February 1526, and 208r, 17 February 1526; *ibid.*, 1887, 175v, 5 March 1526). Disputes with Bishop James Hay of Ross over teinds may have made a resident abbot desirable (see ASV, SRR, *Manualia Actorum et Citationum*, 135, 19 March-12 December 1526; *ibid.*, 185, 2 August 1535-27 December 1536; *Laing Chrs.*, nos. 354, 355, 411). A Papal bull of 1 July 1528 (GD297/189), confirming Fearn's existing privileges, suggests that Denoon had official backing.

Abbot Donald does not appear frequently in contemporary records. As judge-delegate, he issued a summons, 26 April 1532 (Batten, *Beauly*, 205-10), and gave a judgment, 27 March 1536 (Fraser, *Grant*, iii, no. 102). He was a member of the earldom court which sat at Delny on 21 April 1530 'till decerne upon ye messeris and firlatts of ye hail countraye'. The thirty-five freeholders and burgesses of Ross who attended told the royal officers that fermes and victual rents were delivered to the girnels of Delny and Balconie by 'ye litill firlat quhilk extendis to thre pekis of ye commond firlot and messor of Leithe' (GD305/1/116/423, recording their findings, carries twelve named seal-tags, with eight seals, including that of the abbot, still surviving; for Exchequer treatment of the little measure see *ER*, xiv, 87-8; xv, 502-03; xvi, 113-14, 202-03, 279). In 1539 the Lords of Council admitted a claim by Abbot Donald, Angus MacCulloch of Tarrel (52), William MacCulloch of Plaids (51), John Denoon of Davidston (128), William Denoon of Pithogarty (see below) and John Vaus of Lochsclin (16) that they were tenants-in-chief of the earldom of Ross, and should attend the bailie court at Kinnairdie rather than the sheriff court of Inverness (GD305/1/129/5, 28 August; endorsements show this useful concession was invoked by Commendator Nicholas Ross (143) on 19 October 1558 and by Commendator Thomas Ross (221) on 2 October 1576; see also GD96/333, 7 October 1606).

Abbot Donald's parentage has not been ascertained; his grandson William II Denoon of Pitnellie was a *consanguineus* of John Denoon of Davidston (*RMS*, iv, 1452, 30 January 1562). He was not celibate, as shown by the royal letters of legitimation granted to his sons William and David (*RMS*, iii, 2051, 23 December 1539). *Blackie*, 73-5, gives him nine sons by two mothers. One son, Mr Thomas, was parson of Kincardine by 19 November 1530 (GD1/436/1). An attempt to secure the parsonage of Assynt for another, John, led to the abbot being summoned before the Lords of Council (*ADCP*, 496-7, 5 October 1540; see also SP13/28, 26 July 1540).

For yet another son, William (son of Elizabeth Urquhart [62]),

Donald built up a considerable estate. This included the abbey feu-lands of Little Rhyne (Fearn par.), Easter Fearn (Edderton par.) and Amat Abbot (Kincardine par.: GD1/436/1, 19 November 1530; see also ASV, ASPA, Reg. Matrim. et Divers., 95, 113r-114v, 2 May 1537); one third of Arbol (Tarbat par.: RMS, iii, 1019, 5 May 1531; RMS, iii, 1430, 4 June 1534); Pithogarty (Tain par.: GD305/1/12/2,3, 27 March 1534 [RMS, iii, 1540 reads 27 March 1535]); and Pitnellie and Balkeith (Tain par.: RMS iii, 2043, 4 November 1539; GD305/1/74/93, 31 July 1540). The abbot's relationship to William is shown in an instrument dividing Arbol into thirds, 12 October 1535 (GD199/6; GD199/66), the parties to which were John Denoon of Davidston (128), John Corbet of Easter Ard, and the 'venerable father Donald Denoon, by divine permission abbot of Fearn for himself and for his natural son William Denoon'.

A royal precept of 8 December 1540 (RSS, ii, 3719), two months after Abbot Donald's death, confirmed a liferent grant of Pitnellie by William, presumably with marriage in mind, to Marjorie Grant (110), who died in the following February. By 29 June 1547 he was married to Elizabeth Urquhart (130): RMS, iv, 228; Tayler, *Urquhart*, 22, identifies her as a daughter of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, the *paterhemon*, who had already been married to John Vaus of Lochslin (16). Any children of the marriage must still have been very young when William died at the battle of Pinkie in the following September (GD96/163, 2 May 1576).

The Denoon inheritance was fought over for the next thirty years. The lands and marriage of the young heir William II were disputed between his Denoon uncles, his mother's Urquhart kinsmen, and Jasper Vaus of Lochslin, who planned to marry William to his own daughter Katherine, attempting to buy out the claims of his three sisters. The marriage took place, but William II died in 1565 and his eldest sister Margaret was eventually retoured heir (*Retours*, ii, Ross and Cromarty, no. 5, 7 May 1574). The Inverness sheriff court was uncertain whether or not a division should take place, but ten Edinburgh advocates, Thomas Craig amongst them, ruled that the inheritance was a superiority and should not be divided (SC29/1/1, 91r-v; cf. *The Jus Feudale by Sir Thomas Craig of Riccarton*, trans. J. A. Clyde (Edinburgh, 1914), 598, 970-71). The lands, however, were carved up. Walter Urquhart, sheriff of Cromarty, took Nether Pitnellie, Balkeith and the major part of Pithogarty; Jasper Vaus's son John acquired Over Pitnellie, Amat Abbot and the remainder of Pithogarty; and Alexander Ross IX of Balnagown, who had backed the Denoon uncles, took Easter Fearn into Ross hands (see 286). In all of this the heiress and her

husband, Finlay Manson, portioner of Pitcalzean, were nominal figures only. Abbot Donald's attempt to give his family a landed base was thus thwarted by his son's death at Pinkie and the two difficult successions that followed. For some episodes in this complex affair see: SC29/1/1A, 61r-62r, 31 October 1561; NP1/25, 15v, 11 July 1564; CS7/39, 68v-71r, 5 February 1567; SC29/1/1, 91r-v, 7 May 1574; NP1/32, 68v-72v, 9 November 1574.

1542

15 Hand F Octauo huius [March] 1541 obiit probus et egregius vir Hector Munro de Foulis apud Carbistoll.

Munro Tree, S.

1546

16 Hand F Quinto huius [February] anno Domini M^o v^c xl quinto obiit honorabilis vir Joannes Wauss de Lochsline.

See Munro, 'Vasses', 35-9. Dr Munro suggests that a later gift of nonentry (RSS, vi, 1062, 31 December 1570), which refers to a John Vaus who died at the field of - , may indicate that he died at Ancrum Moss (see 119). However, the *Calendar* scribes began the year on 25 March, and John Vaus's death was therefore a year later. The 1570 gift, which also names the semi-legendary Paul MacTyre, may refer to John Vaus, killed at Aldecharwis in 1487 (40). For Elizabeth Urquhart, wife, see 130; see also 14 for Vaus involvement in the Denoon of Pitnellie inheritance.

1548

17 Hand F Obitus Patritii Daudis olim capellani de altari Sancte Marie Virginis qui migravit ad Christum decimo septimo Octobris anno Domini M v^c quadragesimo octauo. Qui de eo habuerit pro eo orauerit. Amen. Jesus Maria sit semper mecum in via.

Patrick Davidson has not been identified. The majority of entries in Hand F relate to Tain and its immediate neighbourhood, which may suggest that he served an altar in St Duthac.