

Crínán of Dunkeld

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Crínán of Dunkeld (died 1045) was the lay abbot of the monastery of Dunkeld, and perhaps the Mormaer of Atholl. Crínán was progenitor of the House of Dunkeld, the dynasty which would rule Scotland until the later 13th century. He was the son-in-law of one king, and the father of another.

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Family

Crínán was married to Bethóc, daughter of Máel Coluim mac Cináeda (Malcolm II) (King of Scots, who reigned from 1005 to 1034). As Máel Coluim had no surviving son, the strongest hereditary claim to the Scottish throne descended through Bethóc. Crínán and Bethóc's eldest son, Donnchad (Duncan I), who reigned from 1034 to 1040.

There is a myth that Crínán had a second son, Maldred of Allerdale, who held the title of Lord of Cumbria. There is no evidence to support this.^[1]

Lay Abbot of Dunkeld

The monastery of Saint Columba was founded on the north bank of the River Tay in the 6th century or early 7th century following the expedition of Columba into the land of the Picts. It may have continued to draw its hierarchy from the Cenél Conaill of Donegal.^[2] Iain Moncreiffe argued that Crínán belonged to a Scottish sept of the Irish Cenél Conaill royal dynasty.^[3]

While the title of Hereditary Lay Abbot was a feudal position that was often exercised in name only, Crínán does seem to have acted as Abbot in charge of the monastery in his time. He was thus a man of high position in both clerical and secular society.

The magnificent semi-ruined Dunkeld Cathedral, built in stages between 1260 and 1501, stands today on the grounds once occupied by the monastery. The Cathedral contains the only surviving remains of the previous monastic society: a course of red stone visible in the east choir wall that may have been re-used from an earlier building, and two stone ninth - or tenth-century cross-slabs in the Cathedral Museum.

In 1045, Crínán of Dunkeld rose in rebellion against Macbeth in support of his 14-year-old grandson, Malcolm III's claim to the throne.^[4] Malcolm was the elder son of Crinan's son, the late King Duncan, who predecessor his Father. However, Crínán, by then an elderly man, was killed in a battle at Dunkeld.

Notes

- ↑ http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17858/?back=,17859,8209,17859,8209

2. Woolf, Alex. "The Problem with Crínán" *From Pictland to Alba*, Edinburgh University Press, 2007(<https://books.google.com/books?id=iyikBgAAQBAJ&pg=PA249&dq=cr%C3%ADn%C3%A1n+of+dunkeld&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDEQ6AEwBGoVChMIhDgoX4xgIVRhU-Ch1fkgD8#v=onepage&q=cr%C3%ADn%C3%A1n%20of%20dunkeld&f=false>)
3. Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that Ilk, *The Highland Clans* Part II. 1982. p. 236
4. Knox, James. *The topography of the basin of the Ty*, Andrew Shorteed, Edinburgh, 1831 (https://books.google.com/books?id=mp4HAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA133&dq=beth%C3%B3c+biography&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CEoQ6AEwCTgKahUKEwiTi_bmmfnGAhVKVz4KHZdlBEw#v=onepage&q=beth%C3%B3c%20biography&f=false)

External Source

- Cawley, Charles, *Medieval Lands Project on Crinan*, Medieval Lands database, Foundation for Medieval Genealogy,
- Clans and Families of Ireland and Scotland

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