

Chapter 5 - The Ancient Scottish Pedigree, Celtic and Norse Ancestors

Introduction: There is really no such entity as the “Ancient Scottish Pedigree.” I have just called it that for expediency. It exists in the form of family trees that have been posted by genealogists on such sites as the Family Tree on Familysearch.org; the Public Members Trees (PMT) -on Ancestry.com; Geni.com; and Wikitree.com. These trees include much of the royalty, nobles, and families significant to the history of Scotland.

Our connection to these trees or pedigrees is somewhat nebulous. But it starts with proven ancestors who lived on the Island of Tiree in County Argyll, Scotland. The genealogy paper trail and in some cases DNA matches have shown us to descend from the following families that lived on Tiree in the 1700s: Hugh McDonald/Catherine McNeill; John MacKinnon/Catherine MacKinnon; Allan McLean/Una McLean; Neil Lamont/Janet MacLean; Charles Lamont/Mary McDonald; John Clarke/Mary Lamont; and Donald MacLean/Effie McNeill (Chrosbie).

One genealogist who has researched his own ancestors on the Island of Tiree is Gene Donald Lamont. Mr. Lamont was successful in determining that his Tiree ancestor Donald MacLean in Ruaig is a direct descendant in the male line of Gillean of the Battle Axe, the founder of Clan MacLean. Among his other ancestors were also the Gallo-Norse hero, Somerled, the founders of Clans Donald, Campbell, Cameron, and Lamont, as well as the early Kings of Scots. We have one DNA match to a descendant of this same Donald MacLean who descends from his daughter Catherine McLean. This indicates that our ancestor, Janet McLean, is most likely Donald MacLean’s daughter and sister of Catherine McLean. So we descend from this same family.

Gene Lamont points out that Dr. Bryan Sykes, Professor of Human Genetics at Oxford University concluded that Somerled, for example, has some 500,000 descendants living today. Lamont further provides that:

Anyone with ancestors who lived in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland probably can boast of many of the same ancestors of Donald Maclean in Ruaig, just as any Scot is probably a descendant of Kenneth MacAlpin.

These encouraging statements are what led me to attempt to find a connection between our known Tiree ancestors and the Ancient Scottish Pedigree. I first found Public Member Trees on Ancestry.com and the Family Tree on familysearch.org that provided the following:

- Hugh McDonald was found to descend, in four generations, from a couple named Donald Gorm Og MacDonald and Margaret Cameron. This couple was found in the Family Tree on familysearch.org with connection to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree.
- John MacKinnon was found to descend, in four generations, from a couple named John

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MacKinnon and Lady Margaret McDonald. This couple was found in the Family Tree on familysearch.org with connection to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree.

- Mary Lamont was found to descend, in seven generations, from a couple named Hugh Fraser and Katherine MacKenzie. This couple was found in the Family Tree on familysearch.org with connection to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree.
- Janet McLean (daughter of Donald MacLean and Effie McNeill) was found to descend in five generations, from a couple named John Dubh MacLean and Mary Campbell. This couple was found in the Family Tree on familysearch.org with connection to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree.
- Allan McLean, husband of Una McLean, was found to descend in three generations from a couple named Neil Ban MacLean and Ann MacKenzie. He also descends in three generations from a couple named Niel MacLean and Florence MacDonald. These couples were found in the Family Tree on familysearch.org with connection to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree.

What makes these connections somewhat nebulous is that the people that post these trees often make connections for which they do not provide any reference to a source or a record that “proves” the connection. But certainly one or more of these paths to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree has a high likelihood of being true. Further, considering that we descend from numerous McLean, McDonald, McKinnon, and Lamont families that came from the Inner Hebrides, it is more likely than not that we descend from the persons found in the Ancient Scottish Pedigree. So I would estimate that there is at least a 70% chance that our connections to the pedigree and accuracy of the pedigree is true.

In the previous chapter, I have already identified some of our ancestors from the Ancient Scottish Pedigree. Here I will provide a sampling of some of the significant Celtic and Norse characters who happened to be our ancestors. I determined whether these person were significant by finding their names in the index of *Scotland, The Story of a Nation*. I have excluded from this chapter any narrative on Clan MacDonald as I provided that in the previous chapter. Further Clan MacLean is not included here as I will cover them in a future chapter. By reading these narratives you will be able to capture much of the history of Scotland and the parts our ancestors played.

King Kenneth (Cinaed) MacAlpin (810-858) (our 33rd great grandfather)

Kenneth MacAlpin (810 – 13 February 858) is best known as Kenneth I, who was a king of the Picts and, according to national myth, was the first king of Scots. He was thus later known by the posthumous nickname of An Ferbasach, "The Conqueror". He became the apex and eponym of a dynasty—sometimes called Clann Chináeda—that ruled Scotland from the 9th to the early 11th century. According to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree, he was married in about 842 to Fergusia de Isles. They were known to have at least three children.

Kenneth's reign is dated from 843, but it was probably not until 848 that he defeated the last of his rivals for power. The Pictish Chronicle claims that he was king in Dal Riada for two years before becoming Pictish king in 843, but this is not generally accepted by all historians. It

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is also said that his reign began in 834 and ended in 863, this is especially predominant in the 17th and 18th centuries where many depictions of Kenneth would state his reign as either 834-863 or 843-863. In 849, Kenneth had the relics of St. Columba transferred from Iona to Dunkeld. Other than these bare facts, the Chronicle of the Kings of Alba reports that he invaded Saxonia six times, captured Melrose and burnt Dunbar, and also that Vikings laid waste to Pictland, reaching far into the interior.

The reign of Kenneth also saw an increased degree of Norse settlement in the outlying areas of modern Scotland. Shetland, Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland, the Western Isles and the Isle of Man, and part of Ross were settled; the links between Kenneth's kingdom and Ireland were weakened, those with southern England and the continent almost broken. In the face of this, Kenneth and his successors were forced to consolidate their position in their kingdom, and the union between the Picts and the Gaels, already progressing for several centuries, began to strengthen. By the time of Donald II, the kings would be called kings neither of the Gaels or the Scots but of Alba.

Kenneth died from a tumor on February 13, 858 at the palace of Cinnbelachoir, perhaps near Scone. The annals report the death as that of the "king of the Picts", not the "king of Alba". The title "king of Alba" is not used until the time of Kenneth's grandsons, Donald II (Domnall mac Causantín) and Constantine II (Constantín mac Áeda). The Fragmentary Annals of Ireland quote a verse lamenting Kenneth's death:

Kenneth left at least two sons, Constantine and Áed, who were later kings, and at least two daughters. One daughter married Run, king of Strathclyde, Eochaid being the result of this marriage. Kenneth's daughter Máel Muire married two important Irish kings of the Uí Néill. Her first husband was Aed Finliath of the Cenél nEógain. Niall Glúndub, ancestor of the O'Neill, was the son of this marriage. Her second husband was Flann Sinna of Clann Cholmáin. As the wife and mother of kings, when Máel Muire died in 913, her death was reported by the Annals of Ulster, an unusual thing for the male-centered chronicles of the age.

King Constantine MacKenneth I (836-877)(our 32nd great grandfather)

Constantine MacKenneth was a king of the Picts. He is often known as Constantine I in reference to his place in modern lists of kings of Scots, but contemporary sources described Constantine only as a Pictish king. A son of Kenneth MacAlpin, he succeeded his uncle Domnall MacAlpin as Pictish king following the latter's death on April 13, 862. Constantine's wife is reported in the Ancient Scottish Pedigree as Sabhth, Queen of Scots. He had at least one child, Donald MacConstantin born about 862.

Viking activity in northern Britain appears to have reached a peak during Constantine's reign. Viking armies were led by a small group of men who may have been kinsmen. Among those noted by the Irish annals, the Chronicle of the Kings of Alba and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle are Ívar who was active from East Anglia to Ireland, Halfdan, and Ólafur.

Some sources of uncertain reliability state that Auisle was killed by Amlaíb in 867 in a dispute over Amlaíb's wife, the daughter of Kenneth. It is unclear whether this woman should be identified as a daughter of Kenneth MacAlpin, and thus Constantine's sister, or as a daughter of Kenneth MacConaing, king of Brega. While Amlaíb and Auisle were in north Britain, the Annals

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of Ulster record that Áed Findliath, High King of Ireland, took advantage of their absence to destroy the long ship docks along the northern coasts of Ireland. Áed Findliath was married to Constantine's sister Máel Muire. She later married Áed's successor Flann Sinna. Her death is recorded in 913.

In 870, Amlaíb and Ívarr attacked Dumbarton Rock, where the River Leven meets the River Clyde, the chief place of the kingdom of Alt Clut, south-western neighbor of Pictland. The siege lasted four months before the fortress fell to the Vikings who returned to Ireland with many prisoners, "Angles, Britons and Picts", in 871. Archaeological evidence suggests that Dumbarton Rock was largely abandoned and that Govan replaced it as the chief place of the kingdom of Strathclyde, as Alt Clut was later known. King Artgal of Alt Clut did not long survive these events, being killed "at the instigation" of Constantine. Artgal's son and successor Run was married to a sister of Constantine.

In 875, the Chronicle and the Annals of Ulster again report a Viking army in Pictland. A battle, fought near Dollar, was a heavy defeat for the Picts; the Annals of Ulster say that "a great slaughter of the Picts resulted". In 877, shortly after building a new church for the Culdees at St Andrews, Constantine was captured and executed (or perhaps killed in battle) on February 6, 877 after defending against Viking raiders. Although there is agreement on the time and general manner of his death, it is not clear where this happened. Some believe he was beheaded on a Fife beach, following a battle at Fife Ness, near Crail. William Forbes Skene reads the Chronicle as placing Constantine's death at Inverdovat (by Newport-on-Tay), which appears to match the Prophecy of Berchán. The account in the Chronicle of Melrose names the place as the "Black Cave," and John of Fordun calls it the "Black Den". Constantine was buried on Iona.

King Donald MacConstantine II (862-900)(our 31st great grandfather)

Donald MacConstantine (862-900) or Donald II was King of the Picts or King of Alba in the late 9th century. He was the son of Constantine I. Donald is given the epithet Dásachtach, "the Madman", by the Prophecy of Berchán.

Donald became king on the death or deposition of Giric (Giric mac Dúngail), the date of which is not certainly known but usually placed in 889. The Chronicle of the Kings of Alba reports:

Doniualdus son of Constantini held the kingdom for 11 years [889–900]. The Northmen wasted Pictland at this time. In his reign a battle occurred between Danes and Scots at Innisibsolian where the Scots had victory. He was killed at Opidum Fother [modern Dunnottar] by the Gentiles.

The Ancient Scottish Pedigree reports that Donald MacConstantine was married in about 890 to Sigurda who was the daughter of Erlend Thorfinnsson of Orkney.

It has been suggested that the attack on Dunnottar, rather than being a small raid by a handful of pirates, may be associated with the ravaging of Scotland attributed to Harald Fairhair Halfdanarson (our 27th great grandfather in the Ancient Icelandic Pedigree) told in the *Heimskringla*. The Prophecy of Berchán places Donald's death at Dunnottar, but appears to

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attribute it to Gaels rather than Norsemen; other sources report he died at Forres. Donald's death is dated to 900 by the Annals of Ulster and the Chronicon Scotorum, where he is called king of Alba, rather than king of the Picts. He was buried on Iona. Like his father, Constantine, he died a violent death at a premature age. The Ancient Scottish pedigree provides he died on October 8, 900 at Donnottar Castle in Elginshire, Scotland.

The Chronicle of the Kings of Alba has Donald succeeded by his cousin Constantine II. Donald's son Malcolm (Máel Coluim mac Domnall) was later king as Malcolm I.

King Malcolm MacDomnall Remain I (897-954)(our 30th great grandfather)

Malcolm MacDomnaill Remain (897-954), or Malcolm I was king of Alba (before 943 – 954), becoming king when his cousin Constantine II abdicated to become a monk. He was the son of King Donald MacConstantine II.

Malcolm was probably born on June 3, 897 at Moray in Kincardineshire, Scotland. According to the Ancient Scottish Pedigree, in about 928 he was married to Aelgifu, Queen of Alba. They were known to have had at least three children.

By the 940s, Malcolm was no longer a young man, and may have become impatient in awaiting the throne. Willingly or not—the 11th century Prophecy of Berchán, a verse history in the form of a supposed prophecy, states that it was not a voluntary decision that Constantine II abdicated in 943 and entered a monastery, leaving the kingdom to Malcolm. Seven years later, the Chronicle of the Kings of Alba says:

Malcolm I plundered the English as far as the River Tees, and he seized a multitude of people and many herds of cattle: and the Scots called this the raid of Albidosorum, that is, Nainndisi. But others say that Constantine made this raid, asking of the king, Malcolm, that the kingship should be given to him for a week's time, so that he could visit the English. In fact, it was Malcolm who made the raid, but Constantine incited him, as I have said.

In 945, Edmund I of England, having expelled Amlaíb Cuaran (Olaf Sihtricsson) from Northumbria, devastated Cumbria and blinded two sons of Domnall mac Eógain, king of Strathclyde. It is said that he then "let" or "commended" Strathclyde to Malcolm in return for an alliance. What is to be understood by "let" or "commended" is unclear, but it may well mean that Malcolm had been the overlord of Strathclyde and that Edmund recognized this while taking lands in southern Cumbria for himself.

The Chronicle of the Kings of Alba says that Malcolm took an army into Moray "and slew Cellach". Cellach is not named in the surviving genealogies of the rulers of Moray, and his identity is unknown.

Malcolm died in the shield wall next to his men. He would be the third in his immediate family to die violently, his father Donald II and grandfather Constantine I both having met similar fates 54 years earlier in 900 and 77 years earlier in 877, respectively. The Annals of Ulster report that Malcolm was killed in 954. Other sources place this most probably in the Mearns, either at Fetteresso following the Chronicle, or at Dunnottar following the Prophecy of

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Berchán. The Ancient Scottish Pedigree reports his death as December 3, 954 at Fettercairne in Kincardineshire, Scotland. He was buried on Iona. Malcolm's sons Dub and Cináed were later kings. However, we descend from his daughter Bethoc MacAlpin, so this ends our descent from this line of Scottish royalty.

Earl Thorfinn “Rollo-Brico” Einarsson of Orkney (890-977)(our 29th great grandparent)

It is in this person that we find one of our first overlaps between the Ancient Scottish Pedigree and the Ancient Icelandic Pedigree. Thorfinn Elinarson is our ancestor in the Ancient Scottish Pedigree and his father Earl Torf-Einar Rognvaldsson is found in the Ancient Icelandic Pedigree.

Thorfinn Torf-Einarsson also known as Thorfinn Skull-splitter was a 10th century Earl of Orkney. He appears in the Orkneyinga saga and briefly in St Olaf's Saga, as incorporated into the *Heimskringla*. These stories were first written down in Iceland in the early 13th century and much of the information they contain is "hard to corroborate".

Thorfinn was the youngest son of Torf-Einar, himself the son of Rognvald Eysteinnsson, the first Earl of Orkney. Thorfinn was married to Grelad (Grelauga) Duncansdottir. She was a daughter of "Earl Dungad of Caithness" and Groa, herself a daughter of Thorstein “the Red” Olafsson (our 27th great grandfather in the Ancient Icelandic Pedigree). Grelad's Norse credentials were thus impressive, but it has been suggested that her connection to this "earl" of Caithness may have been more important for the Orkney earldom. It is likely that Dungad was a member of a pre-Norse era ruling family and that the marriage brought Groa's descendants within the Celtic lineage and helped to legitimize their ambitions on the north mainland of Scotland.

Thorfinn and Grelad had five sons: Arnfinn, Havard, Lodvir, Ljot, and Skuli. They also had two daughters whose names are not known.

Thorfinn Torf-Einarsson lived to be an old man and may have died about 977 "on a bed of sickness". He is said to have been buried at the broch site at Howe of Hoxa on South Ronaldsay. According to St Olaf's Saga his sons became Earls after him but the earldom was then beset by dynastic strife.

Thorfinn's son Hlodver then became earl and "ruled alone over this country." Hlodver ruled well and married Audney, daughter of Kjarvaldur, King of Ireland. Hlodver died in his bed and was buried at Ham in Caithness. He was succeeded as earl by his son Sigurdur Hlodversson.

Earl Sigurdur “the Stout” Hlodversson (960-1014)(our 27th great grandfather)

Sigurdur Hlodvirsson (960 – 1014), popularly known as Sigurd the Stout, was an Earl of Orkney. Sigurdur was the son of Hlodvir Thorfinnsson and great grandson of Torf-Einar Rognvaldson. Sigurd's tenure as earl was apparently free of the kin-strife that beset some other incumbents of this title and he was able to pursue his military ambitions over a wide area. He also held lands in the north of mainland Scotland and in the Sudrøyar.

Sigurdur was in the fortunate position that on his accession to the earldom there seem to have been no other serious contenders. In this respect his rule was unlike that of the earlier

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generation of the sons of Earl Thorfinn and of the next generation in that it avoided the bitter feuding that beset the earldom during both of those periods.

Sigurdur's great-grandfather, Torf-Einar, lost the udal rights of the Orkney and Shetland farmers as part of a deal he brokered with the Norwegian crown. These rights were restored by Sigurdur. Sigurdur was married to Anleta MacAlpin. They were known to have five sons.

Sigurdur's domain included not just Orkney itself but also Shetland, which formed part of the earldom and also extensive lands on mainland Scotland. For the latter his overlords were the Kings of Scotland rather than of Norway. The extent of these mainland dominions is uncertain. According to the rather dubious source, Njal's Saga, they included Ross, Moray, Sutherland and the Dales. At the time Moray would have included districts on the west coast including Lochaber. During Sigurdur's tenure the earldom approached its high point and his influence was perhaps only exceeded by that of his son Thorfinn.

Sigurdur the Stout also took control of the Hebrides, and placed a jarl called Gilli in charge. The Annals of Ulster record a raid by "the Danes" on Iona on Christmas Night in which the abbot and fifteen of the elders of the monastery were slaughtered and this may have been connected with the successful conquering of the Isle of Man by Sigurdur and Gilli between 985 and 989. Njal's Saga records a victory for Sigurdur over Gofraid mac Arailt, King of the Isles with the former returning to Orkney with the spoils. The contemporary Annals of Ulster record a similar event in 987 although with the reverse outcome. Here it is claimed that 1,000 Norsemen were killed, among them the Danes who had plundered Iona. Two years later Njal's Saga reports a second campaign in the southern Hebrides, Anglesey, Kintyre, Wales and a more decisive victory in Man.

According to the Orkneyinga Saga, the Northern Isles were Christianized by King Olaf Tryggvasson (our 25th great grandfather in the Ancient Icelanidic Pedigree) in 995 when he stopped at South Walls on his way back to Norway from Dublin. The King summoned Earl Sigurdur and said "I order you and all your subjects to be baptized. If you refuse, I'll have you killed on the spot and I swear I will ravage every island with fire and steel." Unsurprisingly, Sigurdur agreed and the islands became Christian at a stroke.

A battle was fought between Norwegian forces and Malcolm II of Scotland at Mortlach in about 1005 which may have involved or been led by Sigurdur. Although victory went to the Scots, the Norwegians had clearly spent some considerable time encamped in Moray and came equipped with a large fleet. Scottish forces had pushed north into Caithness.

The Orkneyinga Saga blandly reports that "five years after the Battle of Svolder" Earl Sigurdur went to Ireland to support Sigtrygg Silkbeard and was killed in a battle that took place on Good Friday. The 12th century Irish source, the Cogadh Gaedhil re Gallaibh, records the events of the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. The "foreigners and Leinstermen" were led by Brodir of the Isle of Man and Sigurdur, and the battle lasted all day. Though Brian Boru was killed in the battle, the Irishmen ultimately drove back their enemies into the sea, and Sigurdur himself was killed on April 23, 1014. His death is corroborated by the Annals of Ulster, which record that amongst the dead was "Siuchraid son of Loduir, iarla Innsi Orcc" (Sigurdur, son of Hlodvir, Earl of Orkney). This is the earliest known contemporary reference to the earldom of Orkney.

Sigurdur left four sons: Brusi, Sumarlidi, Einar and Thorfinn, each of whom would also

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bear the title Earl of Orkney.

Abbot Crinan Thane of Dunkeld (978-1045)(our 27th great grandfather)

Crinan of Dunkeld (978-1045) was the hereditary abbot of the monastery of Dunkeld, and perhaps the Mormaer of Atholl. Crinan 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.

In about 1001, Crinan was married to Bethoc, daughter of Malcolm II. As Malcolm had no surviving son, the strongest hereditary claim to the Scottish throne descended through Bethoc. Crinan and Bethoc's eldest son, Duncan.

The monastery of Saint Columba at Dunkeld was founded on the north bank of the River Tay in the 6th century or early 7th century following the expedition of St. Columba into the land of the Picts. It may have continued to draw its hierarchy from the Cenél Conaill of Donegal. Iain Moncreiffe argued that Crinan belonged to a Scottish sept of the Irish Cenél Conaill royal dynasty. Alternatively, Christopher Cairney proposed a Cenél nEógain descent for the House of Dunkeld.

While the title of Hereditary Abbot (coarb in Gaelic) was a feudal position that was often exercised in name only, Crinan 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 9th or 10th century cross-slabs in the Cathedral Museum.

In 1045, Crinan of Dunkeld rose in rebellion against Macbeth in support of his 14-year-old grandson, Malcolm III's claim to the throne. Malcolm was the elder son of Crinan's son, the late King Duncan, who predeceased his father. However, Crinan, by then an elderly man, was killed in a battle at Dunkeld on April 5, 1045.

King Duncan “the Gracious” Dunkeld MacCrinan I (1001-1040)(our 27th great grandfather)

Duncan MacCrinan (1001 – 14 August 1040) known as King Duncan I, was king of Scotland (Alba) from 1034 to 1040. He is the historical basis of the "King Duncan" in Shakespeare's play Macbeth. He was a son of Crinan, hereditary lay abbot of Dunkeld, and Bethoc, daughter of king Malcolm II. He was born in about 1001 in Atholl of Perthshire, Scotland.

Unlike the "King Duncan" of Shakespeare's Macbeth, the historical Duncan appears to have been a young man. He followed his grandfather Malcolm as king after the latter's death on November 25, 1034, without apparent opposition. He may have been Malcolm's acknowledged successor since the succession appears to have been uneventful.

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Duncan married Suthen Sybil Munso of Northumbria in about 1030. Duncan had at least three sons. The eldest, Malcolm III was king from 1058 to 1093 after assassinating and usurping Lulach, MacBeth's stepson. The second son Donald III was king afterwards. Máel Muire, Earl of Atholl was the third son. We descend from all three of these sons.

The early period of Duncan's reign was apparently uneventful, perhaps a consequence of his youth. Macbeth (Mac Bethad mac Findláich) is recorded as having been his dux, today rendered as "duke" and meaning nothing more than the rank between prince and marquess, but then still having the Roman meaning of "war leader."

Duncan led a large Scots army south to besiege Durham, but the expedition ended in disaster. Duncan survived, but the following year he led an army north into Moray, Macbeth's domain, apparently on a punitive expedition against Moray. There he was killed in action, at Bothnagowan, now Pitgaveny, near Elgin, by the men of Moray led by Macbeth, probably on August 14, 1040. He is thought to have been buried at Elgin before later relocation to the island of Iona.

Gudrod Crovan Haraldsson III (1030-1095)(our 25th great grandfather)

Gudred Crovan Haraldsson (1030 -1095), was a Norse-Gaelic ruler of the kingdoms of Dublin and the Isles. Although his precise parentage has not completely been proven, he was certainly a descendant of Amlaíb Cúarán, King of Northumbria and Dublin.

Gudrod was born about 1030 in the Hebrides of Scotland. He first appears on record in the context of supporting the Norwegian invasion of England in 1066. Following the collapse of this campaign, Gudrod is recorded to have arrived on the Isle of Man, at the court of Gofraid mac Sitriuc, King of the Isles, a likely kinsman of his. During the 1070s, the latter died and was succeeded by his son, Fingal. Within the decade, Gudrod violently seized the kingship for himself, although the exact circumstances surrounding this takeover are uncertain. By 1091, Gudrod attained the kingship of Dublin, and thereby secured complete control of the valuable trade routes through the Irish Sea region. Gudrod's expansion may be further perceptible in the Clyde estuary and Galloway, and may well have forced the English to consolidate control of Cumberland in an effort to secure their western maritime flank. Gudrod appears to have drawn his power from the Hebrides; and archaeological evidence from Man reveals that, in comparison to the decades previous to his takeover, the island seems to have enjoyed a period of relative peace.

During his reign, Gudrod appears to have lent military assistance to Gruffydd ap Cynan, King of Gwynedd, a probable kinsman, who was then locked in continuous conflicts with Welsh rivals and encroaching English magnates. The earliest known Bishops of the Isles date from about the time of Gudrod's reign, although it is almost certain that earlier Ecclesiastes held this position. It may have been just prior to Gudrod's accession in the Isles, whilst Dublin was under the ultimate control of Toirdelbach Ua Briain, King of Munster, that Dublin and the Isles were ecclesiastically separated once and for all. Gudrod's rule in Dublin came to an abrupt end in 1094 with his expulsion at the hands of Muirchertach Ua Briain, King of Munster, a man who may have even driven Gudrod from Man as well. Documentary evidence reveals that the last decade

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of the 11th century saw an upsurge in plague and famine. According to Irish sources, one quarter of Ireland perished from pestilence in 1095 alone. One of the fatalities was Gudrod himself, who died on Islay.

Gudrod's greatest impact on history may have been his founding of the Crovan dynasty, his patrilineal descendants who ruled in the Isles for almost two centuries. Gudrod was an important maternal ancestor of Clann Somairle (Somerled), a family that held power in the Isles centuries after the final extinction of the Crovan dynasty. As such, he may be identical to Gofraid mac Fergusa, an apparent genealogical construct claimed as a Clann Somairle ancestor. Gudrod may well be identical to the celebrated King Orry of Manx legend, a figure traditionally credited with instituting the Manx legal system. Gudrod and King Orry are associated with numerous historic and prehistoric sites on Man and Islay. We descend from his son Olafur "Bitling" Gudrodarson.

King Malcolm III Canmore (1031-1093)(our 26th great grandfather)

Malcolm III (1031-1093) was King of Scots from 1058 to 1093. He was later nicknamed "Canmore". Malcolm Canmore was born on March 26, 1031 at Dunkeld in Perthshire, Scotland. His parents were King Duncan MacCrinan I and Suthen Sybil Munso. Soon after the death of his father Duncan, Malcolm and his brother were sent away for greater safety. According to one version, Malcolm (then aged about nine) was sent to England, and his younger brother Donalbane was sent to the Isles. It was assumed that Malcolm passed most of Macbeth's seventeen-year reign in the Kingdom of England at the court of Edward the Confessor. Today's British royal family can trace their family history back to Malcolm III via his daughter Matilda as well as his son David I, an ancestor of Robert the Bruce and thus also the Stewart kings.

In about 1059, Malcolm married his first wife Ingeborg Sigrid Finnsdottir at Dundermline in Fifeshire, Scotland. They were known to have three sons. One of those sons would become King Duncan II, from whom we descend.

By the end of 1070, Malcolm had married Edgar's sister Margaret (later known as Saint Margaret). They had 6 sons and two daughters. We descend from their sons Alexander and David I, later King of Scotland. We also descend from their daughter Mary. Malcolm's second wife, St. Margaret of Scotland, is Scotland's only royal saint. Malcolm himself had no reputation for piety; with the notable exception of Dunfermline Abbey in Fife, he is not definitely associated with major religious establishments or ecclesiastical reforms.

Malcolm's long reign of 35 years preceded the beginning of the Scoto-Norman age. Henry I of England and Eustace III of Boulogne were his sons-in-law, making him the maternal grandfather of Empress Matilda, William Adelin and Matilda of Boulogne. All three of them were prominent in English politics during the 12th century.

Malcolm's kingdom did not extend over the full territory of modern Scotland: the north and west of Scotland remained under Scandinavian rule following the Norse invasions. Malcolm III fought a series of wars against the Kingdom of England, which may have had as its objective the conquest of the English earldom of Northumbria. These wars did not result in any significant advances southward. Malcolm's primary achievement was to continue a lineage that ruled

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Scotland for many years, although his role as founder of a dynasty has more to do with the propaganda of his youngest son David I and his descendants than with history.

While marching north again, Malcolm was ambushed by Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumbria, whose lands he had devastated, near Alnwick on November 13, 1093. There he was killed by Arkil More, steward of Bamburgh Castle. The conflict became known as the Battle of Alnwick.

King Duncan Canmore II (1063-1094)(our 27th great grandfather)

Duncan Canmore II (1060 - 1094) was king of Scots. Duncan Canmore was born about 1063 in Perth, Scotland. He was son of Malcolm Canmore III and his first wife Ingibjorg Finnsdottir, widow of Thorfinn Sigurdsson.

Duncan was given into the keeping of William the Conqueror (our 26th great grandfather) in 1072 as a hostage. The Annals of Ulster note that the "French went into Scotland and brought away the son of the king of Scotland as hostage" (the word French, is referring to the Normans). Edgar Ætheling, the last remaining male member of the English royal family had fled to Scotland, in 1068, seeking protection from the invading Normans. Edgar sought Malcolm III's assistance in his struggle against William the Conqueror. The relationship was reinforced when Malcolm married his second wife, Ætheling's sister, Margaret, in 1071.

The formal link between the royal house of Scotland and Wessex and Malcolm's forays in northern England were an obvious threat to William who counter-attacked with a full-scale invasion of southern Scotland in 1072. Malcolm met William in Abernethy. In the resulting Treaty of Abernethy, Malcolm submitted to William for Malcolm's lands in England (Cambria and Northumbria) but not for Scotland. Though the facts are not clear, one of the conditions of the agreement may have been that Edgar Ætheling leave the Scottish court. The offering of Duncan, Malcolm's eldest son, as hostage was probably another term of the treaty.

Duncan was raised in the Anglo-Norman court of William I, becoming familiar with the culture, education, and institutions of his hosts. He was trained as a Norman knight and participated in William's campaigns. In 1087, William died, and his eldest surviving son Robert Curthose succeeded him as Duke of Normandy. Robert released Duncan from custody and had him officially knighted. Duncan was allowed to leave the Duchy of Normandy. He chose to join the court of William II of England, younger brother to Robert. His father, who by then had many sons, appears to have made no effort to obtain Duncan's return. Edward, the eldest paternal half-brother of Duncan, had been designated as heir in his absence. Duncan notably chose to stay with his adoptive culture, partly due to the influence of 15 years of Norman life and partly in pursuit of personal wealth and glory, though he may always have had in mind that one day he would become Scotland's king, like his father and grandfather.

In 1092, hostilities between Malcolm III and William II were ongoing. William managed to capture Carlisle, a major settlement of Cumbria. In 1093, William started construction of Carlisle Castle. Malcolm reacted by leading his last raid into Northumberland. Malcolm was killed in the conflict on November 13, 1093 near Alnwick. Edward was mortally wounded in the same fight. Malcolm's queen Margaret died days after receiving the news of their deaths from her

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son Edgar. The resulting power vacuum allowed Donald III of Scotland, younger brother of Malcolm, to seize the throne. The new monarch represented the interests of "a resentful native aristocracy", driving out the Anglo-Saxons and Normans who had come to the court of Malcolm and Margaret. The event allowed Duncan to lay claim to the throne, attempting to depose his uncle. He had the support of William II, in exchange for an oath of fealty to his patron.

Duncan married Ethelreda of Northumbria, daughter of Gospatrick, Earl of Northumbria. The marriage is recorded in the *Cronicon Cumbriæ*. They had a single known son, William FitzDuncan. A surviving charter of Duncan II indicates that William was an only child. We descend from this William.

By 1094, Duncan was leading a sizeable army, consisting of mercenary knights, and infantry. Many of these soldiers probably came from Northumbria, reflecting the familial association of Duncan to Gospatrick. In the early summer, Duncan led his army in an invasion of Scotland. Donald III mobilized his own supporters and troops in response. The early phase of the war took place in June, resulting in victory for Duncan. Donald was forced to retreat towards the Scottish Highlands. Duncan was crowned king at Scone, but his support and authority probably did not extend north of the River Forth. His continued power was reliant on the presence of his Anglo-Norman allies.

The continued presence of a foreign occupation army was naturally resented by much of the local population. Duncan himself had spent most of his life abroad, granting him outsider status. Months into his reign, landowners and prelates rose against the Normans. The occupation army fared poorly against a series of ongoing raids. Duncan was only able to maintain the throne by negotiating with the rebels. He agreed to their terms, sending most of his foreign supporters back to William.

Sending away his support troops soon backfired. The Lowland rebels seem to have ceased their activities, but Donald had spent the intervening months rebuilding his army and political support. In November 1094, Donald led his army to the Lowlands and confronted his nephew. On November 12, 1094, Duncan was ambushed and killed in battle at Monthechin in Kincardineshire, having reigned for less than seven months. There are two, contradictory accounts about the burial place of Duncan II. One reports him buried at Dunfermline Abbey, the other at the isle of Iona.

Matilda “Maud” de Senlis de Huntingdon (1072-1130),(our 25th great grandmother)

Maud or Matilda (1072 - 1130) was the queen consort of King David I of Scotland. She was the great-niece of William the Conqueror and the granddaughter of Earl Siward. Matilda was born on July 2, 1072 in Northumberland, England. Matilda was the daughter of Waltheof Siwardson, the Anglo-Saxon Earl of Huntingdon and Northampton, and his Norman wife Judith of Lens. Her father was the last of the major Anglo-Saxon earls to remain powerful after the Norman conquest of England in 1066, and the son of Siward, Earl of Northumbria. Her mother was the niece of William the Conqueror, which makes Matilda his grand-niece. Through her ancestors the Counts of Boulogne, she was also a descendant of Alfred the Great and Charles the Bald and a cousin of Godfrey of Bouillon.

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Matilda was married to Simon de Senlis (or St Liz) in about 1090. He received the honor of Huntingdon (whose lands stretched across much of eastern England) probably in right of his wife from William Rufus before the end of the year 1090. Matilda and Simon were known to have three children. We descend from their daughter Matilda.

Simon died some time after 1111 and Matilda next married David, the brother-in-law of Henry I of England, in 1113. Through the marriage, David gained control over his wife's vast estates in England, in addition to his own lands in Cumbria and Strathclyde. They had two sons and two daughters. We descend from their son Henry.

In 1124, David became King of Scots. Matilda's two sons by different fathers, Simon and Henry, would later vie for the Earldom of Huntingdon. She died on April 23, 1130 and was buried at Scone Abbey in Perthshire.

King Alexander “The Fierce” Canmore I (1078-1124)(our 26th great grandfather)

Alexander Canmore I (1078 - 1124), posthumously nicknamed “The Fierce” , was the King of Scotland from 1107 to his death. Alexander was born about 1078 to King Malcolm III and his wife St. Margaret of Wessex, grandniece of Edward the Confessor. Alexander was named after Pope Alexander II.

He was the younger brother of King Edgar, who was unmarried, and his brother's heir presumptive by 1104 (and perhaps earlier). In that year he was the senior layman present at the examination of the remains of Saint Cuthbert at Durham prior to their re-interment. He held lands in Scotland north of the Forth and in Lothian.

On the death of Edgar in 1107, he succeeded to the Scottish crown; but, in accordance with Edgar's instructions, their brother David was granted an appanage in southern Scotland. Edgar's will granted David the lands of the former kingdom of Strathclyde or Cumbria, and this was apparently agreed in advance by Edgar, Alexander, David and their brother-in-law Henry I of England. In 1113, perhaps at Henry's instigation, and with the support of his Anglo-Norman allies, David demanded, and received, additional lands in Lothian along the Upper Tweed and Teviot. David did not receive the title of king, but of "prince of the Cumbrians", and his lands remained under Alexander's final authority.

The dispute over the eastern marches does not appear to have caused lasting trouble between Alexander and Henry of England. In 1114 he joined Henry on campaign in Wales against Gruffydd ap Cynan of Gwynedd. Alexander's marriage with Henry's illegitimate daughter Sybilla of Normandy took place in about 1107. Sybilla died in unrecorded circumstances at Kenmore, Perthshire, Scotland on July 12, 1122 and was buried at Dunfermline Abbey. We descend from their daughter Aveline Hesding.

Alexander had at least one illegitimate child, Malcolm MacAlexander, who was later to be involved in a revolt against David I in the 1130s. He was imprisoned at Roxburgh for many years afterwards, perhaps until his death some time after 1157.

Alexander was, like his brothers Edgar and David, a notably pious king. He was responsible for foundations at Scone and Inchcolm. His mother's chaplain and hagiographer Thurgot was named Bishop of Saint Andrews in 1107, presumably by Alexander's order.

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Alexander also patronized Saint Andrews, granting lands intended for an Augustinian Priory, which may have been the same as that intended to honor his wife.

For all his religiosity, Alexander was not remembered as a man of peace. He manifested the terrible aspect of his character in his reprisals in the Mormaerdom of Moray. Alexander was holding court at Invergowrie when he was attacked by "men of the Isles". The attackers were from Moray and Mearns. Alexander pursued them north, to "Stockford" in Ross (near Beauly) where he defeated them. This is why he was named the "Fierce".

Alexander died on April 23, 1124 at his court at Stirling. His brother David, probably the acknowledged heir since the death of Sybilla, succeeded him.

Olafur “Bitling” Gudrodarson (1080-1153)(our 24th great grandfather)

Olafur Guðrøðarson (1080 - 1153) was a twelfth-century King of the Isles. Olafur was born about 1080 on the Isle of Man. His parents were Gudrodur Crovan and Ealdgyth of Mercia. As a younger son of Guðrøður Crovan, King of Dublin and the Isles, Óláfur witnessed a vicious power struggle between his elder brothers in the aftermath of their father's death. At some point, the young Óláfur was entrusted to the care of Henry I, King of England, and like the contemporaneous Scottish monarchs, Alexander I and David I, Óláfur appears to have been a protégé of the English king. As King of the Isles, Óláfur contracted marital alliances with neighboring maritime rulers. Although he appears to have overseen successful military operations to reclaim the northern-most territories once controlled by his father, he may have witnessed the loss of authority in Galloway as well. Like his counterpart David I, Óláfur was a reformer and modernizer of his realm.

The Isles were ruled by Olafur's father Guðrøður Crovan for over two decades until his death in 1095. After a short period of Irish domination, the region lapsed into further conflict which was capitalized on by Magnús (barefoot) Ólafsson (our 21st great grandfather in the Ancient Icelandic Pedigree), King of Norway, who led two military campaigns throughout the Isles and surrounding Irish Sea region at about the turn of the 12th century. Magnús dominated these regions until his death in 1103, whereupon control of the Isles appears to have fragmented into chaos once again.

Rather than allow ambitious Irish powers to fill the power vacuum, Henry I appears to have installed Óláfur on the throne at some point between 1112 and 1115. Óláfur is recorded to have spent his youth at Henry I's court, and Óláfur's later religious foundations reveal that he was greatly influenced by his English upbringing. In the second quarter of the 11th century, Óláfur founded Rushen Abbey, a reformed religious house on Man. He further oversaw the formation of the Diocese of the Isles, the territorial extent of which appears to reveal the boundaries of his realm. Óláfur is recorded to have had at least two wives: Ingibjorg, daughter of Hákon Pálsson, Earl of Orkney; and Alfrecga, daughter of Fergus, Lord of Galloway. The unions seem to reveal that Óláfur shifted from an alliance with Orkney to that with Galloway. Not long after his marriage to Affreca, Óláfur's daughter Raginhild married Somerled MacGillebride (Our 23rd Great Grandfather from the Ancient Scottish Pedigree), Lord of Argyll, an emerging power in the region. We descend from Raginhild by Olufur's first wife Ingibjorg and Gudrod Olafsson by his

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second wife Alfrega.

Although Óláfur's reign is recorded to have been peaceful, there is reason to suspect that his own succession was uncertain. In 1152, Guðrøður traveled to Norway and rendered homage to Ingi Haraldsson, King of Norway. At about this time, the Diocese of the Isles was incorporated within the recently elevated Archdiocese of Niðarós. Whilst this strengthened Norwegian links with the Isles, it secured the ecclesiastical independence of Óláfur's domain, and safeguard his secular authority in the region.

Ólafur's four-decade reign ended in abrupt disaster when he was assassinated by three nephews on June 29, 1153 on the Isle of Man. Following the ensuing power struggle, Óláfur's son Guðrøður overcame the kin-slayers, and assumed the kingship of the Kingdom of the Isles. Óláfur's descendants went on to reign as kings of the Isles for over a century.

King David Canmore I (1084-1153)(our 25th great grandfather)

David Canmore I (1084 - 1153) was a 12th century ruler who was Prince of the Cumbrians from 1113 to 1124 and later King of Scotland from 1124 to 1153. David was born about 1084 at Edinburgh Castle in Midlothian, Scotland. The youngest son of Malcolm III and St. Margaret of Wessex, David spent most of his childhood in Scotland, but was exiled to England temporarily in 1093. Perhaps after 1100, he became a dependent at the court of King Henry I. There he was influenced by the Anglo-French culture of the court.

In 1093 King Malcolm III and David's brother Edward were killed at the River Aln during an invasion of Northumberland. David and his two brothers Alexander and Edgar, both future kings of Scotland, were probably present when their mother died shortly afterwards. According to later medieval tradition, the three brothers were in Edinburgh when they were besieged by their paternal uncle Donald.

William Rufus, King of England, opposed Donald's accession to the northerly kingdom. During the power struggle of 1093–97, David was in England. In 1093, he may have been about nine years old. From 1093 until 1103 David's presence cannot be accounted for in detail, but he appears to have been in Scotland for the remainder of the 1090s. When William Rufus was killed, his brother Henry Beauclerc seized power and married David's sister, Matilda. The marriage made David the brother-in-law of the ruler of England. From that point onwards, David was probably an important figure at the English court. Despite his Gaelic background, by the end of his stay in England, David had become a full-fledged Normanized prince.

David's time as Prince of the Cumbrians and Earl marks the beginning of his life as a great territorial lord. His earldom probably began in 1113, when Henry I arranged David's marriage to Maud, 2nd Countess of Huntingdon, who was the heiress to the Huntingdon–Northampton lordship. As her husband, David used the title of earl, and there was the prospect that David's children by her would inherit all the honors borne by Matilda's father Waltheof. The marriage brought with it the "Honor of Huntingdon," a lordship scattered through the shires of Northampton, Huntingdon, and Bedford. Within a few years, Matilda bore a son, whom David named Henry after his patron. We descend from Henry.

When David's brother Alexander I died in 1124, David chose, with the backing of Henry

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I, to take the Kingdom of Scotland (Alba) for himself. In either April or May 1124 of the same year, David was crowned King of Scotland at Scone. If later Scottish and Irish evidence can be taken as evidence, the ceremony of coronation was a series of elaborate traditional rituals, of the kind infamous in the Anglo-French world of the 12th century for their "unchristian" elements.

Outside his Cumbrian principality and the southern fringe of Scotland-proper, David exercised little power in the 1120s, and in the words of Richard Oram, was "king of Scots in little more than name." He was probably in that part of Scotland he did rule for most of the time between late 1127 and 1130. However, he was at the court of Henry in 1126 and in early 1127, and returned to Henry's court in 1130, serving as a judge at Woodstock for the treason trial of Geoffrey de Clinton. It was in this year that David's wife, Matilda of Huntingdon, died. Possibly as a result of this, and while David was still in southern England, Scotland-proper rose up in arms against him.

He was forced to engage in warfare against his rival and nephew, Máel Coluim mac Alaxandair. Subduing the latter seems to have taken David ten years, a struggle that involved the destruction of Óengus, Mormaer of Moray. David's victory allowed expansion of control over more distant regions theoretically part of his Kingdom. After the death of his former patron Henry I, David supported the claims of Henry's daughter and his own niece, Empress Matilda, to the throne of England. In the process, he came into conflict with King Stephen and was able to expand his power in northern England.

When the winter of 1136–37 was over, David prepared again to invade England. The King of the Scots massed an army on the Northumberland's border, to which the English responded by gathering an army at Newcastle. Once more pitched battle was avoided, and instead a truce was agreed until December. When December fell, David demanded that Stephen hand over the whole of the old earldom of Northumberland. Stephen's refusal led to David's third invasion, this time in January 1138.

By February 1138, King Stephen marched north to deal with David. The two armies avoided each other, and Stephen was soon on the road south. In the summer David split his army into two forces, sending William FitzDuncan to march into Lancashire, where he harried Furness and Craven. Then on June 10, 1138, William FitzDuncan met a force of knights and men-at-arms in the Battle of Clitheroe, and the English army was routed. But David would be defeated at the Battle of the Standards in Aug 1138.

Perhaps the greatest blow to David's plans came on July 12, 1152 when Henry, Earl of Northumberland, David's only son and heir, died. He had probably been suffering from some kind of illness for a long time. David had under a year to live, and he may have known that he was not going to be alive much longer. David quickly arranged for his grandson Malcolm IV to be made his successor, and for his younger grandson William to be made Earl of Northumberland. Donnchad I, Mormaer of Fife, the senior magnate in Scotland-proper, was appointed as rector, or regent, and took the 11 year-old Malcolm around Scotland-proper on a tour to meet and gain the homage of his future Gaelic subjects. David's health began to fail seriously in the spring of 1153, and on May 24, 1153, David died in Carlisle Castle. In his obituary in the Annals of Tigernach, he is called Dabíd mac Mail Colaim, rí Alban & Saxan, "David, son of Malcolm, King of Scotland and England", a title which acknowledged the

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importance of the new English part of David's realm. He was buried in Dunfermline Abbey.

David's reign would become known as the "Davidian Revolution" which is a term used by many scholars to summarize the changes which took place in Scotland during his reign. These included his foundation of burghs and regional markets, implementation of the ideals of Gregorian Reform, foundation of monasteries, Normanization of the Scottish government, and the introduction of feudalism through immigrant French and Anglo-French knights.

Walter FitzAlan Stewart (1106-1177), first high Stewart (our 24th great grandfather)

Walter FitzAlan (1106 – 1177) was a 12th century Scottish magnate and Steward of Scotland. He was a younger son of Alan fitzFlaald and Avelina de Hesdin. He was born about 1106 at Oswestry Castle in Shropshire, England. Walter's father was a Breton knight who was granted lands in Shropshire by Henry I, King of England. In about 1136, Walter appears to have arrived in Scotland and entered into the service of David I, King of Scotland. He became the king's dapifer or steward in about 1150, and served as such for three successive Scottish kings: David, Malcolm IV, and William I. In time, the stewardship became hereditarily-held by Walter's descendants.

Walter started his career as a minor English baron. Upon arriving in Scotland, however, he received a substantial grant of lands from his Scottish sovereigns. These included the western provincial lordships of: Mearns, Strathgryfe, Renfrew and North Kyle. The caput of Walter's holdings is uncertain, although there is reason to suspect it was either Dundonald Castle or Renfrew Castle. Walter was a benefactor of several religious houses, and was the founder of Paisley Priory.

There is reason to suspect that Walter took part in the Siege of Lisbon against the Moors in 1147. He probably assisted Malcolm in the series of Scottish invasions of Galloway in the 1160, which resulted in the downfall of Fergus, Lord of Galloway. In fact, Walter and the other colonial lords settled in western Scotland were probably intended to protect the Scottish realm from external threats located in regions such as Galloway and the Isles. In 1164, Somerled, King of the Isles invaded Scotland and was defeated near Renfrew. It is possible that the commander of the local Scottish forces was Walter himself.

Walter was married to Eschina de Londres, an apparent member of the Londres/London family. There is reason to suspect that she was also matrilineally descended from a family native to southern Scotland. If correct, this could explain why Walter was granted the lands of Mow. Alternately, it is possible that Eschina's rights to Mow merely stemmed from her marriage to Walter. Eschina and Walter were the parents of Alan, Walter's successor. We descend from Alan and also their daughter Margaret. Walter was an ancestor of the Stewart family, from which descended the royal Stewart/Stuart dynasty.

Walter served as steward until his death. Walter retired to Melrose Abbey, and died there on February 2, 1177 as a lay member of the monastery. He was thereafter buried at Paisley.

Henry Huntington (1114-1152), 3rd Earl of Huntingdon (our 24th great grandfather)

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Henry of Scotland (1114 – 1152) was heir apparent to the Kingdom of Alba. He was also the 3rd Earl of Northumberland and the 3rd Earl of Huntingdon. He was born on November 19, 1114 in Huntingdon, England. He was the son of King David I of Scotland and Queen Maud, 2nd Countess of Huntingdon.

King David I (Canmore) of Scotland, Henry's father, invaded England in 1136. His army was met by Stephen of Blois at Carlisle. Instead of battle, there was a negotiated settlement that included Henry performing homage to Stephen for Carlisle and the Earldom of Huntingdon. Henry's journey to Stephen's court for Easter (1136) was met with resentment, including an accusation of treason, which brought about his return at his father's insistence.

After another invasion by his father, Henry was finally invested with the Earldom of Northumberland in 1139. Later in the year, Henry met with Stephen at Nottingham, where he was also reinvested with Carlisle and Cumberland. Henry then paid homage to Stephen for his earldom.

Henry's inclusion into King Stephen's inner circle was highlighted by his arranged marriage to Ada de Warenne in about 1139. Ada was the daughter of William de Warenne, 2nd Earl of Surrey (died 1138), and Elizabeth of Vermandois, daughter of Hugh of Vermandois. This marriage secured Henry's place within Stephen's kingdom. Following Stephen's capture by forces of Empress Matilda, Henry held the Earldom of Northumberland as a Scottish fief.

Henry had been in poor health throughout the 1140s. He died suddenly on June 12, 1152 at Kelso in Roxburghshire, Scotland. Unlike in the case of the English king, who had been left without legitimate male descendants in the wreck of the White Ship, there was no succession crisis. This was because Henry and Ada were known to have eight children. Four of which were sons to carry forward the lineage of their father. We descend from five of their children: William, Margaret, Ada, David, and Marjorie.

David MacEanric Huntingdon I (1152-1219), 8th Earl of Huntingdon (our 25th great grandfather)

David MacEauric of Scotland (1152 – 1219) was a Scottish prince and 8th Earl of Huntingdon. He was, until 1198, heir to the Scottish throne.

David was born about 1152 in Stirling, Scotland. He was the youngest surviving son of Henry of Scotland, 3rd Earl of Huntingdon and Ada de Warenne, a daughter of William de Warenne, 2nd Earl of Surrey, and Elizabeth of Vermandois. His paternal grandfather was David I of Scotland. Huntingdon was granted to him after his elder brother William I of Scotland ascended the throne. David's son John succeeded him to the earldom.

On August 26, 1190 David married Matilda of Chester (1171 – 6 January 1233), daughter of Hugh de Kevelioc, 3rd Earl of Chester. David was almost twenty years Matilda's senior. The marriage took place at Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, England. David and Matilda were known to have seven children. We descend from their daughter Margaret.

In 1190 his brother gave him 'superiority' over Dundee and its port. The same year he endowed Lindores Abbey in Fife and a church dedicated to St Mary in Dundee.

David died on June 17, 1219 at Jedburgh, Roxburghshire, Scotland. Some have said that

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David quite possibly could have been the “Robin Hood” of English folklore.

William de Burgh (1160-1205)(our 25th great grandfather)

William de Burgh (1160 – 1205) was the founder of the de Burgh/Burke/Bourke dynasty in Ireland. He was born about 1160 and some sources say this occurred in Ulster, Ireland. Other sources say he arrived in Ireland in 1185 and was closely associated with Prince John.

King Henry II of England appointed William de Burgh as Governor of Limerick and granted him vast estates in Leinster and Munster. De Burgh's castles at Tibberaghny (County Kilkenny), Kilsheelan, Ardpatrik and Kilfeacle were used to protect King John's northern borders of Waterford and Lismore and his castles at Carrigogunnell and Castleconnell were used to protect Limerick. He was Seneschal of Munster (Royal Governor) from 1201 to 1203.

Sometime in the 1190s, William allied himself with the King of Thomond, either Domnall Mór Ó Briain, King of Thomond (died 1194) or his son Muirchertach. In 1193, William de Burgh married Mor O'Brian, the daughter of Domnall Mór Ó Briain, King of Limerick. This alliance probably took place during the reign of Muirchertach, as up to the time of his death Domnall Mór had been at war with the Normans. At any rate no more wars are recorded between the two sides for the rest of the decade. According to the Annals of Inisfallen, in 1201 William and the sons of Domnall Mór led a major joint military expedition into Desmond, slaying Amlaíb Ua Donnabáin among others.

From 1199 to 1202 de Burgh led military campaigns in Desmond with the aid of the Ó Briain. Success in the west and south allowed de Burgh to conquer the Kingdom of Connacht, which although he had been granted probably before 1195, he had never occupied. Cathal Crobhdearg Ua Conchobair, King of Connacht, fought a successful counter-attack against the Anglo-Norman castles in Munster, including de Burgh's castle of Castleconnell. Further fighting led to loss of three castles and property, all of which was eventually retrieved with the exception of much of Connacht.

In 1200, "Cathal Crobhdearg Ua Conchobair went into Munster, to the son of Mac Carthy and William de Burgh to solicit their aid." This marked the start of de Burgh's interest in the province. King Cathal Crobdearg Ua Conchobair (reigned 1190–1224) faced much opposition, mainly from within his own family and wished to engage de Burgh's aid to help secure his position. The following year William and Ua Conchobair led an army from Limerick to Tuam and finally to Boyle. Ua Conchobair's rival, Cathal Carragh Ua Conchobair marched at the head of his army to give them battle but was killed in a combined Burke/Ua Conchobair onslaught after a week of skirmishing between the two sides.

William and Ua Conchobair then traveled to Iar Connacht and stayed at Cong for Easter. Here, William and the sons of Rory O'Flaherty conspired to kill Ua Conchobair but the plot was foiled, apparently by holy oaths they were made to swear by the local Coarb family. However, when de Burgh demanded payment for himself and his retinue, battle finally broke out with over seven hundred of de Burgh's followers said to have been killed. William, however, managed to return to Limerick.

The following year in 1202, William returned and took revenge for his army that was

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destroyed a year early. He took the title “Lord of Connacht” in 1203. He died in the winter of 1205 and was interred at the Augustinian Priory of Athassel in Golden, County Tipperary, Ireland which he had founded in 1200. William and his wife Mor O’Brian were known to have had four children. We descend from their son Richard.

Richard de Burgh (1194-1243) 1st Lord of Connacht (our 24th great grandfather)

Richard Mor de Burgh, 1st Lord of Connacht (1194 – 1243), was a Hiberno-Norman aristocrat and Justiciar of Ireland.

Richard Mor de Burgh, born about 1194 in Connaught, Ireland. He was the eldest son and heir of William de Burgh and Mor O’Brian, who was the daughter of Domnall Mór Ua Briain, King of Limerick. De Burgh's principal estate was in the barony of Loughrea where he built a castle in 1236 and a town was founded. He also founded Galway town and Ballinasloe. The islands on Lough Mask and Lough Orben were also part of his domain.

From the death of his father in 1206 to 1214, Richard was a ward of the crown of England until he received his inheritance. In 1215 he briefly served in the household of his uncle Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent. In 1223 and again in 1225 he was appointed seneschal of Munster and keeper of Limerick castle.

In 1224, Richard claimed Connacht, which had been granted to his father but never, in fact, conquered by him. He asserted that the grant to Cathal Crobdearg Ua Conchobair, the Gaelic king, after his father's death had been on condition of faithful service, and that his son Aedh mac Cathal Crobdearg Ua Conchobair, who succeeded Cathal that year, had forfeited it. He had the favor of the justiciar of England, Hubert de Burgh, and was awarded Connacht in May 1227. Having been given custody of the counties of Cork and Waterford and all the crown lands of Decies and Desmond, he was appointed Justiciar of Ireland from 1228 to 1232.

On April 21, 1225, Richard married Egidia de Lacy, daughter of Walter de Lacy, and Margaret de Braose in County Meath, Ireland. With this alliance he acquired the cantred of Eóghanacht Caisil with the castle of Ardmayle in Tipperary. Richard and Egidia had three sons and four daughters. We descend from their son Walter.

When in 1232 Hubert de Burgh fell from grace, Richard was able to distance himself and avoid being campaigned against by the King of England, Henry III. It was only in 1235 when he summoned the whole feudal host of the English lords and magnates to aid him that he expelled Felim mac Cathal Crobdearg Ua Conchobair, the Gaelic king, from Connacht. He and his lieutenants received great shares of land, while Felim was obliged to do homage and was allowed only to keep five cantreds. Richard de Burgh held the remaining 25 cantreds of Connacht in chief of the crown of England. De Burgh took the title of "Lord of Connacht".

Richard died on February 17, 1243 in Aquitaine, France.

Prince Magnus O’Cathan (1200-1260)(our 23rd great grandfather)

Magnus O’Cathan (1200 – 1260) was the Prince Of Limavady in Ulster. He was born about 1200 in Ulster. He was the son of Rory Raudria O’Cathain, who was the progenitor of the

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O'Cathan dynasty.

He married Formaiel and they had at least one son, Guy O'Cathan, who we descend from.

Magnus died in the year 1260 at the Battle of Down, Ireland, he was 60 years old. The Battle of Down, also known as the Battle of Druim Dearg, took place on or about May 14, 1260 near Downpatrick, in modern-day County Down, Northern Ireland.

Hence the epithet Catha an Duin MacNamee laments the loss of Magnus O'Cathain as being the most grievous after that of O'Neill himself. Lament of the O'Cathain Loss:

Bitter to my heart (to see) the grey Galls Triumphant over the slaughtered Maghnus; That the head of O'Cathain, attracting no notice, Should be seen on the bridge of Dun.

Robert de Bruce (1210-1295), 5th Lord of Annandale (our 21st great grandfather)

Robert de Bruce, 5th Lord of Annandale (1210 – 1295), was a feudal lord, justice and constable of Scotland and England, a regent of Scotland, and a competitor for the Scottish throne in 1290/92 in the Great Cause. His grandson Robert the Bruce eventually became King of Scots.

Robert was born on November 2, 1210 in Annandale Castle, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He was the son of Robert de Bruce, 4th Lord of Annandale and Isobel of Huntingdon. Widely known as Robert the Noble, he was also grandson of David of Scotland, 8th Earl of Huntingdon and Matilda de Kevillo of Chester, Great-grandson of Henry of Scotland, Earl of Huntingdon and Northumberland and Ada de Warenne and Great-great grandson of King David I of Scotland and Maud, Countess of Huntingdon.

In addition to Annandale, Robert was Lord of Hartlepool (otherwise known as Hartness) in county Durham, and Writtle and Hatfield Broad Oak in Essex, England.

On May 12, 1240, Robert married Lady Isabella de Clare, daughter of Gilbert de Clare, 4th Earl of Hertford and 5th Earl of Gloucester and Lady Isabel Marshal. With this marriage he gained the village of Ripe, in Sussex, England. Robert and Isabella were known to have seven children. We descend from both their son Robert de Bruce and their daughter Christina.

Robert's possessions were increased following the defeat of Simon de Montfort at the Battle of Evesham (1265), via a series of grants that included the estates of the former rebel barons Walter de Fauconberg, John de Melsa and his brother Bernard. These grants were possibly compensation for the ransom his son Robert, negotiated and paid to his brother Bernard, and nephew Gilbert de Clare, 7th Earl of Gloucester, for his release following his capture, at the Battle of Lewes (1264). Henry III also re-appointed Robert a Justice, and Constable of Carlisle Castle and keeper of the Castle there in 1267, a position he had been dismissed from in 1255.

On May 3, 1273 Robert married Christina de Ireby, the Widow of Adam Jesmond, the Sheriff of Northumberland. This marriage added estates in Cumberland and dower land from her previous husband to the Brus holdings. Following the marriage, Robert appears to have restricted himself to the management of the family's northern possessions, leaving the southern to his sons.

Robert de Bruce was Regent of Scotland some time during minority of his second cousin King Alexander III of Scotland (1241–1286) and was occasionally recognized as a Tanist of the Scottish throne.

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After the extinction of the senior line of the Scottish royal house (the line of William I of Scotland) David of Huntingdon's descendants were the primary candidates for the throne. The two most notable claimants to the throne, John Balliol and Robert himself represented descent through David's daughters Margaret and Isobel respectively.

Robert de Bruce pleaded tanistry and proximity of blood in the succession dispute. He descended from the second daughter of David of Huntingdon, whereas John Balliol descended from the eldest, and thus had the lineal right. However, Robert was a second cousin of kings of Scotland and descended in 4th generation from King David I of Scotland, whereas John Balliol was a third cousin of kings and descended in 5th generation from King David I, the most recent common ancestor who had been Scottish king. The ensuing 'Great Cause' was concluded in 1292. It gave the Crown of Scotland to his family's great rival, John Balliol.

Soon after the death of young queen Margaret, Robert de Bruce raised a body of men with the help of the Earls of Mar and Atholl and marched to Perth with a considerable following and uncertain intentions. Bishop William Fraser of St. Andrews, worried of the possibility of civil war, wrote to Edward I of England, asking for his assistance in choosing a new monarch.

Judgment processed slowly. On August 3, 1291 Edward asked both Balliol and Bruce to choose forty auditors while he himself chose twenty-four, to decide the case. After considering all of the arguments, in early November the court decided in favor of John Balliol, having the superior claim in feudal law, not to mention greater support from the kingdom of Scotland. In accordance with this, final judgement was given by Edward on November 17 and on November 30, John Balliol was crowned as King of Scots at Scone Abbey. The Bruce family thus lost what they regarded as their rightful place on the Scottish throne.

Robert resigned the lordship of Annandale and his claim to the throne to his eldest son Robert de Bruce. Sir Robert de Bruce died at Lochmaben Castle in Dumfriesshire, Scotland and was buried at Gisborough Priory in Cleveland.

Dervorguilla of Galloway (1218-1290) wife of John I de Balliol (our 23rd great grandmother)

Dervorguilla of Galloway (1218 – 28 January 1290) was a 'lady of substance' in 13th century Scotland, the wife from 1223 of John, 5th Baron de Balliol, and mother of John I, a future king of Scotland.

Dervorguilla was born about 1218 in Galloway, Wigtownshire, Scotland. She was one of the three daughters and heiresses of the Gaelic prince Alan FitzRoland Canmore, Lord of Galloway. She was born to Alan's second wife Margaret of Huntingdon, who was the eldest daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon and Matilda (or Maud) of Chester. David in turn was the youngest brother to two Kings of Scotland, Malcolm IV and William the Lion. Thus, through her mother, Dervorguilla was descended from the Kings of Scotland, including David I.

Dervorguilla married John de Balliol in 1223. They were known to have ten children. We descend from their two daughter Cecilia and Euphemia and their son Alexander.

Dervorguilla's father died in 1234 without a legitimate son. According to both Anglo-Norman feudal laws and to ancient Gaelic customs, Dervorguilla was one of his heiresses,

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her two sisters Helen and Christina being older and therefore senior. Because of this, Devorguilla bequeathed lands in Galloway to her descendants, the Balliol and the Comyns. Devorguilla's son John of Scotland was briefly a King of Scots too, known as Toom Tabard.

The Balliol family into which Devorguilla married was based at Barnard Castle in County Durham, England. Although the date of her birth is uncertain, her apparent age of 13 was by no means unusually early for betrothal and marriage at the time.

In 1263, her husband Sir John was required to make penance after a land dispute with Walter Kirkham, Bishop of Durham. Part of this took the very expensive form of founding a College for the poor at the University of Oxford. Sir John's own finances were less substantial than those of his wife, however, and long after his death it fell to Devorguilla to confirm the foundation, with the blessing of the same Bishop as well as the University hierarchy. She established a permanent endowment for the College in 1282, as well as its first formal Statutes. The college still retains the name Balliol College, where the history students' society is called the Devorguilla society and an annual seminar series featuring women in academia is called the Devorguilla Seminar Series.

Devorguilla founded a Cistercian Abbey 7 miles south of Dumfries and Galloway Scotland, in April 1273. It still stands as a picturesque ruin of red sandstone. It is claimed that she was also responsible for the establishment of the first library in Dundee.

When Sir John died on October 25, 1268, Devorguilla had his heart embalmed and kept in a casket of ivory bound with silver. The casket traveled with her for the rest of her life.

In her last years, the main line of the Royal House of Scotland was threatened by a lack of male heirs. Devorguilla died on January 28, 1290 in Kemston, Bedfordshire, England. She had died just before the death of the young heiress Margaret, the Maid of Norway. If she had outlived her, Devorguilla would have been one of the claimants to her throne. Devorguilla was buried beside her husband at New Abbey, Dumfriesshire, Scotland which was christened "Sweetheart Abbey", the name which it retains to this day.

Walter de Burgh (1230-1271), 1st Earl of Ulster (our 23rd great grandfather)

Walter de Burgh, 1st Earl of Ulster, 2nd Lord of Connaught (1230 – 1271), also spelt Bourke or Burke, was an Irish peer from the House of Burke.

Walter de Burgh was born about 1230 in Clanricarde, Connaught, Ireland. He was the second son of Richard Mor de Burgh, 1st Lord of Connaught and Egidia de Lacy.

In 1243, he succeeded his father as Lord of Connacht. In a royal order from Westminster in September 1247, Sir John FitzGeoffrey was charged by the King with seizing the lands of Walter de Burgh's older brother Richard, who had died.

In 1264, Walter de Burgh first married a cousin Lady Maud de Lacy, only daughter and heiress of Hugh de Lacy, 1st Earl of Ulster. That year De Burgh was created Earl of Ulster in her right. In 1270, he and Walter de Ufford, the Justiciar of Ireland, were defeated by Aedh mac Felim Ua Conchobair at Ath an Chip.

Walter then married his second wife Aveline, daughter of Sir John FitzGeoffrey, Justiciar of Ireland, by his wife, Isabel Bigod.

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Walter died on July 28, 1271, aged about 40, in Galway, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Richard Óg de Burgh, 2nd Earl of Ulster (The Red Earl of Ulster). Other children were three sons, Theobald, William and Thomas, and daughter, Egidia, who married Sir James Stewart (1260–1309), High Steward of Scotland. We descend from both Richard and Egidia.

Sir William “the Hardy” Douglas (1255 - 1298), Lord of Douglas (our 21st great grandfather)

Sir William Douglas "le Hardi", Lord of Douglas (1255 – 1298) was a Scottish nobleman and warlord.

William Douglas was born about 1255 in Douglas, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the son of William Longleg, Lord of Douglas and his second wife, Constance Battail of Fawdon.

Douglas' father, Longleg died on October 16, 1274 and there is some confusion as to whether his eldest son Hugh predeceased him, however William the Hardy was certainly in possession of his estates by the end of the decade.

Douglas married Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Stewart, 4th High Steward of Scotland in about 1276 at Douglas in Lanarkshire. They had at least a daughter and a son. We descend from both their daughter Barbara and their son James Douglas (the Black Douglas). Elizabeth Stewart appears to have died before in November 1288, possibly in childbirth.

Douglas was knighted before 1288, when he was called upon by Sir Andrew Moray, to imprison his uncle Sir Hugh de Abernethy at Douglas Castle. Abernethy had been party to the murder of Donnchadh III, Earl of Fife, one of the six Guardians of Scotland. Abernethy died in custody despite attempts by Edward I of England to have him released.

In 1289, Douglas requested the release of certain family charters from Richard, Abbot of Kelso. These charters had been kept at the Priory of Lesmahagow, a daughter house of the Tironensian Abbey of Kelso, for safety. In the receipt for these documents, Douglas styled himself Dominus de Duglas, Lord of Douglas, the first time the title had been recorded.

Eleanor Ferrers was the daughter of Matthew de Lovaine, a great grandson himself of Godfrey III, Count of Louvain. King Edward had provided a handsome dowry from her husband's English lands following his death. He had also possessed lands in five counties in Scotland, and Eleanor had come north to collect her rents. Rather than despoilate the land and the castle, Douglas contented himself by abducting Eleanor and removing her to Douglas Castle. Eleanor, apparently not averse to the rough charms of her kidnapper, and Douglas were wed soon afterwards. We descend from their son Archibald.

King Edward was not so charmed by this event and ordered the Sheriff of Northumberland to seize all Douglas possessions in that county and to apprehend Douglas if the chance arose. Edward also demanded that the Guardians of Scotland immediately arrest Douglas and deliver him and Eleanor to his pleasure. The Guardians did not respond. Douglas was connected to two of the Guardians: James Stewart, 5th High Steward of Scotland was his brother-in-law, and Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan was a brother-in-law of Eleanor de Lovaine. Furthermore, the Guardians may not have reacted well to the preemptory nature of the English king's request.

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However, Douglas seems to have fallen into the hands of the English monarch in early 1290 and was confined at Knaresborough Castle. His imprisonment does not appear to have been unduly harsh, he was released by the spring of 1290 when his wife Eleanor posted bail for his release. Douglas was in favor with Edward again and his Northumbrian lands were restored to him. Eleanor Douglas was fined £100 sterling, and by way of payment had some of her manors in Essex and Herefordshire taken by the crown in 1296.

Following the Battle of Dunbar, a large section of the Scots nobility were languishing in prison in England. The countryside was fomenting and there was talk of a new champion for the Scots people, William Wallace of Elderslie had started his campaign. Most Scots magnates thought that Wallace was beneath their dignity, but Douglas had no such compunction. He was the first nobleman to join with Sir William Wallace in 1297 in rebellion; combining forces at Sanquhar, Durisdeer and later Scone Abbey where the two liberated the English treasury. With that booty Wallace financed further rebellion. Wallace joined his forces with that of Sir Andrew Moray and together they led the patriot army in the Battle at Stirling Bridge fought on September 11, 1297. They were joined by other patriots such as Robert Wishart Bishop of Glasgow, and the Morays of Bothwell, with a contingent of Douglasses at the national muster at Irvine, North Ayrshire.

When King Edward heard of Douglas' supposed treason he commanded the future King of Scots Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, then governor of Carlisle for the English to take retribution. Bruce swept into Douglasdale at the king's order. However, young Bruce, who was twenty-two years old at the time, stated, "I must join my own people and the nation in which I was born." He then was joined by the men of Douglas and Lady Douglas, proceeding to join the rebels at Irvine.

The third time Douglas was held a prisoner of Edward Plantagenet, was after July 9, 1297 when he was accused by Sir Henry de Percy of breaking his covenant of peace with Edward. By the time Sir Andrew de Moray and William Wallace won their great victory at Stirling, Sir William the Hardy was again Edward's prisoner at Berwick Castle; staying in what was now called "Douglas Tower."

Following Wallace's success at Stirling Bridge the English fled Berwick on Tweed with Douglas and another Scottish prisoner Thomas de Morham; both were later committed to the Tower of London on October 12, 1297 with Douglas meeting his end there on January 24, 1298 due to mistreatment.

Robert de Bruce (1243-1304), 6th Lord of Annandale, Earl of Carrick (our 20th great grandfather)

Sir Robert de Bruce VI (1243 – 1304), 6th Lord of Annandale and Earl of Carrick, was a cross-border lord, and participant of the Second Barons' War, Ninth Crusade, Welsh Wars, and First War of Scottish Independence.

Robert de Bruce was of Scoto-Norman heritage. He was born on July 1, 1243 in Annandale, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He was the son of Robert de Bruce, 5th Lord of Annandale and Isabel de Clare. Through his father he was a third-great grandson of David I of Scotland. His

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ancestors included Richard (Strongbow) de Clare, 2nd Earl of Pembroke, King of Leinster and Governor of Ireland, and William Marshal, 1st Earl of Pembroke, regent of England, and Henry I of England.

In about 1271 Robert married, without Scottish Royal consent, Marjorie, Countess of Carrick. As a result, she temporarily lost her castle and estates, but regained them on payment of a fine. Robert and Marjorie were known to have had 12 children. Seven of these children are our ancestors: Isabel, Christian, King Robert I, Mary, Margaret, Christina, and Matilda.

Robert supported his father's claim to the vacant throne of Scotland, left so on the death of the Maid of Norway in 1290. The initial civil proceedings, known as The Great Cause, awarded the Crown to his father's 1st cousin once removed, and rival, John Balliol.

After his father's death in May 1295, Robert swore fealty to Edward I on October 6 and was made Constable and Keeper of Carlisle Castle, a position his father previously held. On March 26, 1296, Robert's garrison repels an attack, led by John Comyn, the new Lord of Annandale, across the Solway on Carlisle Castle. Robert forces the raiders to retreat back through Annandale to Sweetheart Abbey. On April 28, he again swears fealty to Edward I and fights for Edward, at the Battle of Dunbar Castle.

Shortly after William Wallace's victory at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, Annandale was laid waste as retaliation.

Robert de Bruce, the 6th Lord of Annandale died on April 4, 1304 at Holm Cultram, Cumberland, England. His son would become King of Scotland, Robert de Bruce, the most famous Robert de Bruce of all.

James Stewart (1243-1309), 5th High Stewart (our 22nd great grandfather)

James Stewart (1243 - 1309) was the 5th Hereditary High Steward of Scotland and a Guardian of Scotland during the First Interregnum.

James was born possibly as early as 1243 in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was the eldest surviving son of Alexander Stewart, 4th High Steward of Scotland and Countess Jean MacRory of Bute. James was firstly married to Cecilia, a daughter of Patrick, Earl of Dunbar. Then his second marriage was to Muriel (born 1244), a daughter of Malise, Earl of Strathearn. Then in about 1280 he married Egidia, a daughter of the Irish nobleman Walter de Burgh. We descend from their son Walter.

In 1286 James was chosen as one of the six Guardians of Scotland. He subsequently submitted to King Edward I of England on July 9, 1297 and was one of the auditors for the competitor, Robert Bruce, 5th Lord of Annandale. However, during the Wars of Scottish Independence he joined with Sir William Wallace. After Wallace's defeat at the Battle of Falkirk in 1298, he gave his support to Robert Bruce, later King Robert I of Scotland, grandson of the competitor.

In 1302, with six other ambassadors including John Comyn, Earl of Buchan, he was sent to solicit the aid of the French king against King Edward, to whom he was once again compelled to swear fealty at Lanercost Priory on October 23, 1306. To render his oath inviolable, it was taken upon the two crosses of Scotland most esteemed for their sanctity, on the consecrated host,

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the holy gospels and on various relics of saints and he agreed to submit to instant excommunication if he should break his allegiance to Edward. However, convinced that his faith was primarily to his country in spite of all, he once again took up the Scottish patriotic cause and died in the service of Robert the Bruce on July 16, 1309 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland.

John Stewart (1246-1298), of Bonkyll, (our 21st great grandfather)

Sir John Stewart of Bonkyll (1246 – 1298) of Bonkyll Castle in Berwickshire, Scotland, was a military commander during the First Scottish War of Independence.

John Stewart was born about 1246 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was the second son of Alexander Stewart, 4th High Steward of Scotland (d.1283), by his wife Jean MaCrory, heiress of the Isles of Bute and Arran.

John married Margaret de Bonkyll in about 1268 in Lanarkshire. She was the daughter and heiress of Sir Alexander de Bonkyll. John and Margaret were known to have had eight children. We descend from both their sons Alexander and James and their daughter Isabel.

Margaret remarried in about 1302 to Sir David, Lord of Brechin. We descend from their daughter Margaret..

John Stewart was a military commander during the First Scottish War of Independence. So he is the one more of our ancestors that can be readily identified as an ally to William Wallace. He fought alongside Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk, where he commanded the Scottish archers. He was killed at the battle on July 22, 1298. He was buried in the churchyard of the Falkirk Old Parish Church.

John Stewart is the direct paternal ancestor of Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, the second husband of his brother's descendant, Mary, Queen of Scots, and of their son, James VI of Scotland, who later became James I of England in 1603.

Sir William Oliphant (1253-1329) (our 24th great grandfather)

Sir William Oliphant (1253 – 1329), Lord of Aberdalgie and Dupplin, was a Scottish magnate, knight and leader during the Wars of Scottish Independence.

William Oliphant was born about 1253 in Aberdalgie, Perthshire, Scotland. He was the son of Walter Oliphant and Christian Strathearn. He married Elizabeth Douglas in about 1270. We descend from their son Robert Walter.

Oliphant fought at the Battle of Dunbar in 1296, where the Scots, under their King John Balliol, were defeated by the invading English. Following the battle he was captured and taken to Rochester Castle in England where he was imprisoned. He was released after agreeing to serve King Edward I of England overseas. He returned to Scotland where he was second in command of Stirling Castle under his cousin of the same name, Sir William Oliphant. During the siege of 1304, when the castle was attacked by the forces of Edward I of England, the garrison eventually surrendered to the English. He was captured once again, this time being imprisoned at Wallingford Castle while his cousin the commander was imprisoned in the Tower of London. In this same year all of Scotland with the exception of William Wallace had sworn fealty to Edward

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For 110 shillings, as "William Olyfaunt, Knight", he was bonded by Hugh le Despenser, the elder and remained in England until 1313. He had a safe conduct to return to Scotland on October 21 of that year and was a witness to a charter of King Robert the Bruce in February 1314-15. He was one of the signatories to the Declaration of Arbroath on April 6, 1320 and his seal is still visible.

William Oliphant died on February 5, 1329 at Aberdalgie and he is buried in the churchyard there. He left his estates to his son Robert Walter. These included Dupplin, Hedderwick and Cranshaws which he inherited from his Oliphant predecessors; Aberdalgie, Turin, Glensaugh, Pitkerie and Gallery which apparently came into the family from a Wishart heiress; Gasknes, Newtyle, Kinpurnie, Auchtertyre, Balcrais, Muirhouse and Hazelhead acquired as gifts from the King.

Richard de Burgh (1259-1326) Earl of Antrim (our 22nd great grandfather)

Richard Óg de Burgh, 2nd Earl of Ulster and 3rd Baron of Connaught (1259 – 1326), called The Red Earl, was one of the most powerful Irish nobles of the late 13th and early 14th centuries.

Richard de Burgh was born about 1259 in Donegal, Ireland. He was the son of Walter de Burgh, 1st Earl of Ulster, and Aveline FitzJohn of Mandeville. On February 27, 1280 in Lanvalay, Connaught, Ireland, he married Margaret de Burgh. Margaret was the daughter of John de Burgh and Cecilia de Balliol. Richard and Margaret were known to have ten children. We descend from their daughter Elizabeth Aylher de Burgh who would become the second wife of King Robert the Bruce.

Richard Óg was the most powerful of the de Burgh Earls of Ulster, succeeding his father in Ulster and Connacht upon reaching his majority in 1280. He was a friend of King Edward I of England, and ranked first among the Earls of Ireland. He pursued expansionist policies that often left him at odds with fellow Norman lords.

Richard's daughter Elizabeth was to become the second wife of King Robert the Bruce of Scotland in about 1302. However, this did not stop him leading his forces from Ireland to support England's King Edward I in his Scottish campaigns. Edward captured Elizabeth in 1306, but in order to gain the support of Richard, Edward only put Elizabeth under house arrest. When the forces of Edward Bruce (Robert's brother) invaded Ulster in 1315, the Earl led a force against him, but was beaten at Connor in Antrim. The invasion of Bruce and the uprising of Felim Ó Conchúir in Connacht left him virtually without authority in his lands, but Ó Conchúir was killed in 1316 at the Second Battle of Athenry, and he was able to recover Ulster after the defeat of Bruce at Faughart.

Richard died on July 29, 1326 at Athassel Priory, near Cashel, County Tipperary.

Robert de Keith (1262-1346), Marischal of Scotland (our 22nd great grandfather)

Sir Robert de Keith, great marischal of Scotland, (1262 – 1346) first appears as marischal in 1294, when he received a charter from King John Baliol of the lands of Keith.

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Robert de Keith was born about 1262 in Buchan, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He was the son of William de Keith and Barbara de Seton. He married Barbara Douglas, daughter of William “Le Hardi” Douglas and Elizabeth Stewart. They were known to have two sons: John and William. We descend from both of these sons.

During the war which ensued on King John Baliol's dethronement, de Keith, who had been appointed by the Scottish regents warden of the forest of Selkirk, was in 1300 captured by the English and imprisoned in the castle of Carlisle. Reported to Edward as “one of his worst enemies and of bad repute,” he was ordered to be removed to Nottingham Castle; but, on reaching York on his journey, was sent to Bristol Castle. In 1302 he was admitted to the king's peace, and returning to Scotland, is mentioned as dining with the Prince of Cymru at Perth in February 1304. In the following year he was sent to the parliament at Westminster as one of the Scots commissioners for the settlement of the government of Scotland; Sir John de Bretagne, Earl of Richmond, was then appointed the royal lieutenant in Scotland, and de Keith one of his council, with the office of justiciar between the Forth and the Month, at a salary of forty merks yearly. Until the lieutenant was able to enter on his duties de Keith was appointed one of the four wardens of Scotland, and he continued to act for the English king, and received various grants of money from him for his faithful services until the close of 1308.

De Keith then joined Robert the Bruce, but subsequently to the battle of Inverurie, as the date of his desertion from the English is distinctly stated as Christmas 1308. In March following he united with other Scottish nobles in a letter to the king of France requesting his countenance in the assertion of the national independence. He received several charters of lands from Bruce, including one of the office of marischal of Scotland, and was appointed justiciar of Scotland from the Forth to the Orkneys.

De Keith had command of the Scottish horse at Bannockburn (June 24, 1314), and so successfully attacked the English bowmen in flank as to completely rout them and materially aid the victory of Bruce. He signed the letter of independence to the Pope in 1320, and was in 1326 appointed one of the Scots commissioners for concluding a treaty of alliance between Bruce and Charles IV of France, though he does not appear to have gone to France.

After Bannockburn, De Keith was one of those who immediately provided for the safety of the young king, David II, by removing him to the fortress of Dumbarton, and thence to France. Here Robert de Keith, marischal, is mentioned as forming a member of David's court at the Chateau Gaillard in Normandy. After his return to Scotland with the king he fell at the battle of Neville's Cross in Durham, Northumberland, England on October 17, 1346.

Sir Simon “the Patriot” III Fraser (1266-1306) (our 21st great grandfather)

Sir Simon Fraser of Oliver and Neidpath (1266 – 1306) was a Scottish knight who fought in the Wars of Scottish Independence, for which he was hanged, drawn, and quartered in 1306.

Simon Fraser was born about 1266 at Oliver Castle, Peebleshire, Scotland. He was the son of Simon Fraser and Maria Bisset. He was married to Margaret Sinclair. They were known to have had three children. We descend from both their daughter Joanna and their son Hugh Alexander.

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Fraser was captured during the Battle of Dunbar on April 27, 1296 and was sent to a prison in England. He was forfeited of his lands. He was released to serve King Edward I of England's expedition in Flanders in 1297. Fraser was made a household knight - effectively, a member of the royal bodyguard - and gifted a horse by Edward before the Battle of Falkirk. Fraser was thus among the English cavalry divisions that defeated the army of William Wallace. On March 27, 1299, in recognition of his good service, he was restored his lands and titles. He was the Keeper of Selkirk Forest, and was at the Siege of Carlaverock on the side of the English in 1300.

Fraser switched to the Scottish side in mid-1301 and led the Scottish victory at the Battle of Roslin in 1303, alongside John III Comyn, Lord of Badenoch (also known as "Red Comyn"). Here Fraser killed Ralph Manton, an English treasury clerk, whom Fraser accused of embezzling King Edward of funds and neglecting to pay Fraser's wages when he was in English service. Consequently, the English King Edward I, marched north through Stirling taking Perth. As Edward approached Dunfermline, the Bishop of St Andrews and the bishop of Glasgow along with Red Comyn met his army and submitted. Fraser refused to swear fealty to the English King and did not attend.

In March 1304, Fraser and William Wallace were ambushed by English forces at the Action at Hallow and defeated. By June Fraser had deserted Wallace and accepted Edward's peace terms. In January 1305 he was employed, along with all other Scottish knights, to hunt down his former comrade Wallace.

In March 1306 Fraser once again broke faith with King Edward and defected to Robert the Bruce. He escaped from the defeat at the Battle of Methven, but was captured during the summer of 1306 at a subsequent engagement at Kirkencliff near Stirling by Sir Thomas de Multon and Sir John Jose. King Edward had commanded all captured supporters of King Robert executed and, in particular, the lands of Simon Fraser harried and burnt. The prisoner was sent to London, and hanged, drawn, and quartered on September 8, 1306. His head was impaled on a spike on London Bridge, along with William Wallace's.

King Robert the Bruce I (1274-1329), King of Scotland (our 21st great grandfather)

Robert I (1274 – 1329), known as Robert the Bruce was King of Scotland from 1306 until his death in 1329. Robert was one of the most famous warriors of his generation, and eventually led Scotland during the First War of Scottish Independence against England. He fought successfully during his reign to regain Scotland's place as an independent country and is today revered in Scotland as a national hero.

Robert's first appearance in history is on a witness list of a charter issued by Alexander Og MacDonald, Lord of Islay. His name appears in the company of the Bishop of Argyll, the vicar of Arran, a Kintyre clerk, his father, and a host of Gaelic notaries from Carrick.

Robert the Bruce was born on July 11, 1274 at Turnberry Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was the son of Robert de Bruce, 6th Lord of Annandale, and Marjorie McDuncan of Carrick. His paternal fourth great-grandfather was King David I. Robert's grandfather, Robert de Bruce, 5th Lord of Annandale, was one of the claimants to the Scottish throne during the "Great Cause". As

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Earl of Carrick, Robert the Bruce supported his family's claim to the Scottish throne and took part in William Wallace's revolt against Edward I of England.

Robert first married Isabel Matilda Erskine Strathbogie of Mar in 1295. She was the daughter of Earl Domhnall I of Mar and Elen verch Llewelyn of Chester. Isabel died on December 12, 1296 perhaps in childbirth with their daughter Marjory. We descend from Marjory. Robert's second wife was Elizabeth Aylher de Burgh, daughter of Richard de Burgh and Margaret de Burgh. They were married in 1302 and were known to have five children. We descend from three of their daughters: Margaret, Matilda, and Elizabeth.

William Wallace had resigned as Guardian of Scotland after his defeat at the Battle of Falkirk. He was succeeded by Robert Bruce and John Comyn as joint Guardians in 1298. John III Comyn, Lord of Badenoch was Robert's chief rival for the throne. Robert later resigned in 1300 due to his quarrels with Comyn and the apparently imminent restoration of John Balliol to the Scottish throne. After submitting to Edward I in 1302 and returning to "the king's peace," Robert inherited his family's claim to the Scottish throne upon his father's death.

In February 1306, Bruce, having wounded Comyn, rushed from the church where they had met and encountered his attendants outside. He told them what had happened and said, "I must be off, for I doubt I have slain the Red Comyn." "Doubt?", Roger de Kirkpatrick of Closeburn answered. "I mak sikker," ("I'll make sure," or "I make sure"). Kirkpatrick then rushed into the church and killed Comyn. For this, Bruce was then excommunicated by the Pope (although he received absolution from Robert Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow). Bruce moved quickly to seize the throne, and was crowned king of Scots on March 25, 1306. Edward I's forces defeated Robert in the battle of Methven, forcing him to flee into hiding before re-emerging in 1307 to defeat an English army at Loudoun Hill and wage a highly successful guerrilla war against the English. Bruce defeated his other Scots enemies, destroying their strongholds and devastating their lands, and in 1309 held his first parliament. A series of military victories between 1310 and 1314 won him control of much of Scotland, and at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, Robert defeated a much larger English army under Edward II of England, confirming the re-establishment of an independent Scottish kingdom. The battle marked a significant turning point, with Robert's armies now free to launch devastating raids throughout northern England, while also extending his war against the English to Ireland by sending an army to invade there and by appealing to the Irish to rise against Edward II's rule.

In conjunction with the invasion of Ireland, Bruce popularized an ideological vision of a "Pan-Gaelic Greater Scotia" with his lineage ruling over both Ireland and Scotland. This propaganda campaign was aided by two factors. The first was his marriage alliance from 1302 with the de Burgh family of the Earldom of Ulster in Ireland; second, Bruce himself, on his mother's side of Carrick, was descended from Gaelic royalty in Scotland as well as Ireland. Bruce's Irish ancestors included Aoife of Leinster (d.1188), whose ancestors included Brian Boru of Munster and the kings of Leinster. Thus, lineally and geopolitically, Bruce attempted to support his anticipated notion of a pan-Gaelic alliance between Scottish-Irish Gaelic populations, under his kingship. This is revealed by a letter he sent to the Irish chiefs, where he calls the Scots and Irish collectively *nostra nacio* (our nation), stressing the common language, customs and heritage of the two peoples. It was as if he wished to re-establish the Ancient Kingdom of Dal

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Riada.

Despite Bannockburn and the capture of the final English stronghold at Berwick in 1318, Edward II refused to renounce his claim to the overlordship of Scotland. In 1320, the Scottish nobility submitted the Declaration of Arbroath to Pope John XXII, declaring Robert as their rightful monarch and asserting Scotland's status as an independent kingdom. In 1324, the Pope recognized Robert I as king of an independent Scotland, and in 1326, the Franco-Scottish alliance was renewed in the Treaty of Corbeil. In 1327, the English deposed Edward II in favor of his son, Edward III, and peace was concluded between Scotland and England with the Treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton in 1328, by which Edward III renounced all claims to sovereignty over Scotland.

Robert died on June 7, 1329. His body is buried in Dunfermline Abbey, while his heart was interred in Melrose Abbey and his internal organs embalmed and placed in St Serf's Chapel, Dumbarton, site of the medieval Cardross Parish church.

Sir John Stewart Menteith (1275 - 1329), Sheriff of Dumbarton (our 21st great grandfather)

Sir John Menteith of Ruskie and Knapdale (1275 – 1329) was a Scottish nobleman during the Wars of Scottish Independence. He is known for his capture of Sir William Wallace in 1305 and later joined with King Robert I of Scotland and received large land grants in Knapdale and Kintyre for his service. He is described as "guardian" of the Earldom of Menteith, as his great-nephew Alan II, Earl of Menteith was a minor at the time of the death of Alan I, Earl of Menteith.

John Menteith was born about 1275 at Menteith, Perthshire, Scotland. He was the younger son of Walter Bailloch Stewart, and Mary Inghean, Countess of Menteith, the daughter of Muireadhach II, Earl of Menteith. John possessed the land of Ruskie in Stirlingshire. John was a party to the Turnberry Bond with his father, Walter Stewart and the Bruces, which was signed at Turnberry Castle on September 20, 1286.

John Menteith was married to Marjorie de Strivelelyn. They were known to have three children. We descend from both their son John and their daughter Joanna.

With his older brother Alexander, John was involved in the resistance against King Edward I of England and were both captured after the Battle of Dunbar on April 27, 1296. While Alexander was released after swearing fealty, John remained a prisoner at Nottingham Castle in England until August 1297, when Edward released John from prison, on his taking oath and giving security to serve with the king in the campaign of 1297 in Flanders.

John Menteith was appointed the Constable of Lennox and was ravaging the lands of Edward's partisans in Lennox in 1301. John was sent in 1303 to treat of peace with the English, but refrained from pressing his mission. By 1303 John submitted and had been restored to Edward's favor, for on March 20, 1304 John was appointed Warden of the castle, town, and sheriffdom of Dumbarton. Edward was keen to secure the fortification as a major access route into Scotland by sea. John, as sheriff of Dumbarton, captured Sir William Wallace in 1305 and handed him over to the English.

John Menteith was nominated one of the representatives of the Scots barons in the

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parliament of both nations which assembled at London in September 1305 and was chosen upon the Scottish council, which was appointed to assist John of Brittany, the new Guardian of Scotland, in the English interest. John received on June 1, 1306 from Edward the Earldom of Lennox, while on June 15 he received the Warden of the castle, town, and sheriffdom of Dumbarton office for life. John returned to Scotland in October.

Edward appealed to John in December 1307 to join him in resisting the revolting Robert de Bruce, however John abandoned his earldom of Lennox, joining Bruce's side. King Robert the Bruce I of Scotland, rewarded John with large grants in Knapdale and Kintyre. In March 1308, John was among the Scottish magnates who wrote to the King Philip IV of France on behalf of the nation and in 1309, he was sent with Sir Nigel Campbell to treat with Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, receiving a safe-conduct on August 21, from King Edward II of England. John's English lands were forfeited for his treason. In 1316 he was commissioned with Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray to treat on behalf of Robert the Bruce for a truce with the English. John remained closely attached to the royal court, as is shown by the numerous charters he attested and was at the Arbroath parliament in April 1320, and signed the Declaration of Arbroath sent by the barons of Scotland to Pope John XXII.

John Menteith was one of the negotiators of the thirteen years' truce between Bruce and the English, signed on May 30, 1323 and was present at a Scottish council at Berwick in June. The last recorded grants to him are in 1329, during the minority of King David II of Scotland. He died shortly thereafter in Menteith.

Thomas Randolph (1281-1332), 1st Earl of Moray (our 22nd great grandfather)

Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray (1278 – 1332) was a soldier and diplomat in the Wars of Scottish Independence, who later served as regent of Scotland.

Thomas Randolph was born about 1281 at Stranith Nithsdale, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He was the son of another Thomas Randolph, who was Chamberlain of Scotland and Sheriff of Roxburgh, and the grandson of the Randulf or Ranulf who gave the family their surname. It is known that he was the nephew of King Robert the Bruce, but it is uncertain which of Robert's sisters was his mother. Her name was possibly Isabel de Bruce. The traditional view is that she was of the first marriage of Marjorie of Carrick, who was mother of Robert the Bruce by her second marriage. There has been conjecture that the King's father Robert married again after Marjorie's death and had with his second wife a daughter, Isabel, who married the elder Thomas; however, because Marjorie of Carrick did not die until 1292 and Thomas the younger was at the coronation of John Balliol in 1292, this is impossible. There is no record of Randolph's date of birth. Although the author of Scots Peerage speculated that Randolph's date of birth was 1278, his grandmother was born in 1253 or 1256, and it is unlikely that he was born when his grandmother was in her early twenties. Therefore, that date has to be called into question.

Thomas married Isabel Stewart of Bonkyll in about 1306 in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. She was the only daughter of Margaret and John Stewart of Bonkyll, a brother of James, High Steward of Scotland. They had two sons and two daughters. We descend from their daughter Agnes Isabel.

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Thomas supported Robert the Bruce in his attempt to take the throne, and was present at his uncle's coronation in 1306. He was probably knighted by the king then or shortly after. Following the Scottish defeat at the Battle of Methven, he was taken prisoner by the English, coming under the custody first of Sir Adam Gordon and then of the Earl of Lincoln. During his confinement he joined the English cause, and remained attached to them until he was captured by Sir James Douglas in 1307, and persuaded to rejoin the Scottish side. His defection came to the attention of Edward II of England, who forfeited all his lands, bestowing them on his favorite Hugh le Despencer.

In 1312 Robert the Bruce made Thomas Randolph Earl of Moray, and he became ruler of a large swathe of land in the north of Scotland, far exceeding his southern possessions. He was also made lord of the Isle of Man, according to the charter this was in exchange for six ships of 26 oars and money to the value of 100 merks to be paid at Inverness. Around this time he became one of Robert's most trusted lieutenants, and he seems to have accompanied him on most of his campaigns. His most famous achievement was on March 14, 1314 when he carried out a daring attack on Edinburgh Castle. This was one of a handful of castles in Scotland still in English hands, and stood on top of an apparently unscalable rock. Amongst Moray's men was William Francis, the son of a former governor of the castle, who knew of a secret path up the rock. Moray used this path to reach the castle, and successfully retook it for the Scots.

Thomas Randolph played an important role in the Scottish victory at the Battle of Bannockburn, where he commanded one of the three divisions of the infantry, the others being commanded by King Robert and Edward Bruce, the king's brother.

In 1315 Thomas accompanied Edward Bruce, the king's brother, during his invasion of Ireland. He was one of the principal leaders in the war against the English settlers in Ireland. He returned twice to Scotland during the war to obtain reinforcements and to get Robert's personal presence in Ireland.

Thomas Randolph's name appears directly after Robert's on the famous Declaration of Arbroath, which was sent to the Pope by the nobles of Scotland to persuade him to recognize Scotland as an independent nation. Later, in 1324, he was sent to meet the Pope in person at his court in Avignon. At this meeting he successfully persuaded the Pope to recognize Robert as King of Scots. The next year the Pope wrote to Randolph declaring his hope and trust in his efforts to make peace between England and Scotland, and gave permission for him to visit the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

Thomas was again sent to France in 1325, this time to persuade King Charles IV to sign the Treaty of Corbeil renewing the Franco-Scottish alliance, which he did successfully. After his return to Scotland he had a commanding role in the Battle of Stanhope Park against the English. The English suffered a humiliating defeat, and were forced to sign the Treaty of Edinburgh–Northampton, by which Scotland's independence was finally acknowledged.

During King Robert the Bruce's final years, Thomas had been a constant companion, and had superintended the household of the young heir to the throne, David. Before his death, Robert decreed that Thomas would serve as regent for David, who was only five years old when he succeeded as king. He performed this role justly and wisely, but died on July 20, 1332 at Musselburgh three years later while on his way to repel an invasion by Edward Balliol and his

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supporters. At the time it was said that he had been poisoned by the English, but some modern historians believe that it is more likely that he died from a kidney stone.

Queen Elizabeth Aylher de Burgh (1284-1327)(our 21st great grandmother)

Elizabeth de Burgh (1284 – 1327) was the second wife and the only queen consort of King Robert the Bruce. Elizabeth was born sometime around 1284, probably in Down or Antrim in Ireland. She was the daughter of one of the most powerful Irish nobles of the period, Richard Óg de Burgh, 2nd Earl of Ulster, who was a close friend and ally of Edward I of England.

Not much is known about Elizabeth, despite her husband's status as one of the most famous Scottish kings and warriors. As is the case with most medieval women, records of Elizabeth are scarce; however, it is clear that she was caught up in the political turmoil that unfolded between the Scottish and the English during the reign of her husband King Robert, had to move several times to keep safe, and was eventually seized as a prisoner.

Elizabeth probably met Robert the Bruce, then Earl of Carrick, at the English court. By the time they married in 1302 at Writtle, near Chelmsford, Essex, England Robert was a widower with a young daughter from his first marriage. Elizabeth would have been about 18 years old, and Robert 28. She and Robert had three children who reached adulthood. We descend from their daughters Matilda, Margaret, and Elizabeth.

On March 27, 1306, Robert and Elizabeth were crowned as King and Queen of Scots at Scone. The coronation took place in defiance of the English claims of suzerainty over Scotland after the execution of Sir William Wallace.

After the defeat of the Scots at the Battle of Methven on June 19, 1306, the king sent Elizabeth, his daughter Marjorie by his first marriage, his sisters Mary and Christina to Kildrummy Castle, under the protection of his brother Niall. The English laid siege to the castle containing the royal party. The siege finally succeeded when the English bribed a blacksmith with "all the gold he could carry" to set fire to the grain store. The victors hanged, drew and quartered Niall Bruce, along with all the men from the castle. However, the royal ladies under the escort of the Earl of Atholl had already fled.

They were taken from the sanctuary of St. Duthac at Tain by the Earl of Ross, a supporter of the Comyns, and dispatched to King Edward. He imprisoned Bruce's sister Mary and Isabella MacDuff, Countess of Buchan, in wooden cages erected on the walls of Roxburgh and Berwick castles respectively, and then sent Bruce's nine-year-old daughter Marjorie to the nunnery at Watton. Elizabeth was held under severe conditions of house arrest in England while Edward still needed aid from her father. The Earl of Atholl was hanged and his head displayed on London Bridge.

Elizabeth was imprisoned for eight years by the English. From October 1306 to July 1308 she was held at Burstwick-in-Holderness, Yorkshire, where she, only served by two elder women, wrote a letter complaining about her condition (she had only 3 clothes and no headgear or linen bed clothing), before being transferred to Bisham Manor, Berkshire until March 1312. From there, she was moved to Windsor Castle with six attendants and an allowance, where she was held until October 1312, Shaftesbury Abbey, Dorset until March 1313, Barking Abbey,

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Essex until March 1314, and Rochester Castle, Kent until June 1314. After the Battle of Bannockburn, she was moved to York while prisoner exchange talks took place. At York, she had an audience with King Edward II of England. Finally, in November 1314, she was moved to Carlisle just before the exchange and her return to Scotland.

Elizabeth died aged around 43, on October 27, 1327 after falling from her horse during a visit to the royal residence at Cullen, Banffshire. Plans were immediately made to transport her body to Dunfermline Abbey in Fife, the resting place of Scottish kings and queens since 1093. As parishioners in Cullen were worried that her remains would not arrive intact they took the step of having her internal organs removed during the embalming process. While some sources claim that her entrails were transported separately to Fife, others state that they were buried in the parish church of Cullen. The parishioners also had Masses said to pray for her soul.

When Robert the Bruce died 18 months later his body was laid to rest next to Elizabeth who had been interred in the very center of the abbey beneath the high altar, in an alabaster tomb decorated with gold leaf. The abbey was sacked in 1560 by Calvinists during the Scottish Reformation and the tomb was lost, however King Robert's coffin was rediscovered in 1819 during construction work on the new abbey and Elizabeth's coffin was rediscovered in 1917. Both were re-interred in the new abbey.

Sir James “the Black” Douglas (1286-1330) (our 22nd great grandfather)

Sir James Douglas (also known the Black Douglas) (1286 – 1330) was a Scottish knight and feudal lord. He was one of the chief commanders during the Wars of Scottish Independence.

James Douglas was born about 1286 at Douglas Castle, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the eldest son of Sir William Douglas, known as "le Hardi" or "the bold", who had been the first noble supporter of William Wallace. His mother was Elizabeth Stewart, the daughter of Alexander Stewart, 4th High Steward of Scotland, and Jean MacRory. James Douglas was married to Jean Halyburton. They were known to have at least two sons. We descend from their son Archibald.

Douglas was sent to France for safety in the early days of the Wars of Independence, and was educated in Paris. There he met William Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews, who took him as a squire. He returned to Scotland with Lamberton. His lands had been seized and awarded to Robert Clifford. Lamberton presented him at the occupying English court to petition for the return of his land shortly after the capture of Stirling Castle in 1304, but when Edward I of England heard whose son he was he grew angry and Douglas was forced to depart.

Douglas's actions for most of 1307 and early 1308, although confined for the most part to his native Douglasdale, were essential to keeping the enemy in the South and freeing Robert the Bruce to campaign in the north. He soon created a formidable reputation for himself as a soldier and a tactician. While Bruce was campaigning in the north against his domestic enemies, Douglas used the cover of Selkirk Forest to mount highly effective mobile attacks against the enemy. He also showed himself to be utterly ruthless, particularly in his relentless attacks on the English garrison in his own Douglas Castle, the most famous of which quickly passed into popular history.

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Some report this to have occurred on Palm Sunday March 19, 1307. With the help of local farmer Thomas Dickson, a former vassal of his father, Douglas and his small troop were hidden until the morning of Palm Sunday, when the garrison left the battlements to attend the local church. Gathering local support, he entered the church and the war-cry "Douglas! Douglas!" went up for the first time. Some of the English soldiers were killed and others taken prisoner. The prisoners were taken to the castle, now largely empty. All the stores were piled together in the cellar, the wine casks burst open and the wood used for fuel. The prisoners were then beheaded and placed on top of the pile, which was set alight. Before departing, the wells were poisoned with salt and the carcasses of dead horses. The local people soon gave the whole gruesome episode the name "the Douglas Larder." As an example of frightfulness in war, it was meant to leave a lasting impression, not least upon the men who came to replace their dead colleagues. Further attacks followed by the man now known to the English as "The blak Dowglas", a sinister and murderous force "mair fell than wes ony devill in hell."

In August 1308, Douglas met the king for a joint attack on the MacDougalls of Lorn, kinsmen of the Comyns, the climax to Bruce's campaign in the north. Two years before, the MacDougalls had intercepted and mauled the royal army at the Battle of Dalrigh. Now they awaited the arrival of their opponents in the narrow Pass of Brander, between Ben Cruachan and Loch Awe in Argyllshire. While Bruce pinned down the enemy in a frontal advance through the pass, Douglas, completely unobserved, led a party of loyal Highlanders further up the mountain, launching a surprise attack from the rear. Soon the Battle of Pass of Brander turned into a rout. Returning south soon after, Douglas joined with Edward Bruce, the king's brother, in a successful assault on Rutherglen castle near Glasgow, going on to a further campaign in Galloway.

In the years before 1314 the English presence in Scotland was reduced to a few significant strongholds. The Scots had no heavy equipment or the means of attacking castles by conventional means. However, this inevitably produced a degree of complacency in garrisons provisioned enough to withstand a blockade. In dealing with this problem the Scots responded in the manner of foxes; and among the more cunning of their exploits was Douglas' capture of the powerful fortress at Roxburgh. His tactic, though simple, was brilliantly effective. On the night of February 19, 1314 (Shrove Tuesday) several dark shapes were seen beneath the battlements and mistakenly assumed to be cattle. Douglas had ordered his men to cover themselves with their cloaks and crawl towards the castle on their hands and knees. With most of the garrison celebrating just prior to the fast of Lent, scaling hooks with rope ladders attached were thrown up the walls. Taken by complete surprise the defenders were overwhelmed in a short space of time. Roxburgh Castle, among the best in the land, was slighted or destroyed in accordance with Bruce's policy of denying strong points to the enemy.

Douglas and others were knighted on the field of the Battle of Bannockburn. After the English defeat in the Battle, Douglas requested the honor of pursuing the fleeing Edward and his party of knights, a task that was carried out with relentless vigor. In the end Edward managed to evade Douglas by taking refuge in Dunbar Castle.

Bannockburn left northern England open to attack and in the years that followed many communities in the area became closely acquainted with the "Blak Dowglas." Along with Thomas Randolph, Douglas was to make a new name for himself in a war of mobility.

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Douglas had become even more significant as a border fighter. In February 1316 he won a significant engagement at Skaithmuir near Coldstream with a party of horsemen sent out from the garrison of Berwick. Further successes followed: another raiding party led by Edmund FitzAlan, 9th Earl of Arundel was intercepted and defeated at Lintalee, to the south of Jedburgh; a third group was defeated outside the walls of Berwick, where their leader, Sir Robert Neville was killed by Douglas in single combat. Such was Douglas' status and reputation that he was made Lieutenant of the Realm, with the Steward, when Edward Bruce and Thomas Randolph went to Ireland in the autumn of 1316.

Douglas' military achievements inevitably increased his political standing still further. When Edward Bruce, the king's brother and designated successor, was killed in Ireland at the Battle of Faughart in the autumn of 1318, Douglas was named as Guardian of the Realm and tutor to the future Robert II, after Randolph if Robert should die without a male heir. This was decided at a parliament held at Scone in December 1318, where it was noted that "Randolph and Sir James took the guardianship upon themselves with the approbation of the whole community."

Edward III was not bound by the truce of his predecessor that kept the peace between the English and the Scots. So the Scots began conducting raids in 1327 with the intention of forcing concessions from the English. By mid-summer Douglas and Randolph were ravaging Weardale, Durham and the adjacent valleys. On July 10 a large English army, under the nominal command of the young king Edward III, left York in a campaign that resembles nothing less than an elephant in pursuit of a hare. The English commanders finally caught sight of their elusive opponents on the southern banks of the River Wear. The Scots were in a good position and declined all attempts to draw them into battle. After a while they left, only to take up an even stronger position at Stanhope Park, a hunting preserve belonging to the bishops of Durham. From here on the night of August 4 Douglas led an assault party across the river in a surprise attack on the sleeping English. Panic and confusion spread throughout the camp: Edward himself only narrowly escaped capture. The Battle of Stanhope Park, minor as it was, was a serious humiliation, and after the Scots outflanked their enemy the following night, heading back to the border, Edward is said to have wept in impotent rage. His army retired to York and disbanded. Peace negotiations, finally concluded the following year with the Treaty of Northampton, which recognized the Bruce monarchy and the independence of Scotland.

Early in 1330, Douglas set sail from Berwick upon Tweed, accompanied by seven other knights with twenty six esquires and gentlemen on a crusade. In 1325, King Alfonso of Castile declared war on the Moorish Emirate of Granada and invited other Christian kings to join him in a new crusade. Granada was inhabited mostly by Muslims. Douglas and his company joined with King Alfonso of Castile's army and then set out for the frontier of Granada with the objective of besieging the castle of Teba. This became known as the Battle of Teba. James "the Black" Douglas was killed during the siege on August 25, 1330. Another purpose Douglas had was given to him with the death of Robert the Bruce in 1329. Robert had requested that after his death, Sir James should take his embalmed heart and bear it with him on a crusade. Douglas' body and the casket with Bruce's heart were recovered after the battle. His bones, the flesh boiled off them, were taken back to Scotland by Sir William Keith of Galston in Ayrshire and deposited at St Bride's Church.

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Marjory de Bruce (1296-1316)(our 21st great grandmother)

Marjory or Marjorie de Bruce (1296 – 1316) was the eldest daughter of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, by his first wife, Isabella of Mar. Marjorie was born on December 12, 1296 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland.

Marjorie's marriage to Walter, High Steward of Scotland gave rise to the House of Stewart. Her son was the first Stewart monarch, King Robert II of Scotland.

On March 27, 1306, her father was crowned King of Scots at Scone, Perthshire, and Marjorie, then 10 years old, became a Princess of Scotland. Three months after the coronation, in June 1306, her father was defeated at the Battle of Methven. He sent his wife, two sisters, and Marjorie north with his supporter Isabella MacDuff, Countess of Buchan, but by the end of June they were captured by Uilleam II, Earl of Ross, a Balliol supporter, who handed them over to the English.

As punishment, Edward I of England sent his hostages to different places in England. Marjorie was sent to the convent at Watton. Her aunt, Christina Bruce, was sent to another convent. Elizabeth de Burgh was placed under house arrest at a manor house in Yorkshire. Elizabeth de Burgh's punishment was lighter than the others. This is due to the fact that Edward I needed the support of her father, the powerful Earl of Ulster. Marjorie's aunt, Mary Bruce, and the Countess of Buchan were imprisoned in wooden cages, exposed to public view, at Roxburgh Castle and Berwick Castle, respectively. For the next four years, Elizabeth, Christina, Mary, and Isabella endured solitary confinement. The latter two experienced daily public humiliation. A cage was built for Marjorie, who was around the age of 12, at the Tower of London, but Edward I reconsidered. He instead sent her to the Gilbertine convent in Watton.

Edward I died in 1307. He was succeeded by his son, Edward II, who subsequently held Marjorie captive in a convent for about seven more years. She was finally set free around 1314, probably in exchange for English noblemen captured after the Battle of Bannockburn.

Upon the liberation of Elizabeth de Burgh and Marjorie from their long captivity in England, Walter Stewart, 6th High Steward of Scotland was sent to receive them at the Anglo-Scottish border and conduct them back to the Scottish court. Walter Stewart and Marjorie were married on March 10, 1315. We descend from their son King Robert Stewart II.

The traditional story is that two years later, on March 2, 1316, Marjorie was riding in Gallowhill, Paisley, Renfrewshire while heavily pregnant. Her horse was suddenly startled and threw her to the ground. She went into premature labor and her child, Robert II of Scotland, was born. Marjorie died soon afterward on March 2, 1316 at the age of around 20, like her mother, who was roughly the same age when she died in childbirth. She is buried at Paisley Abbey.

Her son succeeded his childless uncle David II of Scotland in 1371 as King Robert II. Her descendants include the House of Stewart (now styled Stuart) and all their successors on the throne of Scotland, England and the United Kingdom.

Walter Stewart (1296-1327), 6th High Stewart (our 21st great grandfather)

Walter Stewart (1296 – 1327) was the 6th Hereditary High Steward of Scotland and was

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the father of King Robert II of Scotland, the first Stewart monarch. He was born in about April 1296 at Bathgate Castle, West Lothian, Scotland. He was the eldest son and heir of James Stewart, 5th High Steward of Scotland by his third wife Egidia de Burgh, a daughter of the Irish nobleman Walter de Burgh, 1st Earl of Ulster.

At the age of 21 Walter fought against the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. For his services at Bannockburn, Walter was appointed Warden of the Western Marches and was rewarded with a grant of the lands of Largs, which had been forfeited by King John Balliol. In 1316 Stewart donated those lands to Paisley Abbey.

Following the liberation of King Robert the Bruce's wife, Elizabeth de Burgh, and daughter Marjorie, from their long captivity in England, Walter the High Steward was sent to receive them at the Anglo-Scottish Border and conduct them back to the Scottish royal court. He married Marjorie on March 10, 1315 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He received the Barony of Bathgate in Linlithgowshire as part of his wife's dowry. He and Marjorie had a son who would become King Robert Stewart II. We descend from Robert.

During the absence of King Robert the Bruce in Ireland, Walter the High Steward and Sir James Douglas managed government affairs and spent much time defending the Scottish Borders. Upon the capture of Berwick-upon-Tweed from the English in 1318 he took command of the town which subsequently on July 24, 1319 was besieged by King Edward II of England. Several of the siege engines were destroyed by the Scots' garrison whereupon Walter the Steward suddenly rushed in force from the walled town to drive off the enemy. In 1322, with Douglas and Thomas Randolph, he made an attempt to surprise the English king at Byland Abbey, near Malton in Yorkshire, but Edward escaped, pursued towards York by Walter the Steward and 500 horsemen.

Walter married a second time to Isabel de Graham and they had three children. Walter died on April 9, 1326 at Bathgate Castle and was buried in the Abbey Church of Paisley, alongside his first wife, Marjorie Bruce, and his five High Steward ancestors.

McEoin (John) Bissett (1300-) (our 21st great grandfather)

McEoin (John) Bissett was born about 1300 in Red Bay Castle, County Antrim, Ireland. His father was most likely a John or Eoin Byset. It is reported that his Bissett family arrived in Ulster from Scotland in the early or mid-13th century. While still remaining involved in Scottish affairs, the Bissetts would establish themselves as the Lords of the Glens of Antrim and quickly become equally, then eventually more involved in the politics of the Irish province, becoming among the most Gaelicised of all the so-called Anglo-Norman families in Ireland. The heads of the leading branch of the family soon adopted the Gaelic lineage style Mac Eoin Bissett (of the Glens), by which they are known in the Irish annals, and which translates as "Son/Descendant of John Byset", after a prominent ancestor born in Scotland. In a number of English and Anglo-Norman sources the same head of the family is referred to as the Baron Bissett, also with variants.

Precisely when the elder John Byset arrived with his family from Scotland is unknown, but he appears in the (surviving) English documents relating to Ireland in 1245, when Henry III

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of England orders 50 marks to be given out of the treasury to him as a gift. This entry at least proves that he had established himself prominently in the region with fire and sword.

It has been reported that Edward Bruce may have spent some time as a youth with the Bissetts, and it was to Rathlin Castle that Robert the Bruce and his followers retired in 1305/6 after suffering losses in Scotland. Despite the decrees of Edward I of England, they were reportedly welcomed by the owner Sir Hugh Byset, usually presumed to be a son of the Elder MacEoin, and at this time Rathlin Island belonged to the Lordship of the Glens.

It would be the MacEoin (John) Bissett, who was born in 1300, that would ultimately establish an alliance between the Bissetts and the O'Neill dynasty in Ulster. When MacEoin John Bissett was about 30 years old, he married Sabia O'Neill. She was praised as "the choice woman of the descendants of Njall of the Nine Hostages in her time" and "a lady that far surpassed all the ladies of the Clanna Neill, in all good parts requisite for the character of a noble matron." She has been described as the daughter of one Aodh Ó Néill. By tradition Aodh Reamhar Ó Néill was remembered as King of Ulster and King of Tyrone.

MacEoin John Bissett and Sabia O'Neill were known to have two sons: Thomas and Hugh. We descend from both. Hugh MacEoin Bissett was the father of Margery Bissett who married John MacDonald, Earl of Antrim and son of John MacDonald, 7th Lord of the Isles.

King Robert Stewart II (1316-1390) (our 20th great grandfather)

Robert Stewart II (1316 – 1390) reigned as King of Scotland from 1371 to his death as the first monarch of the House of Stewart. He was born on March 2, 1316 at Paisley Abbey, Renfrewshire, Scotland. He was the son of Walter Stewart, 6th High Steward of Scotland and of Marjorie Bruce, daughter of the Scottish King Robert the Bruce by his first wife Isabella of Mar.

Edward Bruce, younger brother of Robert the Bruce, was named heir presumptive but died without heirs on December 3, 1318. Marjorie had died probably in 1316 in a riding accident and parliament decreed her infant son, Robert Stewart, as heir presumptive, but this lapsed on March 5, 1324 on the birth of a son, David, to King Robert and his second wife, Elizabeth de Burgh. Robert Stewart became High Steward of Scotland on his father's death on April 9, 1326, and in the same year parliament confirmed the young Steward as heir should Prince David die without a successor. In 1329 King Robert I died and the six-year-old David succeeded to the throne under the guardianship of Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray.

Edward Balliol, son of King John Balliol—assisted by the English and those Scottish nobles who had been disinherited by Robert I—invaded Scotland inflicting heavy defeats on the Bruce party on August 11, 1332 at Dupplin Moor and Halidon Hill on July 19, 1333. Robert, who had fought at Halidon joined his uncle, King David in refuge in Dumbarton Castle. David escaped to France in 1334 and parliament, still functioning, appointed Robert and John Randolph, 3rd Earl of Moray as joint Guardians of the kingdom. Randolph was captured by the English in July 1335 and in the same year Robert submitted to Balliol bringing about the removal of his guardianship. The office was reinstated in 1338 and Robert held it until David's return from France in June 1341. Hostilities continued and Robert was with David at the Neville's Cross on October 17, 1346 and either escaped or fled the field but David was captured and remained a

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prisoner until he was ransomed in October 1357.

Robert married Elizabeth Mure on November 22, 1347 in Kyle, Ayrshire, Scotland. Robert and Elizabeth were known to have had four sons and five daughters. We descend from six of these children: King Robert III (John), Duke Robert, Margaret, Alexander, Elizabeth, and Joanna. Robert married his second wife Euphemia de Ross on May 2, 1355 in Kyle. Robert and Euphemia had two sons and two daughters. We descend from their daughter Egidia.

Robert rebelled against the King in 1363 but submitted to him following a threat to his right of succession. David died in 1371 and Robert, at the age of fifty-five, was coronated on March 26, 1371.

With Robert as King, the Stewarts greatly increased their holdings in the west, in Atholl, and in the far north: the earldoms of Fife and Menteith went to Robert II's second surviving son Robert, the earldoms of Buchan and Ross (along with the lordship of Badenoch) to his fourth son Alexander and the earldoms of Strathearn and Caithness to the eldest son of his second marriage, David. King Robert's sons-in-law were John MacDonald, 7th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather), John Dunbar, Earl of Moray and James who would become the 2nd Earl of Douglas. Robert's sons John, Earl of Carrick, the king's heir, and Robert, Earl of Fife, were made keepers of the castles of Edinburgh and Stirling respectively, while Alexander, Lord of Badenoch and Ross, and afterwards Earl of Buchan, became the king's Justiciar and lieutenant in the north of the Kingdom. This build-up of the Stewart family power did not appear to cause resentment among the senior magnates—the king generally did not threaten their territories or local rule and where titles were transferred to his sons the individuals affected were usually very well rewarded. This style of kingship was very different from his predecessor's—David tried to dominate his nobles whereas Robert's strategy was to delegate authority to his powerful sons and earls and this generally worked for the first decade of his reign. Robert II was to have influence over eight of the fifteen earldoms either through his sons directly or by strategic marriages of his daughters to powerful lords.

The border magnates continued to attack English-held zones in southern Scotland and by 1384, the Scots had re-taken most of the occupied lands. Robert's son, John, Earl of Carrick, had become the foremost Stewart magnate south of the Forth just as Alexander, Earl of Buchan was in the north. Alexander's activities and methods of royal administration, enforced by Gaelic mercenaries, drew criticism from northern earls and bishops and from his younger half-brother David, Earl of Strathearn. These complaints damaged the king's standing within the Council leading to criticism of his ability to curb Buchan's activities. Robert's differences with the Carrick affinity regarding the conduct of the war and his continued failure or unwillingness to deal with Buchan in the north led to the political convulsion of November 1384 when the Council removed the king's authority to govern and appointed Carrick as lieutenant of the kingdom—a coup d'état had taken place. With Robert sidelined, there was now no impediment in the way of war. In June 1385, a force of 1200 French soldiers joined the Scots in a campaign that involved the Earl of Douglas and two of Robert's sons, John, Earl of Carrick and Robert, Earl of Fife. The skirmishes saw small gains but a quarrel between the French and Scottish commanders saw the abandonment of an attack on the important castle of Roxburgh.

Robert ensured that Scotland was included in the Anglo-French truce of 1384 and that

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was a factor in the coup in November when he lost control of the country first to his eldest son, John, and then from 1388 to John's younger brother, Robert.

In March 1390, Robert returned to Dundonald Castle in Ayrshire where he died on April 19 April and was buried at Scone Abbey on April 25 April.

Archibald “the Grim” Douglas (1325-1400), 3rd Earl of Douglas (our 20th great grandfather)

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Douglas and Wigtown, Lord of Galloway, Douglas and Bothwell, called Archibald “the Grim or Black” Archibald, was a late medieval Scottish nobleman.

Archibald Douglas was born about 1325 at Douglas Castle, Lanarkshire, Scotland. Archibald was the bastard son of Sir James "the Black" Douglas, Robert I's trusted lieutenant, and Jean Halyburton. He was first cousin of William 1st Earl of Douglas, he inherited the earldom of Douglas and its entailed estates as the 3rd earl following the death without legitimate issue of James 2nd Earl of Douglas at the Battle of Otterburn. He was born just a few years before his father went on crusade and was killed at the Battle of Teba whilst fighting the Moors.

Archibald's first major appearance in history is recorded in 1356 at the Battle of Poitiers where he was captured by the English. Archibald had accompanied his cousin, William Lord of Douglas, to serve King John II of France in his wars against the Black Prince. Edward III of England had concluded truce negotiations with the Scots. During the truce, Earl William had secured safe passage to travel to Château Gaillard to visit David II; amongst his entourage was the 28-year-old Archibald. Once in France, in the chivalric spirit of the age the Douglasses joined the French army at the Battle of Poitiers. The battle was a disastrous defeat for the French. King John was captured along with many noblemen, including Black Archibald.

His escape from English hands in 1356 was aided by one Sir William Ramsay of Colluthie, also a prisoner of the English. In the presence of one of the guards, Ramsay pretended that Archibald was just a “scullion and a rogue,” and not at all an important prisoner. Ramsay paid the fee of 40 shillings in ransom and Archibald was released. Archibald made his way back to Scotland, and deprived Edward the Black Prince's English army of what would have been a considerable ransom.

Black Archibald was appointed Constable of Edinburgh Castle in 1361, which along with the office of Sheriff of Edinburgh, he held until 1364. In that year, he was also appointed Warden of the Western March. This was an uneasy appointment, as the English held Annandale, which formed the greater part of his new jurisdiction.

Around 1362 Archibald Douglas married Joanna de Moravia, daughter of Maurice de Moravia, 1st Earl of Strathearn. They had five children. We descend from their son Archibald. Douglas also had an unknown mistress who bore him a son named William. We also descend from this William.

Archibald further increased his power by his marriage to the widow and heiress Joanna de Moravia. Archibald is said to have offered to fight five English knights in single combat for her hand. The Lady of Bothwell and heiress to the de Moravia dynasty, Joanna brought with her large

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estates and lordships throughout Scotland, which Archibald claimed de jure uxoris. This included the semi-ruined Bothwell Castle, which he promptly started to rebuild. The marriage was a device of the king to ensure that the Moray inheritance would be passed into safe (and loyal) hands. Since the death of Joanna's first husband, Sir Thomas de Moravia, the Lord of Bothwell, in 1361, she and her widowed mother had been wards of the court. Joanna was declared to be not only heiress of her father's unentailed lands, but also those of her first husband. The estates stretched from Aberdeenshire, Moray and Ross in the north, to Lanarkshire and Roxburghshire in the south. Although Douglas did not inherit his wife's father's Earldom of Strathearn, Douglas would be able to use his newfound kindred ties to the advantage of the King in the center of the kingdom.

In the following years, Archibald carried out numerous raids against the English. In 1368, Douglas was appointed Lord Warden of the Marches and was successful in ousting the English from Annandale completely by 1383. Then in 1369, Archibald was appointed Lord of Galloway by King David.

In about 1378 Archibald started work on his fortification at Threave Castle, and endowed Sweetheart Abbey, near Dumfries, with a hospital. Rather than taking over Buittle, traditional seat of the Balliols during the construction of Threave, he took up residence at Kirkcudbright, traditional seat of the earlier Lords. In 1388, Archibald inherited his cousin's earldom and all the entailed Douglas lands making him the most powerful magnate in Scotland.

Archibald appeared to have strengthened his line's connection with that of the Royal Stewarts, when in 1390 he arranged the marriage of his son and heir, Archibald, Master of Douglas to the Princess Margaret, and in 1399 his daughter Marjorie to David Stewart, Duke of Rothesay; both of these spouses were children of Robert III.

Archibald Douglas died at Threave Castle, on December 24, 1400, and was buried at Bothwell.

King Robert Stewart III (1337-1406) (our 19th great grandfather)

Robert III (1337 – 1406), born John Stewart, was King of Scotland from 1390 to his death. He was known primarily as the Earl of Carrick before ascending the throne aged between 50 and 53 years. John (Robert) Stewart was born August 14, 1337 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was the eldest son of Robert II and Elizabeth Mure and was legitimized with the marriage of his parents in 1347. John joined his father and other magnates in a rebellion against his great-uncle David II early in 1363 but submitted to him soon afterwards.

John was married to Anabella Drummond on March 13, 1365 in Kyle, Ayrshire, Scotland. John and Anabelle had seven children. We descend from their son James I and their daughters Margaret and Mary.

By 1367 John held the Earldom of Atholl. David II reinforced the position of John and Annabella by providing them with the Earldom of Carrick on June 22, 1368 and the tacit approval of John as the king's probable heir.

John's father became king in 1371 after the unexpected death of the childless King David. In the succeeding years, John was influential in the government of the kingdom but

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became progressively more impatient at his father's longevity. In 1384 John was appointed the king's lieutenant after having influenced the general council to remove Robert II from direct rule. John's administration saw a renewal of the conflict with England. In 1388 the Scots defeated the English at the Battle of Otterburn where the Scots' commander, James, Earl of Douglas, was killed. By this time John had been badly injured from a horse-kick but it was the loss of his powerful ally, Douglas, that saw a turnaround in magnate support in favor of his younger brother Robert, Earl of Fife, to whom the council transferred the lieutenantancy in December 1388.

King Robert II died on April 19, 1390. In May 1390 parliament granted John permission to change his regnal name to Robert, probably in part to maintain the link back to Robert I but also to disassociate himself from King John Balliol. Four months later John Stewart ascended the throne as Robert III but without authority to rule directly. His younger brother Robert continued as Lieutenant until February 1393 when power was returned to the king in conjunction with his son David.

King Robert III was increasingly blamed for the failure to pacify the Gaelic areas in west and north. The general council held in Perth in April 1398 criticized the king's governance, and empowered his brother Robert and his son David—now respectively the Dukes of Albany and Rothesay—to lead an army against Donald MacDonald, 8th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather), and his brothers.

In 1401, the Earl of Rothesay took on a more assertive and autonomous attitude, circumventing proper procedures, unjustifiably appropriating sums from the customs of the burghs on the east coast, before provoking further animosity when he confiscated the revenues of the temporalities of the vacant bishopric of St Andrews. Rothesay had also in conjunction with his uncle, Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, confronted Albany's influence in central Scotland. As soon his lieutenantancy expired in 1402, Rothesay was arrested and imprisoned in Albany's Falkland Castle where he died in March 1402.

Following Rothesay's death, and with the restoration of the lieutenantancy to Albany and the Scottish defeat at the battle of Humbleton, Robert III experienced almost total exclusion from political authority and was limited to his lands in the west.

By October 28, 1405 Robert III had returned to Dundonald Castle in Ayrshire. With the king's health failing, it was decided in the winter of 1405–6 to send the young prince to France out of the reach of Albany. James would fall into English captivity. By this time, Robert III had moved to Rothesay Castle. After hearing that his son was captured, Robert III died there on April 4, 1406 and was buried in Paisley Abbey, which had been founded by the Stewarts.

Robert Stewart (1340-1420) Duke of Albany (our 20th great grandfather)

Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany (1340 – 1420) was a member of the Scottish royal family who served as regent to three different Scottish monarchs (Robert II, Robert III, and James I). A ruthless politician, Albany was widely regarded as having caused the murder of his nephew, the Duke of Rothesay, and brother to the future King James I of Scotland. James was held in captivity in England for eighteen years, during which time Albany served as regent in Scotland, king in all but name.

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Robert Stewart was born about 1340 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. Robert Stewart was the second son of the future King Robert II of Scotland and Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan. Robert's grandfather was Walter Stewart, 6th High Steward of Scotland and his father was the first monarch of the House of Stewart. His great-grandfather was Robert the Bruce I. Robert Stewart was raised in a large family with many siblings. His older brother John Stewart became Earl of Carrick in 1368, and would later be crowned King of Scotland under the name Robert III.

In 1361 Robert Stewart married Margaret Graham, Countess of Menteith, a wealthy divorcee who took Robert as her fourth husband. His sister-in-law's claim to the Earldoms of Menteith and Fife allowed him to assume those titles, becoming Earl of Menteith and Earl of Fife. Robert and Margaret had eight children. We descend from their son Murdoch and their daughters Joan and Marjory Marcelline. After Margaret's death in 1380, Robert subsequently married Muriella Keith, with whom he had three children.

Robert Stewart was responsible for the construction of Doune Castle. When he was created Earl of Menteith, he was granted the lands on which Doune Castle now stands. Building may have started any time after this, and the castle was at least partially complete in 1381, when a charter was sealed here.

During the reign of their infirm father as King Robert II, Robert Stewart and his older brother John (Robert III) functioned as regents of Scotland, kings in all but name, with Albany serving as High Chamberlain of Scotland. Robert also led several military expeditions and raids into the Kingdom of England.

John Stewart acceded to the throne as King Robert III in 1390. His "sickness of the body" caused control of the kingdom eventually to devolve in 1399 to his son and heir apparent, David. In 1398 David had been created Duke of Rothesay and Robert had been created Duke of Albany, the first two dukedoms created in the Scottish Peerage. Power had begun to shift away from Albany and towards his nephew.

The English soon invaded Scotland, and serious differences emerged between Albany and Rothesay. In 1401, Rothesay was accused of unjustifiably appropriating sums from the customs of the burghs on the east coast and confiscating the revenues of the temporalities of the vacant bishopric of St Andrews. Rothesay had also in conjunction with his uncle, Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, confronted Albany's influence in central Scotland—as soon his lieutenancy expired in 1402 Albany acted swiftly and ruthlessly. Rothesay was arrested and imprisoned in Albany's Falkland Castle where he died in March 1402.

After the death of his brother King Robert III, Albany ruled Scotland as regent. His young nephew, the future James I of Scotland, remained in exile and imprisonment in England for 18 years. Albany made little effort to secure the young Prince's ransom and return to Scotland, focusing his energies instead on securing his own power and interest.

Albany's political triumph did not settle his differences with the other members of the nobility, in particular Donald MacDonald, 8th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather), who in 1411 led an army of clansmen from the Northwest Highlands into open battle with the Stewarts. This conflict began when Albany had attempted to secure the Earldom of Ross for his second son John, despite MacDonald's better claim. At the Battle of Harlaw (known as "Red

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Harlaw" on account of its savagery) on July 24, 1411, losses were heavy on both sides, though MacDonald's eventual withdrawal allowed the Stewarts to claim a strategic victory.

Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany died on September 3, 1420 at Stirling Castle and lies buried in Dunfermline Abbey in Fife. He was succeeded as Duke of Albany and Regent of Scotland by his son, Murdoch Stewart, Duke of Albany.

Alexander Stewart (1343-1405), 1st Earl of Buchan, Wolf of Badenoch (our 20th great grandfather)

Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan (1343 – 1405), also called the Wolf of Badenoch. He was the 1st Earl of Buchan from 1382 until his death. Alexander Stewart was born in about 1343 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was the third surviving son of King Robert II of Scotland and youngest by his first wife, Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan.

Alexander Stewart married the widowed Euphemia I, Countess of Ross, but they had no children. However, he had seven children by his longtime mistress, Mairead inghean Eachainn. They may have had a “handfasting” (secular) marriage not recognized by the church. We descend from their daughter Margaret and also their son Alexander.

In March 1371, on his father's accession to the throne, Alexander was officially made Lord of Badenoch. Robert II's charter gave Alexander the lands of Badenoch seemingly in regality with, presumably, authority over the church lands however, Bishop Bur possibly protested at this, as the details of the grant of Badenoch contained in the Register of the Great Seal has no reference to regality. Alexander was therefore to hold the Badenoch lands with no greater authority than John Comyn had a century before. The bishop continued to come under pressure from Alexander either directly or from his caterans (warriors from the Scottish Highlands) possibly acting independently. Both the bishops of Moray and Aberdeen were in dispute with Alexander regarding the strain that his cateran followers were putting on church lands and tenants.

In April 1385, at the council, Buchan's brother David claimed that Buchan was holding Urquhart unlawfully, while Sir James Lindsay of Crawford reinstated his claim to the Lordship of Buchan and finally, the Earl of Moray demanded that some of Buchan's men be prosecuted for the killing of some of his men. Despite these early attacks on his position, Buchan significantly strengthened his territorial position especially in the Great Glen where he retained Urquhart after his brother's death and then in the autumn of 1386 he gained the lands of Bona at the head of Loch Ness from the Earl of Moray and the adjoining lands in Abriachin from Sir Robert Chisholm.

Buchan's increased influence in Scottish affairs was again furthered when sometime before February 1387, he was appointed Justiciar North of the Forth. The Earl of Carrick's guardianship of Scotland had not been a success and certainly failed to rein in Buchan and so late in 1388, King Robert's second son, Robert, Earl of Fife (Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany) became the effective ruler of the Kingdom. Within days Fife removed Buchan from the Justiciarship and, it is assumed, the Royal Lieutenancy and the Sherifffdom of Inverness and later installed his own son, Murdoch as Justiciar North of the Forth. Fife was very uncompromising

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towards Buchan, who had been described as “useless to the community” at a previous general council meeting. Buchan had long deserted his wife and lived with Mairead inghean Eachainn with whom he had a number of children, including Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar. Marital law was the prerogative of the Church and so on November 2, 1389, Bishop Alexander Bur of Moray and Bishop Alexander Kylquhous of Ross, ordered his return to his wife, Euphemia. Buchan agreed to this, but didn't live up to his promise and so Fife encouraged Euphemia of Ross during her divorce proceedings against Buchan and in 1392 Euphemia was successful in her appeal to the Avignon papal court and his marriage was annulled. Following the annulment, Buchan lost all claim to Euphemia's lands which returned to her and to her son Alexander Leslie, Earl of Ross who was also contracted to marry Fife's daughter.

Alexander is remembered for his destruction of the royal burgh of Elgin and its cathedral. Bishop Bur's involvement with Buchan's estrangement with his wife and then Bur's alignment with Moray presented an opportunity for Alexander to take revenge on the church culminating in the destruction of Forres in May and then Elgin with its cathedral in June 1390. His destruction of the church possessions in Elgin was complete—as well as the cathedral, the monastery of the Greyfriars, St Giles parish church and the Hospital of Maison Dieu were all put to flame. Church and state now came together to oppose him—excommunicated by Bur, Buchan had to appear at the Church of the Friars Preacher, in Perth in the presence of his brothers, King Robert III of Scotland and the Earl of Fife, and the council-general to plead for forgiveness—absolution was granted by bishop Walter Trail, Bishop of St Andrews.

Alexander lost his Lordship of Urquhart in 1392 and then his claim on Ross following his wife's divorce in 1392. Although, Buchan appeared to have halted his violent traits after this, his sons did not. A fight ensued near Pitlochry involving Duncan and Robert Stewart at the head of a band of caterans, when Sir Walter Ogilvie and Walter de Lychton and followers were killed. Later it is recorded that three sons of Buchan's were imprisoned in Stirling Castle from 1396 to 1402.

Alexander's nickname “wolf of Badenock” was earned due to his notorious cruelty and rapacity, but there is no proof that it was used during his lifetime. Alexander Stewart died on June 20, 1405 in Badenock, Invernesshire, Scotland and he was buried in Dunkeld Cathedral.

Queen Annabella Drummond (1350-1401), wife of Robert III (our 19th great grandmother)

Anabella Drummond (1350–1401) was the queen consort of Scotland by marriage to King Robert III of Scotland. Anabella Drummond was born about 1350 in Dunderline, Fifeshire, Scotland. She was the daughter of Sir John Drummond, of Stobhall, near Perth, 11th Thane of Lennox and Chief of Clan Drummond, and Mary Montifex, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir William de Montifex, Justiciar of Scotland.

Anabella married John Stewart (the future Robert III of Scotland) on March 13, 1365 in Kyle, Ayrshire, Scotland. We descend from their son James I and their daughters Margaret and Mary.

Soon after her marriage, Anabella was enveloped in a power struggle with her husband's brother, Robert. Since Anabella and John did have two daughters, but no sons for several years,

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he was a supporter of a law that would bar women from inheriting the throne.

Anabella was crowned with Robert at Scone Palace when he came to the throne in 1390. She continued bearing children until she was past forty and had her last child, the future James I of Scotland, in 1394.

King Robert, an invalid since 1384 due to an accident with a horse, grew increasingly despondent and incompetent throughout his reign and was not capable to govern. During this time he is said to have said to her that he should be buried in a dung heap with the epitaph "Here lies the worst of kings and the most miserable of men".

Because the king was not able to rule, Anabella was prompted to manage state affairs as de facto ruler. The chronicles of Scotland generally praise Queen Anabella and her conduct as queen. Protecting the interests of her oldest son, David, she arranged a great tournament in 1398 in Edinburgh, where her oldest son was knighted. In April of that year she also called a council where he was created Duke of Rothesay and Lieutenant of the Realm in the same year. Shortly after his mother's death he would be imprisoned by his uncle and died in mysterious circumstances. David was described as debauched, self-indulgent and erratic, and the Duke of Albany did not have to fight hard to control him.

The Fife burgh of Inverkeithing was a favorite residence of the queen. Her presence is still recalled in the sandstone fort, decorated with angels and heraldry, which she presented to the parish church of the town, one of Scotland's finest surviving pieces of late medieval sculpture.

Anabella died in Scone Palace in October 1401, and was buried at her birthplace of Dunfermline. With the loss of her protection, her eldest son David would become the prey of his uncle, Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany, dying shortly after.

Murdock Stewart (1362 - 1425) 2nd Duke of Albany (our 20th great grandfather)

Murdoch Stewart, Duke of Albany (1362 – 24 May 1425) was a leading Scottish nobleman. Murdoch Stewart was born on December 9, 1362 at Falkland, Fifeshire, Scotland. He was the only son of Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany and his wife Margaret Graham, Countess of Menteith. He was the grandson of King Robert II of Scotland, who founded the Stewart dynasty.

In 1389, at around age 27, Murdoch was appointed Justiciar North of the Forth. Father and son would now work together to expand their family interest, bringing them into violent confrontation with other members of the nobility, such as Donald MacDonald, 8th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather).

Murdoch married Isobel of Lennox on February 17, 1392 in Lennox, Dunbartonshire, Scotland. Isobel was the daughter of Donnchadh Lennox and Helen Campbell. Murdoch and Isobel were known to have four sons and a daughter. We descend from their son James the Fat.

Stewart served in Scottish military actions against the English in the early 15th century and was captured at the Battle of Homildon Hill, which took place on September 14, 1402 in Northumberland, England. Led by Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl of Douglas (our 19th great grandfather), the Scottish army had invaded England bent on plunder, in part to avenge the killing and capture of Scottish nobles in the Battle of Nesbit Moor on June 22, 1402. While

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returning to Scotland, they were intercepted by English forces led by Henry Percy, 1st Earl of Northumberland. The result was a decisive defeat of the Scottish army and imprisonment for Murdoch. In 1416 Murdoch was exchanged for Henry Percy, 2nd Earl of Northumberland, and he returned to Scotland.

In 1420, on his father's death, Murdoch, now aged 58, finally inherited the Dukedom of Albany. He also inherited the Earldom of Fife and the Earldom of Menteith, and at last became Governor of Scotland in his own right. He would hold this position from 1420 to 1424, while King James I was still held captive in England. Few serious attempts appear to have been made by Duke Albany to return James to Scotland, but eventually political pressure compelled Murdoch to agree to a general council.

After the Battle of Verneuil in August 1424 and the Scottish army was routed—the loss of these Albany allies with their fighting force left Murdoch politically exposed. James moved swiftly against his Albany Stewart relatives soon afterwards. In 1425, soon after James's coronation, Murdoch Stewart was arrested.

Murdoch and his son Alexander were tried before a jury on May 25, 1425. His son Walter was tried the day before. They were found guilty of treason. They were publicly beheaded on Heading Hill "in front of" Stirling Castle. Murdoch was attainted and all of his peerage titles were forfeited. He was buried at Blackfriars' Church, Stirling. His only surviving heir was James the Fat, who escaped to Antrim, Ireland, where he died in 1429.

Murdoch's wife, Isabella of Lennox, survived the execution of her family, though she spent eight years as a royal prisoner at Tantallon Castle. In 1437, after the death of James I, she at last recovered her lands and title.

Archibald Douglas (1369-1424), 4th Earl of Douglas (our 19th great grandfather)

Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl of Douglas, Duke of Touraine (1369 – 1424), was a Scottish nobleman and warlord. Archibald Douglas was born about 1369 at Threave Castle, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the eldest legitimate son of Archibald Douglas, 3rd Earl of Douglas and Joanna de Moravia of Bothwell. He was known as the Master of Douglas until his accession.

Archibald married the Princess Margaret of Carrick, a daughter of King Robert III of Scotland in about 1390 in Fifeshire. They were known to have five children. We descend from their son James. Around this time, his father bestowed upon him the regalities of the Ettrick Forest, Lauderdale and Romannobridge, Peeblesshire.

In 1400 George I, Earl of March and Henry "Hotspur" Percy had entered Scotland and laid waste as far as Papple in East Lothian. The villages of Traprain, Markle and Hailes were burnt and two unsuccessful attempts were made to invest Hailes Castle. Archibald, the Master of Douglas, who held the office of Lord Warden of the Marches, surprised them by night at their camp near East Linton and defeated the English Force. The Douglasses chased the enemy away as far as Berwick upon Tweed, slaughtering many stragglers in the woods near Cockburnspath.

On June 4, 1400, King Robert appointed Archibald Keeper of Edinburgh Castle for life, on a pension of 200 merks a year.

Archibald's father died at Christmas 1400, and the new 4th Earl became the largest and

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most powerful magnate in the realm. His father's vast lordships stretched from Galloway Douglasdale, Moray, Clydesdale to the shires of Stirling and Selkirk. These were augmented by the forfeited lands of the Earl of Dunbar in Lothian and the Merse.

On June 22, 1402, a small Scots force was beaten by George Dunbar, the Earl of March's son, at the Battle of Nesbit Moor. Archibald Douglas led a punitive raid with Murdoch Stewart of Fife (our 20th great grandfather) as far as Newcastle to avenge the battle. At the head of 10,000 men he laid waste to the whole of Northumberland. Once Douglas' men had made camp at Millfield, relatively low ground, the English army rushed to attack. The Scots did however have keen sentries and the army was able to retreat to the higher ground of Homildon hill. A hundred men, under Sir John Swinton, chose to charge the enemy saying: "Better to die in the mellay than be shot down like deer". All perished. It has been suggested that Douglas hesitated to signal the advance of his main force, and when he did, it was too little too late. Douglas' mauled army met the as yet unbloodied English men at arms, and were routed. Many of Douglas' leading captains were captured, including his kinsman George Douglas, 1st Earl of Angus (our 18th great grandfather), Thomas Dunbar, 5th Earl of Moray and Murdoch Stewart of Fife. Douglas himself was captured having been wounded five times, including the loss of an eye.

Douglas was now a captive of King Henry. The cost of the ransom of the Scots nobles taken at Homildon was proving hard for the impoverished Scots exchequer. After Archibald Douglas gave his oath on Holy Scripture to King Henry to be his man above all others excepting King James, and on the production of suitable hostages for his Parole, Douglas was allowed to return to his estates to carry out his private affairs. Douglas had agreed again under oath to return to captivity in England upon an appointed day. At Easter Douglas went north and did not return upon the aforesaid day. King Henry wrote to Regent Albany complaining of this "un-knightly" behavior and warned that unless Douglas returned the hostages would be dealt with at his pleasure. Douglas did not return. Only upon payment of 700 Merks in 1413 to the new King of England, Henry V were the hostages liberated.

Douglas's son Archibald had been fighting in France where they were able to inflict a heavy defeat over the English at the Battle of Bauge in 1421. In 1423 his son Archibald arrived back in Scotland to raise more troops for the War effort, and with a personal request to his father Archibald from Charles VII of France to lend his aid. So he willingly consented to the French King's request. He sailed into La Rochelle with an estimated 6,500 men on March 7, 1424.

Douglas was given the post of "Lieutenant-General in the waging of war through all the Kingdom of France". On April 29, 1424, Douglas was granted the Duchy of Touraine, including the "Castle, town and city" of Tours, and the "Castle and town" of Loches. Douglas was the first foreigner and also the first non-royal to be granted Ducal status in France.

Archibald was defeated and slain at Verneuil on August 17, 1424, along with his second son, James, and son-in-law John Stewart, 2nd Earl of Buchan. Douglas was buried in the choir of Tours Cathedral, alongside Sir James Douglas, his son.

Alexander Stewart (1375-1435), Earl of Mar (our 20th great grandfather)

Alexander Stewart (1375 – 1435) was a Scottish nobleman, Earl of Mar from 1404. He

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acquired the earldom through marriage to the hereditary countess, and successfully ruled the northern part of Scotland. Alexander Stewart was born about 1375 at Dundonald Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was thought to be an illegitimate son of Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan and Mairead inghean Eachainn, as they had a “handfasting” (secular) marriage not recognized by the church.

Alexander held the Earldom of Mar and the Lordship of the Garioch jure uxoris, in right of his first wife Isabel Douglas, Countess of Mar. Alexander's marriage to Isabella followed his capture of Kildrummy Castle, and Isabella with it, in 1404. He had forced her to execute a charter settling the reversion to the earldom on himself and his heirs. This act she is believed to have revoked in September, but on marrying him, on the December 9, 1404, she granted him the earldom for life, the king confirming this on June 21, 1405. These events sent major shockwaves throughout the kingdom and Alexander only escaped punishment because he was a close relation to the Royal Family. His possession of the Earldom was later regularized in 1424 by grant of his cousin, King James I.

Prior to his marriage he had a daughter named Margaret in about 1402 possible by a mistress named Elizabeth. We descend from this Margaret as she married Lachlan Bronnach MacLean, 7th Clan MacLean Chief (our 19th great grandfather), in about 1422.

Alexander Stewart was a close supporter of his uncle Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany, who was then ruler of the kingdom as regent for his brother King Robert III of Scotland. Robert had been badly injured when he was kicked by his horse. Alexander led the so-called "Lowland" army, in fact that of the north-east and eastern Highlands, against Donald MacDonald, 8th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather) at the bloody and indecisive Battle of Harlaw in 1411.

Alexander Stewart sat on the jury of 21 knights and peers that convicted his first cousin Murdoch Stewart, Duke of Albany, and two of his sons of treason in 1424, leading to their execution and the virtual annihilation of the Stewarts of Albany. Alexander Stewart died in about 1435 at Mar, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He is buried at Blackfriars, Invernesshire.

Sir James Stewart (1383-1451), Black Knight of Lorn (our 17th great grandfather)

James Stewart, the Black Knight of Lorne (1383 – 1451) was a Scottish nobleman. James Stewart was born on July 25, 1383 at Innermeath, Argyllshire, Scotland. His father was Sir John Stewart, Scotland's Ambassador to England, and Isabella MacDougall. He was a direct male line descendant of Alexander Stewart, 4th High Steward of Scotland, through his second son Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, who was killed at the Battle of Falkirk. His mother was also a descendant of Elizabeth de Burgh, second wife/Queen Consort of King Robert the Bruce I.

James was a younger brother of Robert Stewart, 1st Lord Lorne (1382–1449), whose descendants bore this title. He was an ally of the Black Douglasses, Earls of Douglas. After the murder of James I of Scotland in 1437, power was held by Archibald Douglas, 5th Earl of Douglas as regent for the underage James II of Scotland. The Stewarts of Lorn were amongst his most trusted supporters, and their power greatly increased while the Douglas family controlled Scotland and the king was a mere 7 years of age. However the unexpected death of the 5th Earl of Douglas from a fever in 1439 saw power now being uneasily shared between William, 1st Lord

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Crichton, Chancellor of Scotland and Sir Alexander Livingston, Governor of Stirling Castle.

James married, Joan Beaufort, Queen Consort of Scotland and widow of James I of Scotland on September 21, 1439. They had a papal dispensation for both consanguinity and affinity. James and Joan had three children. We descend from their son James.

Through his marriage, James became stepfather to James II. Stewart and his Douglas allies planned to remove the young James II, who was being held by Livingston in his stronghold of Stirling Castle. However, Livingston arrested Lady Joan on August 3, 1439, imprisoning her in Stirling Castle, while throwing Sir James and his brother Sir William into its dungeon. They were later released on good behavior. Stewart was given safe conduct to England in 1445, 1447, and 1451. He was supposedly captured at sea by Flemish pirates and put to death in 1451, somewhere on mainland Europe. But he was still alive in 1453–54 when he carried King James II's offer to Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset to rescue him. Somerset was then a prisoner in the Tower of London while Richard Duke of York was in charge of the government.

King James Stewart I (1394 - 1437) (our 19th great grandfather)

James I (1394 – 1437) was King of Scotland from 1406 to 1437. The youngest of three sons, he was born on July 25, 1394 in Dunfermline Abbey to King Robert III and his wife Annabella Drummond. His older brother David, Duke of Rothesay, died under suspicious circumstances while being detained by their uncle, Robert, Duke of Albany. His other brother, Robert, died young. Fears for James's safety grew through the winter of 1405/6 and plans were made to send him to France. In February 1406, James was forced to take refuge in the castle of the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth after his escort was attacked by supporters of Archibald, 4th Earl of Douglas. He remained there until mid-March when he boarded a vessel bound for France. On March 22 English pirates captured the ship and delivered the prince to Henry IV of England. The ailing Robert III died on April 4, 1406 and the 11-year-old James, now the uncrowned King of Scotland, would not regain his freedom for another eighteen years.

It would be at the beginning of this uncrowned king's reign that conflict would occur between the Kingdom of Scotland and the semi-autonomous Lordship of the Isles which was the remnant of the Ancient Kingdom of Dal Riada. The Celtic clans of the Western Isles had basically ruled themselves since early time with the exception of the incursion of the Vikings which ended in 1266. The Lordship of the Isles had been ruled by Clan MacDonald since then. They had supported Robert the Bruce in the Wars of Independence but continued to rule all of the Western Isles and large areas of the western mainland from Dunyvaig Castle on the Island of Islay. Most of Argyllshire was in their domain. They were known to be able to muster an army of ten thousand fighting Highlanders whenever they wished.

Donald MacDonald, 8th Lord of the Isles (our 20th great grandfather) held a great gathering of his clansmen at his castle at Ardtornish, on the sound of Mull. He selected 6,000 of the best fighting men and transported this formidable army to the mainland and marched towards Inverness. After burning Inverness, he was joined by others from the clans of MacIntosh, MacLean, MacLeod, Cameron, and Chatten. The clash would occur at the Battle of Harlow on July 24, 1411. It basically was the Highlanders vs. the Lowlanders. The armies simply rushed at

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each other as a test of their valor. The Highlanders charged with reckless bravery against the massed spearmen and knights of the Scottish army. During the night both sides withdrew, not knowing who had won the day. Donald MacDonald moved back to Inverness leaving no fewer than a thousand clansmen dead on the field, including two clan chiefs: “Red Hector” MacLean, 6th Clan MacLean Chief (our 20th great grandfather) and the MacIntosh.

James was educated well at the English Court where he developed respect for English methods of governance and for Henry V. The Scottish king, apparently willingly, joined Henry in his military campaign in France during 1420 – 1421. His cousin, Murdoch Stewart, Albany's son, an English prisoner since 1402 was traded for Henry Percy, 2nd Earl of Northumberland, in 1416.

James married Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, on February 12, 1424 in Southwark, London. James and Joan were known to have eight children. We descend from their son King James III.

For James release from English captivity, a ransom treaty of £40,000 sterling (less a dowry remittance of 10,000 marks) was agreed at Durham on March 28, 1424 to which James attached his own seal. The king and queen escorted by English and Scottish nobles reached Melrose Abbey on April 5 were met by Albany who relinquished his governor's seal of office.

The King's re-entry into Scottish affairs was not altogether popular since he had fought on behalf of Henry V in France and at times against Scottish forces. Noble families were now faced with paying increased taxes to cover the ransom repayments but would also have to provide family hostages as security. It was against this backdrop that James's coronation took place at Scone on May 21, 1424. The coronation parliament of the Three Estates witnessed the king perform a knighthood ceremony for eighteen prominent nobles including Alexander Stewart, Murdoch's son; an event probably intended to foster loyalty to the crown within the political community. Called primarily to discuss issues surrounding the finance of the ransom payments, the parliament heard James underline his position and authority as monarch. James, who excelled in sporting activities and appreciated literature and music, also held a strong desire to impose law and order on his subjects although he applied it selectively at times. To secure his position, James launched pre-emptive attacks on some of his nobles beginning in 1425 with his close kinsmen, the Albany Stewarts, resulting in the execution of Duke Murdoch and his sons.

In the north and west the “Highland problem” remained unsolved. Alexander MacDonald, 9th Lord of the Isles (our 19th great grandfather) and son of Donald who had fought at the Battle of Harlow in 1411, was in open defiance of the King's writ. James decided that the Highlanders had to be brought to heel. In July 1428, the king convened a general council at Perth aimed at obtaining finance for an expedition to the Highlands against the semi-autonomous Lord of the Isles. The council initially resisted granting James the funds but eventually gave in to the king's wishes. Although it seemed that an all-out attack on the Gaels of the north was not the king's intention, James had resolved to use a degree of force to strengthen royal authority. The leaders of the Gaelic kindreds in the north and west were summoned by James ostensibly to a sitting of parliament in Inverness. On August 24, 1428, of those assembled the king arrested around 50 of them including Alexander MacDonald, 9th Lord of the Isles (our 19th great grandfather), his mother, Mariota, Countess of Ross, and also Lachlan Bronnach MacLean, 7th Clan MacLean Chief (our 19th great grandfather). A few were executed but the remainder, with the exception of

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Alexander, his mother, and Lachlan MacLean were quickly released. During Alexander's captivity James attempted to split Clan MacDonald.

The king's need for allies in the west and north led him to soften his approach towards the Lord of the Isles and, hoping that Alexander MacDonald would now become a loyal servant of the crown, he was given his freedom. But Alexander then led a rebellion attacking the castle and burgh of Inverness in spring 1429. Lachlan Bronnach MacLean was among those who joined with MacDonald. The crisis deepened when a fleet from the Lordship of the Isles was dispatched to bring James the Fat Stewart (our 19th great grandfather) back from Ulster “to convey him home that he might be king”. With James's intention to form an alliance with the Ulster O'Donnells of Tyreconnell against the MacDonalds, the English became distrustful of the Scottish king's motives and they themselves tried to bring James the Fat to England. Before he could become an active player, James the Fat died suddenly releasing James to prepare for decisive action against the Lordship.

The King's army and that of Alexander MacDonald met on June 21, 1429 in Lochaber. Alexander MacDonald was heavily defeated. Alexander escaped probably to Islay but James continued his assault on the Lordship of the Isles. Alexander probably realized that his position was hopeless and tried to negotiate terms of surrender but James demanded and received his total submission. Lachlan Bronnach MacLean and several other vassals, were forced to surrender unconditionally, and were imprisoned in Tantallon Castle. The Islesmen would rise again in September 1431 and inflicted two important defeats on the king's men – Mar's army was beaten at Inverlochy and Angus Moray's in a fierce battle near Tongue in Caithness. This was a serious setback for James and his credibility was adversely affected.

In 1431, before the September uprising, the king had arrested two of his nephews, John Kennedy of Carrick and Archibald, Earl of Douglas (our 18th great grandfather) possibly as a result of a conflict between John and his uncle, Thomas Kennedy in which Douglas may have become involved. Douglas was released on September 29, possibly because the king made the earl's release conditional on support at the forthcoming parliament at Perth at which James intended to push for further funding for the campaign against the Lordship of the Isles. Four summer campaigns against the Lordship of the Isles were now officially at an end with James's wishes having effectively been blocked by parliament.

In August 1436, James failed in his siege of the English-held Roxburgh Castle. The retreat from Roxburgh exposed the king to questions regarding his control over his subjects, his military competence and his diplomatic abilities yet he remained determined to continue with the war against England. Just two months after the Roxburgh fiasco, James called a general council in October 1436 to finance further hostilities. The council then witnessed an unsuccessful attempt by Graham to arrest the king resulting in the knight's imprisonment followed by banishment but James did not see Graham's actions as part of any extended threat.

The reaction against the king at the general council had shown Atholl that not only was James on the back-foot but his political standing had received a huge setback, and may have convinced the earl that James's killing was now a viable course of action.

A general council was held in Atholl's heartland in Perth on February 4, 1437 and crucially for the conspirators, the king and queen had remained in the town at their lodgings in

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the Blackfriars monastery. In the evening of February 20, 1437 the king and queen were in their rooms and separated from most of their servants. Atholl's grandson and heir Robert Stewart, the king's chamberlain, allowed his co-conspirators—thought to number about thirty—led by Robert Graham and the Chambers brothers access to the building. James was alerted to the men's presence, giving the king time to hide in a sewer tunnel but with its exit recently blocked off to prevent tennis balls getting lost, James was trapped. James was assassinated at Perth likely in the early morning of February 21, 1437. Queen Joan, although wounded, managed to evade the attackers and reached her son, now King James II, in Edinburgh Castle.

James Mor “the fat” Stewart (1395-1451) (our 19th great grandfather)

James Mor Stewart, called James the Fat, (1395 – 1451), was born about 1395 in Aberfoyle, Perthshire, Scotland. He was the youngest son of Murdoch Stewart, Duke of Albany and Isabella of Lennox.

Little is known of James's life before the arrest of his father, the Duke of Albany, and his eldest son Alexander, for treason by King James I of Scotland on March 21, 1425. The family properties of Doune Castle and Falkland Palace were captured, and Duke Murdoch and two of his sons were imprisoned and held pending trial. James soon became a rallying point for enemies of the King, raising a large rebellion against the crown. Initially at least, events moved in his favor. He received the support of his mother's supporters in the Lennox, and also from Fionnlagh MacCailein, Bishop of Argyll, a long-standing supporter of the Albany Stewarts. James marched on the town of Dumbarton, burned it, and killed the keeper of the royal castle there, Sir John Stewart of Dundonald, who was the King's uncle. However, the castle itself, commanded by John Colquhoun, successfully held out against James's men.

James the Fat's rebellion was quickly defeated. His father and brothers were found guilty of treason by a jury of knights and peers, and executed after a trial. At a stroke, almost all of James' family was wiped out. Only his mother, Isabella of Lennox survived the insurrection. Later in 1425, pursued by a royal expedition, James fled to Antrim, Ireland to escape the King's justice. Few details of his escape survive but it seems likely that he sought assistance from the Campbells of Loch Awe, to whom he was closely linked by blood and marriage.

In Ireland, James became involved with a Lady Anne MacDonald. She was one of the daughters of John MacDonald, 1st Earl of Antrim, the son of John of Islay, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross. Her mother was Margery Bissett, heiress of the Seven Glens of Antrim. James and Lady Anne did not marry, but he had seven illegitimate children. We descend from their daughter Maud Matilda Stewart. Although, this wasn't a “marriage” alliance, it firmly established James' close relationship with the MacDonalds, the Lords of the Isles.

A second attempt at rebellion would occur in 1429. This time James had as his ally Alexander MacDonald, 9th Lord of the Isles (our 19th great grandfather). Alexander led the rebellion attacking the castle and burgh of Inverness in spring 1429. The crisis deepened when a fleet from the Lordship of the Isles was dispatched to bring James the Fat Stewart back from Ulster 'to convey him home that he might be king'.

James the Fat would never return to his native Scotland. He remained an exile in Ireland

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until his death on April 30, 1451.

Dowager Queen Joan Beaufort (1402-1445) (our 17th great grandmother)

Joan Beaufort (1402 – 1445) was the Queen of Scotland from 1424 to 1437 as the spouse of King James I of Scotland. During part of the minority of her son James II (from 1437 to 1439), she served as the regent of Scotland. Joan Beaufort was born on December 27, 1402 in Beaufort Castle, Goudet, Haute-Loire, Auvergne, France. She was a daughter of John Beaufort, 1st Earl of Somerset, and Margaret Holland.

King James I of Scotland met Joan during his time as a prisoner in England, and knew her from at least 1420. She is said to have been the inspiration for King James' famous long poem, "The Kingis Quair," written during his captivity, after he saw her from his window in the garden. James married Joan Beaufort on February 12, 1424 at St Mary Overie Church in Southwark, London, England. The marriage was at least partially political, as their marriage was part of the agreement for his release from captivity. From an English perspective an alliance with the Beauforts was meant to establish his country's alliance with the English, rather than the French. Negotiations resulted in Joan's dowry of 10,000 merks being subtracted from James's substantial ransom. They were feasted at Winchester Palace that year by her uncle Cardinal Henry Beaufort.

She accompanied James on his return from captivity in England to Scotland, and was crowned alongside him at Scone Abbey. James and Joan had eight children. We descend from their son King James II.

James I was assassinated in Perth in 1437. Joan had also been a target of assassination along with her husband, but managed to survive her injuries. She successfully directed her husband's supporters to attack his assassin Walter Stewart, Earl of Atholl, but was forced to give up power three months later. The prospect of being ruled by an English woman (of French birth) was unpopular in Scotland. The Earl of Douglas was thus appointed to power, though Joan remained in charge of her son.

On September 21, 1439, she married James Stewart, the Black Knight of Lorn, after obtaining a papal dispensation for both consanguinity and affinity. James was an ally of the latest Earl of Douglas, and plotted with him to overthrow Alexander Livingston, governor of Stirling Castle, during the minority of James II. Livingston arrested Joan in August 1439 and forced her to relinquish custody of the young king. In 1445, the conflict between the Douglas/Livingston faction and the queen's supporters resumed, and she was under siege at Dunbar Castle by the Earl of Douglas when she died on July 15, 1445. She was buried in the Carthusian Priory at Perth.

Alexander Gordon (1410-1470), 1st Earl of Huntly (our 17th great grandfather)

Alexander Seton, 1st Earl of Huntly (1410 – 1470), who adopted the family name of Gordon from about 1457, was a powerful 15th century Scottish magnate. He was knighted in 1439/1440 and was Lord of Badenoch, Gordon, Strathbogie and Cluny. Alexander Gordon was born about 1410 in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He was the son of Alexander Seton, Lord Gordon by his spouse Elizabeth Gordon, daughter and heiress of Sir Adam Gordon.

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Alexander married first, on January 8, 1426 Egidia Hay, daughter and heir of John Hay of Tullibody. Together they had a son named Alexander. We descend from this Alexander.

Alexander accompanied the princess Margaret to France to marry the 9th Dauphin of France in 1435.

Alexander obtained an annulment to his first marriage in 1438 in order to marry Elizabeth Crichton, daughter of William Crichton, the Chancellor of Scotland. Alexander and Elizabeth had eight children. We descend from their daughter Christian.

In a charter dated February 23, 1439, he is styled Sir Alexander Seton of Tullibody, heir of Elizabeth Gordon. The charter confirmed an earlier exchange of lands between Sir William Keith and Margaret Fraser (his maternal grandparents) and William Lindsay, Lord of Byres exchanging lands for that of Dunottar.

Alexander succeeded his father as Lord Gordon before April 1441. Alexander then resigned his lands to the king on April 3, 1441 and in return was granted a charter to himself and his wife Elizabeth of the lordships of Gordon, county Berwick; Strathbogie, Aboyne, Glentanner and Glenmuick, in Aberdeenshire; and Panbride in county Forfar; to be held in liferent and by their son George Gordon in fee as well as his lawful male heirs.

In 1449, Alexander was raised to the peerage and created the first Earl of Huntly by King James II of Scotland, sometime before July 3 of that year when he witnessed a charter to James Hamilton, 1st Lord Hamilton (our 17th great grandfather) under that title. Later in the year he was present at the gates of Arbroath Abbey when the Ogilvies and Lindsays were disputing their claims to the office of justiciary of that abbey; where the Ogilvies were defeated and Earl Alexander, there in support of that family, had to flee the field himself.

Alexander had two additional children by a daughter of Cumming of Altyre, identified by her byname “the Fair Maid of Moray”.

Alexander was embroiled in struggles against the Douglasses, against the Lords of the Isles, and against the Lindsay earls of Crawford while being closely aligned with William Crichton, the Chancellor. On April 28, 1451 he received a charter from the king of the lordship of Badenoch and the castle of Ruthven. Gordon fought on the King's side against the Douglasses during The Douglas Rebellion and soundly defeated the Crawfords at the Battle of Brechin on May 18, 1452.

Alexander adopted the family name of Gordon in about 1457. He died on July 15, 1470 at Huntly Castle and was buried in Elgin Cathedral.

Duncan MacKintosh (1415-1496), 11th Clan MacKintosh Chief (our 18th great grandfather)

Duncan MacKintosh, 11th Chief of Clan MacKintosh (1415 – 1496) was born about 1415 in Invernesshire, Scotland. He was the son of Malcolm MacKintosh, 10th Chief of MacKintosh and 11th of Clan Chattan and Moira MacDonald. In about 1435 in Invernesshire, Duncan married Florence MacDonald, daughter of Alexander MacDonald, 9th Lord of the Isles, and Elizabeth de Seton.

Duncan disposed of the lands of Rothiemurchus to his cousin, Alastair MacKintosh of Shaw. He held the position of 12th Chief of Clan Chattan in 1464. In 1466 he had a charter of

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Moymore and other lands from the Lord of the Isles. In January 1493 he had a charter granting him Brae Lochaber, from King James IV. In 1495 he repaired Inverness Castle and handed over its custody on the order of King James IV, to Alexander, Lord Gordon. Duncan died about 1496 in Dunachton, Invernesshire, Scotland.

Sir John Mor MacDonnell (MacDonald) (1425-1439)(our 17th great grandfather)

Sir John Mor MacDonnell or John Mor MacDonald (1425 – 1439) was the 3rd Lord of Clan MacDonald and of the Glens of Antrim. He was born about 1425 in Dunnyveg, Isle of Islay, Scotland. John More was a son of Donald Balloch MacDonald and Johanna, daughter of Conn O'Neill of Edenduffcarrick. His grandparents were John McDonald and Margery Bissett of the Seven Glens of Antrim. He was the 3rd chief of Clan MacDonald of Dunnyveg.

With his father, he signed the Treaty of Ardtornish in October 1461, which proposed that Scotland be divided between King Edward IV of England and James Douglas, 9th Earl of Douglas. He succeeded to the chieftainship of the clan after his father died at Islay in 1476.

In 1493, with John of Islay being required to forfeit his title of Lord of the Isles and paid homage to King James IV of Scotland, the King garrisoned and provisioned Tarbert and Dunaverty Castle with Royal forces in 1494. Sir John Mor MacDonald, whom the king had recently knighted and to whom John had rendered homage, retook Dunaverty Castle just as the King was sailing for Stirling. The dead body of the castle's governor was hung over the castle walls in sight of the King and his departing entourage. The King, infuriated by Sir John's actions, declared Sir John a traitor and he was summoned him to Edinburgh for treason.

Sir John Mor MacDonald ignored the summons and continued to reside at Islay. He and his sons were captured through the treachery of his kinsman John MacIain of Ardnamurchan. Sir John, his son John Cathanach and John Cathanach's sons John Mor, John Og and Donald Balloch were tried, convicted of treason and hung on the Burgh Muir in 1499. John Cathanach's remaining son, Alexander, fled to Ireland and became the next chief of the clan.

John Mor MacDonald was married to Sabina O'Neill, daughter of Phelim O'Neill of Clanaboy, Ulster. We descend from their son John Cathanach, who was executed alongside his father in 1499. John Mor MacDonald is the great grandfather of Mary MacDonald, wife of Echuinn Mor MacLean, 12th Chief of Clan MacLean.

King James Stewart II (1430 - 1460)(our 18th great grandfather)

James Stewart II (1430 – 1460) was a member of the House of Stewart who reigned as King of Scotland from 1437 until his death. James Stewart was born in Holyrood Abbey, Edinburgh, Scotland on October 16, 1430. He was the son of King James I and Joan Beaufort. By his first birthday his twin and only brother, Alexander, who was also the older twin, had died, thus making James the heir apparent and given the title Duke of Rothesay.

James I was assassinated on February 21, 1437. The Queen, although hurt, managed to get to her six-year-old son James II, who was now king. On March 25, 1437, the six-year-old was formally crowned King of Scots by Abbot Patrick at Holyrood Abbey. The Parliament of

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Scotland revoked alienations of crown property and prohibited them, without the consent of the Estates, that is, until James II's eighteenth birthday. He lived along with his mother and five of his six sisters at Dunbar Castle until 1439.

From 1437 to 1439 the King's first cousin Archibald Douglas, 5th Earl of Douglas, headed the government as lieutenant-general of the realm. After his death, and with a general lack of high-status earls in Scotland due to deaths, forfeiture or youth, political power became shared uneasily among William Crichton, 1st Lord Crichton, Lord Chancellor of Scotland and Sir Alexander Livingston of Callendar, who had possession of the young king as the warden of the stronghold of Stirling Castle. Taking advantage of these events, Livingston placed Queen Joan and her new husband, Sir John Stewart, under "house arrest" at Stirling Castle on August 3, 1439. They were released on September 4 only by making a formal agreement to put James in the custody of the Livingstons, by giving up her dowry for his maintenance, and confessing that Livingston had acted through zeal for the king's safety.

Negotiations for a marriage to Mary of Guelders began in July 1447, when a Burgundian envoy came to Scotland, and were concluded by an embassy under Crichton the chancellor in September 1448. Philip settled sixty thousand crowns on his kinswoman, and her dowry of ten thousand was secured on lands in Strathearn, Athole, Methven, and Linlithgow. A tournament took place before James at Stirling, on February 25, 1449, between James, master of Douglas, another James, brother to the Laird of Lochleven, and two knights of Burgundy, one of whom, Jacques de Lalain, was the most celebrated knight-errant of the time. On July 3, 1449, nineteen-year-old James married fifteen-year-old Mary of Guelders, daughter of the Duke of Gelderland, at Holyrood Abbey. A French chronicler, Mathieu d'Escouchy, gives a graphic account of the ceremony and the feasts which followed. Many Flemings in Mary's suite remained in Scotland, and the relations between Scotland and Flanders, already friendly under James I, consequently became closer. James and Mary had seven children, six of whom survived into adulthood. We descend from their daughter Mary.

In 1449 James II reached adulthood, but he had to struggle to gain control of his kingdom. The Douglasses, probably with his cooperation, used his coming of age as a way to throw the Livingstons out of the shared government, as the young king took revenge for the arrest of his mother. Douglas and Crichton continued to dominate political power, and the king continued to struggle to throw off their rule. Between 1451 and 1455 he struggled to free himself from the power of the Douglasses. Attempts to curb the Douglasses' power took place in 1451, during the absence of William Douglas, 8th Earl of Douglas from Scotland, and culminated with the murder of Douglas at Stirling Castle on February 22, 1452.

King James accused William Douglas of forging links with John MacDonald, 10th Lord of the Isles, and Alexander Lindsay, 4th Earl of Crawford. This bond, if it existed, created a dangerous axis of power of independently-minded men, forming a major rival to royal authority. When Douglas refused to break the bond with MacDonald, James broke into a fit of temper and stabbed Douglas 26 times and threw his body out of a window.

This murder did not end the power of the Douglasses, but rather created a state of intermittent civil war between 1452 and 1455. The main engagements were at Brodick, on the Isle of Arran; Inverkip in Renfrew; and the Battle of Arkinholm. James attempted to seize

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Douglas lands, but his opponents repeatedly forced him into humiliating climbdowns, whereby he returned the lands to James Douglas, 9th Earl of Douglas, and a brief and uneasy peace ensued.

In the months that followed, the Parliament of Scotland declared the extensive Douglas lands forfeit and permanently annexed them to the crown, along with many other lands, finances and castles. The Earl fled into a long English exile. James finally had the freedom to govern as he wished, and one can argue that his successors as Kings of Scots never faced such a powerful challenge to their authority again. Along with the forfeiture of the Albany Stewarts in the reign of James I, the destruction of the Black Douglasses saw royal power in Scotland take a major step forward.

James II enthusiastically promoted modern artillery, which he used with some success against the Black Douglasses. His ambitions to increase Scotland's standing saw him besiege Roxburgh Castle in 1460, one of the last Scottish castles still held by the English after the Wars of Independence. For this siege, James took a large number of cannons imported from Flanders. On August 3, 1460, he was standing near one of these cannons, known as "the Lion", when it exploded and killed him.

The Scots carried on with the siege, led by George Douglas, 4th Earl of Angus, and the castle fell a few days later. Once the castle was captured James's widow, Mary of Guelders, ordered its destruction. James's son became king as James III and Mary acted as regent until her own death three years later.

John Stewart (1440-1512), 1st Earl of Atholl (our 16th great grandfather)

John Stewart, 1st Earl of Atholl (1440 – 1512), also known as Sir John Stewart of Balveny, was a Scottish nobleman and ambassador. John Stewart was born about 1440 at Balveny Castle, Fifeshire, Scotland. He was the oldest child of Joan Beaufort, widow of James I of Scotland, and her second husband Sir James Stewart, the Black Knight of Lorn.

He was created Earl of Atholl in about 1457, the first earl of the eighth creation of the title. He is believed to have had a hand in suppressing the rebellion of John MacDonald, 11th Earl of Ross, the last of the Lords of the Isles. According to legend, the Earl of Atholl had whisky, honey and oats added to MacDonald's water well, which so entranced or intoxicated him that MacDonald was easily captured. The mixture became a drink named Atholl Brose.

On April 19, 1475, John married as his second wife, Lady Eleanor Sinclair, daughter of William Sinclair, 3rd Earl of Orkney and Marjory Sutherland. They had two sons and nine daughters. We descend from their daughter Katherine and their son John.

John Stewart became ambassador to England in 1484. He died on September 15, 1512 at Laighwood Castle, Perthshire, Scotland. He was buried in Dunkeld Cathedral in Perthshire.

Archibald Campbell (1452 - 1513), 2nd Earl of Argyll (our 16th great grandfather)

Gillespie Archibald Campbell, 2nd Earl of Argyll (1452 - 1513) was a Scottish nobleman and politician. Archibald was born on June 7, 1452 in Argyllshire, Scotland. Archibald was the eldest son of Colin Campbell, 1st Earl of Argyll and Isabel Stewart, daughter of John Stewart, 2nd

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Lord Lorn. He descends from the Campbell dynasty that traces back at least 12 generations in the area of Loch Awe, Argyllshire, Scotland.

Archibald married Elizabeth Isabel Stewart, a daughter of John Stewart, 1st Earl of Lennox, on June 22, 1479 at Balveny Castle, Fifeshire, Scotland. Archibald and Elizabeth were known to have 12 children. We descend from their son John and their daughters Elizabeth and Janet. Elizabeth married Lachlan Cattanach MacLean, 11th Clan MacLean Chief (our 15th great grandfather), in about 1496. We descend from their son Euchuinn More MacLean, 12th Clan Chief. Lachlan's first wife Elizabeth died in 1516 and he supposed married her sister Catherine Campbell. Their marriage was not a happy one and was said to be childless. Lachlan decided to get rid of her. In 1519, he had her bound tight with ropes and then marooned her at low tide on a prominent rock (Lady's Rock) in the sea channel between the Island of Lismore and Mull. Needless to say, this did not set well with the Campbell family.

Archibald was made Master of the Royal Household of James IV of Scotland on March 24, 1495. After a crisis of law and order in the west of Scotland, Argyll was made governor of Tarbert Castle and Baillie of Knapdale, and this was followed by an appointment as Royal Lieutenant in the former Lordship of the Isles on April 22, 1500. Argyll eventually rose to the position of Lord High Chancellor of Scotland. His "clan" was rivaled only by Clan Gordon.

The Earls of Argyll were hereditary Sheriffs of Lorn and Argyll. However, a draft record of the 1504 Parliament of Scotland records a move to request Argyll to hold his Sheriff Court at Perth, where the King and his council could more easily oversee proceedings, if the Earl was found at fault. This may have been provoked by Argyll's kinship with Torquil MacLeod and MacLean of Duart. These western chiefs supported the suppressed Lordship of the Isles.

Archibald Campbell, 2nd Earl of Argyll and Lachlan MacLean, 10th Clan MacLean Chief (our 16th great grandfather) both went to fight in the Battle of Flodden. This conflict began when James IV, King of Scots declared war on England to honor the Auld Alliance with France by diverting Henry VIII's English troops from their campaign against the French king Louis XII. Henry VIII had also opened old wounds by claiming to be the overlord of Scotland, which angered the Scots and their King. Many of Scotland's nobles gave their lives in this battle. Among them was Archibald Campbell and Lachlan MacLean. They died in the battle on September 9, 1513, along with King James IV and many others. Archibald is buried at Kilmun Parish Church.

James Hamilton (1475-1529), 1st Earl of Arran (our 16th great grandfather)

James Hamilton, 1st Earl of Arran and 2nd Lord Hamilton (1475 – 1529) was a Scottish nobleman, naval commander and first cousin of James IV of Scotland. James Hamilton was born on April 25, 1475 at Brodick Castle, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the eldest of two sons of James Hamilton, 1st Lord Hamilton, and his wife, Mary Stewart, Countess of Arran. Mary was a daughter of King James II of Scotland and his Queen consort Mary of Guelders, and a sister of King James III of Scotland.

James succeeded to his father's lordship, inheriting his lands when his father died in 1479. In 1489 his first cousin King James IV made him Sheriff of Lanark, a position his father had

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previously held, and a Scottish Privy Counsellor.

On April 28, 1490 James married Elizabeth Home, but in November 1504, he had been granted a divorce from Elizabeth Home on the grounds that she had previously been married to Thomas Hay. Hay had apparently left the country and was thought to be dead when Hamilton married Home, in or before 1490, but in fact he did not die until 1491 or later. This award of divorce was repeated in 1510, suggesting that Hamilton had continued living with her, after 1504, and was held by some to undermine the dissolution of the first marriage as invalid. It is likely that the real motive for divorcing Elizabeth was that she had not born any children, and that Hamilton wanted a legitimate heir; he already had several illegitimate.

Between April and August 1502, Hamilton commanded a naval fleet sent to help King Hans of Denmark, James IV's uncle, defeat a Swedish rebellion. He negotiated James's marriage to Margaret Tudor and was present at the wedding on August 8, 1503. On the same day Lord Hamilton was created Earl of Arran, with the formal grant three days later, "for his nearness of blood" and his services at the time of the marriage. He was appointed Lieutenant General of Scotland and in May 1504 commanded a naval expedition to suppress an uprising in the Western Isles.

In September 1507, James IV sent Hamilton as his ambassador on a diplomatic mission to the court of Louis XII of France. When returning in early 1508, he was briefly detained in the Kingdom of England by Henry VII, who was suspicious of a renewal of the Auld Alliance between Scotland and France.

When Henry VIII of England joined the War of the League of Cambrai by invading France in 1513, Scotland came under pressure to support France against England. Hamilton was given command of the Scottish naval fleet. He first sailed to Ulster and attacked Carrickfergus, the main English stronghold there. The fleet then sailed to France, arriving there in September 1513, too late to be much help as the Scottish army had been defeated at the Battle of Flodden in England on September 9, 1513, with King James IV being killed in battle.

Hamilton was married secondly, on November 1516, to Janet Bethune, daughter of Sir David Betoun of Creich, and widow of Sir Robert Livingstone of Easter Wemyss, who had been killed at the Battle of Flodden. Arran and Janet Bethune had at least four children. We descend from their daughter Janet (Johanna) Hamilton. Hamilton was also known to have five illegitimate children.

During the minority of King James V, Hamilton opposed Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Angus and the English party. He plotted against the Regent John Stewart, 2nd Duke of Albany, and was president of the council of regency during Albany's absence in France from 1517 to 1520. The same year he led an expedition to the border to punish the murderers of the French knight Antoine d'Arces ("De la Bastie").

Hamilton was defeated in an attempt to overpower Angus in the streets of Edinburgh in 1520, during a riot known as "Cleanse the Causeway". He was again a member of the council of regency in 1522 and Lieutenant of the South. He joined the Queen Dowager Margaret Tudor in ousting Albany and proclaiming James V in 1524. In the same year, Hamilton was compelled by Henry VIII of England to readmit Angus to the council. He supported Angus against John Stewart, 3rd Earl of Lennox in 1526 at the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge, but on the escape of

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James V from the Douglases, Hamilton received Bothwell from Angus's forfeited estates.
James Hamilton died on July 21, 1529 in Boness, West Lothian, Scotland.

Sources:

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- Various Wikipedia articles. Most of the narratives are extractions from Wikipedia articles which I have abridged and edited.
- Family Tree on Familysearch.org. By searching on some of the above named individuals on the Family Tree database, you will encounter what I refer to as the “Ancient Scottish Pedigree.” I have had to make some corrections in my own personal database for information in Family Tree that seemed erroneous. I did this by using what I believed was more reliable information found in Wikipedia.
- Information on the above named persons can also be found in The Public Members Trees on Ancestry.com; the Geni.com database; and Wikitree.com database.