



Dabh Ghhlase

The Newsletter of the Clan Douglas Society of North America

VOL 49 ISSUE 1
MARCH 2022

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The Battle of Bannockburn, Day 1



On 23 June, 1314, the first day of the Battle of Bannockburn, two English cavalry formations advanced towards the Scots who were positioned beyond the Bannock Burn. As they crossed the stream, the English formations encountered a body of Scots, among them Robert the Bruce himself. Without warning, Henry de Bohun, the nephew of the Earl of Hereford, raised his lance and charged at the unsuspecting Bruce. Bruce turned to face him and, at the last moment as the two passed side by side, he swiftly pulled his pony aside, dodged the lance and split Bohun's head wide open with his battle axe. The effect of seeing the English knight fall dead at the feet of their King raised the Scots' morale incredibly. The Scots then rushed upon the remaining English who struggled back over the Bannock Burn.

After being chided by his generals for risking his life in single combat, King Robert's only regret was that he had broken the haft of his good axe in the duel.

The second English cavalry force advanced on the flank of the Scots, coming up against the schiltrion commanded by Thomas Randolph but were forced to withdraw in confusion, unable to break the Scottish formation after a heated battle.

Artwork by Andrew Hillhouse; part of his Scottish Wars of Independence collection.
https://www.andrewhillhouseprints.co.uk/photo_13837857.html#photos_id=13837099

NEWSLETTER FOUNDER Gilbert F. Douglas, JR. MD (deceased)

OFFICERS

President

Tim Tyler

2780 Pine Creek Circle
Fullerton, CA 92835
Phone: 714-478-9666
clandouglas@socal.rr.com

Vice-President

Mark Peterson

6505 N. Gentry Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711
Phone: 559-917-0926
mpeterson1019@comcast.net

Secretary

Carol J Morton-Bianchini

PO Box 6974
Portland, OR 97228
(Call/Text) 971-300-8593
DouglasSecretary@comcast.net

Treasurer

Tom Douglas

3101 Raven Croft Terrace
The Villages, FL 32163
Phone: 618-795-3879
tomdouglas46@yahoo.com

Board Member

Chuck Mirabile (Past Pres)

.....
.....

Assistant Vice-President (East)

Harold Edington
11907 E. Alberta St.
Sugar Creek, MO 64054
Phone: 816-529-7764
clan.douglas@yahoo.com

Assistant Vice-President (West)

Cora Peterson
6505 N. Gentry Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711
Phone: 559-709-6588
corampeterson@gmail.com

**HELP CDSNA MOVE FORWARD!
BECOME A REGENT
Or Co-REGENT**

REGENTS

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA - Gilbert F. Douglas III
205-222-7664
ke4nrl@gmail.com

ALASKA --- Regent wanted

ARIZONA
Barbara J. Wise
520-991-9539
bwise320@gmail.com

ARKANSAS
Diana Kay Stell
501-757-2881
DouglasLady@outlook.com

CALIFORNIA (North)
Mark & Cora Peterson
559-439-2947
corampeterson@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA (North) Co-Regents
Bob & Dee Douglas
209-740-7366
rdoug1@comcast.net

CALIFORNIA (South)
Alex Kirkland
714-718-1571
alex.m.kirkland@gmail.com

COLORADO
Chuck Mirabile
720-934-6901
loudbeak@yahoo.com

FLORIDA (North)
Marc Hitchins
mahitchins@msn.com

Jeff Sparks
jtsparks1@gmail.com

FLORIDA (South)
Elizabeth Douglass & Russell Douglass
786-853-1349
edouglass@bellsouth.net

GEORGIA
Dennis Conrad
904-772-8102
sarahsdaddy@comcast.net

GEORGIA
Doug Isbecque
770-813-0789
drcl.bel@gmail.com

HAWAII
James Douglas Putnam
808-554-1944
jamesputnam85@gmail.com

IDAHO - Regent wanted

ILLINOIS (Central)
Timothy Kirkpatrick
253-359-7069
kirkpatrick79@yahoo.com

ILLINOIS - Co-Regent wanted for Chicago area

INDIANA
Jim & Sandy Douglas
765-296-2710
sandyd77@outlook.com

IOWA - Regent wanted for the Quad City area

KANSAS --- Regent wanted for Wichita area

KENTUCKY --- Co-Regents wanted
Elizabeth Martin
931-289-6517
elizabeth.d.martin05@gmail.com

LOUISIANA - Regent/Co-Regent wanted for the Minden area

MARYLAND
James Agnew
571-278-6056
jim.agnew67@gmail.com

MICHIGAN
Mary Clark
734-301-8472
MICDSNA@gmail.com

MINNESOTA (North)
John M. Glendenning, Jr.
218-728-4998
jglen@charter.net

MINNESOTA (South)
Brooke Kenney
612-655-8954
brooke@brotheroke.com

MISSISSIPPI - Regent/Co-Regent wanted

MISSOURI
Harold Edington
816-529-7764
clan.douglas@yahoo.com

MONTANA - Regent wanted

NEVADA (North - Reno area)
Richard & Holly Bromley
775-530-5667
rlbrich@aol.com

NEVADA (South - Las Vegas area) - Regent/Co-Regent wanted

NEW ENGLAND -- Regents wanted for...

CONNECTICUTT, MAINE, VERMONT, MASSACHUSETTS, RHODE ISLAND

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Lance Perry
617-396-7429
lperry86@gmail.com

NEW MEXICO
Eric Vigil
575-749-1275
ericrvigil@yahoo.com

NEW YORK
Daneen Muehlbauer
716-283-5247
clan_douglas.ny51@yahoo.com

NORTH CAROLINA
Samuel Machado
704-718-7775
kilt777@aol.com

OHIO --- See Michigan Regent Info

OKLAHOMA
Jody Blaylock
405-985-9704
jmblylock@yahoo.com

OREGON (North)
Carol Bianchini
971-300-8593
clandouglaspnw@aol.com

OREGON (South) - Regent/Co-Regents wanted

PENNSYLVANIA
Andy Hart
631-944-2023
regentpenna@gmail.com

SOUTH CAROLINA Co-Regent
George W. Douglas MD., FSA-Scot
843-991-5516
douglassgw@bellsouth.net

SOUTH CAROLINA Co-Regent
Thelma Hein
843-780-8473
ladyhein@yahoo.com

SOUTH DAKOTA
Tom Douglass Adams
605-717-0669
tdadams@rushmore.com

SOUTH DAKOTA Co-Regent wanted for Aberdeen area

TENNESSEE
Derek & Brittany Douglas
615-691-0939
derek@douglas-clan.com

TEXAS (North)
Matthew Douglas
214-493-6442
matthew.douglas75@gmail.com

TEXAS (South) --- Regent and/or Co-Regents wanted

UTAH
Trenton Duke
435-459-2580
trentduke95@outlook.com

VIRGINIA Co-Regent
Scott Douglas
571-426-3826
arlyndoug@aol.com

VIRGINIA Co-Regent
Sean Morton
504-875-9540
mountainmanmorton@gmail.com

WASHINGTON Regent
John Blakemore
510-484-3001
2doalameda@gmail.com

WEST VIRGINIA - Regent wanted

WISCONSIN
Lori Garbett
414-256-0806
grabit1112@sbcglobal.net

WYOMING -- Regent wanted for Cheyenne and/or Jackson areas

ADMINISTRATORS

Store Keepers

Joseph Blaylock
8616 Elk Way
Elk Grove, CA 95624
Phone: 916-705-9927
jcbalaylock@yahoo.com

Cora Peterson
6505 N. Gentry Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711
Phone: 559-709-6588
corampeterson@gmail.com

Web Administrator

Web Editors

Mark Peterson (CDSNA Asst VP)
mpeterson1019@comcast.net

Harold Edington (CDSNA Asst VP)
clan.douglas@yahoo.com

Historical Article Editors

Dr. Callum Watson
Battle Coordinator at the Battle of
Bannockburn Visitor Centre just
outside Stirling

Mr. Ian Douglas
Author, Photographer
Whitchurch, Hampton, UK

Newsletter Editor

Harold Edington
11907 E. Alberta St.
Sugar Creek, MO 64054
Phone: 816 529 7764
clan.douglas@yahoo.com

REGENTS (cont.)

If there is a local Scottish
or Celtic event in your
area that invites clans but
has no Clan Douglas
representative, consider
becoming our Douglas
Regent for that event.

Regions needing a Regent
are highlighted in **yellow**.

Even if you are available to
represent CDSNA at just one
festival a year, that is so
much better than no
Douglas representation at
all.

INTERNATIONAL REGENTS

CANADA – Regents wanted

*** BRITISH COLUMBIA --- Vacant

*** NOVA SCOTIA --- Vacant

*** ONTARIO --- Vacant

AUSTRALIA - Contact the
Clan Douglas Society of Australia
Andrew Douglas
04- 5816-7652
douglasab70@gmail.com

BENELUX
(Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg)
Murray Frick
470-232-8060
murrayfrick@att.net

SPAIN
Leopoldo Fernández de Angulo y Gómez
de las Cortinas
Phone: 34 954 277 365
Cell: 34 639 019 632
regenteclandouglas@gmail.com

**Looking for a different kind of
gift for a family member?**

**Consider giving the gift
of an annual membership (\$20) to
The Clan Douglas Society.**

Another Douglas

is a member in Good Standing in the
**Clan Douglas Society
of North America**
clandougllassociety.org

member # **5000**
expires **01/2023**
MM/YYYY

**SEE PAGE 59
for a Member
Application Form**

**A DOUGLAS!
A DOUGLAS!
A DOUGLAS!**

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

- Annual Membership: \$20.00
- Three-Year Membership: \$55.00
- Life Membership (under 60 years of age): \$300.00
- Life Membership (over 60 years of age): \$200.00

President's Comments ...

Happy New Year to All,

I realize the opening greeting is coming in March but this is my first opportunity to greet you with it. My hope is that this will indeed be a **Happy** new year for you – for all of us. If I am being honest, I have to admit I am more than a little bummed out at this time. So many Scottish events here in Southern California have been cancelled in the past year and a half to two years that I feel as if it has been years since I last attended anything Scottish. I also have to admit to myself that I have attended Scottish events outside of California in the past year. But I want very much for the SoCal Scottish events to return; preferably without any restrictions placed on venues or on the attendees.

I note (with a bit of jealousy) that Scottish events are happening across the country in 2022. Florida has had a couple of festivals already (that I know of) and many more games and festivals reportedly will be held in March, April, and May in many parts of the US. I am not aware of any comprehensive listing of these future events; I think many events are still a bit hesitant to make a solid commitment.

One event worth noting is the new festival happening the weekend of March 25, 26 & 27. The **New Mexico Renaissance Celtic Festival** will be held at the Wildlife Nature Park & Zoo in Edgewood, New Mexico. This festival has been birthed through the efforts of our own CDSNA Regent Eric Vigil. Maybe Mary and I will be able to attend this event; it is only 11 hours away. But hey, when you need a festival, you go to where they are.

We aren't making any promises, Eric, but don't be surprised if you see us there.

I imagine a number of you know of Scottish festivals happening soon or perhaps later this year in your local area. Help your local games by spreading the word in the community. Attend the event and take along a few friends and family members to enjoy it with you. If the event has a Clan Douglas tent, go support the Regent with your attendance. If you take pictures or have some great memories to share from the event, share them online with other Douglas members in the many Douglas-themed Facebook groups. If your local event does not have a Douglas tent, consider becoming a CDSNA Regent even if you only represent CDSNA at that one event each year. Newsletter Editor Harold Edington has done a great job keeping up with the Regent vacancies by highlighting Regent openings in yellow on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter. If you live in one of the regions without a Regent, you have an open opportunity and an invitation.

When compared to many other clans, CDSNA has a significantly large membership. Our 500+ members may look impressive but when you consider how many members may have been missed in those areas without a Clan Douglas representative, it becomes clear that CDSNA has the potential for membership to easily reach 1000 members.

And what about those lapsed CDSNA members? There are literally thousands of former members we could reach out to and invite back to the CDSNA family. I am aware of the work of our CDSNA Secretary Carol Morton-Bianchini. Carol has been contacting "archive" members and inviting them to return to CDSNA – with some success. Some of you reading this may know of former CDSNA members in your family. I encourage you to appeal to them to rejoin Clan Douglas. Regardless, make it a point to participate in CDSNA and Scottish activities since doing so may reignite the thrill they once had for such things.

Our Clan Douglas Society has so much potential but it will take more of us than we now have working to realize the full potential. In this new year, be one who is willing to step up and take on a new challenge.

These next few years leading up to our 2024 CDSNA 50th Anniversary Celebration & GMM at Grandfather Mountain can be an incredible time of growth for CDSNA. With the help of all of us, we can move Clan Douglas FORWARD.

Yours aye,

Tim Tyler
CDSNA President



Vice-President's Comments ...

Hello Clan Douglas members,

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and I am keeping my fingers crossed we will all be able to start attending more of the Scottish Games this year. I never knew how much I would miss attending the games and seeing many of our extended family here at Clan Douglas. As always, we are in need of Regents to help represent the Clan Douglas Society at events where clans are included but there is not currently a Douglas representative.

We have started to discuss within the board that in 2024, the Clan Douglas Society will be celebrating its 50 Year Anniversary. That is a remarkable accomplishment and a testament to those that started Clan Douglas in 1975 almost 50 years ago. We will be holding our General Members Meeting (GMM) during this 50 year celebration, which we will hold at the Grandfather Mountain Games in North Carolina; this is where the Clan Douglas Society was born. This event will be a milestone celebration and accomplishment for the Society.

We also have plans this year in June to hold a GMM during the Portland Highland Games and our Secretary Carol Morton-Bianchini has put a lot of effort into planning this event. Anyone that can attend should do so. We appreciate all that Carol is doing for Clan Douglas – and she is doing a great job as our new Secretary.

I hope everyone stays safe and comes out to support our Regents at the upcoming games throughout the country and abroad. And for those of you who have not renewed your membership, please do not forget to do so.

If **YOU** are interested in being a Regent, please reach out to me, to our Assistant VP of the East, Harold Edington, or to our Assistant of the West, Cora M Peterson. We need members to step up and join us in representing and expanding our Clan Douglas Society. It is the Regents that have made Clan Douglas what it is and, to continue to be a Society in this day and age, we need volunteers to help.

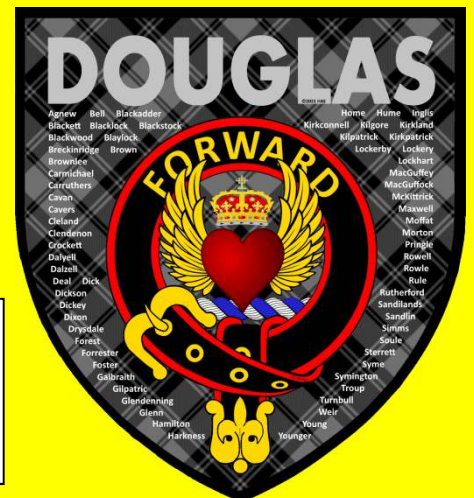
Best Regards
 Mark A. Peterson
 CDSNA Vice President
 Email: mark.peterson@ai-engines.com

REGENTS & CO-REGENTS WANTED

CDSNA is seeking members willing to serve as Regents & Co-Regents in provinces and states currently un-represented or under-represented by CDSNA. IF YOU ARE A MEMBER of CDSNA willing to share your enthusiasm about Clan Douglas and available to serve as a representative in any of the following states and provinces, contact CDSNA VP Mark Peterson, CDSNA Asst VP Harold Edington, CDSNA Asst VP Cora Peterson, or your current Regent.

See the REGENTS pages (pages 2 & 3) to view the highlighted areas of need.

HELP CDSNA MOVE
FORWARD!
 BECOME A REGENT
 Or Co-REGENT



Secretary's Comments ...



Clan Douglas Society of North America

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 8:00 am PST/11:00 am EST

First Quarter 2022 CDSNA MEETING AGENDA

1. **Meeting called to order** by Mark Peterson, Vice President.

2. **Secretary calls roll.** Chuck Mirabile, Past President, Mark Peterson, Vice President, Tom Douglas, Treasurer, and Carol Morton-Bianchini, Secretary were present. Tim Tyler, President, was absent. A quorum was established.

Guests attending: Joe Blaylock, Storekeeper, Cora Peterson, Asst. Vice President West and Asst. Storekeeper, and Harold Edington, Editor and Asst. Vice President East.

3. Officers Reports:

- a. President's report – None.
- b. Vice President's report – Discussed inviting international guests to 50th Anniversary.
- c. Treasurer's report – Checking \$18,206.07 and Investment reported on January 20, 2022 as \$145,805.82. Today, as of 1/22/2022, Investment is \$134,347.54. A motion was made for the Treasurer, Tom Douglas, to contact Morgan Stanley to request their recommendations on how to diversify our investment account to lower the risk and preserve funds. Once a recommendation is made by Morgan Stanley, the Board will vote via email.
- d. Secretary's report – 20 new members, 19 renewals, 3 life members, and \$370 in store goods.
- e. Storekeeper's report – Purchased an inventory system support agreement for \$90 as a donation. Allows software support for inventory system if troubles develop, which they did when Windows 10 was reinstalled on the system that controls our inventory.
- f. A new black t-shirt will be offered soon with Andrew Hillhouse's design and the CDSNA logo. More to come as it develops.
- g. Asst. Storekeeper & Asst. Vice President West's Report – Not much activity due to event cancellations from Covid.
- h. Editor & Asst. Vice President East's Report – Appreciation to Colum Watson for generously allowing CDSNA to use his writings in the Dubh Ghlasé Newsletter. A thank you should be extended to Colum (t-shirt, thank you via social media, etc) for his generosity. Andrew Hillhouse's wife, Vicky, donated the use of Andrew's artwork for the planned new black t-shirt. Harold sent Vicky a thank you. Former Regent Don Dickey will be asked to send Harold his store goods inventory so that it can be sold or transferred to the new Regent. Search ongoing for Regents throughout the U.S.

4. Old Business:

- a. Meeting Minutes approved from October 16, 2022.
- b. New Regent, Lance Perry, for NH has not responded yet to Harold. Regent, Marc Hitchins will be retiring and has selected two Co-Regents as his replacement – Mark Hill and Jeff Sparks. The turnover of inventory will be next month. Any information for new Regents also needs to be sent to Joe Blaylock and Cora Peterson, Storekeepers.
- c. 2022 General Members Meeting – PHGA will make a determination in early March 2022 as to whether the Portland Highland Games will be held for 2022. Board will decide at the March 2022 meeting on 2022 GMM.
- d. Douglas Archives Online Library donation. Tom will make a donation via the Douglas Archives website of \$250. Harold to send Tom the link for the donation. A motion was made for Tom Douglas, Treasurer, to request a \$1000 credit card in the name of CDSNA to pay for donations, deposits, etc.
- e. Three (3) \$250 scholarship recipients for 2021 were Kendall Anne Blausler, Elk Grove, CA, Pamela Boyd Brownlee, Mandeville, LA, Gillian Alice Brownlee, Mandeville, LA.

5. New Business:

- a. Fillable forms are being created for Regents. We have a fillable membership application to be uploaded to website at turnover of the website logins and underway are a Registration Form and One Stop Report. Per Cora Peterson, Asst. Storekeeper, A simple way to keep track of your sales of memberships and store goods is to record them in a receipt book and have them complete a membership application. For members, whether renewing or new memberships, we require their name, email and phone number at a minimum to complete the membership transaction.

- b. Social media – Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, and Website. Please send usernames and passwords to Secretary so we can accomplish housekeeping and set up a unified social media posting for current information on highland games, events, membership info, and to highlight Regents and Members. Thank you!
- c. Support Harold Edington in preparing the Dubh Ghlasé Newsletter. Please forward your information to him in a timely fashion.
- d. No change on paper copies of the Dubh Ghlasé Newsletter as the cost is \$6000 to print them in color and produce the old newsletter. Members/Regents can email them to any Office Depot and request they print a paper copy.
- e. A motion was made and approved for the addition of the following Sept/Allied Family names: Caddie/Caddy/Cadie/Cady, Cadden/Caddin, Caggie/Caggy, Cauldlaw/Coldlaw, Gladstanes/Gladstain/Gladstone, and Kidston. Attached is Harold Edington's research into each Sept name. [The new names will be introduced through Newsletter articles.]
- f. A motion was made and approved to donate \$250 (£185) to the Douglas Archives to support William Douglas in his maintenance and expansion of the largest repository of Douglas information on the internet.
- g. Games Kit including a new banner in development to be passed on to next regent along with a Checklist of the Top Thing a Regent does to be Successful! Editor with Board assistance to create a one page Helpful Hints Checklist before next meeting for review.
- h. Scholarship applications are accepted until May 1, 2022. Editor to place advertisement in Dubh Ghlasé Newsletter and send out to email to Regents so they can offer the scholarship contest to the members in their area;
- i. Awards were discussed to be given out to members who had served as Regents or on the Board. Harold proposed we offer a medal along with the award so the members have something to wear at events.
- j. Next Meeting date set for March 19, 2022 at 9 am PST / 12 pm EST to discuss CDSNA 2022 GMM.

A Douglas!

A Douglas!

A Douglas!

Cead mile failte to our new members this quarter. ***Welcome to the Clan Douglas Society.***

- 4295 Douglas, Edwin H.; Shinglehouse, PA
 4296 Ware, Eric & Frankie; Atlanta, GA
 4297 Hunnewell, Sylvia; Arnold, MO
 4299 Crampton, Dave & Heather; Savannah, GA
 4300 Clausen, Michelle; Rex, GA
 4301 Shipley, Teresa Douglas; Titusville, LA
 4302 Mattingly, Kimberly Brown; Athens, GA
 4303 Davis, Steve; Abita Springs, LA
 4304 Brown, Don;
 4305 Clauss, Adam Michael; Huntsville, AL
 4306 Douglas, Allyson; Oviedo, FL



ADDRESS CHANGES:

A reminder that all phone, email or address changes for members or others receiving Dubh Ghlasé should be made to the clan secretary:

DouglasSecretary@comcast.net

Also, the Membership Application Form included with this issue has been modified to use for contact info changes. Forms can be scanned/emailed to the Secretary or snail mailed to the address on page 2.

Membership applications and dues payments should also be sent to the Secretary.

The Editor's Ramblings ...

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Transfixed in thought, I wondered how I was going to find the new Regent's phone number when the one listed in the CDSNA roster gave me a **"The number you have called..."** message. No wonder the several attempts at texting never worked. Then it came to me: send an email. And with that revelation, the issue was solved within 12 hours.

It would have been far simpler had the correct number been in the roster but I realized that in the last two years of minimal communications for all of us a number of Life Changes may have occurred for many of us and we never thought to send updates to the CDSNA Secretary. Fortunately, the email address listed was correct. I find it amazing that two simple pieces of contact info – phone and email -- can be so important to an organization. And it is amazing how important those two items of info are for modern communications.

Communication is such an overlooked and assumed item in our lives – until it is not available. Admit it – how many of you have tried to call a spouse, a child, or a family member and no one picked up? Were you startled? Scared? Angry? A bit of all three and possibly more? We take the ability to communicate for granted.

As a Society, our main methods of communication are this newsletter and the many internet social media platforms created by a few of our members. While these methods of communicating are useful, they are useful for mass communication but not personal communication.

So... If you have changed any of your contact information in the last two years, please send an update message to our Clan Secretary. After all... **The spice must flow.** [Yes, that is a Dune reference. If you have seen the new Dune movie, send me a review via my email. I missed it.]

PARTICIPATION

Looking through the Officer's Comments, I see a common thread this quarter: **Participation**. Both Tim and Mark mention the need for Regents in areas without a Douglas representative and more participation from members in those areas with a Douglas representative. And Carol is reaching out to those whose membership has lapsed to invite them to return to the Clan Douglas family and participate in any way they can.

If you looked at pages 2 and 3 on your way here, you may have noted the 21 highlighted states, provinces, regions that could use a Douglas Regent. Those are, in fact, the **KNOWN** areas of need. You may have a local festival without a Douglas tent. If you do, this may be a wonderful opportunity for you to make a positive difference for CDSNA.

If JFK were a member of CDSNA today, he might say, "Ask not what your Scottish clan can do for you; ask what you can do for your Scottish clan." There is no actual need to ask; between the Officer's comments and the yellow highlights on pages 2 & 3 of this newsletter, a number of opportunities exist.

You may not have time to serve as a Regent, but do you have a special skill or talent that could be of benefit to CDSNA? Do you have time to help your local Regent at your local festival? If so, let your local Regent know you want to help and talk about how you can. Or contact one of the Officers and share your thoughts, skills, talents. CDSNA is always looking for ways to improve the organization for all of you.

A FEW NOTES ABOUT THIS ISSUE?

- A big THANK YOU to Dr. Callum Watson for (once again) sharing his Scottish History articles with us. Comments from membership are very positive regarding the articles. This quarter's article from Dr. Watson is a two-part article. Part two will be published in the JUNE 2022 issue of **Dabh Ghlaese**.
- This issue of Dubh Ghlaese you will see the CDSNA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION form and the CDSNA SERVICE AWARDS NOMINATION form for the last until the December newsletter. These forms are for 2022 nominations. **The deadline for BOTH is MAY 1, 2022.** See the forms at the end of the newsletter for more information or use.
- Several new sept/allied family names have recently been approved for recognition on our Douglas banner. Over the next few issues, information for these new names will be published.
- The 2022 GMM (more info on page 31-32) is up in the air. The executive council for the Portland, OR Highland Games will convene sometime in March to decide if they are willing to declare the pandemic restrictions will be set aside for the games to happen. But a new wrinkle popped up in February with the passing of the gentleman who has long organized the clans on clan row. Losing a major coordinator is a serious blow. When CDSNA knows the decision, membership will be informed. Keep your eyes on the many social media outlets for CDSNA. Quite possibly, an announcement will also be sent via email to membership.
- Have you dreamed about having your very own coat of arms? If you have, jump to page 25 to see if dreams come true.

2022 can be a GREAT YEAR for CDSNA but (as I said last issue) we are going to need all hands on board. It will take all of us to make a difference.

Regards to all... and enjoy this issue,

Harold

'They glory in their wagons and their horses':

The Battle of Bannockburn from an English perspective, Part 1

On June 23, 1314 the Battle of Bannockburn, the most remarkable military accomplishment of King Robert I of Scotland's twenty-three year reign, began. The battle saw an English army some two or three times the size of Robert's defeated, King Edward II of England forced to flee more than sixty miles to Dunbar, and the deaths of perhaps several thousand of his men, most of them trampled and drowned in the mud and the water of the Bannock Burn itself as they sought desperately to escape. We have looked at the battle on several occasions here on the blog, including close analyses of a curious event explored in our most detailed Scottish account of the battle and a speech attributed to King Robert on the big day. This year however, we thought we would take a slightly different perspective and consider the battle from an English point of view. This will not mean simply examining the individual English sources we have for the battle (although we will do this too), but more pertinently (and perhaps most interestingly) we will try to reconstruct what was going through the minds of the English who were present in 1314 and understand why they took the decisions that led them to defeat and disaster. Was the English defeat at Bannockburn really the result of high-handed arrogance or Edward's mismanagement? Would another English war leader - perhaps Edward's much-vaunted father Edward I or his formidable son Edward III - have fared any better? Two new blog post articles will offer an answer to these questions.

'Thar wes nocht/In warld a king mycht him withstand': English fortunes in Scotland, 1306-1314



A contemporary illustration of King Edward II of England, from the *Chronicle of England* (BL Royal MS 20 A ii, f. 10r). A much-criticised king, Edward II's failures as a war leader are frequently blamed for the English military disaster at Bannockburn. However, this rests on a grossly simplistic assessment of the events of 1314.

Image source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Edward_II_-_British_Library_Royal_20_A_ii_f10_\(detail\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Edward_II_-_British_Library_Royal_20_A_ii_f10_(detail).jpg)

There can be no doubt that England was - as a larger and more populous kingdom than Scotland - considerably better resourced than its northern neighbour. Both in terms of manpower and in terms of wealth, England could naturally far outstrip Scotland, and so in a purely material sense it had a seemingly overwhelming advantage in any conflict between the two. This did not simply mean that the English crown could outspend the Scottish crown and field much larger armies, it could more easily absorb a military setback - even one as large in scale as Bannockburn. Thus, while for the English one resounding breakthrough (a major battlefield victory such as that at Dunbar in 1296 or Falkirk in 1298) could provide them with an opportunity to dramatically shift the momentum of the conflict in their favour, the Scots were forced to rely on a more long-term approach - and ideally on external support - to make progress against their opponents. Yet, the beginning of Robert I's reign - through a combination of fortune and careful planning - coincided with a period of particular instability for the English crown. When he struck - quite literally - against the English settlement of Scotland in 1306, the English crown and its nascent administration in Scotland were about as vulnerable as could be hoped for, a fact that Bruce surely hoped to exploit. King Edward I was in increasingly poor shape by 1306, and his age alone (he would be 67 in June) signaled that he had more years behind him than ahead of him. On balance, he had been a remarkable successful king, but like any aging monarch the approach of his death was revealing the weak points in his legacy. Scotland was perhaps the most acute of these weak spots. For almost a decade Edward had been pouring a great deal of effort into cementing his control over Scotland, and in doing so he had placed enormous strain on English royal finances and on the English political

community more generally. The strain had almost been too much as early as 1302, and while credit is due to King Edward for financing and raising a formidable army to serve in Scotland from 1303-4 (a move that rescued the entire war effort), it must also be acknowledged that his freedom to do so was in part thanks to events quick beyond his control - most notably the French defeat at Courtrai in 1302 and the subsequent collapse of French diplomatic support for the Scots. By reigniting a war that Edward's subjects and creditors had by now at least twice been assured was decisively ended, Bruce was also burdening not just the English crown but also an increasingly war weary English community.

Edward I's death in July 1307 saved him from dealing with the ramifications of this - and rescued Bruce from finding out whether the aging king could pull off a repeat of the campaign of 1303-4 - instead placing his son Edward II in the unenviable position of having to wage (and win) an unpopular war while simultaneously balancing the English crown's increasingly crooked books. Scholars and writers historians alike have accused Edward II of being 'disinterested' in Scottish affairs (I have been just as guilty as anyone of this), and while that may be trivially true it is surely understandable why the incoming king might have felt inclined to address himself to domestic issues before tackling matters of foreign policy. The scope of the crown's financial woes is illustrated by Edward's early dealings with the Frescobaldi, a family of Italian bankers who loaned significant sums of money to the English royal administration until 1311. In 1309, Edward granted Amerigo dei Frescobaldi six manors for the nominal rent of a penny. The following year, he issued orders that Frescobaldi should be preferred for ecclesiastical offices in England. The king was, in effect, mortgaging long-term royal income and crown rights in return for short-term cash injections. This might be interpreted merely as mismanagement

by King Edward, but this is hardly the behaviour of a monarch (capable or otherwise) who was finding it easy to secure lines of credit. Edward was certainly guilty of mishandling the distribution of patronage among his subjects - the favouritism he showed to Piers Gaveston in the years before Bannockburn and his preference for the Despensers afterwards was one of the cardinal sins for a medieval monarch - but the blame for Edward's desperate financial situation surely belongs to his father. As early as 31st January 1308, before the new king's governing style can have been assessed, the Bishop of Durham and the earls of Lincoln, Surrey, Pembroke, and Hereford met at Boulogne (where Edward's marriage to Isabella of France had taken place just one week earlier) and agreed to a series of general and moderate proposals for reform that would only grow more specific and frantic as the reign progressed.

Edward II's preoccupation with domestic matters may have been necessary (even though his efforts were ineffective and often counterproductive), but it also gave Bruce time to focus on his domestic affairs. In particular, it allowed him eliminate the 'native' resistance to his rule. This largely took the form of Scots with links to the Balliol-Comyn bloc that had formed in support of John Balliol's kingship in the years since 1290 (initially supporting the prospect of a Balliol monarchy, briefly upholding his rule, and since 1296 seeking its restoration).

Following the death of Edward I in the summer of 1307, Bruce moved north and spent the autumn, winter and spring systematically terrorising the Highland communities into submission. Victories over John Comyn, earl of Buchan, at Inverurie and John Maccougall, lord of Argyll, at the Pass of Brander in 1308 robbed the Balliol Scots of effective leadership and blunted internal opposition to Bruce's kingship. By March 1309 King Robert felt confident enough to hold his first parliament at St Andrews and around this time had begun to make speculative grants to his surviving brother Edward and his nephew Thomas Randolph of lordships in the south-west, apparently designed to encourage them to expand Bruce authority into that region. On 16th June 1310 Sir Alexander Abernethy, Sir Ingram d'Umfraville, John Maccougall and his father Alexander attended a council at Westminster at which they insisted that the English were on the brink of losing 'both the land [of Scotland] and



The oddly unassuming tomb of King Edward I of England at Westminster Abbey. The later Latin inscription *Edwardus Primus Scottorum Malleus hic est, 1308. Pactum Serva* ('Here is Edward I, Hammer of the Scots, 1308. Keep the Vow') demonstrates how firmly his exploits in Scotland influenced his posthumous reputation. Yet, the conquest of Scotland remained Edward's most outstanding failure at the time of his death, and the domestic difficulties he bequeathed his son led to major problems for the English royal administration, issues that would make the war in Scotland practically unwinnable.

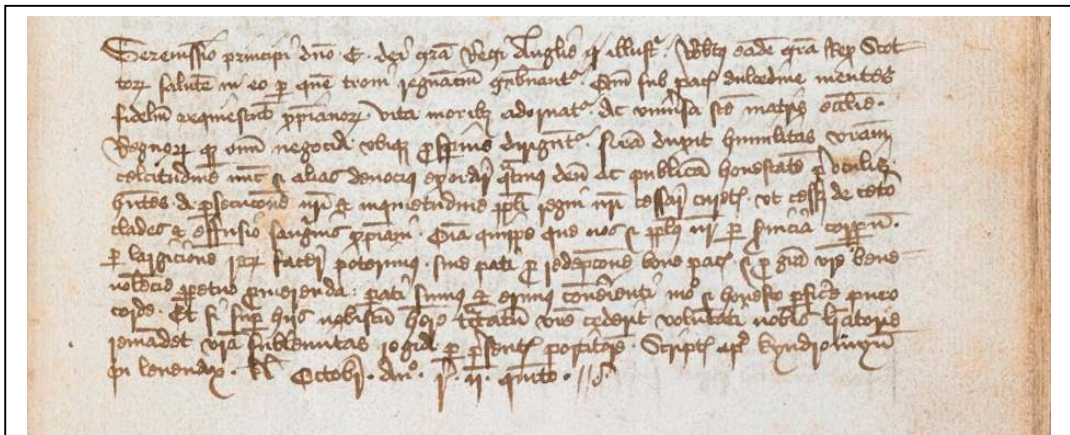
Image source: <https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/royals/edward-i-and-eleanor-of-castile>



The ruins of St Andrews Cathedral seen from the top of St Rule's Tower. Bruce's summoning of a parliament here in early 1309 was a significant indication of his growing confidence and undoubtedly contributed to Edward II's decision to launch a campaign into Scotland the following year.

Image source: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/st-andrews-cathedral/>

those who still remain faithful...by reason of [Edward's] default and laxity'. While this accusation may have stung, at this point in the reign the prospect of intervention in Scotland provided Edward II with a welcome opportunity to escape his growing domestic pressures. In March of that year, he had been compelled to appoint a council of twenty-one noblemen - known as the lords ordainer and including three of the four earls who had been party to the Boulogne agreement in 1308 - with a remit to propose potentially far-reaching reforms to the governance of the realm. By launching a campaign into Scotland - and taking his hugely controversial favourite Gaveston with him - Edward could



The surviving copy of the letter from Bruce to Edward II, preserved in a fifteenth-century dossier of English royal correspondence now housed at the British Library. The letter provides a fascinating insight into the Bruce government's attitudes and priorities at this point in the struggle, and it also serves to highlight the impotence of the English royal administration to harm King Robert during the 1310-11 campaign.

Image source: <https://www.medieval.eu/newfound-letter-of-robert-the-bruce-from-1310/>



The illuminated E(dwardvs) from the charter, dated 7th August, creating Piers Gaveston earl of Cornwall in 1307. Edward's arms are depicted in the upper part of the 'E', while those of Gaveston (impaled with his wife Margaret de Clare) are present in the lower part. Gaveston was a hugely disruptive figure among the English political community in the early years of Edward's reign, and the circumstances surrounding his death in 1312 presented a major challenge to the king's authority. However, the ruthlessness with which the king's most staunch opponents dealt with Gaveston ultimately galvanised a number of equivocal nobles against further political unrest.

Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaveston_Cornwall_charter.jpg

distance himself from the on-going criticism of his rule. Furthermore, if he could encounter and defeat Bruce in battle and thus make a genuine breakthrough in the war, he might silence some of this criticism altogether.

The English army was ordered to muster at Berwick by 8th September. With most of the leading English magnates engaged in drawing up the Ordinances, it was a significantly reduced army by England's usual standards, with the ordainers sending only the minimum number of troops they were legally obliged to provide. Nevertheless, it probably still outnumbered anything Bruce might have raised to confront it. King Edward set off from Berwick in September with the intention of pursuing the same crude strategy favoured by his son Edward III and - the campaign of 1303-4 notwithstanding - by his father as well. He would advance through Scotland in force, hoping to find and engage the Scottish army with the intention of scoring a decisive victory that would leave the Scots unable to field another sizeable fighting force for years to come. In the meantime, the English army could restock and resupply the string of garrisons across southern Scotland, consolidating their grip on this area. For a cautious and patient tactician like Bruce however, the response to this strategy was both simple and easy. Bruce would withdraw beyond the reach of the advancing English army and wait for King Edward to return home, at which point he could resume terrorising the remaining garrisons into submission. On 1st October, King Robert dispatched a letter to his English counterpart, oozing with saccharine charm and 'the sweetness of peace', in which he insisted that: *'...everything which we and our people will be able to do by bodily service, or to bear by giving freely of our goods, for the redemption of good peace and for the perpetually flourishing grace of your good will, we are prepared and shall be prepared to accomplish in a suitable and honest way, with a pure heart.'*

Yet the fact that this missive was produced at Kilmun in Lennox, a region that Edward's heavy and slow-moving army would struggle to pass through - let alone to effectively search for Bruce in - illustrates that for all his protestations of watching to discuss peace terms, Bruce had no intention of giving Edward the battle he hoped for. By November, Edward had returned to Berwick, having progressed no further north than Linlithgow, and Bruce responded to this withdrawal with a savage and destructive raid into the Lothians. Edward remained at Berwick until July, even sending Gaveston to resupply Dundee and Perth during the winter, but ultimately he was forced to return south having had virtually no impact on events in Scotland. To add insult to injury - more or less literally - in August a draft copy of the Ordinances was finally presented to the king, compromising no fewer than forty-one clauses regulating almost every aspect of government. The humiliation of 1310-11 would metastasise in Edward and have a significant impact on the events of 1314.



The 'Valence Casket', a highly decorative object believed to have belonged to Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke. A long-standing royal servant and brother-in-law of the John Comyn, lord of Badenoch, who Bruce had killed in 1306, Pembroke had served as Guardian of Scotland for a brief period from 1306-7, resigning only after suffering an embarrassing reversal at the Battle of Loudoun Hill. He was a moderating force during the fractious early years of Edward II's reign, and became a firm supporter of the crown once again following the demise of Gaveston in 1312.

Image source: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O126749/the-valence-casket-casket-unknown/>

Now freed from the immediate threat of direct royal intervention, Bruce resumed his campaign of seizing stronghold and slighting them in order to prevent the English from holding them against him again. In December 1312 he unsuccessfully assaulted Berwick, then captured Perth in January 1313, Dumfries in February, and by June had even occupied the Isle of Man. In the meantime, Edward's attention was consumed by yet another crisis. Gaveston's exile had been one of the key demands put forward by the lords ordainer, but by January 1312 Edward had conspired to bring Gaveston back into England. On 13th March, Robert Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury and one of the leading ordainers, summoned a council at St Paul's, at which it was agreed that Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, and John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, should be sent north to arrest Gaveston. There is some evidence that at this point Edward made overtures to Bruce, asking him to give Gaveston shelter in return for concessions in the direction of an Anglo-Scottish peace. The *Vita Edwardi Secundi* (*Life of Edward II*, written by an anonymous English courtier in the 1320s) for concessions in the direction of an Anglo-Scottish peace. The *Vita Edwardi Secundi* (*Life of Edward II*, written by an anonymous English courtier in the 1320s) for instance makes this claim, while the contemporary *Annales Londonienses* state that two border barons - Sir Robert Clifford and Sir Henry Percy - were instructed by the lords ordainer to intercept any communications passing between King Edward and King Robert.

Pembroke and Surrey besieged Gaveston at Scarborough, and he surrendered himself into their custody on 19th May. Following a final meeting with the king at York, Gaveston was escorted south by Pembroke. However, on 10th June, Gaveston was seized by Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who was one of the more radical ordainers, and on 19th he was summarily executed following a hasty judgment by Warwick, the king's cousin Thomas, earl of Lancaster, Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, and Edmund Fitzalan, earl of Arundel. This was both a shockingly violent rebuke to English royal authority and a deeply personal loss for the king.

Ironically, the crisis over Gaveston ultimately served to strengthen Edward's position ahead of Bannockburn. For a start, the underhand actions of Warwick, Lancaster et al. brought Pembroke and Surrey firmly back into the royal fold. Pembroke in particular seems to have felt personally affronted by Warwick's decision to take Gaveston from his custody (after Pembroke had guaranteed his safety) and he would remain a committed 'royalist' until his death in 1324. Furthermore, the extrajudicial manner in which Gaveston was treated enabled the king to look beyond his own borders for support, and he appealed to both King Philippe IV of France and the pope to condemn the actions of his subjects. Edward's position was bolstered further still by the birth of a son and heir - the future Edward III - on 13th November, and on 20th December, after a long period of strenuous negotiation, the king agreed to pardon those implicated in Gaveston's death in return for their formal submissions. Archbishop Winchelsey died in May 1313 and Edward filled the vacant see with his ally, Walter Reynolds. In June Edward, his queen Isabella, and a delegation including the newly-reconciled earl of Pembroke travelled to Paris for an unusually productive diplomatic meeting with Philippe IV, and the pope too lent his weight to Edward's case against his fractious magnates. On 14th October 1313, Edward received the formal submissions of Lancaster, Warwick, Hereford, and Arundel, and two days later - a delay surely meant to signify the king's superiority - the promised pardons were forthcoming. Thus, while the situation in Scotland remained dire, and the news of Bruce's piecemeal recovery of several major settlements cannot have been well-received, in the months that preceded Bannockburn Edward might well have supposed that his domestic opponents had been suitably cowed and he was now in a strong position to attempt to decisively tackle his Scottish enemies again.

The Road to Defeat: English preparations for Bannockburn

At some point in October or November 1313, Patrick Dunbar, earl of March, and his adherent Sir Adam Gordon, claiming to be speaking on behalf of 'the people of Scotland', and most certainly representing the beleaguered majority of Scots in Berwickshire and Roxburghshire, presented a petition to Edward II complaining of the daily threat they were under from the Bruce Scots and pleading for direct intervention to protect them from further depredations. The supplicants painted a vivid but grim picture of their miseries. Since Edward's ill-fated expedition of 1310-11, they claimed to have been blackmailed out of £20,000 pounds by the Bruce Scots and the most recent truce they had purchased - due to expire at Martinmas (11th November) - had cost them 1,000 qrs. of corn. The Scots in the south-east were trapped it seems between a rock and a hard place, with the Berwick garrison pilfering their goods and livestock as often as the Bruce Scots, punishing them for independently making truces with King Robert, and mistreating them when they sought redress. In one particularly unpleasant case, the Berwick garrison - led by Thomas of



Roxburgh Castle, situated on an island in the River Teviot. It was here in February that the Scottish offensive of 1314 began, although James Douglas - the young warlord who seized Roxburgh - may have acted without the approval or even the awareness of the Scottish royal administration.

Image source: http://www.castlesfortsbattles.co.uk/lothian_borders/roxburgh_castle.html

Pencaitland - were accused of kidnapping a group of locals and ransoming some back to their loved ones while 'those who had nothing were killed and thrown into the Water of Tweed'. An attempt to seek redress from the king's chamberlain John Weston had resulted in nothing more than Gordon's wrongful imprisonment, and so March and Gordon now begged Edward to come north and deliver justice himself. On 28th November, Edward responded to this petition, promising to lead an army north to Berwick-upon-Tweed by the following summer. On 23rd December, writs of summons were issued to eight earls (including Lancaster and Warwick) and eighty-seven barons, requiring them to present themselves and their military followings at Berwick by 10th June 1314. The countdown to Bannockburn had now begun.

Edward's hopes for a better outcome in 1314 than he had achieved in 1310 may have been raised further by news that King Robert's health had taken a downturn in late 1313. Bruce had suffered a serious bout of ill-health in the winter of 1307-8 - a mysterious 'seknes' that the late fourteenth-century Scottish poet John Barbour attributed to the cold and wet conditions he had been campaigning in - and for a time it was feared among his supporters that he would not survive. Although he pulled through, this may have been an intermittent ailment that haunted Bruce for the remainder of his life. Certainly, he is described in similar terms in 1307-8 and during his final illness from c.1327-9, suggesting that it was the same sickness that ultimately killed him. We have no direct confirmation of the king's ill-health in the build-up to Bannockburn, but our first hint that something may have been up comes with the creation of his younger brother Edward Bruce as earl of Carrick at or shortly before an assembly that met at Dundee in October 1313. With King Robert's wife Elizabeth and daughter Marjory captive in England since 1306, Edward Bruce was heir presumptive, yet the most lavish patronage he had hitherto received was a speculative grant of the lordship of Galloway (one of the great provincial lordships and a former Balliol holding) in or around 1309. His sudden elevation to the aristocracy, and moreover the grant of their mother's earldom (which would afterwards become associated with the heir to the throne), can certainly be interpreted as a formal acknowledgement of his status as heir, perhaps as a way to allay concerns about the king's health. Furthermore, the earliest surviving royal act in 1314 - dated 16th February - places him at Scotlandwell, near Kinross, a site associated with curative miracles. Here, he granted lands and revenue to Inchaffray Abbey in Perthshire 'for salvation of his soul and for the salvation of the souls of his predecessors and successors', phrasing that may indicate a pressing concern for the state of his immortal soul.

Perhaps the point most indicative of a downturn in the king's health was his conspicuous absence from the frantic offensive the Scots launched against key remaining targets in the south-east in the early months of 1314. This would appear to be a direct response to news of Edward's intention to lead a renewed invasion of southern Scotland. The Scots appear to have hoped to undermine the beleaguered English administration, doing as much damage as possible before the English advance began, at which point the Scots would presumably withdraw just as they had done in 1310. Yet King Robert played no apparent part in this offensive, despite having been intimately involved in the Scots' military activities up to this point. On Shrove Tuesday (19th February), the up-and-coming border warlord James Douglas - possibly acting on his own initiative - succeeded in capturing Roxburgh Castle by approaching under cover of darkness and hidden under cowhides, raising rope ladders to the walls, and catching the garrison unawares. When news of this feat reached the royal administration, it was Edward - not Robert - Bruce who came with an armed force to slight Roxburgh. On 14th March, Edinburgh Castle fell to a similarly audacious ruse concocted by the king's 'dearest nephew' Randolph, involving scaling the precipitous north face of Castle Rock to gain entry to the castle without raising the alarm. While the recovery and destruction of these two former royal castles was certainly good news for the Scots, and the overall strategy of going on the offensive before the desperate garrisons of the south could be restocked by Edward's army, the striking absence of King Robert - coupled by the fact that Douglas's seizure of Roxburgh seems not to have been undertaken with the royal administration's consent or knowledge - gives the impression that Bruce himself may have been indisposed by the latest bout of his recurring illness. In the meantime, Edward Bruce had apparently assumed a coordinating role, while 'junior' members of the wider Bruce affinity like Randolph and Douglas competed to demonstrate their usefulness to what might soon be the administration of King Edward I of Scotland.

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The heraldic achievement of the earl of March, as depicted in the late fourteenth-century *Armorial de Gelre*. Patrick Dunbar - whose son George is represented in this image - found himself in the unenviable position of being the greatest magnate along the Anglo-Scottish border during a time of intense conflict between the two kingdoms. His estates were thus extremely vulnerable to attack from both sides, and he was forced to awkwardly shift his allegiance according to whichever group was in the ascendency. As a consequence, he developed a reputation for being unreliable both among the English and the Scots.

Image source: <https://uurl.kbr.be/1733715>



Edinburgh Castle seen from the north. It was up this craggy rockface that Bruce's nephew the earl of Moray reputedly climbed in March 1314 in order to gain access to the castle without alerting the defenders. With Edinburgh's fall, supplies for the English garrison at Stirling would have to cover some sixty miles of largely hostile territory in order to reach them. Image source: <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryMagazine/DestinationsUK/Edinburgh-Castle/>



Berwick-upon-Tweed, with its sixteenth-century walls particularly prominent. It was here that the bulk of Edward's army mustered ahead of the campaign that would eventually lead to the Battle of Bannockburn, with some elements of the force gathering at nearby castle at Wark-on-Tweed. Image source: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/berwick-upon-tweed-castle-and-ramparts/history/>

Meanwhile, Edward II makes reparations with gathering pace. By 9th March (less than a week before Edinburgh's capture), muster orders were being dispatched to raise an invasion force and to equip a sizeable fleet that could keep it resupplied by sea if necessary. A number of Anglo-Irish colonists and even 'native' Irish lords were summoned to appear, and given that Bruce's own father-in-law Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster, was with Edward at Newminster by 29th May at least some of them responded favourably. Some 5,000 infantry (spearmen and archers) were raised from Wales, and a further 4,000 bowmen were expected from the midlands and northern counties. Edward could also call on his subjects in Gascony, and a contemporary poem written by Robert Baston - a Carmelite monk who accompanied the English army to Bannockburn - notes the presence of four German 'volunteers' (presumably mercenaries) among his troops. The earls of Lancaster, Warwick, Arundel, Surrey, and Oxford refused to appear in person, sending only the minimum number of troops they were legally required to provide (as in 1310), but the earl of Hereford did serve in person, perhaps feeling he needed to repair his relationship with the king after the incident with Gaveston. Pembroke too was present, motivated both by his frustrations over the handling of the Gaveston situation and probably by an eagerness to support his Scottish kinsmen. The John Comyn who Bruce had killed in 1306 had been married to Pembroke's sister Joan, and thus Comyn's son - another John - was Pembroke's nephew (and also served in Edward's army at Bannockburn, probably in his uncle's following). Edward was also supported by his nephew, the twenty-three year old Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, a young but ambitious magnate with a large and powerful following drawn from his extensive estates along the Welsh marches.

Lower down the ranks were well-established veterans of the Scottish war such as Sir John Seagrave, Sir Robert Clifford, Sir Thomas Gray 'the Elder', and Sir Marmaduke Tweng. Edward also personally arranged the release of the fearsome Sir Giles d'Argentan from Salonika, where he had been imprisoned since being captured on Rhodes while on crusade. There were also those in Edward's army with personal scores to settle in Scotland. Sir Henry Beaumont - a long-standing servant of the English crown - was married to Alice Comyn, sister and heir of the late earl of Buchan. Beaumont could not hope to enjoy the material benefits of his wife's inheritance however so long as north-east Scotland remained firmly in Bruce's hands. Like the aforementioned Comyn, Robert Umfraville, earl of Angus, and Sir Ingram Umfraville were kinsmen of the Balliols and thus could not easily reconcile with Bruce. Sir Alexander Seton and Sir Lawrence Abernethy were Berwickshire lords whose lands in the south-east made it expedient for them to remain in English service, at least for the time being. In total, the lords in Edward's army furnished the king with a total of around 2,500-3,000 cavalry. Barbour [J. Barbour, *The Bruce*, Bk. 11, ll. 132-41] describes the appearance of the English army in particularly striking terms:

*Men mycht se than that had bene by
Mony a worthi man and wucht
And mony ane armur gayly dycht
And mony a sturdy sterand stede
Arayit intill ryche wede,
Mony helmys and haberjounys
Scheldis and speris and penounys,
And sa mony a cumbly knyght
That it semyt that into fycht
Thai suld vencus the warld all haile.*

While Barbour did not personally witness the English army at Bannockburn, but there can be no doubt that the purpose of Edward's preparations in early 1314 was to impress, to intimidate, to overawe. This is vitally important to bear in mind as we consider what followed, as the nature of the English army at Bannockburn played a significant part in its downfall.

As Edward's forces coalesced at Berwick (and the nearby castle at Wark-on-Tweed), the Scottish offensive continued apace. It is unclear precisely when the Scots laid siege to Stirling Castle. Probably it was after 25th March, when Edward approved the delivery of supplies to the garrison. From about 16th-19th April, according to the contemporary Lanercost chronicler, Edward Bruce (again, the king noticeably absent) led a destructive raid through Cumbria - again, probably intended to inflict as much damage as possible before Edward's army could set off - and so the siege most likely began in late April or early May. Regardless of when it began however, the only really salient fact is that with the fall of Edinburgh in March a yawning sixty mile gap had formed in the supply line between Stirling and the nearest 'friendly' castle at Dunbar. We cannot be certain whether the Scots or the English garrison (itself captained by a Scot, Sir Philip Mowbray) first approached the other about a possible agreement over the terms of surrender, but dangerously isolated and now surrounded by the Scots as they were, the garrison could hardly be blamed for



The arms of 'the lord of Beaumont', as depicted in the late fourteenth-century *Armorial de Gelre*. Sir Henry Beaumont - whose descendant is represented here - was born in France but from a young age carved out a lucrative career as a knight in the service of the English crown. His marriage to Alice Comyn gave him a strong claim to the earldom of Buchan and his pursuit of this claim led him to enthusiastically participate in both the First and Second Wars of Independence.

Image source: <https://uurl.kbr.be/1733715>



The arms of the earldom of Gloucester (extinct at the time this image was created), as depicted in the late fourteenth-century *Armorial de Gelre*. Though only twenty-three years old in June 1314, the ambitious Gilbert de Clare was eager to assert himself within the English political community, especially after his personal authority within his earldom had been diluted by a long minority (he had been only four years old when his father died). As a close kinsman and the brother-in-law of the late Piers Gaveston, his uncle Edward II probably viewed him as a more trustworthy figure than the jaded earl of Hereford.

Image source: <https://uurl.kbr.be/1733715>



The seal matrix of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford. As hereditary Constable of England, Hereford would have expected a privileged position in any English army. However, his equivocal relations with the king - and particularly his role in the death of Gaveston - made him a figure of suspicion for Edward II. Edward's resultant rebuke of Hereford over leadership of the English vanguard played a major part in sowing discord among the English army at Bannockburn.

Image source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Humfry2.jpg>

seeking to cut a deal with their besiegers. The resulting arrangement also surely favoured the garrison over the Scots, which might also indicate that it was they who first proposed it. The precise terms of the deal sadly do not survive, but the broad impression given by the relevant sources is that the garrison agreed to surrender the castle if it were not relieved by the English king before St John the Baptist's Day (24th June), on the understanding that the Scots would preserve the life and limb of the defenders. That this favoured the garrison should be obvious. The English army was coming already, and even if it failed to set off on 10th June as anticipated, reaching Stirling ahead of the deadline would hardly be a difficult goal to achieve. This may explain (and indeed justify) the tradition that Edward Bruce accepted this arrangement without the consent of his brother, who sternly rebuked him for it afterwards.

Certainly, news of the deal between the garrison at Stirling and the besieging Scots seems to have excited Edward II. The English king must have heard about it around 26th May, as from 27th he was issuing muster orders stating his intention was specifically to rescue Stirling Castle, rather than the earlier more general intention of entering Scotland in pursuit of his enemies there. The deadline of 10th June slipped by, but the English army set out precisely one week later on 17th. Within two days they had reached Edinburgh, where they remained for three days. This would have given them time to assess the damage to Edinburgh Castle, but the delay was probably primarily designed to allow the English to gather



Stirling Castle, looking roughly north-west. Although the deal between the besieging Scots and the beleaguered English garrison dictated that the two armies came together at Bannockburn in 1314, once the two forces were in the field the castle became something of a red herring. As soon as they had sight of each other, the two kings were focused on killing or capturing their counterpart, regardless of the situation regarding the castle.

Image source:

<https://www.facebook.com/visitstirlingcastle/photos/a.434516529930382/3525433877505283/?type=3>

information on Scottish preparations. On 22nd, the army struck out for Falkirk, and during this twenty mile march they learned that the Scots had pulled out of the Torwood (an area of mostly woodland stretching northwards between the River Carron and the Bannock Burn in which Bruce had mustered his army) into the New Park, a royal hunting reserve just south of Stirling. This intelligence must surely have confirmed English suspicions/fears that Bruce once again intended to frustrate their efforts to bring him to battle, preferring instead to keep at least a day's march ahead of them and avoid a pitched battle, as he had done in 1310. On the morning of 23rd June (a Sunday), the English army set out north from Falkirk in the direction of Stirling, now with only fourteen miles to cover before reaching the beleaguered castle. The vanguard of the army was now jointly led by Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, and Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford. This had already been the source of considerable conflict among the English leadership and serves as a useful illustration of the acute internal tensions within the English army.



King Robert I of Scotland and his first wife Isabella of Mar, as depicted in the Seton Armorial of 1592. Bruce's 'caution in strategy, boldness in tactics' (as Prof GW.S. Barrow succinctly put it) was absolutely critical in revolutionising Scottish fortunes in the years 1307-1314, and his victory at Bannockburn serves as a striking illustration of this principle in practice.

Image source:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert_I_and_Isabella_of_Mar,_Seton_Armorial.jpg

barrier was designed to keep deer in, it would have no trouble keeping the horses of the English out. Nonetheless, the Englishmen in the vanguard still seem to have believed that the Scots intended to run, and assumed that they had caught their foes unawares, rather than finding themselves ensconced in a defensive position. The New Park did have a few entry points, one of which seems to have been in the southern side of the wall, close to Milton Ford, the main crossing point on the Bannock Burn south of Stirling. The English vanguard therefore surged forward and began to thunder across the ford in a column. On reaching the northern side of the burn, the English soon discovered that they could not spread out any wider than they had while crossing the ford, as the Scots had dug a series of pitfalls to further narrow the entrance to the New Park. Baston describes these as 'A contrivance full of evils...holes with stakes, so that they may not pass without disasters', while Barbour [J. Barbour, *The Bruce*, Bk. 11, ll. 372-5] claims they were:

*Off a fute-breid round, and al tha
War dep up till a mannys kne,
Sa thyk that thai mycht liknyt be
Till a wax cayme that beis mais.*

These pits - coupled with the palisade around the New Park - forced the English to hit the Scots on the narrowest possible front, blunting the impact of their charge and nullifying their superior numbers. Far from finding the Scots unprepared, the English vanguard now discovered the Scots dug in and ready for a fight. A number of striking setbacks befell the English army at the entrance to the New Park. Gloucester was unhorsed, apparently by an ordinary Scottish foot soldier. This would have been embarrassing enough at the best of times, but took on an additional layer of humiliation given how controversial and fiercely contested his leadership of the vanguard had been. Hereford too though suffered what must have been a bitter personal blow in the fighting on 23rd June. In one of the most famous moments of the entire battle, Hereford's nephew Sir Henry

Hereford was an experienced and capable war leader, boasted a large and effective armed following, and moreover was Lord Constable of England - making him ostensibly the senior military officer in the kingdom after the king. This last point alone would, under normal circumstances, give him the right to command of the vanguard, the most prestigious command in the whole army. However, as we have seen above, Hereford was also deeply implicated in the death of Gaveston, and so instead he initially appointed his nephew Gloucester to lead the vanguard. Though he too led a formidable armed following, Gloucester was young and inexperienced and - perhaps worst of all - was Hereford's most serious local rival along the Anglo-Welsh border. This piece of (literal) nepotism may thus have been intended as a deliberately provocative act on the king's part. It certainly caused an almighty row among the English commanders and Edward, perhaps now regretting the disharmony it had caused, made the weakest possible attempt at compromise by giving *both* men joint command of the vanguard. This decision only served to sow more confusion and disunity among the leading portion of his army. Now, aside from those in the direct service of each earl, the rest of the troops in the vanguard might reasonably struggle to decide whose orders - Gloucester's or Hereford's - superseded the other, spreading confusion and uncertainty among the division of the English army that would be the first to encounter the Scots. Nevertheless, the men-at-arms in the English vanguard were apparently buoyed up by an unexpected sight as they emerged from the Torwood around three miles south of Stirling - the Scots were still present in the New Park, just beyond the Bannock Burn.

Off to a Bad Start: The First Day, 23rd June 1314

The New Park was a royal hunting reserve, so called to distinguish it from the King's Park, an older hunting park just west of Stirling Castle. Bounded to the north and south by shallow, fairly slow-moving streams - the Pelstream and the Bannock Burn respectively - the New Park had been enclosed for King Alexander III in 1264, with a new palisade wall added as recently as 1288. Given that this



The earliest surviving depiction of the Battle of Bannockburn, from Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon* (1440s). The centrepiece of the image is the (infamous) face-off between Robert Bruce and Sir Henry de Bohun, which is attested in three of the four most useful contemporary and near-contemporary sources we have for reconstructing the battle. While details differ from source to source, it is easily understandable how the killing of a knight perhaps half his age by King Robert served to significantly boost Scottish morale and add to a sense of unease and frustration among the English.

Image source:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Bannockburn.jpg

de Bohun was killed, apparently by King Robert himself. Precise details of how the killing took place differ from source to source. The earliest account - from the *Vita* - has Sir Henry being ambushed by Bruce and killed as he tries to withdraw, with his squire also being cruelly killed while defending his body. Barbour - who misidentifies Sir Henry as Hereford's 'cousyne' (Bk. 12, ll. 31) - claims that it was Sir Henry who surprised King Robert, who at the time was still inspecting the troops while riding 'apon a litill palfrey' (Bk. 12, ll. 18). Rather than fleeing however, Barbour has Bruce mount a counter-charge against his opponent and split Sir Henry's helm and head open to the brains with a mere 'hand-ax' (Bk. 12, ll. 57). Both of these accounts have their obvious problems, with the *Vita* seeking to paint Bruce as an almost cartoonish villain while Barbour's version of events relies on the king being able to perform an essentially superhuman feat of strength by smashing through helmet and skull with a single blow. Yet the existence of both, independent accounts suggests a kernel of truth to the tale. This is further corroborated by a third, somewhat confused but certainly more grounded account in Sir Thomas Gray's *Scalacronica* (written in the 1360s). Gray states:

'Here [i.e., at the New Park], Piers Mountforth [sic], knight, was killed at the hands of Robert Bruce with an axe, it was said.'

This terse observation - while misidentifying Sir Henry - surely must be read as a confirmation of the more dramatic accounts preserved in the *Vita* and *The Bruce* (Barbour's poem). Word that the nearly forty year old king had killed a knight perhaps half his age would no doubt be a serious blow to English morale as it passed back through the English army, in much the same way as it would have boosted Scottish confidence. This would have no doubt been even more true if the English had been led to believe that towards the end of 1313 Bruce's health had been deteriorating.

While the English vanguard was making something of a spectacle of itself at the entrance to the New Park, another, smaller body of cavalry - perhaps only 300-strong - was attempting to skirt around the Scottish position to the east. The precise purpose of this manoeuvre is uncertain. The earliest account - found in the *Lanercost Chronicle* - states that the cavalry hoped 'to prevent the Scots escaping by flight'. The notion that this force hoped to cut off a potential Scottish retreat is certainly in keeping with the general impression that the English were concerned that Bruce still intended to withdraw and deny them a pitched battle. However, Barbour claims 'To the castell thai thocht to far' (Bk. 11, ll. 537). Gray, whose father and namesake served in this division, might be expected to offer some insight into this issue, but frustratingly he does not offer an explanation for the manoeuvre. Instead, he blandly states that they 'went round the wood on the other side, towards the castle, keeping to open fields'. The phrase 'towards the castle' (*deuers le chastel*) might support Barbour's claim, but this is hardly conclusive. Gray does at least furnish us with other details. He hints at similar divisions and disharmony among this cavalry division as there were in the vanguard, for instance claiming that it was under the joint command of Sir Robert Clifford and Sir Henry Beaumont. These two men had less to divide them than Gloucester and Hereford, but in this case Gray notes a disunity between the leaders and their men. On reaching the far side of the 'wood', by which it seems likely Gray means the New Park, Clifford and Beaumont's division was confronted by a tightly-packed formation of spearmen - known to some contemporary English chroniclers and modern military historians as a schiltrun - led by King Robert's nephew Randolph. Gray's father - who had been in Beaumont's following since saving the latter's life at the Siege of Stirling in 1304 - advised against giving the Scots space to form up properly,



The Clifford arms, as depicted in the late fourteenth-century *Armorial de Gelre* (again, representing a descendent of the Clifford who fought at Bannockburn). Sir Robert Clifford was a minor Yorkshire knight who as early as 1297 had clearly recognised the opportunities for self-aggrandisement available to those willing to provide the English crown with energetic service in the Anglo-Scottish wars. By 1314, he had become one of the most experienced English war leaders and was one of them most prominent political figures in the north-west. His acquisition of the Douglas patrimony as a reward for his service in war had however begun a feud with a similarly up-and-coming Lanarkshire kindred that would still be causing bloodshed as late as the 1390s!
Image source:
<https://uurl.kbr.be/1733715>



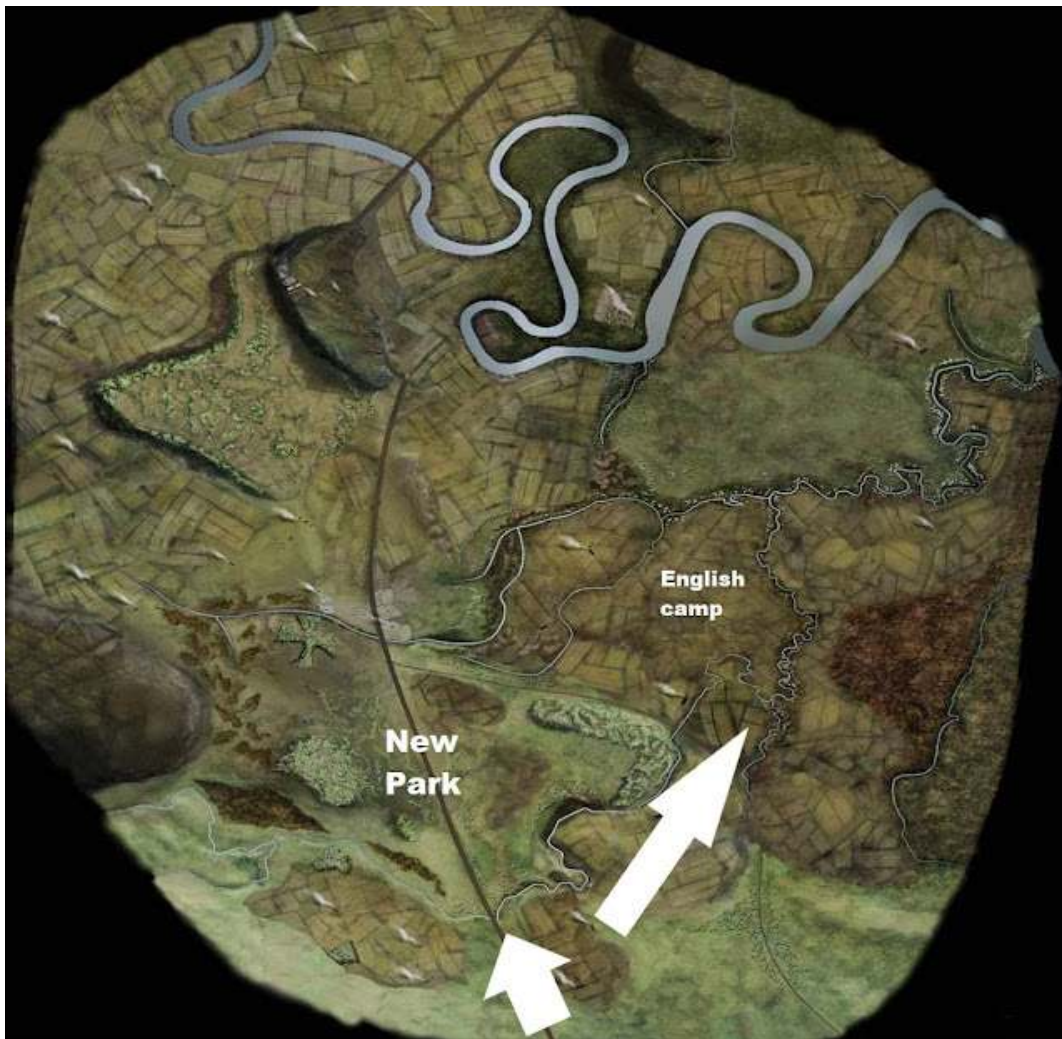
A view from the south side of the Bannock Burn towards the New Park. The flagpole visible in this image is just outside the modern Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre, the low grey building to the right of the flagpole. It would have been close to the modern visitor centre that the Scottish army was gathered when the English arrived on 23rd June,

Image source: Yours truly.

leading Beaumont to accuse him of cowardice. This provokes Gray senior and his companion Sir William Deyncourt to spur their horses forward and charge into the Scots, getting Deyncourt killed, Gray's horse pinioned by Scottish spears, and Gray himself taken prisoner. The experience of Gray and Deyncourt foreshadowed that of the rest of the cavalry. Schiltron formations had been specifically developed to blunt heavy cavalry charges, and thus Clifford and Beaumont's could find no way to penetrate this oval-shaped body of spearmen. Eventually, they were forced to withdraw, as by now the vanguard had done from the New Park.

Edward's Choice: English preparations on the evening of 23rd June

Even before these minor defeats had been inflicted on the advance parties of his army, King Edward must have been forced to contemplate how to react to Bruce's decision to make his stand in the relative safety of the New Park. Unable to tackle the Scots head-on, due to the narrowness of the entrance and the pits the Scots had dug north of Milton Ford, the English army would now have to find a way around the Park in the hopes of finding a clearer line of attack. It may be that, far from trying to cut off a Scottish retreat or seeking to muscle their way into the castle, Clifford and Beaumont's men had been dispatched to scout out the possibilities for assaulting the Scottish position from an alternate angle. To the west of the New Park, the ground was low-lying and boggy, and further west still was the awkward bulk of Gillies Hill. Navigating this area, particularly for the heavy, slow-moving English royal host, would be a painstaking, laborious, and most importantly time-consuming task. The delay this would inevitably cause would more-or-less guarantee the Scots time to withdraw further north again, diminishing Edward's chance of forcing the pitched battle he so desperately needed. With King Robert's banner probably in sight from the brow of the hill over which the English would have approached the New Park, King Edward could not afford to let this opportunity slip away. Two short skirmishes (both of which the English had after all lost) followed by a hasty Scottish retreat would not appeal to the English king's fractious magnates like Lancaster and Warwick, any more than his desultory meandering through southern Scotland had done in 1310-11. Edward *had* to have a battle - now more than ever after the dismal showing his troops had made on the first day - and moving west would all but guarantee this would *not* happen.



A map of the area around Stirling in which the Battle of Bannockburn took place as it would have looked in 1314. The English approached Stirling in June 1314 up the 'Old Roman Road', the thick dark line running roughly vertically up this map. They found the Scots waiting for them in the New Park and, being unable to break through them, moved eastwards along the southern bank of the Bannock Burn before making camp overnight in an area known as the Carse of Stirling.

Image source: <https://twitter.com/BannockburnNTS/status/1402964028641665025?s=20>



King Edward I of England (seated, left) creates his son, the future Edward II, Prince of Wales in 1301. Perhaps inevitably, Edward II is frequently and unflatteringly compared to his more successful father (and to his warlike son for that matter). However, there is no reason to suppose that either Edward I or Edward III would have fared any better than their hapless namesake had they been leading the English army in 1314. They would have been faced with precisely the same choice as Edward - to wait and risk Bruce escaping or to press on eastwards in the hope of forcing a confrontation - and in those circumstances the route that Edward chose gave the English army the greatest chance of success.

Image source:
<https://www.akg-images.de/archive/Edward-II.becomes-Prince-of-Wales/Illum.-2UMDHUKJPL2.html>

East of the New Park, the Bannock Burn cut a deep ravine - some forty feet from the ridgeline down to the water below - through the landscape for about a mile and a half. However, beyond this the burn debauched into a wide, flat area known as the Carse of Stirling. The Carse - a mixture of meadowland and peat bog - was crisscrossed with shallow, slow-moving streams (of which the Bannock Burn was one of the larger) known in French as *polles* and in Scots as 'pows'. Local place names such as Polmont, Polmaise, even the *Pelstream* itself, attest to the extent of these geographical features. The Carse extended as far as the banks of the River Forth itself, and the eastern portions (closest to the river) were at least as wet and marshy as the area around the foot of Gillies Hill. However, the western parts of the Carse, nearest the New Park, were meadowland, normally used for sheep farming and perhaps even some limited crop cultivation. This would certainly be firm enough for the English army to set up camp. Once the burn itself had been crossed - a slow but achievable aim - the Carse would offer some further benefits to the English army. For a start, the *polles* themselves would provide freshwater for the men and horses who had travelled the fourteen miles from Falkirk on 23rd in the midsummer heat. Beyond the Bannock Burn, the next major obstacle to the English army's progress northwards would be the Pelstream (which flowed together with the Bannock Burn on the Carse before joining the River Forth), but during the night it and the Bannock Burn would serve to protect the flanks of the English army, ensuring that if the Scots sought to raid into the English camp under cover of darkness they could only realistically do so down a relatively narrow strip of land between the two streams. Though hardly an ideal position to spend the night, it was undoubtedly the best option the Scots had left open to the English. Edward thus marched his army eastward towards the Carse.

Crossing the Bannock Burn proved - predictably - to be a long and frustrating process for the English royal host. It was achieved, according to the *Vita*, in part by pilfering doors from local farmhouses to use as makeshift bridges, and the passage of perhaps 20,000 pairs of English feet, plus the hooves of several thousand horses, plus an uncertain number of carts and wagons, churned the wetlands around the burn itself - described by Gray as 'an evil, deep, boggy stream' to begin with - into something of a morass. This probably did not concern the English greatly once they had crossed it however, since few if any of them would have expected to have to cross it again any time soon. They had after all only seen the Scots fighting defensively on the first day of battle and they likely still believed that Bruce favoured withdrawal over confrontation. Assuming that they awoke to find that the Scots had *not* decamped and fled under cover of darkness, the English were probably planning to either attack the Scots from the east - in the hope that the Scots had not made similar preparations on this side of the New Park as they had done to the south - or perhaps to move even further north across the Pelstream. In this latter case, the English would be able to form up on the firm ground between the New Park and Stirling, and most importantly of all would have cut Bruce off from his most likely escape route into the north-west. As strange as it may seem, given the frustrations of the first day and our modern knowledge of what was to come, there was some cause for hope in the English camp on the evening of 23rd June. They had overcome the most serious obstacle between them and the Scots (the Bannock Burn) and were now closer to Bruce's army than any English royal army had been since the beginning of either king's reign. Those leading the English army could be forgiven for hoping that the momentum of the encounter was gradually shifting in their favour. In fact, they had stepped neatly into the trap King Robert had been preparing for them for at least a month...

Coming in the June 2022 issue of **Dabh Ghlase**...

'Let the retaliation of Scotland depend on her foot-soldiers': The Battle of Bannockburn from an English perspective, Part 2

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Dr. Callum Watson is an historian, historical blogger, and an active member of the Late Antique and Medieval Postgraduate Society (LAMPS), a student-led society at the University of Edinburgh. He currently works as a Battle Coordinator at the Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre just outside Stirling. As Dr. Watson describes it, "This somewhat pompous title belies a job that mostly amounts to guiding visitors around the high tech 3D exhibition at the Centre."

A number of his historical blogposts can be viewed @ <https://drcallumwatson.blogspot.com/>

You can contact Dr. Callum Watson via email... <mailto:drcallumwatson@gmail.com>



An original post by...

## Medieval Scotland On This Day

### February 10, 1306

<https://www.facebook.com/MedievalScotlandOTD/posts/404011448236311>

On this day in Scottish history, Robert the Bruce killed his main political rival, John Comyn, 'The Red' of Badenoch, at Dumfries on 10 February 1306. The exact events which transpired at Greyfriars will forever remain elusive, however, following this act of hot blood Bruce moved swiftly to effectively seize the throne, culminating in his inauguration as King of Scots at Scone on 25 March.

In context, after William Wallace's capitulation and defeat at Falkirk in 1298, an unusual balancing act was formed for the appointment of guardianship of Scotland, with power being given to John Comyn and to Robert the Bruce, before William Lamberton, Bishop of St Andrews was later appointed as third guardian. Both families of Comyn and Bruce had previously competed for the crown in 1292, however, Comyn's kin relations with King John made him a committed ally after the outbreak of war between England and Scotland. Bruce's track record, on the other hand, had been inconstant, and although his family had initially supported King Edward I of England, he had recently defected back to the patriot party. Whilst the Scots were still fighting on the behalf of the absent King John, it is probable that Bruce was merely paying lip service to this cause and was closeting his true royal ambitions. This uneasy guardianship lasted until 1300, when Bruce resigned and was replaced by Ingram De Umfraville, a kinsman of King John.



Death of Comyn.

Thereafter, Bruce made peace with Edward in February 1302 whilst Comyn became sole guardian. Although Comyn's role as guardian and his regional powerbase in the north had facilitated his domination of Scottish government, the Scots' position was bleak, with Edward's preparation of a new offensive in northern Scotland in addition to Anglo-French amity precipitating Comyn entering into peace negotiations in February 1304. Subsequently, most of the Scottish realm had surrendered to Edward's sustained warfare by 1304, with most magnates seeking to curry favour with the English king in order to attain restoration and the re-distribution of lands. Comyn's negotiation of a general submission to Edward had won favour, whilst Bruce had gained very little from the conditions of 1304-5. Thus, on 11 June 1304, Bruce entered into a band with Bishop Lamberton, promising mutual aid 'to resist and defeat their enemies'.

What followed was, in historian Michael Brown's words, 'the defining political act of fourteenth-century Scotland'. On 10 February 1306, a meeting between Bruce and Comyn in Dumfries 'to resolve certain matters toughing them' quickly spilled into violence, with Comyn being killed. Near contemporary English sources ascribe to the view that:

'Robert de Brus, aspiring to the kingdom of Scotland, sacrilegiously killed the noble man John Comyn at Dumfries (where the justiciar of the king of England was then sitting in the castle) in the church of the Friars Minor, because [Comyn] would not consent to his treasonable action.'

Other accounts suggest that Bruce had murdered Comyn due to breaking a previously signed pact between the two men.

Nevertheless, despite uncertainty over what actually happened over the course of this meeting and whether this was a premeditated move or not, it is certain that Bruce had killed his rival in an act of hot blood, and in a holy place. Edward was furious, ordering his military commander, Aymer de Valence, second Earl of Pembroke, to take swift action against Bruce and his adherents by refusing quarter to them. Meanwhile, Bruce moved at breakneck speed to seize the throne, besieging castles at Dumfries, Ayr, Dalswinton, Rothesay, and Dunaverty before reaching Scone for his inauguration as King of Scots in March. Crucially, the death of Comyn initiated a new phase in the war between England and Scotland, and will forever remain one of the most important events in Scottish history.

**[Dabh Ghlas EDITOR's NOTE:** The Murder of the Red Comyn by Robert the Bruce (and friends) on February 10, 1306 is arguably one of the most important events in Scottish History and ranks as one of the most important events in the history of the Kirkpatricks of Closeburn family and its cadet branches. With the death of Comyn, "made sure" by Kirkpatrick, the last contender standing between Bruce and the Scottish throne was removed. From this point forward, Bruce and his closest supporters knew it was an "all or nothing" push for an independent Scotland with their very lives hanging in the balance. After hiding with Kirkpatrick for three days – most likely on lands belonging to Kirkpatrick – Bruce had a few things to do on his "TO DO" list: be crowned king, find allies, and defeat England to guarantee an independent Scotland. The fact that Bruce did all these is an amazing story; one that soon after the event of February 10, 1306 will include the introduction of a young James Douglas to the retinue of Bruce. [Cue the music for "Outlaw King", please.]



## Lord Lyon issues notes for guidance on recognition of Chiefs

Dr Joseph Morrow CBE, QC, FRSE, the Rt. Hon. The Lord Lyon King of Arms, and Vice President of the Royal Celtic Society, has issued the following guidance on matters of succession to the chiefship of a clan, looking at the history of clans and how the succession of chiefs has evolved, how chiefs are recognised, and the process for identifying a new chief when the original chiefly line has expired.

<https://www.royalcelticsociety.scot/en/news/178-lord-lyon-issues-notes-for-guidance-on-recognition-of-chiefs.html>

Dr. Joseph J. Morrow, Q.C.  
Lord Lyon King of Arms

Russell G. Hunter, Esq.  
Lyon Clerk  
and Keeper of the Records



THE COURT OF THE LORD LYON  
H.M. NEW REGISTER HOUSE  
EDINBURGH  
EH1 3YT  
Telephone: 0131 556 7255  
Email: lyonoffice@gov.scot

### GUIDANCE NOTE CHIEFS OF CLANS AND FAMILIES SUCCESSION OF CHIEFS FAMILY CONVENTIONS NOMINATION OF HEIR

## Background

1. For a significant part of its long history large parts of Scotland have been organised in clans and families. These clans and families centred upon kindred groups but their power extended further, particularly in the cases of clans, to encompass all those living in the geographical areas they dominated which altered over time.
2. These clans and families were led by chiefs, their power sustained by their own personal authority and the support of great magnates and landed gentry all coming to be recognised by the ordinary people. As chiefs came to be granted land by charters from the Crown their power and prestige increased and their position came to be universally recognised.
3. Clans and families became a building block of Scottish society encompassing blood, social, marital, martial, commercial, legal, cultural and emotional ties. Over time and at different times in different parts of Scotland economic, industrial, social and political change weakened some of those ties – for example the martial, commercial and legal ties – until the clans and families became principally organisations bound by kindred, social, cultural and emotional ties.
4. Scottish clans and families are organic groupings inextricably connected to Scotland, its culture, law, history and society. Many have a chief. Some, at present, do not because the genealogical connection to past chiefs has been lost and await the day a chief is identified or selected.
5. While a clan or family association, society or other corporate body may be created that body is created only in support of a clan or family. That body is not itself the clan or family. That is an important distinction. The chiefship of a clan or family is regulated by the Lord Lyon King of Arms by regulation of arms. The Lord Lyon does not regulate the leadership of associations, societies or other corporate bodies created in support of a clan or family. That is an internal matter for the association, society or corporate body itself. Any chief recognised by the Lord Lyon as chief of a clan or family is chief of all who bear the name of the clan or family and not only those belonging to a particular body.



## Succession

6. The ad hoc derbhfine was an ancient process for choosing a successor to the late head of a royal house or great family. This process was adopted within the Scottish clan system for the purpose of selecting a chief involving selection by the great and the good of the clan of an individual from a group falling within the chiefly bloodline. That group essentially comprised all members of the clan, male or female, who could trace their ancestry to the most recent great grandfather in the chiefly line. With social and economic change this process fell into disuse in or around the 13th and 14th Centuries.

7. Since at least the 16th Century to be recognised as chief of a clan or family has required an individual to be entitled to bear the undifferenced arms of the clan or family (i.e. the principal arms of the clan or family that descend from one chief to the next in undifferenced form through the generations) and so be “Chief of the Name and Arms” of the clan or family. It is for the Lord Lyon to determine who has legally succeeded and is entitled to bear the undifferenced arms of a clan or family.

8. To be recognised as entitled to bear the undifferenced arms an individual must establish the right by descent from the original grantee or in some cases from an ancient user of the arms and fall within the destination of the original grant of arms (Maclean of Ardgour v Maclean 1941 SC 613). To do that an individual requires to satisfy the Lord Lyon, on the balance of probabilities, by evidence (commonly, birth, marriage and death certificates, entries from Parish Registers and the like) that the individual descends through each generation from the grantee or ancient user of the arms. The individual must also bear (whether historically or by formal change of name) as sole surname the name of the clan or family.

9. Where the undifferenced arms have descended through the same family for many generations it may be relatively straightforward to prove entitlement to bear the undifferenced arms. For example, where a chief has matriculated the undifferenced arms in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland it may be that the heir need prove only descent from the late chief to prove entitlement to the arms and so to the chiefship.

10. The task is more difficult where the chief of a clan or family has been unknown for some time, perhaps decades or centuries. In such circumstances an individual need prove not only that person’s own descent from the original grantee or ancient user through each and every generation but also that any and all superior lines of descent have been extinguished in accordance with the law applicable to establishing such extinctions.

11. For example, where in one generation there were six brothers and the person making the claim is descended from the sixth and youngest brother, that person would require to satisfy the Lord Lyon not only of that person’s own descent but also that all lines descending from the five older brothers – each of whom would have a senior and so superior claim to the undifferenced arms – has been extinguished. This task must be carried out through all the relevant previous generations.

## Family Convention

12. Where a hereditary chief cannot be identified and a clan or family is without a chief there is a process – known as a family convention – by which a commander may be appointed by the Lord Lyon to lead the clan or family. The Lord Lyon may appoint a commander at the request of the clan or family. The purpose of the appointment of a commander is to allow time and space for the clan or family to raise its profile, build itself up, publicise itself and for a potential candidate to be hereditary chief to be identified. One of the principal responsibilities of a commander is to seek to identify any potential hereditary claimant to the chiefship. If it is not possible to identify a potential claimant who can prove descent from the chiefly line the commander should seek to encourage suitable candidates who may have wide support from the clan or family to come forward as a candidate for the chiefship (see paragraph 18 below).

13. The purpose of a family convention is to allow the clan or family to identify a suitable candidate to be commander. If a family convention is to result in the appointment of a commander by the Lord Lyon the Lord Lyon requires that it must be overseen by a supervising officer (usually one of the Officers of Arms) appointed by the Lord Lyon to chair the family convention and to ensure that it is run efficiently, effectively and fairly.

14. The supervising officer works with the clan or family to make certain that the procedures adopted (for example in giving notice of and advertising the family convention; ensuring participation of people with an interest whether in person or remotely; allowing all participating in the family convention by whatever means to have a say) are understood by all concerned, are transparent and are fair. At the end of the family convention the supervising officer reports to the Lord Lyon.

15. On receipt of the supervising officer’s report the Lord Lyon would likely only appoint a commander where the clan or family clearly coalesces around a single candidate. Recognising a commander where a clan or family was divided between two or more candidates would be likely to promote the fracturing of the clan or family rather than its unity. Given the role of a commander and the links of clans and families with Scotland and its people it is generally preferred that a candidate for commander reside within the United Kingdom.

16. A commander is generally appointed for a five year term. The appointment can be renewed at the discretion of the Lord Lyon so long as the commander wishes to continue to serve as commander and can show that the clan or family supports re-appointment. As noted above one of the main functions of a commander is to seek out and encourage to come forward any potential claimant to the hereditary chiefship.

17. If such a candidate comes forward, proves entitlement to bear the undifferenced arms and is recognised as Chief of the Name and Arms of the clan or family by the Lord Lyon then the commandership comes to an end.

18. If no such candidate comes forward there is a mechanism for the Lord Lyon to recognise a person as Chief of the Name and Arms of the clan or family even where that person cannot prove descent from the chiefly line. However, the Lord Lyon is only likely to do so if there has been a commander in position for at least ten years. While a person who served as commander could be recognised as chief in this way with the support of the clan or family there is no expectation that a person who served as commander will be a candidate for the chiefship. Other candidates may have better qualifications or greater support among the clan or family. If, during the period of the commandship no person comes forward to make up title to the undifferenced Arms (i.e. no hereditary chief is identified) it is then possible for the clan or family to seek a further family convention chaired by a supervising officer appointed by the Lord Lyon to nominate a chief for the approval of the Lord Lyon. Once a chief is recognised by the Lord Lyon in this way that chief's heirs constitute the new hereditary line for the chiefship and the commandship comes to an end.

19. Even once a chief is recognised on the basis of the available evidence as being entitled to be Chief of the Name and the Arms of the clan or family or has been recognised by the Lord Lyon as chief there is a 20 year period (the long prescription period) during which that individual's claim to be chief may be challenged. Once the long prescription period expires the incumbent chief's right to the chiefship is immune from challenge. However, on any chief's death the succession re-opens and a person with a legitimate claim and the evidence to support it may petition the Court of the Lord Lyon to prove entitlement to bear the undifferenced arms. Such a claim must be proved with evidence.

20. Given the resources of the Court of the Lord Lyon the Lord Lyon would be likely to appoint a supervising officer to chair and oversee a family convention only where the clan or family demonstrates that it has fairly wide support and that it has structures in place in different locations. For example, where a clan or family has supportive associations, societies or other bodies in place fostering local or national or international connections.

## Nomination

21. An incumbent chief has the right to vary the original destination of the coat of arms and to nominate as successor any individual who is a direct descendant of the original grantee of the chiefly arms or of an ancient user of the chiefly arms and who falls within the destination of the arms. Such a nomination can only have effect once confirmed by the Lord Lyon.

22. A nomination may have early effect if the incumbent chief also resigns the chiefship and the nominee petitions the Court of the Lord Lyon to matriculate the undifferenced arms at which point the Lord Lyon will proceed to consider and determine the petition. If such a nomination is to have later effect – for example on the death or mental incapacity of the incumbent chief – it is advisable that such a nomination be intimated to the Court of the Lord Lyon for entry in the Register of Intimations of Succession to Arms.

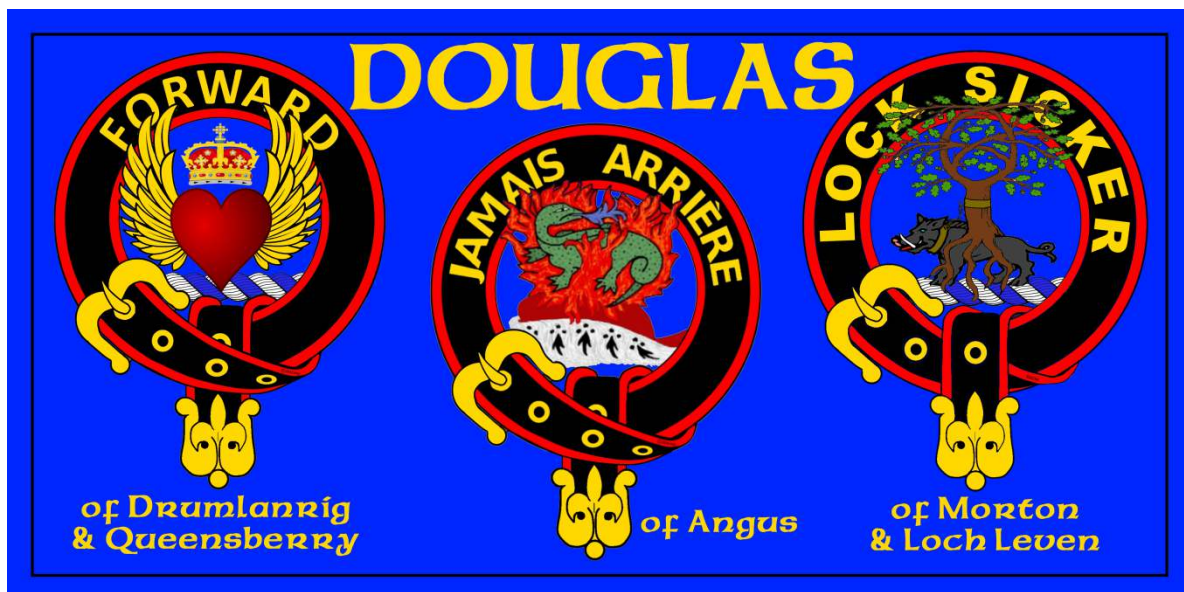
23. Where such a nomination is made it can be confirmed or rejected by the Lord Lyon only at the point where the succession opens (such as the resignation of the arms by the incumbent chief or the incumbent chief's mental incapacity or death) and the nominee petitions the Court of the Lord Lyon to succeed to the undifferenced arms. It is only at this point when the petition is advertised and any potential objection is made known or rival claimant comes forward that all of the relevant competing evidence can be placed before the Lord Lyon for the Lord Lyon's determination of the claim.

24. This note is for guidance only. It is not intended to be an exhaustive statement of the law. Its purpose is to address practical matters regularly raised with the Court of the Lord Lyon.

25. If you have any questions about, or arising from, this guidance note you should address them to the Lyon Clerk at [lyonoffice@gov.scot](mailto:lyonoffice@gov.scot).

THE COURT OF THE LORD LYON

16 December 2021





## ARM YOURSELF!

### For those of us who have been curious all our lives.



Petitioning For Arms In Scotland

Court of the Lord Lyon

### Petitioning For Arms In Scotland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOqJ9pwNtyA>

CLICK THE LINK ABOVE TO SEE THE PRESENTATION.

A short talk presented by Dr. Joe Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms.

If you have ever been interested in petitioning for your very own Scottish Arms -- either hereditarily matriculated or an original grant -- this is the video to see.



## Coat of Arms: Can Your Family Claim One?

### by Family Tree Editors

In our supposedly classless, egalitarian society, nobility wannabes are fueling a craze for that symbolic representation of a person's heritage known as a coat of arms, often mistakenly called a "family crest." Rare is the family historian who doesn't hope to be descended from an ancestor who was armigerous (that is, according to Webster's, "bearing heraldic arms"). Most however, are disappointed to find their ancestors weren't actually entitled with the right to bear arms. Learn what's and what's history when it comes to heraldry.

Understanding Heraldry Laws

For starters, a key fact to keep in mind is that coats of arms are not and never have been granted to families. They're granted to individuals and belong to individuals. Arms can, however, be inherited. According to an informational brochure, "Heraldry for United States Citizens," published by the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG)...

<https://www.familytreemagazine.com/heraldry/coat-of-arms-history-resources/>

CLICK THE LINK ABOVE TO READ THIS ARTICLE

## Heraldic Registration in the United States:

### An Introduction by the American Heraldry Society

It is perfectly legal for anyone in the United States to design and adopt an original coat of arms of his or her choice. Not only is there is no legal prohibition against armorial assumption in the United States, but the freedom of the individual to assume arms has also been a time-honored principle observed in most of the Western world ever since the great 14th century legal scholar Bartolo de Sassoferrato listed it as one of the valid ways of acquiring arms. It is only within a few jurisdictions, particularly England and Scotland, that any laws exist against the assumption of arms. These laws have not been applicable in the United States since the attainment of American independence—supposing they were even applicable in the American colonies before that. Thus, under American law, assumed arms enjoy the same validity as those granted by the English College of Arms, Scotland's Lord Lyon, or any other foreign authority.

<https://www.americanheraldry.org/education-resources/grants-and-registrations/heraldic-registration-in-the-united-states>

CLICK THE LINK ABOVE TO READ THIS ARTICLE



# NEWS FROM ALL OVER

## STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES

### Stone Mountain, GA – October 16-17, 2021

The weather was superb, the attendance incredible. You could see everyone was glad to get out. Our tent location was great, only 15 yards from the sponsor's tent and we had over 75 visitors stop by over the two days.

Some new members joined as well as quite a few membership renewals.

It was great to meet Dennis Conrad who is the other Co-regent for Georgia. Even had a visit from one of the Falconers who was a Douglas himself and he brought one of his birds to meet the group.

We had over 30 people join the clan for the parade of tartans. Food was plentiful at the Douglas tent.

We are looking forward to 2022. Potential clan events include the Burns night dinner in January in Atlanta; the Greenville, SC Games over Memorial Weekend; and the Blairsville, GA Games, June 11 & 12.

Yours aye,

Doug Isbecque  
Georgia Co-Regent



# NEWS FROM ALL OVER

## CENTRAL FLORIDA SCOTTISH HIGHLAND GAMES

### Winter Springs, Florida – January 15-16



Edmund Young and CDSNA Treasurer Tom Douglas

The 44rd Annual Central Florida Scot Games were again held in their usual place, Winter Springs, FL, just northeast of Orlando. This was the first of this event since 2020. It was canceled last year due to the Covid Virus. To my knowledge Clan Douglas has been present at every one of these games. For years our clan tent has had a favored position near the main clan entrance, usually not more than two or three tents away from the 'honored clan of the year'. This year 60 clans plus 13 societies were present in the clan village.

Friday & Saturday the weather was breezy but pleasant in the 60's. And, on Saturday the crowds were large.

Many of our Douglas Clan members were present and very helpful in our tent and marching in the Parade of Clans. Some brought food, which was shared by all. These included Clan National Treasurer Tom Douglas, Life members Mark & Sally Hill



Rev. Ed Bartle and his daughter Ashley

and Life members Jeff & Mona Sparks. Allison Morton Painter brought edibles and her trademark enthusiasm and verve. Allison led us in the Clan Parade. Rev. Fr. Ed Bartle brought the donuts and was there with his family as well. They included Brian, Dan, Daren, Ashley, Therese, Gillian, Steve, et al. We were saddened and raised a toast to our dear departed clansman - Randy Bartle. Randy was the Douglas Regent of Eastern Georgia. He was also Ed. Bartle's brother and the uncle of most of the Bartle's attending. Randy was a very good man and is extremely missed.



Allison Morton Painter

We had quite an array of clan members in the noon Parade of Clans. In addition to all of the above, clan member Edmund Young joined us. Edmund is a big man and carries a banner high for all to see.

Stuart & Lucy Ballantyne were there entertaining the crowds with their border collie sheep herding demonstrations. We are saddened to report that McVicar, our royal black-faced Ram, died over the past year. There is a hole in our clan marching order.



Regent Marc with McVicar in 2019

The Master of Ceremonies knows us well. When we passed in review, he identified us as the people of Dubh Ghlas (Dark Water). He mentioned our history and activities along the borders of Scotland. The MC encouraged us to shout our battle cry, which we did - "A Douglas, A Douglas".

The Central Florida Games have an annual Shortbread competition. Two of our best bakers entered the contest. Mona Sparks and Sally Hill produced some delicious traditional shortbread. They were certainly worthy of ribbons but did not garner one. We think the judging may be based on seniority or length of involvement. This was only their second year in the contest. They learned valuable lessons and, no



Life Members Mark Hill (L) & Jeff Sparks (R) with CDSNA Treasurer Tom Douglas (Center)

# NEWS FROM ALL OVER

doubt, will be bringing home the 'blue ribbons' at future Scot Games. We are very proud of Mona and Sally.

Kelly Douglas Warner and her husband joined us on Saturday. Kelly is the daughter of T. George and Pat Douglas, two of our founding CDSNA members. Kelly is a pretty lassie, like her Mom. Kelly wears her Douglas tartan and brought with her some Douglas uniforms which belonged to her Dad. With great thanks, fellow clan members are making good use of these garments.

Sunday's events were an entirely different matter, a weather disaster. Saturday evening we expected some rain. So we packed all of our flags, banners, literature, etc. in their transport tubs. All tubs were placed securely under our tables. Only the Douglas Banner, with crest and Septs, was left attached to the tent poles. Sunday greeted us with driving winds, heavy slanting rain, and warning of tornadoes. Our tent was blown down, One of our tables flipped over and was driven into a nearby tree. One of the poles holding the Douglas banner snapped in half, causing most of the banner to be immersed in mud. In short the clan area was a mess and irretrievable that day. Many other clans had suffered the same fate. In mass, we packed our bags and left the event. A sad ending to a weekend so promising. At least, we had a good Saturday.

On Saturday, we renewed our bonds of friendship with our fellow members of Clan Douglas and with those in other clans we see regularly. We had some good conversations with a multitude of people seeking their roots.

These games are held the third weekend in January, always in Winter Springs, FL. These games launch the Scot Games season. There will be games every two to four weeks, at different cities from now into May. Check our clan newsletter - Dubh Ghlase - for time and place. Come join us.



Yours Aye,  
Marc Hitchins  
Clan Douglas  
North Florida Regent



Sally Hill and Mona Sparks with white banner followed by Mark Hill and Jeff Sparks.



North Florida Regent Marc Hitchins



Clan Douglas Cap Badge  
\$22.00



Clan Douglas Kilt Pin  
\$22.00

**In need of a Clan Douglas Society  
Cap Badge or Kilt Pin?**

**Contact your local Regent and ask that s/he  
reserve one for you for an upcoming event**

**OR**

**Buy what you need today from the  
CDSNA Store.**

**Storekeepers are standing by ...  
A CDSNA Store Goods Order Form  
can be found on page 53.**



For CDSNA Regents manning the Douglas tents at festivals all over North America, one of the most commonly asked questions by festival goers is **“Why is THAT name a Douglas name?”** In 2009, one CDSNA member took on the responsibility of finding an answer for each name in our clan’s list of septs and allied families... and the CDSNA Septs & Allied Families Project was born. Since 2012, research from the Septs & Allied Families Project has led to several new names added to our Douglas list.

Cadden/Caddin were accepted by CDSNA as an allied family in 2022. According to the book **"Tartan For Me (9th ed.)"** by Phillip Smith, the surnames of Cadden and Caddin (obvious variants of the same name) are associated with the Douglas tartan. No documentation is included by Smith for ascertaining why these names are associated.

The only other reference found regarding these names is found in Black’s **“The Surnames of Scotland”** under the surname entry CADENHEAD where it is stated:

*Of local origin from the head of the Caldun or Cadon Water in the Selkirkshire part of the parish of Stow, and not from De Cadneto or Caisneto as the author of The Norman people says.*

Sources:  
 Black, George F. *The Surnames of Scotland*. Birlinn, 1996.  
 Smith, Philip D. *Tartan for Me!: Suggested Tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and North American Surnames with Lists of Clan, Family, and District Tartans*. 9th ed., Heritage Books, 2011.



Caddie/Caddy/Cadie/Cady were accepted by CDSNA as an allied family in 2022. According to the book **"Tartan For Me (9th ed.)"** by Phillip Smith, the surnames of Caddie, Caddy, Cadie, and Cady (obvious variants of the same name) are all associated with the Douglas tartan. No documentation is included by Smith for ascertaining why these names are associated.

The only other reference found regarding these names is found in Black’s **“The Surnames of Scotland”** where it is stated:

CADY. John Cady was a tenant under the earl of Douglas in the barony of Kylbouho, 1376.

Sources:  
 Black, George F. *The Surnames of Scotland*. Birlinn, 1996.  
 Smith, Philip D. *Tartan for Me!: Suggested Tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and North American Surnames with Lists of Clan, Family, and District Tartans*. 9th ed., Heritage Books, 2011.





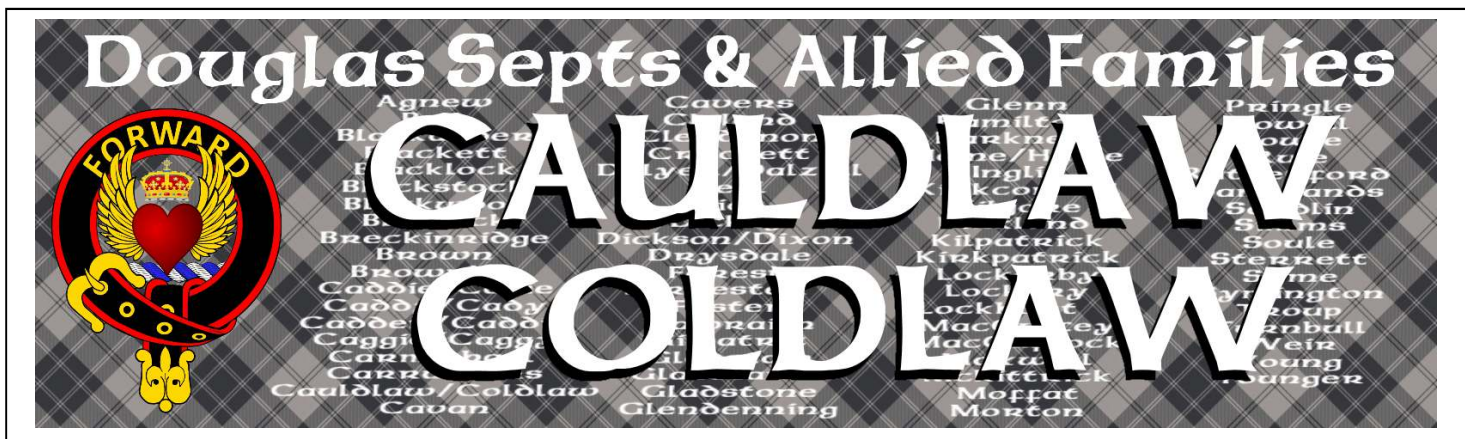
Caggie/Caggy was accepted by CDSNA as an allied family in 2022.

According to the book "*Tartan For Me (9th ed.)*" by Phillip Smith, the surnames of Caggie and Caggy (obvious variants of the same name) are associated with the Douglas tartan. No documentation is included by Smith for ascertaining why these names are associated. Further research would be helpful for these names.

Sources:

Black, George F. *The Surnames of Scotland*. Birlinn, 1996.

Smith, Philip D. *Tartan for Me!: Suggested Tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and North American Surnames with Lists of Clan, Family, and District Tartans*. 9th ed., Heritage Books, 2011.



Cauldlaw/Coldlaw was accepted by CDSNA as an allied family in 2022.

According to the book "*Tartan For Me (9th ed.)*" by Phillip Smith, the surnames of Cauldlaw and Coldlaw (obvious variants of the same name) are associated with the Douglas tartan. No documentation is included by Phillips for ascertaining why these names are associated.

The only other reference found regarding these names is found in Black's "*The Surnames of Scotland*" where it is stated:

CAULDRAW. From Cauldlaw near Carnwath. Thomas de Cauldlaw or Caldlaw was a tenant under the earl of Douglas in the barony of Kylbouho, 1376.

Sources:

Black, George F. *The Surnames of Scotland*. Birlinn, 1996.

Smith, Philip D. *Tartan for Me!: Suggested Tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and North American Surnames with Lists of Clan, Family, and District Tartans*. 9th ed., Heritage Books, 2011.



~ Sept/Allied Families articles coming soon ~

June issue of **Dabh Ghlase: Gladstanes/Gladstain/Gladstone**

September issue of **Dabh Ghlase: Kidston**

# SAVE THE DATE!

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The 2022 GMM is up in the air. The executive council for the Portland, OR Highland Games will convene sometime in March to decide if they are willing to declare the pandemic restrictions will be set aside for the games to happen. But a new wrinkle popped up in February with the passing of the gentleman who has long organized the clans on clan row. Losing a major coordinator is a serious blow. When CDSNA knows the decision, membership will be informed. Keep your eyes on the many social media outlets for CDSNA. Quite possibly, an announcement will also be sent via email to membership.]

## CLAN DOUGLAS SOCIETY OF N.A.

[www.clandouglassociety.org](http://www.clandouglassociety.org)

will hold its

### 2022 General Members Meeting & Gathered Members Meal

*in conjunction with the*

### 2022 Portland Highland Games

[www.phga.org](http://www.phga.org)

**@ the Mt. Hood  
Community College in  
GRESHAM, OR.  
Friday & Saturday,  
July 15 & 16, 2022.**



*For more than 60 years, the Portland Highland Games have delighted participants with a unique, Scottish experience featuring incredible Scottish pipe bands, bag pipers and drummers, dancers and athletes. Come enjoy a full day of this Scottish festival. Explore Scottish clan tents and learn about your Scottish history (you may be surprised to find a little Scottish in ya).*

*Immerse yourself in the music and culture. Watch fun demonstrations (like our popular sheep dogs) and be inspired by powerful athletes competing on the Heavy Athletics field. Become a whisky connoisseur in our whisky tasting tent. Shop for regional Scottish products and gifts, and enjoy tasty food (and yup, there is beer).*



# CLAN DOUGLAS SOCIETY OF N.A. 2022 CDSNA General Members Meeting

in conjunction with the Portland Highland Games

[www.phga.org](http://www.phga.org)

**Mt. Hood Community College,  
26000 SE Stark St., Gresham, OR**

**Friday & Saturday, July 15 & 16, 2022**

## Event Schedule

Parking is free at



**MT HOOD  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**



**Friday - 7/15/22**

12-5 p.m. - Portland Highland Pre-Games

6 p.m. approx. after Pre-Game Geno's Grill,  
3035 NE Kane Dr., Gresham, OR.

4 mi. from MHCC.

No Host Dinner & Social Hour

**Saturday - 7/16/22**

9 a.m. - 6 p.m. - Portland Highland Games

11:45 a.m. - Meet on North end of Track  
for the Clan Parade.

1 p.m. - Meet at the CDSNA Tent for lunch  
& Clan picture.

Join us for a potluck or buy lunch.

7:00 - 10 p.m. - Holiday Inn General  
Members Meeting, Dinner, & "Beltaine"  
music in the Event Room. Beltaine is the  
Northwest's premier Celtic Fusion group  
featuring hammered dulcimer, guitar,  
marimbula, & accordion.

Event Hotel: Holiday Inn

12.8 miles from PDX.

Ph. 503.669.6500

477 NW Phoenix Dr,  
Troutdale, OR 97060

The Holiday Inn releases the block to  
general public on 6/1/2022.

Reference "Clan Douglas"

Book early as there are two major events  
at this time of year.

King Bed \$159/Night

(2) Queen Beds or King Suite \$169/Nt



Fly into: PDX Portland  
International Airport

Transport via Uber,  
Lyft, Cab, or Rental Car.



In the area: McMenamin's Edgefield Resort  
is 4 minutes from the Holiday Inn for an  
alternate hotel (no A/C), spa treatments  
(Massage, facials, etc. - see "Ruby's Spa") with  
swimming pool and free wine, golf, pub and  
theater or outdoor grill restaurants, *The Black  
Rabbit Restaurant* for formal dining, wine  
tasting, gift shop or enjoy your favorite beer or  
wine as you walk the incredible gardens. Visit  
<https://www.mcmenamins.com/edgefield>

Questions? [DouglasSecretary@comcast.net](mailto:DouglasSecretary@comcast.net)





## Annual Clan Douglas Service Awards... Do you have someone in mind?

Each year Clan Douglas recognizes up to three members for their praiseworthy service to our extended Society family. We have a lot of volunteers who spend numerous hours representing our organization at games, Scottish events, and organizational tasks.

***Each nomination must be accompanied by a written recommendation of 1 to 2 paragraphs describing the meritorious service of the nominee.***

The nominations are reviewed by an Awards Committee appointed by the President. The Awards Committee makes a recommendation of up to three potential recipients to the Board of Directors who make the final selections. The individuals selected are awarded a plaque and recognized at the General Members Meeting (GMM).

### **Active Member Meritorious Service Award**

**Active Member Meritorious Service Award** nominations are solicited annually from the general membership, Regents and Board of Directors via email and articles in the newsletter.

**Nominees must be an active (dues current) member of CDSNA;  
any active member is eligible.**

#### **Service Awards Nomination Committee**

The President will appoint a chairperson and 2 members to the Awards Committee to serve a period of time determined by the President. The Awards Committee will be responsible for soliciting nominees through emails and an article in the *Dubh Ghlas*.

Once nominees have been received the Awards Committee will review all candidates and make a recommendation to the Board for their approval. The Board should be provided the names and information for all nominees so that the Board can make an informed decision.

Once the Board approves the award recipients, the Clan Douglas Secretary will notify the CDSNA Storekeeper of the names so that the plaques can be ordered. The Awards Committee chairman should submit an article for the *Dubh Ghlas* for the issue immediately following the GMM.

**Awards Nominations should be sent to  
CDSNA President Tim Tyler,  
Or CDSNA Vice-President Mark Peterson  
ON or BEFORE MAY 1, 2022.  
Awards will be presented at the 2022 GMM.**

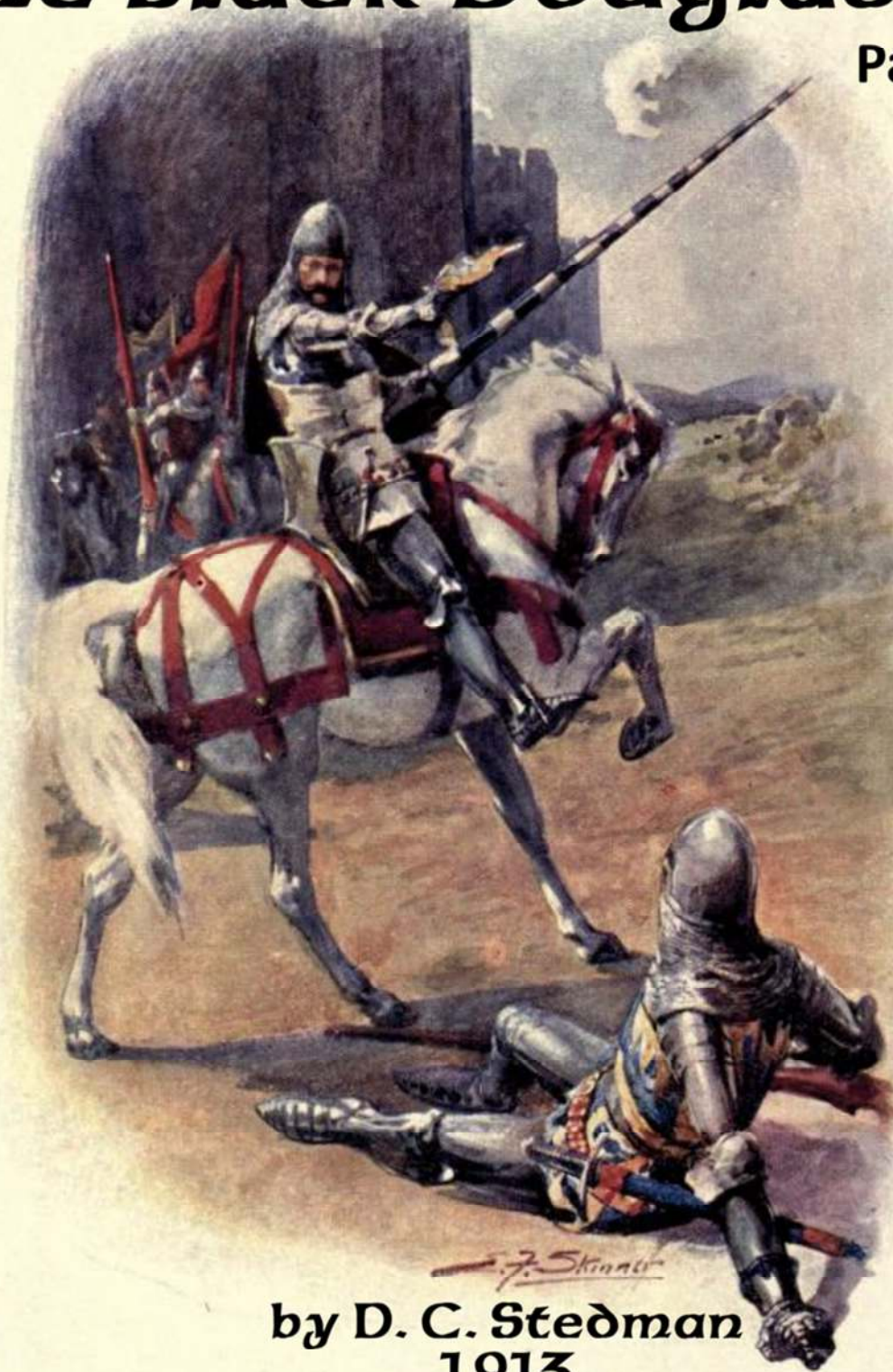
Tim Tyler  
CDSNA Service Awards  
2780 Pine Creek Circle  
Fullerton, CA 92835  
clandouglas@socal.rr.com

**OR**

Mark Peterson  
CDSNA Service Awards  
6505 N. Gentry Ave.  
Fresno, CA 93711  
mpeterson1019@comcast.net

# The Black Douglases

Part 5



by D. C. Stedman  
1913

<https://archive.org/details/blackdouglases00stedrich>

## CHAPTER XI.

## SOVEREIGN POWER.

“One still strong man in a blatant land.”

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON.

A RIGHT noble heart was that of William, eighth Earl of Douglas. The nine years of his rule as Viceroy of Scotland were the best and most prosperous the country experienced under the Stewarts. He it was who lightened many of the grievous burdens of the poorer classes, he who made good treaties of friendship and commerce with England and France. And for the sake of his own house, his wife, and his brothers, he could and did give up everything. For, in order to increase the greatness of his house, he spent most of his time at the court, thereby sacrificing a great deal of the pleasure he might have enjoyed from his own vast dominions.

Of course a man of such strength of mind and will made enemies. Such were Crichton, Bishop Kennedy, and Bishop Turnbull of Glasgow.

The first two of these succeeded in persuading

## 96            The Black Douglasses.

King James to disgrace the Livingstones. Old Sir James and his father were thrown into prison, while his two sons were executed. The Pope's jubilee falling in this year, 1450, Bishop Kennedy induced the king to send Douglas to Rome as his representative. He sailed with a princely following of five lords, six knights, fourteen esquires, and eighty men-at-arms, leaving his brother Hugh, Earl of Ormond, to manage the Douglas estates, but taking James, Master of Douglas, in his train.

This provided the chance the Crichton-Kennedy faction had been seeking for so long. They charged Ormond with misgovernment, and so inflamed the mind of the fiery king against the Douglasses that he raised an army and attacked some of the earl's castles.

With speed Earl William returned home to Scotland. Passing through England he was royally entertained by King Henry the Sixth and Queen Margaret of Anjou. Then he sent his brother James forward into Scotland to learn the king's mind towards him. A speedy reconciliation followed, which shows the hollow nature of the charges brought against the earl. The true character of his rule may be judged from the words of that old chronicler who writes that "all good Scottish men were right joyful of that agreement."

But the seed of mischief was sown. Kennedy, Crichton's firm ally, Turnbull, and the old



## Sovereign Power. 97

chancellor himself had poisoned the mind of the king so far that he was now persuaded that Douglas was aiming at the crown itself.

When the earl perceived that he was in positive danger at the court, he withdrew himself to the mightiest of the Douglas fortresses, the grim island tower of the Thrieve in Galloway.

And now to strengthen his own position he signed that famous bond with John, Earl of Crawford ("Tiger" Crawford as he was called), and John, Earl of Ross, two of the most powerful chieftains in Scotland, which brought about the final break between the Black Douglas and the Stewarts. The three earls formed a close league, pledging themselves to raise forty thousand men in a single day, an injury done to one of them was to be regarded as done to them all, and they were to act together against any person or persons within or without the realm.

The Bishops Kennedy and Turnbull and the old chancellor Crichton persuaded King James that the safety of his throne depended on the breaking up of this powerful league, and prevailed upon him to bid Earl Douglas to Stirling Castle. They sent Sir William Lander of Hatton with the letter, and a full and perfect safe-conduct under the royal seal for "the coming, and the staying, and the going, of William, Earl Douglas, to, at, and from the castle of Stirling."

## 98            The Black Douglasses.

Thereupon Earl William rode to Stirling, John, Lord Hamilton, accompanying him. No doubt he bethought him of another Earl William Douglas who had ridden to another royal castle to meet his king, this very James, and had never returned to the strong fortress of Thrieve; but so confident was he in his own high place, that he left the safe-conduct at home.

Proudly he rode up the great hill on which the royal palace stands in lofty state, encircled by its white terraces, from which he could overlook that plain whereon his famous ancestor, "the good Sir James," had played so glorious a part, the field of Bannockburn. He himself, in another way, had done as much for Scotland. The prosperity which the great soldier had won with the sword of war had been renewed and maintained by the great statesman with the weapons of justice and peace.

A strange event, however, befell at the gates. When Hamilton made to follow the Douglas into the castle, old Livingstone thrust him back with his halberd. This proves at once that what followed had been planned and arranged before Douglas was summoned.

After supper, at seven o'clock, James led Douglas into a small inner room, still shown, which adjoins the banqueting-hall. Only Sir Patrick Gray, an officer high in favour with the king and captain of his guard, was present. The interview could

## Sovereign Power.

99

not have lasted long. King James was angry and frightened, while murder fairly gleamed from his fiery eyes.

“This league between you and the Earls of Crawford and Ross, I will have you quit it at once,” he demanded.

“Your grace must give me leave to warn the noblemen, otherwise I shall be counted a faith-breaker,” answered Douglas. “I pray you have patience.”

The king’s fiery face was suffused with passion.

“If you will not break it, I will !” he shouted, and whipping out his poniard struck the earl in the breast. Gray drove a pole-axe down on his head, and, bursting from the outer hall, the courtiers stabbed and struck again and again, striking long after the great man was dead. Then they cast him through the window, and there, in the little green garden upon which it looks, he was buried.

This foul deed was done on February 20, 1452.

As a statesman, Earl William was the greatest of his race. Clear-headed, calm, and determined, full of all forethought and prudence, he knew well when to take a risk, and could calculate its results with astonishing accuracy. As a Douglas, the head of his family, he takes rank second only to “the Good Sir James” himself. February 20, 1452, is the blackest of all days in the annals of the Black Douglasses.



## 100      The Black Douglases.

The Douglases, infuriated at this red-handed act of violence, acknowledged James as their earl and chief, and paraded the streets of Stirling, giving the king open defiance. Whereas they had formerly declared themselves foes only to Crichton, Livingstone, and the bishops, they now publicly proclaimed King James a “perjured traitor to God and man, to be abhorred and detested by all men as such.” And when summoned to Parliament, Earl James and his brothers fixed on the doors of the famous old church of St. Giles, in Edinburgh, papers declaring that, “the Earl Douglas would not obey command or order in the future because the king was but a murderer of his own blood, and a breaker of the laws of hospitality : a false, ungodly thirster after innocent blood.”

All this was very true, but why did not Earl James at once attack the murderer monarch? There is no doubt that he was strong enough in troops and in resources of all sorts, so strong indeed that the king had decided to flee into France, but Bishop Kennedy persuaded him to remain, urging that, “if he could keep his person safe, and have patience to protract and linger out the time a while, his adversaries’ faction would dissolve ere long and fall asunder of itself.”

At this time, nevertheless, the crown of Scotland hung wavering between the houses of Stewart and Douglas. A swift, determined course of vengeance

## Sovereign Power.

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for his slaughtered brother would have given Earl James the kingdom, and have set a Black Douglas on the throne, not only of Scotland but of England, in the days that were to be.

For James Douglas had many of the most powerful nobles on his side—James, Earl of Hamilton, John, Earl of Crawford, John, Earl of Ross, Lord of the Isles ; he had more soldiers and better trained than were those of the king. And it is to be remembered that the people were dismayed and horrified at the slaughter of Earl William, and by no means prepared to uphold the royal cause. Lastly, the house of Douglas, ever a “war-wall” against England, by reason of its glorious series of victories, dazzled with its splendour the eye of the nation. Why, then, did Earl James hold his hand ?

The answer is, perhaps, not far to seek. A goodly portion of the Douglas lands had, on her husband's death, gone back to fair Margaret, the Maid of Galloway. She herself, doubtless, was weary of that lonesome life she had led with one who was wrapped up so entirely in his statecraft that he had no time to spare for that domestic life which is at once the right and the happiness of every woman. And James of Douglas was handsome, tall, and strong as the pines of his own land, and eager to marry her. Moreover, this had most surely been the intention of Earl William when he

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## The Black Douglasses.

had named his brother *Master* of Douglas, this meaning that James was to succeed as his heir. But for a marriage with a second cousin, the widow of his brother, James needed the permission of the Pope, and this was, no doubt, the more easily to be obtained if the request were backed by the King of Scots himself.

So this was the bribe that stayed the uplifted hand of vengeance, King James undertaking to forward the marriage of James and Margaret Douglas.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE DAY OF DOOM.

“O sir,  
Your presence is too bold and peremptory,  
And majesty might never yet endure  
The moody frontier of a servant brow.”

SHAKESPEARE.

So Earl James rode to the great island fortress of Thrieve to claim his bride, and a right fair sight was that to see, when the splendid young earl, now twenty-seven years of age, and one of the strongest men in Scotland, rode up to the ancient chapel of St. Bride of Douglas with the Fair Maid of Galloway at his side. Margaret Douglas was now just come of age, and to say that the promise of her childhood was fulfilled is scarcely enough. All the wondrous beauty of that dawn of her girlhood had deepened into the full flush of a loveliness so rare that it would have made of her a being strange and mysterious, but that the girl herself was just an ordinary Douglas of the Black, passionate but tender, quick to love or hate, slow to yield and swift to strike, a whole-hearted and loving woman.

## 104      The Black Douglases.

And all the qualities of truest womanhood did her new husband, James Douglas, by his gallantry, his lordliness, his folly and weakness, bring out in her. Although to all appearances he was reconciled with the Stewart, he soon began to act in ways which must have been anything but pleasing to his king.

Malise Graham, Earl of Strathern, was in an English prison, to which he had been consigned as one of the sureties for King James the First, when that monarch was a captive at the English court. Douglas and Hamilton, both relatives of Strathern, made petition in 1453 to King Henry the Sixth of England for his release, and obtained it. But many people thought that these Stratherns had a clearer title to the throne than had the Stewarts themselves, therefore King James was not well pleased when Graham returned to Scotland.

There can be little doubt that the slaughter of Earl William had destroyed all chance of lasting trust between his brothers and his murderer. Earl James reopened the old treaty with the Earl of Ross, Lord of the Isles, and the result showed itself in a raid by Donald Balloch, kinsman of Ross, who burnt Inverkip in Renfrewshire, and destroyed Brodick Castle in Arran.

Then, suddenly, without any warning, the king took the field against the Black Douglas. In March 1455 he appeared before Inveravon Castle, near

## The Day of Doom. 105

Linlithgow, and captured it. Douglas sent James Hamilton of Cadzow into England to ask King Henry's aid. The moment was unfavourable, for it was the early spring of 1455; two months later England was herself plunged in the miseries of that most terrible civil war, the struggle between the great Plantagenet houses of York and Lancaster. Nevertheless, King Henry demanded that the earl should become his man, and should consent to receive an English garrison in the Douglas castles. But with all his faults, James was at heart as loyal to his country as his great ancestors had ever been. He had drawn the sword, it is true, but against the enemies of his house, the Stewart, the Crichton, and Kennedy—not against Scotland. So he sent this noble answer to the English court: "Rather would I die by any hand than leave such a blot on my house, than commit such a crime against my country for a fault done only by the prince and some particular men on whom I hope to be revenged without such shame as this."

By the counsel of his allies, chief among them James Hamilton of Cadzow, Douglas marched to relieve Abercorn Castle, which King James was besieging in person, at the head of thirty thousand men.

But when it was made known to him that Douglas would have at least forty thousand, the king was stupefied with terror, and took ship for

## 106      The Black Douglasses.

St. Andrews, to ask advice of that shrewd counsellor of his, Bishop Kennedy. The bishop handed him a sheaf of arrows, and desired him to break them across his knee.

“That is impossible,” answered the king.

“Nevertheless, I shall show your grace how it may be done,” rejoined Kennedy; and pulling forth the arrows one by one, he snapped them.

“You must deal with the conspirators in this way,” said he.

When James, Earl of Douglas, arrived on the banks of the river Carron, that strange irresolution, which was his worst foe, made itself seen in the clearest manner. He paraded his force of forty thousand men, and even drew them up in battle array, but not all the urging of his friends could induce him to join battle with the Royalists and “cast the dice,” as they said, “for the crown.” He meant to overawe the king. “I tell you,” said James, Earl of Hamilton, “that this occasion is such that if you do not lay hold of it, you shall never find the like again. Your want of resolution will be your overthrow.”

“My heart will not suffer me nor serve me to fight against my sovereign,” answered Douglas.

Now that crafty bishop Kennedy of St. Andrews, acting on his own parable of the arrows, had sent his servant to Lord Hamilton, offering him

## The Day of Doom. 107

free pardon and favour from the king if he would desert his master, the Black Douglas. Wherefore Hamilton, with a mind ill at ease, sought the tent of his chief, and asked what he intended to do—would he give the king battle or not—and he pointed out to him that the longer he delayed the fewer men he would have, while the king would grow stronger with every delay. James Douglas replied that if the Lord Hamilton were tired, he might depart when it pleased him. This he did at once, with a third of the army; and with the king offering a free pardon to such of the Douglas men as should come in to him within forty-eight hours, the host of the earl melted gradually away, and he himself, with a handful of stark, staunch Douglasses, rode across the Border into England. Abercorn, however, made a gallant resistance, and heavy cannon, under the management of a French gunner, had to be brought against it. Even then the Douglas garrison held out for a month, until May 1455.

But the west and south-west Border, the very home of the Douglasses, fairly bristled with battle. At the first note of war, the earl's brother Archibald, Earl of Moray, hastened south from his castle of Darnaway and joined Hugh of Ormond and John of Balvany in Annandale. They raised a small but valiant body of some of their best vassals, true to the splendid name and lofty traditions



## 108      The Black Douglasses.

of the Black Douglasses. The earl, too, joined them in Annandale.

The moment was a serious one. It looked as though the brothers would soon raise the entire Border. The Red Douglas, George, fourth Earl of Angus, was on the royal side, and the king made him captain of the host he sent on the trail of the Black Douglasses. After they had ravaged Annandale, Angus succeeded in hemming them in in Eskdale, on rising ground in the meadows that run along the banks of the Esk. His force was greatly superior in numbers, but the Douglasses, drawn up on some rather steep hills rising above the river, had a certain advantage in position—the Angus men had to come at them up the slopes of the hill. The place, now Langholm, was then called Arkinholm.

Then followed a terrible struggle, Johnstons, Gordons, Maxwells, and Stewarts all swarming up the broomy slopes, but they were beaten down again and again. Earl James and his brothers fought splendidly, but, utterly outnumbered, they were broken in the end. Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray, was slain in the front of battle; Hugh Douglas, Earl of Ormond, severely wounded, was captured, and afterwards executed. At the last, when the hill and the river Esk beneath it ran blood, the earl rode off the field, escaping with his brother John of Balvany through a wood near at hand.

## The Day of Doom. 109

Thus ended the battle of Arkinholm, fought on May 1, 1455—a day of doom, indeed, for the Black Douglasses.

The important fortresses of Douglas and Strathavon surrendered after Arkinholm. Abercorn, as has been said, was reduced, and fell at about the time the battle was fought; and at the beginning of June the tents and pavilions of the royal army were erected at Carlingwark, in the meadows of the Dee, where the siege of the Thrieve, the greatest of the strongholds of the Black Douglas and the only one still defiant, was begun.



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1. Each fiscal year Clan Douglas Society of North America, Ltd. (Clan Douglas) will award up to \$1000.00 in scholarships provided no individual will receive a scholarship in excess of \$250.00.
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3. To be eligible, an applicant must have been an active member in Clan Douglas for a minimum of one year or a direct descendant of such an active member. Active membership will be certified by the Secretary and determined as of April 30th following receipt of application for scholarship. Members of the scholarship committee and their descendants are not eligible.

#### 4. Applications must be post marked by May 1st.

5. Applications will be reviewed by the Scholarship Committee, which will make recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval. Recipients will be announced at the Annual General Meeting of Clan Douglas.
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**For additional information or to receive application forms, you may write to:**

Clan Douglas Scholarship Committee  
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1868 Patton Chapel Rd  
Birmingham, AL 35226-3317

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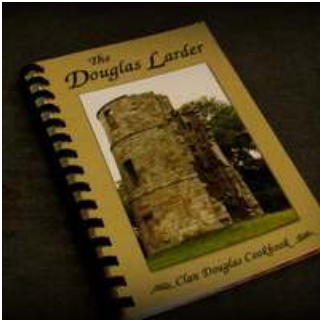
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**Is published four times annually:**

**March, June,  
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Newsletter submissions are accepted until  
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**[Example: June 2022 submissions  
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Items received after the Submission Date  
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