

Dubh Ghlase

The Newsletter of the Clan Douglas Society of North America

Volume 51 ~ Issue 3
September 2025

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*The Good Sir
James Douglas
1286 – August 25, 1330*



Effigy of the Good Sir James Douglas, St. Bride's Kirk. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Effigy_of_the_Good_Sir_James_of_Douglas_-_geograph.org.uk_-_4516136.jpg



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

OFFICERS

President

Mark Peterson
6505 N. Gentry Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711
Phone: 559-917-0926
mark.peterson@ai-engines.com

Vice-President

Scott Douglas
7403 Forrester Lane
Manassas, VA 20109
Phone: 571-426-3826
arlyndoug@aol.com

Secretary

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

Treasurer

Tom Douglas
213 Coleton Ln
DeLand, FL 32724
Phone: 618-795-3879
tomdouglas46@yahoo.com

Board Member

**Chuck Mirabile
(Past President)**
loudbeak@yahoo.com

Board Member

**Tim Tyler
(Past President)**
clandouglas@socal.rr.com

.....
Regional VP (East)

Curtis Rowell
Phone: 434-305-4601
crowell001@gmail.com

Regional VP (Central)

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

Regional VP (West)

Cora Peterson
Phone: 559-709-6588
corampeterson@gmail.com

UNITED STATES REGENTS

ALABAMA

James Douglas
205-613-4725
jamesdndouglas@gmail.com

ARIZONA

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

CALIFORNIA (North)

Mark & Cora Peterson
559-439-2947
corampeterson@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA (South)

Alex Kirkland
714-718-1571
alex.m.kirkland@gmail.com

Tim Tyler

714-478-96666
clandouglas@socal.rr.com

COLORADO

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

FLORIDA (Central)

Jeff & Mona Sparks
407-721-3775
jtsparks1@gmail.com

FLORIDA (South)

Elizabeth Douglass
954-296-1834
edouglass@bellsouth.net

**FLORIDA (Northeast) &
GEORGIA (South)**

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

FLORIDA (Panhandle)

Matthew Douglass
850-333-7163
Thomas Douglass
850-797-7204
tdouglass@panhandle.rr.com

GEORGIA (North)

Doug Isbecque
770-813-0789
drci.bel@gmail.com

HAWAII

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

ILLINOIS (Central)

Timothy Kirkpatrick
253-359-7069
kirkpatrick79@yahoo.com

KANSAS

Michael Sotomayor
620-664-0719
virtualmike55@gmail.com

LOUISIANA

Jerry Douglas
504-606-4787
clan.douglas.la@gmail.com

MARYLAND

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

MICHIGAN

Brian Lewis
813-495-1706
douglasregentmi@yahoo.com

Randy Chancellor

810-777-0126
mivikingsfan@gmail.com

MINNESOTA (North)

John M. Glendenning, Jr.
218-728-4998
jglen@charter.net

MISSISSIPPI

Jamie Haushalter (please text first)
601-506-3202
clandouglas.ms@gmail.com

MISSOURI

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

NEVADA (North - Reno area)

Richard & Holly Bromley
775-530-5667
rlbrich@aol.com

NEW MEXICO

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

Paul Duval

505-884-0883
duvalrccd@yahoo.com

NEW YORK

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

NORTH CAROLINA

Chris Douglass Mogensen
douglasregentmog@gmail.com
919-730-2184

Kirsten Mogensen

kirsten.mogensen917@gmail.com

OKLAHOMA

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

OREGON (North)

Carol Bianchini
971-300-8593
clandouglaspnw@aol.com

OREGON (South)

Elizabeth Blair
541-636-7535
dakotahblair@gmail.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Curtis Rowell
Phone: 434-305-4601
crowell001@gmail.com

Thelma Hein

843-780-8357
ladyhein@yahoo.com

Samuel Thayer

803-389-3550
clandouglasncregent@gmail.com

TENNESSEE (East)

Tyson & Betsy Chastain
865-385-0972 (please text first)
clandouglas.TN@gmail.com

TEXAS (North)

Matthew Douglas
214-493-6442
matthew.douglas75@gmail.com

UTAH

Trenton Duke
435-459-2562
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

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

WEST VIRGINIA

Tyler Agnew
tyler.agnew21@gmail.com

WYOMING

Ethan Smith
307-689-1573
Esmith12041989@gmail.com

Ashlee Johnson

307-363-3354
ashleirene1996@gmail.com



Administrators
<p>CDSNA Storekeeper Brandy Mahoney 6741 Leopolds Trail Haymarket, VA 20169 703-595-7765 douglasclanstore@gmail.com</p> <p>CDSNA Website Editor Carol Morton-Bianchini DouglasSecretary@comcast.net</p> <p>Dubh Ghlase Editor Jamie Haushalter CDSNA.Editor@gmail.com</p> <p>Historical Article Editor Dr. Callum Watson – Battle Coordinator, Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre just outside Stirling</p>


Regents (continued)
<p>CANADA – Regents wanted BRITISH COLUMBIA - Vacant NEW BRUNSWICK -- Vacant ONTARIO – Vacant</p> <p>AUSTRALIA – Contact the Clan Douglas Society of Australia Anne Breust 0419 620 914 anne.breust@bigpond.com</p> <p>BENELUX (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg) Murray Frick 470-232-8060 murrayfrick@att.net</p> <p>SPAIN Leopoldo Fernández de Angulo y Gómez de las Cortinas Phone: 34 954 277 365 Cell: 34 639 019 632 regenteclandouglas@gmail.com</p>



CDSNA



Regents

REGENT VACANCIES		
UNITED STATES		CANADA
<p>ARKANSAS. Regent(s) needed for Batesville and Hot Springs areas</p> <p>IDAHO. Regent(s) needed for Boise area</p> <p>ILLINOIS (North). Regent(s) needed for the Chicago area</p> <p>INDIANA. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>KENTUCKY. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>MINNESOTA. Regent(s) needed for Twin Cities area</p> <p>MONTANA. Regent(s) needed for Billings, Hamilton & Kalispell areas</p> <p>NEVADA. Regent(s) needed for Las Vegas area</p>	<p>NEW ENGLAND. Regents needed for Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont</p> <p>OHIO. Regent(s) needed for Berea area</p> <p>PENNSYLVANIA. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>SOUTH DAKOTA. Regent(s) needed for Aberdeen area</p> <p>TENNESSEE (West/Central). Regent(s) needed</p> <p>TEXAS (South, Central, East). Regent(s) needed</p> <p>UTAH. Co-Regent needed for Salt Lake City area</p>	<p>BRITISH COLUMBIA. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>NEW BRUNSWICK. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>ONTARIO. Regent(s) needed</p> <p>There are several events in Canada in need of CDSNA representation.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>



If a local Scottish or Celtic event welcomes clans but does not have a Clan Douglas representative, please consider being our Douglas Regent for the occasion.

Representing CDSNA at one annual event is better than no Douglas representation at all.



The President's Comments

Greetings Clan Douglas Members and Friends,

I hope everyone is enjoying a wonderful summer! With the Highland Games season in full swing, our Regents are hard at work representing our heritage. On behalf of the Clan Douglas Society, I extend heartfelt thanks to all our Regents for their dedication to preserving the proud legacy of Clan Douglas.

Planning for our next General Membership Meeting (GMM) in 2027 is progressing well. We will soon share details about the location and host hotel on our website and social media accounts. Stay tuned for updates, as we aim to provide ample notice so you can plan to join us for this exciting event.



I recently heard from William Douglas in Scotland, the creator of the remarkable Douglas Archives. Many of you are familiar with his outstanding work maintaining this valuable resource, which features Douglas history, genealogy, photos of Douglas castles across Scotland, and armorial drawings of various Douglas lines. William has kindly allowed us to link the Clan Douglas Society website to his. If you have not visited the Douglas Archives, I encourage you to explore this treasure trove of our heritage. Like many such sites, the Archives relies on donations to stay active, so please consider contributing to support its continued operation.

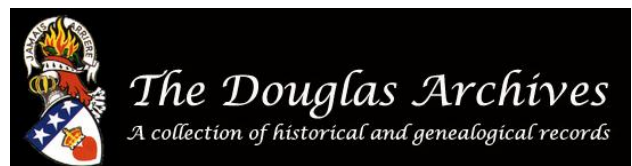
Exciting news from William: the town council in Douglas, Scotland, is awaiting bids for a monument honoring The Good Sir James Douglas. The council is actively planning to move forward with this memorial, and I believe the Clan Douglas Society of North America can play a vital role in supporting this project. As we learn more, we will share details with our members to encourage individual donations and collective Society support to help bring this meaningful monument to realization.

We are always seeking enthusiastic members to serve as Regents or Co-Regents. If you are interested, please reach out to our Regional Vice Presidents: Cora Peterson (West), Harold Edington (Central), or Curtis Rowell (East). You can also contact Vice President Scott Douglas or me, Mark Peterson, President of the Clan Douglas Society. We welcome discussions with anyone interested and value your suggestions. Our Society thrives on the next generation's involvement to keep our Scottish heritage vibrant. We encourage you to attend Scottish Gatherings and Games, support our Regents, and help recruit new members to strengthen Clan Douglas.

I also want to recognize the tireless efforts of our Clan Douglas Society Board Members: Vice President Scott Douglas, Secretary Carol Morton-Bianchini, Treasurer Tom Douglas, Past President Chuck Mirabile, and Past President Tim Tyler. Their behind-the-scenes work keeps our Society thriving, and we deeply appreciate their commitment. I look forward to seeing many of you at the 2027 GMM and connecting in person.

Thank you for your continued support of Clan Douglas!

Best Regards
Mark A. Peterson
President
Clan Douglas Society of North America





The Vice-President's Comments

Clan Douglas Society of North America at the New Hampshire Highland Games

The Clan Douglas Society of North America is pleased to announce that Scott Douglas and his wife, Michelle, will be attending the New Hampshire Highland Games and Festival at Loon Mountain, September 19–21, 2025. This event is one of the largest gatherings of its kind in North America, celebrating Scottish culture, heritage, music, athletics, and clan fellowship.



Scott and Michelle will represent the Clan Douglas Society of North America at the clan tent, welcoming visitors, answering questions, and sharing the proud history and traditions of Clan Douglas with all who attend. The Highland Games provide an important opportunity for clans to come together, strengthen ties, and encourage the next generation to embrace their heritage.

The Society invites all members, friends, and those with Douglas ancestry to stop by the tent, connect with fellow clansfolk, and enjoy the spirit of camaraderie that makes the Highland Games such a special event. With pipes and drums filling the mountain air, traditional athletic competitions, dancing, and music, it promises to be a memorable weekend of Scottish pride and celebration.

We look forward to seeing you at Loon Mountain this September as we honor our heritage and keep alive the enduring legacy of Clan Douglas.

Yours faithfully,
Scott Douglas
Vice President, Clan Douglas Society





The Secretary's Report

Dear Members,

I hope this message finds you well and thriving. As your secretary, it's both an honor and a joy to connect with you. Each of you brings something unique and valuable to CDSNA, and I'm continually inspired by the energy, dedication, and camaraderie that define our membership.

How to Effectively Volunteer CDSNA

Creating Impact Through Purposeful Engagement

Volunteering for Clan Douglas Society of N.A. Ltd. is more than a generous donation of time—it's a chance to contribute meaningfully to causes that enrich our clan membership, and inspire collective progress. Yet, to truly make a difference, a volunteer must approach their role with purpose, preparedness, and a willingness to grow.

Understanding the Mission

Do you know our mission and values? Take time to read the CDSNA By-Laws and history on our website – clandouglassociety.org. We outline our mission statement, vision, and core values on our website. By aligning yourself with the organization's purpose, you'll be better equipped to contribute authentically and stay motivated throughout your volunteering experience. Also, read our Regent's Manual, under Regent's Resources for a greater understanding of the duties of a Regent part of which is provide a One Stop Report after your event and a report to be published in the Dubh Ghlase complete with a picture or two. The report is part of the documentation we need to maintain our non-profit status, don't hesitate to reach out to staff or veteran volunteers to clarify your understanding.

Assessing Your Skills and Interests

Consider your unique skills, experience, and passions. We need a broad array of talents: some need help with hands-on tasks, while others seek expertise in marketing for new regents and members, clan history, or event participation in our General Members Member event volunteers.

- Think of your strengths: List your professional and personal abilities—are you great at public speaking, organizing, fundraising, or digital design?
- Identify your interests or areas of growth to fill out your resume. Advise me of your interests so I can help fulfill your volunteer interests. You can email me at DouglasSecretary@comcast.net to let me know what your interests are.

Respectfully,
Carol Morton-Bianchini
Secretary



Clan Douglas Board Meeting
Saturday, June 14th, 2025
9:00 AM PST, 11:00 AM Central, 12:00 EST

1. Meeting Called to Order by the President @ 2 minutes after the hour.
2. **Roll Call:** Board Members present: Pres Mark Peterson; VP Scott Douglas; Treas Tom Douglas; Past Pres Chuck Mirabile
3. **Welcome Guests:** Regional VPs present: West - Cora Peterson; Central – Harold Edington; East – Curtis Rowell; Storekeeper Brandy Mahoney; CDSNA Editor Jaime Haushalter
4. **Officers and Storekeepers Report**
 - a) **President's Report:** Mark mentioned he has not heard any new information regarding the potential Scottish monument for the Good Sir James. He has reached out to William Douglas (Douglas Archives) to learn what progress has been made.
 - b) **Vice President's Report:** Scott has signed up to host a Douglas tent at the 2025 New Hampshire Highland Games & Festival to be held from September 19-21, 2025 at Loon Mountain Resort in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. This event is being considered as the location for our 2027 CDSNA GMM. Since the event will occur after the next scheduled Board Meeting in August, Scott will have a full report for the November Board Meeting.

Scott mentioned that Donald Dickey has been appointed as a Regent in Pennsylvania. Donald served as our PA Regent for a few years before moving out of state. He has since returned to PA and is interested in resuming Regent duties in the state. With multiple events in PA, it is hoped that Donald will be able to recruit other CDSNA members to serve as Regents and expand coverage at festivals in the state.
 - c) **Secretary's Report:** Secretary was unable to attend.
 - d) **Treasurer's Report:** Tom reported that our CDSNA account with Morgan Stanley is holding strong near \$139,000 despite recent market fluctuations. The CDSNA checking account stands at just over \$10,000 with all current bills paid. He reminded the Board that the Society's fiscal year ends June 30 and that he will have printed *End of Fiscal Year* reports for the next Board meeting and for the September newsletter.



- e) **Storekeeper's Report:** Brandy indicated she believed she did not have full access to Storekeeper features in the website that would allow her to organize inventory reports and to update the site with new inventory products. She informed the Board that Wix is now partnering with the shipper 'Pirate Ship' to streamline the shipping process and inventory of goods leaving the Clan Store. Tom said he had access to the website and would look into the Storekeeper access.

Brandy also mentioned she would appreciate every Regent contacting her via email with a statement of what Store Goods are in the Regent's possession. She needs this to update the Store Inventory. RVPs said they would reach out to Regents in their respective regions to have inventories sent. If the Regent has no CDSNA Store inventory, then the Regent would send a statement to that effect to the Storekeeper.

5. Old Business

- a) **Approve Minutes:** With the absence of the Secretary, a motion made by Mark to shelve the approval of the Minutes of the last meeting until the next meeting. Motion seconded by Scott; motion passed unanimously.
- b) **Store Inventory Items:** Brandy reported that a number of Regents still need to report what Store Goods they have so she can update the CDSNA Store inventory. Once the comprehensive inventory has been made, Brandy wants to add new items to the website. One of the items she mentioned wanting to add was the "Septs & Allied Families" book by Harold Edington. Harold also has a number of Douglas-themed items in his Zazzle account that might be considered for the store.
- c) **Website:** Cora and Chuck both suggested that the admin credentials for fully accessing the website be made available to the Board to safeguard access to the website. Tom said he had access to much of the website but was unsure if he had access to all admin functions. Harold said he had access to the Regent-related sections.
- d) **Media Update:** New CDSNA Newsletter Editor Jamie Haushalter was welcomed to the meeting and congratulated for an excellent first issue as Editor.

6. New Business

- a) **Scholarship discussion:** Chuck mentioned that only one CDSNA Scholarship application was submitted by the May 1, 2025 deadline. The Board awarded a \$250 scholarship to Scottish dancer Olivia Bishop.



Discussion followed regarding how CDSNA might encourage others to apply for the scholarship. Chuck suggested reaching out to parents at Scottish dance competitions as a way to spread the word and as a possible CDSNA membership recruiting tool.

The Scholarship Application criteria is ...

- CDSNA will award up to \$1000.00 in scholarships provided no individual will receive a scholarship more than \$250.00.
 - Applicants must be dedicated to continuing their instruction and furthering their education *in the field of Scottish arts, which includes piping, drumming, dancing, Scottish related languages, traditional Scottish Highland Games athletics, or general Scottish studies.*
 - *Recipients of the scholarship must submit a report upon completion of their studies for publication in the Clan Douglas newsletter, Dubh Ghlase.*
 - *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.*
- b) Charitable Gifts in the amounts of \$500 each were approved by the Board to support the efforts of *The Douglas Archives* and also the *Douglas Heritage Museum*.
- c) Help from Clan Douglas on events where Regents tents, etc, ... are destroyed while attending a game. Curtis, Harold, and Mark brought up the fact some of our CDSNA Regents have suffered catastrophic losses of their tents due to extreme weather while representing the Society in an official capacity at a festival event. Since our Regents are members who *volunteer* their resources and time for the good of the Society, the loss of their tent during an event is a staggering loss.

The Board determined it would be beneficial to Clan Douglas as a whole, if Regents experiencing the loss of their tent at a festival while in an official capacity for CDSNA could be offered assistance in the form of a reimbursement for part of the cost in purchasing a new tent to replace the one destroyed.

Chuck suggested a form be created for Regents to use as an “insurance claim” to be sent to CDSNA along with replacement receipts for any tent so lost. Mark and Tom suggested there be a maximum amount of reimbursement.



The Board voted and approved the following:

In the event of a catastrophic loss of the clan tent while in the official capacity of representing CDSNA at an approved event, the Board agrees to provide a reimbursement - up to a maximum of \$250. Regents requesting the reimbursement will submit a reimbursement request to their Regional VP and submit receipts for the replacement canopies/tents. The Regional VP will forward the request and receipts to the Board for a final determination. Once approved, a reimbursement will be sent by the Treasurer.

It was also determined more discussion may be required to iron out any details of such a program.

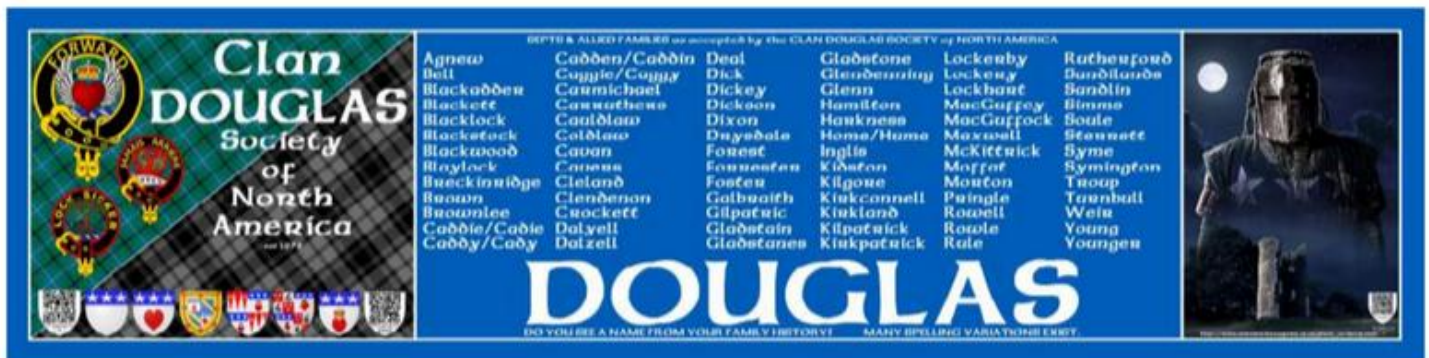
- d) **CDSNA ZOOM Call meeting for ALL CDSNA REGENTS:** Mark brought up the idea of scheduling a ZOOM Call meeting for ALL CDSNA Regents similar to the ZOOM Call meeting from a couple years ago. The Call would be a good way to welcome our new Regents and to talk about the Mission and Goals of being a CDSNA Regent. Regents would also have an opportunity to share ideas and ask questions.

Curtis mentioned that Regent Jeff Sparks utilized a new *Visitor Guestbook* program feature at his tent in Florida earlier this year. The feature was easy to use and a simple way to record visitors at the tent for after-event follow-up. Mark agreed that would be a good topic to talk about during the Regent meeting.

Once a date and time for a meeting is determined, Regents will be notified in advance to mark their calendars.

7. NEXT CDSNA BOARD MEETING scheduled for September 6, 2025.

Respectfully,
 Harold Edington
 Acting Minutes Recorder





The Treasurer's Report

5:38 PM

08/11/25

Accrual Basis

Clan Douglas Society of North America

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2025

	<u>Jun 30, 25</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1010 · Checking - Wells Fargo	10,763.23
1100 · Morgan Stanley Investments	142,055.74
1150 · Petty Cash	350.00
Total Checking/Savings	<u>153,168.97</u>
Other Current Assets	
1400 · Prepaid Postage	14.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>14.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>153,182.97</u>
Other Assets	
1200 · Inventory	11,511.00
Total Other Assets	<u>11,511.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>164,693.97</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2150 · Colorado Regent Travel	1,500.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>1,500.00</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,500.00</u>
Total Liabilities	1,500.00
Equity	
3000 · Opening Bal Equity	37,110.89
3900 · Retained Earnings	122,983.65
Net Income	3,099.43
Total Equity	<u>163,193.97</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>164,693.97</u></u>



5:39 PM

08/11/25

Accrual Basis

Clan Douglas Society of North America
Profit & Loss
 July 2024 through June 2025

	Jul '24 - Jun 25
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4010 · Dues - New	2,182.86
4030 · Dues - Renewals	2,835.10
4050 · Dues - Three year	474.63
4100 · Store Sales	3,462.87
4600 · Clan Dinner Receipts	3,703.16
4990 · Change in Morgan Stanley Value	5,000.00
Total Income	17,658.62
Cost of Goods Sold	
5000 · Cost of Goods Sold	984.32
Total COGS	984.32
Gross Profit	16,674.30
Expense	
6010 · Store Commissions	63.20
6050 · Store Orders Shipping	582.57
6060 · Store Supplies	1,812.98
6070 · Store Kit Shipping	0.00
7010 · Advertising	324.00
7017 · Pay Pal Expenses	77.27
7020 · Clan Dinner Costs	11,078.30
7025 · Game Sponsorship	2,793.68
7026 · Emergency tent replacement	250.00
7030 · Internet Expense	432.00
7060 · Office Expense - Secretary	1,001.01
7065 · Office Expense - Treasurer	159.90
Total Expense	18,574.91
Net Ordinary Income	-1,900.61
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
4995 · Morgan Stanly Change in Value	5,000.04
Total Other Income	5,000.04
Net Other Income	5,000.04
Net Income	3,099.43



Clan Douglas Society of North America New and Renewing Members

Welcome to the Clan Douglas Society

New Members

- 4512 - Patricia Cook Powers, VA
- 4513 – Steven Douglas, SD
- 4514 – Linda Perkins, SC
- 4515 – Jason Sanderson, NH
- 4516 – David Bushey, IN
- 4517 – Laura Goodrich, VA
- 4518 – Malcolm Angus Douglas - NH

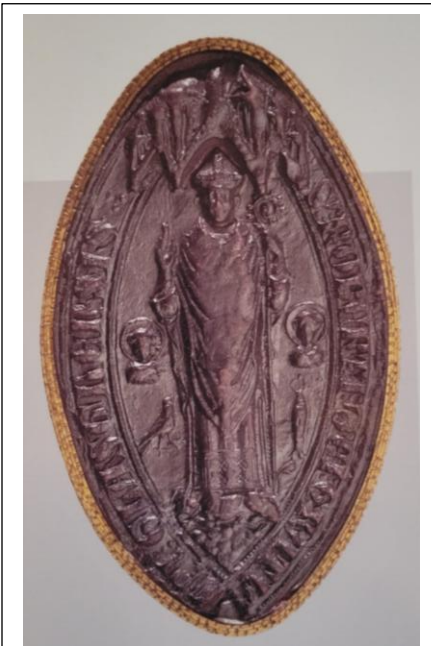
Renewing Members

- 4205 – Helen Kay Shrader, FL
- 444 – Allan C. Douglas
- 1211 – Larry Ray Morton, NV
- 780 – W.A. Blackwood, NC
- 2120 – Michael D. Goodrich, VA
- 4159 – Matthew Douglas, FL
- 3062 – Penny Dilloway, MI





The Editor's Observations



Cast of Bishop Wishart's seal c. 1315. Image Source: Jamie

On a recent trip to Scotland, I visited places tied to the history of the First War of Scottish Independence. This took me to Glasgow and the Glasgow Cathedral in search of Robert Wishart, the Bishop of Glasgow. I have always been interested in him and, in my opinion, he stands as one of Scotland's unsung heroes of the long and turbulent struggle for freedom.

Information about his early life is scarce. Historians estimate he was born around 1240, trained in the clergy, and developed a strong sense of Scottish identity and loyalty. He rose through church ranks and was appointed Bishop of Glasgow around 1271 during Alexander III's reign. After the deaths of Alexander and his granddaughter, Margaret, Maid of Norway, he navigated the ensuing chaos over Scotland's throne. He reportedly supplied funds, resources and sanctuary to William Wallace and his rebels. In 1297, he was implicated in Wallace's rebellion, arrested and was briefly imprisoned by the English but was likely released due to his position with the church.

After Wallace's execution, he became a steadfast political ally of Robert the Bruce lending legitimacy to Bruce's controversial 1306 killing of John Comyn. He also reportedly provided liturgical vestments from Glasgow

Cathedral to create a banner for Bruce's coronation, symbolizing the church's endorsement of the new king. Arrested again by the English in 1307, he languished in prison for seven years. He was released in 1314 as part of a prisoner exchange following the Battle of Bannockburn. Blind and frail, he resumed his duties as Bishop of Glasgow until his death in 1316, working tirelessly for Scotland's cause.

The exact location of his burial site is lost to time; however, it is speculated that he rests near Saint Mungo's tomb, around which Glasgow Cathedral was built. Today, he is acknowledged with a sign near a defaced effigy believed to be Wishart's, though, 700+ years after his death, proof remains elusive.

Robert Wishart was a rare figure in medieval history – a bishop who prioritized national loyalty over church neutrality. Whether truth or lore, his deeds and defiance of English rule and strategic support for Bruce helped sustain the Scottish cause during its most perilous years, earning him a lasting place in Scottish history.

Respectfully yours,
Jamie Haushalter
Editor, Dubh Ghlase
Mississippi Regent



Defaced efficacy of Bishop Robert Wishart, allegedly. Image Source: Jamie Haushalter



CLAN DOUGLAS STORE GOODS

AVAILABLE FROM THE CDSNA WEBSITE



To purchase CDSNA store goods via credit card:

(DELIVERY/POSTAGE COSTS APPLY & ARE DETERMINED BY THE STOREKEEPER)



1. Use the QR Code to open the CDSNA website Store Goods page or select this link: <https://www.clan-douglas-society.org/sale>
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Knight Errant: A Trip to Tantallon Castle, Part 2

Callum Watson, PhD

Welcome back everyone! This is Part 2 of my two-part post on the history of Tantallon Castle and its occupants (Part 1 can be found [here](#)). This absurdly over-the-top study of my favourite castle in Scotland and those who lived there is going to look at some of the most controversial figures to own Tantallon Castle. These men were more influential than any of its previous occupants, but their political activities were frequently disreputable, occasionally treasonous, and brought the entire Red Douglas dynasty to the brink of destruction on more than one occasion. Tantallon itself will have been besieged no fewer than three times (and subjected to at least one more minor attack as well) by the end of the post, the last ending its service as a lordly residence. This post will also extend well beyond the period usually covered by this blog, stretching all the way into the mid seventeenth-century (ew!).

Maverick: Tantallon under 'Bell-the-Cat', 1463-1513



Tantallon Castle in East Lothian. It was built to demonstrate the wealth and prestige of William, 1st earl of Douglas, in the late fourteenth-century. However, it continued to be used as a lordly residence well into the seventeenth-century. It was also during the later stages of its useful life that Tantallon's military capabilities were most strenuously tested.
Image source: Yours truly.



Archibald Douglas, 5th earl of Angus, was about fourteen when he inherited his father's estates and titles in 1463 and he began his renegade political career early when, on 4 March 1468, he married Elizabeth Boyd, eldest daughter of Robert, lord Boyd. Boyd had assumed control of the minority government of James III from Bishop James Kennedy of St Andrews in July 1466 by essentially abducting the fourteen-year-old king while he was out hunting near Linlithgow. For three years thereafter, the Boyd administration ran roughshod over the law, pillaged the royal finances, and alienated huge swathes of the Scottish political community - not least King James himself. Archibald's marriage to Elizabeth may have been part of an effort to get in on this strip mining of the crown purse. However, James III's marriage to Margaret of Denmark at Holyrood Abbey on 13 July 1469 (the only public-spirited achievement of the Boyd regime) led to the king's assumption of personal authority, which in turn saw the complete collapse of the Boyds. Archibald's father-in-law Robert and brother-in-law Thomas, earl of Arran (a title created by the illegal alienation of crown property), had fled the country before the wedding even took place. Earl Archibald seems to have saved his own bacon by sitting on the assize that condemned the hapless Sir Alexander Boyd of Drumcoll - lord Boyd's brother and the only Boyd the vengeful King James could lay his hands on - to be beheaded in November. But he may have remained a figure of suspicion for the young James III and would rarely be seen at court for the first decade or so of the reign.

The possibility of a frosty relationship between King James and Earl Archibald may help explain the latter's association with the king's younger brother Alexander Stewart, duke of Albany. The earl and the duke had much in common even without their shared uneasiness around the king. By the time he was four or five, Albany had already been made earl of March, lord of Annandale, and warden of the marches, suggesting that his father James II had always intended him to be the predominant representative of the crown in southern Scotland. Following the end of his elder brother's minority in 1469, Albany - who would have been around fourteen at the time - was free to fulfil this responsibility in earnest, and maintaining good relations with a powerful southern magnate like Earl Archibald would have been critical in the pursuit of this aim. The two men were also united in their opposition to King James's foreign policy after 1474.

Since the outbreak of the First War of Scottish Independence in 1296, Scotland and England had been at war almost continuously. There had been periods of truce, some of them quite long, but the only peace deal between the two kingdoms during that period, which had been ratified in May 1328, had lasted only five years (arguably four). Thanks to the recent efforts of James II and Albany's mother Mary, the Anglo-Scottish border in 1474 was identical to that in 1296, meaning that nearly 200 years of fighting had led to no territorial acquisition for either side. Coupled with this general war-weariness, King James had been repeatedly burned in his efforts to assert Scottish influence on the Continent by his supposed ally King Louis XI of France, whose reputation for deviousness and duplicity has rightfully earned him the epithet 'the Spider King'. Thus sickened of the traditional 'auld alliance' with France and eager to preserve Scottish possession of Berwick, in November 1474 King James resolved to pursue a more conciliatory approach to Anglo-Scottish relations by betrothing his eldest son and heir James to Edward IV's daughter Cecilia.



Archibald Douglas 'Bell-the-cat', 5th earl of Angus, as depicted in the magnificent processional frieze in the entrance hall of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. The fifth earl is seen here alongside several other prominent figures from his own time. His arrest of the king's unpopular familiar Thomas Cochran(e), shown here to the right of the earl as we look at him, is what gained Archibald his peculiar by-name, as discussed below. Image source: https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/159703?artists/159703?artists%5B3641%5D=3641&page=2&search_set_offset=176



Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland. The castle was subject to an attack by the fifth earl in 1480. Image source: <https://www.historichouses.org/house/bamburgh-castle/visit/>

The prospect of a lasting peace with England threatened disaster for men like Albany and Earl Archibald. While they understood the need for brief respites from warfare during which the Scots might rebuild their defences and recover their strength, the great border magnates justified their leadership of the armed communities of the marches in terms of their personal capacity to offer protection and patronage in times of conflict. If these lords could no longer rely on the periodic threat of warfare along the border, their tenants might reasonably question why they should accept their lordship in the first place. Nevertheless, when open conflict between James III and Albany erupted in 1479, initiated not by the duke but by the king, Earl Archibald appears to have remained largely aloof from events. He

does not appear to have been present for the parliament at Edinburgh in October 1479 at which King James sought to forfeit his brother for treason, and this too may have been a miscalculation, as James proved unsuccessful in convincing parliament that Albany had committed such a crime. The king's bungled attempt to oust his brother ironically contributed more effectively to the collapse of James's peaceable foreign policy than Albany's opposition had done in the past five years. Albany fled Scotland for France, and the threat of French military support for Albany's return to Scotland forced King James to entertain the prospect of renewing his alliance with the artful King Louis. This in turn aggravated Edward IV, who was already frustrated by the lack of development concerning the betrothal of James's son to Cecilia. The increasingly convoluted nature of Anglo-Scottish affairs is neatly illustrated by the fact that King Edward's increasingly bellicose attitude towards Scotland threatened Earl Archibald's position. The exiled ninth earl of Douglas remained a pensioner of the English crown, whose rights Edward cited when threatening renewed conflict with Scotland. These rights included claims on the Douglas estates and titles that the fifth earl's father had received from James II as reward for his support in breaking Black Douglas power in the 1450s. Nevertheless, when open war broke out in early 1480, Earl Archibald seized the opportunity to demonstrate his military lordship by leading an attack on Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland.

Earl Archibald's 'finest hour', or so Hume of Godscroft would have us believe, came in July 1482, when he apparently played a leading role in the so-called 'Lauder Crisis'. It is from this incident that the fifth earl receives his somewhat clunky by-name



The interior of the landward wall at Tantallon Castle, featuring the east tower (left) and central tower (right). The two lines of square holes in the lower part of the wall show where ancillary buildings - possibly a stable block - would have stood when the castle was in use as a residence. Image source: Yours truly.



'Bell-the-Cat'. This is reference to a fable in which a group of mice resolve to hang a bell off a cat that has been terrorising them, only for the plan to fall apart when none of the mice have the courage to perform this dangerous deed. According to Hume of Godscroft, when the time of crisis came, Earl Archibald was the only Scottish lord brave enough to lay hands on the king's hated favourite Thomas Cochrane, instigating a process that saw Cochrane and the rest of the king's familiars arrested and executed and King James himself temporarily removed from government of his own kingdom. For the later panegyrist, this was an act of public-spirited gallantry, an attempt to rescue King James from wicked counsellors who had brought Scotland to the brink of catastrophe, which singled Earl Archibald out as one of the greatest proponents of the long-standing Douglas tradition of fearless defence of the realm from its external *and* internal enemies. In fact, the earl's actions in July 1482 are better explained with reference to much less high-minded and more cynical goals, and his activities throughout the crisis indicate that his personal interests were what he was seeking to protect and advance.



Middleham Castle in North Yorkshire, primary residence of Richard, duke of Gloucester (later King Richard III of England). Gloucester played an active and leading role in the prosecution of the war with Scotland in the early 1480s on behalf of his brother Edward IV. Image source: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/middleham-castle/history/>

Negotiations for an Anglo-French truce - another instance of the crafty Spider King dragging King James into trouble and then ditching him as soon as it suited him to do so - had narrowly saved Scotland from a full-scale English invasion in the summer of 1481. However, since the Scots were not included in the truce, this only postponed the advance of a large English army into Scotland for a year. In March 1482, parliament again met at Edinburgh to make preparations for this exactly eventuality, and it is clear from these preparations that the Three Estates (as the political community at large increasingly called themselves by this period) remained anxious to avoid direct confrontation with the English, preferring to rely instead on the tried and tested guerrilla strategy that had preserved the Scottish kingdom from complete destruction since the reign of Robert I. The Estates were also eager to keep the king himself out of harm's way, insisting that James should only lead the Scottish response to the invasion if his counterpart 'the revare Edward' also led the English army in person. If, as seemed more likely, he delegated responsibility for the invasion to his brother and 'lieutenant-general in the north' Richard, duke of Gloucester (the future King Richard III), then parliament insisted that the English were 'to be resistit be wardanis and lieutennandis stuffit withe sufficient powere according for the tyme'. This of course would include Earl Archibald in his capacity as warden of the east march. Perhaps most significantly, parliament appears to have been willing to temporarily sacrifice some of Scotland's southern territory if it meant the kingdom was better able to weather the coming onslaught. Only 600 'men of were' were to be raised for the defence of the major border strongholds, with the king having to personally take on the 'grete charge and coist' of supplying a further 500 troops specifically to the Berwick garrison.



Berwick-upon-Tweed, with its sixteenth-century town walls. Preserving Scottish possession of Berwick was the central aim of James III's war policy in the early 1480s. His determination to achieve this through open battle with the English led to him to personal disaster and brought him into conflict with the fifth earl.

Later in the same month, a diplomatic delegation - including Earl Archibald himself - was dispatched to France, ostensibly to appeal to King Louis to renew his support for the Scots in spite of his recent truce with England. However, Dr Roland Tanner has reasonably suggested that for the fifth earl, and perhaps several of the Scottish ambassadors, their true purpose was to renew contact with the exiled duke of Albany, and perhaps even to offer their support for the duke in returning to Scotland and ousting his elder brother as king. In April, Albany left France for England and at Fotheringhay Castle on 11 June the duke, now styling himself 'Alexander, king of Scotlande', entered into an indenture with Edward IV, accepting English military assistance for his supposed rights as King of Scots in return for the cessation of a

substantial portion of southern Scotland to the English crown. Gloucester and Albany set off from York in July at the head of a sizeable army and on arriving at Berwick they 'received the surrender of the town immediately on sitting down before it', at least according to Edward IV's second-hand account of the event. Possibly, this was down to the Scottish garrison acknowledging Albany's authority rather than a submission to the English army *per se*, but Berwick would remain an English town to the present day (making it the only lasting territorial acquisition in three centuries of Anglo-Scottish warfare).

Contrary to parliament's earlier provisions, and indeed contrary to Scottish received military wisdom built on nearly 200 years of bitter experience, King James raised an army and prepared for open armed confrontation with Gloucester's army to settle Berwick's fate. Understandably in the circumstances, the great lords in this army were unwilling to participate in what history told them



Edinburgh Castle, viewed from the south-east. It was here that James III was held prisoner by his half-uncles in the months that followed the Lauder Crisis and from here that the royal half-uncles sought to cover Scotland to their own advantage. Image source: <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/edinburgh-castle-tour-b371b78c>

would most likely be mass suicide, and this reluctance - coupled with various frustrations that had been accumulating throughout James's fractious reign - finally boiled over into outright defiance. Even the earliest account of the incident, by sixteenth-century chronicler Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie, identifies Earl Archibald as one of the leading figures in the events at Lauder, and claims that his laying of hands on Cochrane was the spark that led his fellow dissenters to seize the rest of James's familiars for summary execution by hanging from Lauder Bridge. The king himself was placed in the custody of his



half-uncles John Stewart, earl of Atholl, James Stewart, earl of Buchan, and Andrew Stewart, bishop of Moray, and taken to Edinburgh Castle while the army quickly dispersed.

Interestingly, despite being credited as a ringleader of the lords who moved against King James at Lauder, Earl Archibald does not seem to have played an active role in the rest of the crisis. It was the chancellor Andrew Stewart, lord Avandale, the Master of the Royal Household Colin Campbell, earl of Argyll, and the prelates of St Andrews and Dunkeld who met with Gloucester at Edinburgh in August and bought him off with vague promises and minor concessions. Nor is Earl Archibald found in association with the royal half-uncles, who used physical possession of the king - and more

importantly of the king's seals - to dominate the royal administration in the months that followed James's arrest. Earl Archibald does at least appear to have continued to represent Albany in his (straightforwardly treasonous) dealings with England. But the earl does not seem to have taken part in the negotiations between Albany and James's queen Margaret of Denmark that resulted in the king's release from captivity in September (a move intended to break the half-uncles' stranglehold on power in Albany's favour but instead ultimately led to the total collapse of the post-Lauder status quo). Indeed, before King James regained personal control of the government, Albany may have already alienated Archibald by resuming his position as warden of the marches, robbing Archibald of his wardenship in the east. The maverick earl had taken the lion's share of the risk when the magnates had moved against King James at Lauder, but he does not appear to have received any obvious rewards for his efforts, and may even have materially lost out on the deal. This last fact might at least explain why he was not on the receiving end of any serious retribution once King James regained his authority.

Ironically, Earl Archibald's dispiriting experience in 1482-1483 seems to have made him slow to exploit the next crisis that engulfed the hapless King James, and ultimately ended his reign, in the summer of 1488. Perhaps the most enduring consequence of the Lauder Crisis was that it alienated King James from his queen Margaret and their son James, duke of



The view east from the central tower at Tantallon Castle. It is tempting to speculate that the fifth earl may have taken in this view while pondering the political situation during James III's imprisonment upriver at Edinburgh Castle. Image source: Yours truly.



Stirling Castle, viewed from the west. The castle was treated as a kind of crèche by the Stewart dynasty, and most royal children were raised here in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries. It was thus from here that the future James IV escaped in early 1488, initiating the crisis that would bring his father's reign to a dramatic - and bloody - end. Image source: <https://www.citysparespace.com/visit-stirling/#gref>

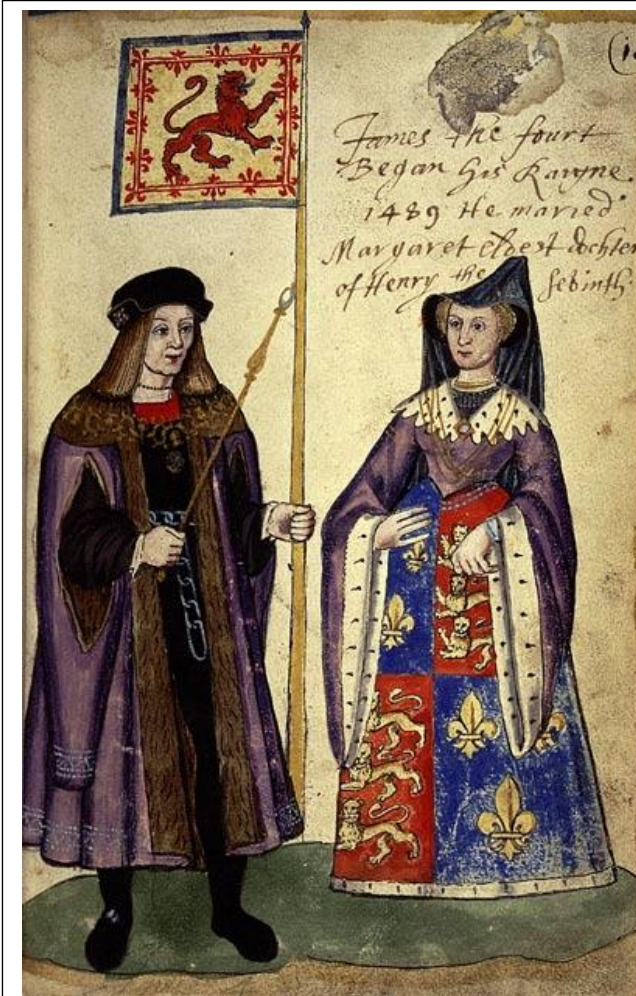


Rothsay (later James IV). As mentioned above, in 1482, Queen Margaret cut a deal with Albany, lending him her support and access to her son as an alternative focus of authority with which to undermine the royal half-uncles. This was probably a fairly desperate but certainly pragmatic decision for the queen intended to provide the young James - who would have turned nine in March 1482 - with some much needed protection in the uncertain months that followed the king's arrest. Margaret's alliance with Albany not only led to her husband's release but possibly even saved his life. King James however did not see things this way and was instead left feeling that both his wife and his heir had abandoned him in favour of his hated brother in his most desperate extremity. Margaret's death in July 1486 saved her from significant repercussions

(though there would be later accusations that she was poisoned by her husband's familiar John Ramsay), but the latest round of Anglo-Scottish peace negotiations in November 1487 left the teenaged duke of Rothsay fearing that he was to be squeezed out of the future governance of the kingdom in favour of his younger brother John, marquis of Ormond. Thus, in early 1488, the younger James slipped away from Stirling Castle and joined a band of disgruntled lords at Linlithgow. Surprisingly, given his long-standing equivocal relationship with the king, Earl Archibald initially appears to have remained close to James III for at least the first month of the ensuing crisis. His eventual shift away from the king to the rebels may have had more to do with a pragmatic recognition that the king's cause was lost than out of an expectation that he could exploit the situation to his advantage. When the crisis came to a head at the Battle of Sauchieburn in July 1488, Earl Archibald may not have even been present, while several of his tenants were to be found on the woefully outnumbered 'royalist' side and suffered accordingly.

Despite his lukewarm attitude to the rebellion that had ended James III's reign (and life), Earl Archibald's fortunes enjoyed a brief uptick once James IV had been crowned. He served on the parliamentary committee that in October 1488 ruled that James III 'happened by chance to depart this life' (*fortuito casu in fata decessit*) at Sauchieburn, absolving both the new king and the leading rebels of any wrongdoing in the events of the summer. He was also briefly given wardship of the young king, and it was likely during this time that the earl developed a close personal relationship with James IV. In the years that followed, Earl Archibald was frequently to be found in the king's company, playing cards and dice with the young man. In one case, Archibald and James are found playing cards together for three days straight (26-28 November 1490) with the royal treasury setting aside no less than forty unicorns (gold coins stamped with a unicorn and worth 18 shillings each) for the king's stake

money. However, King James was still technically a minor, and unlike his father and grandfather - who seized their earliest opportunities to assume personal control of the government - he seemed content to postpone taking personal responsibility for ruling his realm for as long as possible. In the meantime, the royal administration was dominated by the leading rebels, including Patrick Hepburn, lord Hailes (who gained the title earl of Bothwell after James III's supporters at Sauchieburn had been forfeited) and Alexander, Master (i.e., heir) of Hume. The Hepburns and the Humes had, at the time Tantallon was built in the early 1370s, been the kind of minor regional lords who magnates like Earl Archibald (or his great-great grandfather the first earl of Douglas) would have sought to integrate into their affinities by offering patronage and protection. The changes to Scottish noble society that had begun in the reign of James I had, by the 1490s, given such lords a more independent



King James IV of Scotland and his queen Margaret Tudor, as depicted in the Seton Armorial of 1591. The fifth earl's close personal relationship would ensure he experienced his greatest political advancement, though he would also suffer his most desperate challenges in the same period. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Margaret_Tudor,_Queen_of_Scotland.jpg



outlook, and thus Hepburn and Hume were effectively Earl Archibald's rivals for influence in southern Scotland. They therefore used control of the royal administration to expand their authority at the expense of the fifth earl, taking his march wardenships, the office of sheriff of Lanark, and even his private lands at Earlston in Berwickshire and Broughty in Angus. Between January 1489 and February 1492, Earl Archibald even seems to have missed three parliaments, a striking sign of his political alienation.

Having perhaps grown somewhat jaded due to his experience after the Lauder Crisis, and finding his rivals estranging him from the royal government (though not from the king's person), Earl Archibald took the rather extreme step of making contact with King Henry VII of England. An exact chronology of events is difficult to reconstruct, but the earl's initial overtures to the English monarch may have been intimately tied to the Hepburn-Hume regime's efforts to renew the Franco-Scottish alliance in mid-1491. That July, Hepburn had personally set sail for France aboard a ship named the *Katharine* to oversee the negotiations himself. Tellingly, Hepburn left Scotland from North Berwick, meaning that the *Katharine* would have had to sail past Earl Archibald's castle at Tantallon in the initial stage of its journey. Literally days later, the royal council issued instructions for Earl Archibald to confine himself to Tantallon until further notice. No charges or even suspicions were mentioned, but the timing may indicate that the Hepburns and Humes feared that the earl intended to interfere in their diplomatic plans. This may have been as simple as using his personal influence with his gambling partner King James to poison him on whatever the Hepburns and Humes were working on with the French crown. Their efforts to neutralise the earl do not seem



A contemporary portrait of King Henry VII of England, produced c. 1505-1509, by an unknown artist. The fifth earl's efforts to lever concessions from James IV by appealing to King Henry ultimately brought Tantallon under direct attack from the Scottish king. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Enrique_VII_de_Inglatera,_por_un_artista_an%C3%B3nimo.jpg

to have worked however, and by October a royal army was laying siege to Tantallon Castle.

Despite the castle having been in use for at least 117 years, this is the first time that Tantallon is known to have come under direct attack. Artillery for the siege was brought from Edinburgh, Linlithgow, and Blackness, and additional artillery and crossbows were summoned from Leith. It seems likely that the castle was besieged by land and sea, with trenches being dug across the headland on 13 October and six men sent by boat to Largo in Fife, probably to alert the king's most able and trusted sailor Sir Andrew Wood. Much as his grandfather and great-grandfather had been fascinated by cannons, James IV was obsessed with building a permanent naval force for Scotland, and this siege



Earthworks at Tantallon Castle. The existing ditches and banks most likely date to the castle's final siege in 1651, but comparable earthworks were probably a major part of the castle's defences throughout its history. Not only did these make it more difficult for enemy troops to approach the walls, they also increased the distance from which enemy artillery could fire at the castle itself and reduced the areas of the castle that could be targeted by them, as this image demonstrates. Image source: Yours truly.



may have been an early test for the nascent fleet. No source makes explicit reference to the outcome of the siege, but subsequent events suggest that the castle withstood whatever the king and his cannons threw at it. By 16 October, James had moved off to Haddington, and eight days later he was back at Linlithgow. More significantly, Earl Archibald himself does not seem to have been taken into custody and in November he was free to undertake further negotiations with King Henry. The siege of 1491 is a testament to the brilliance of first earl of Douglas's approach to castle-building. Some remodelling of the castle would no doubt have taken place since his initial building, and well-placed earthworks would have helped by increasing the range that the artillery could shoot from and giving their projectiles more time to lose the force with which they were initially fired. But the thick yet soft sandstone wall, which was a key feature of the castle even in its original form, proved perfect for absorbing blows and remaining intact even under the intense pressure that the royal artillery train could bring to bear against it.



'Mons Meg', a mid fifteenth-century bombard now on display at Edinburgh Castle. Though she would have been forty-two years old when James IV besieged Tantallon in 1491, it is likely that Mons Meg was one of the cannon brought from Edinburgh for that event. Indeed, she may even have participated in his son James V's siege of Tantallon in 1528, as her active military career appears to have continued into the mid sixteenth-century. Image source: https://common.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mons_Meg,_Medieval_Bombard,_Edinburgh,_Scotland._Pic_01.jpg

The attack on his primary residence at Tantallon, which must have seemed like an outrageous affront to his rights orchestrated by his opponents on the royal council (Hepburn and Hume), may have pushed Earl Archibald into even closer cooperation with the English king. On 16 November, the earl entered into an indenture with Henry VII, in which he promised to surrender the strategically significant border castle at Hermitage in Liddesdale to Henry in return for lands of equal value in England unless Archibald could convince King James to accept a new and lasting peace deal. The earl even committed himself to attacking those Scots who opposed Henry's proposed peace deal - surely a veiled reference to Hepburn and Hume - while the English king promised to consult the Scottish earl on any changes to the peace that might be proposed during any prospective negotiations. While straightforwardly treasonous, the fifth earl likely hoped that this arrangement



Linlithgow Palace in the snow. It was here in late December 1491 that the fifth earl reached a compromise with James IV. Within thirteen months, the earl had been appointed lord chancellor in one of the most astonishing political comebacks in medieval Scotland. Image source: <https://blog.historicenvironment.scot/2016/11/3-great-winter-days/>



could be leveraged to force a compromise with the hostile Scottish royal administration. In the short term, he was correct. The earl spent Christmas 1491 with the king and the royal council at Linlithgow Palace, where a compromise was hammered out. Understandably given his recent dealings with Henry VII, the Scottish crown was anxious to separate Earl Archibald from the lordship of Liddesdale, but he was at least allowed to exchange this for the lordship of Kilmarnock in Ayrshire and given assurances that this grant would not be revoked once King James reached his majority. His new Ayrshire property gained unexpected significance in 1492, when the earl used his influence in the region to assist the king in settling a local feud between Robert Cunningham, lord Kilmaurs, and Hugh, lord Montgomery. It was also around summer 1492 that the nineteen-year-old King James began an affair with Earl Archibald's niece Marion Boyd, which no doubt further enhanced the personal relationship between Archibald and James. The benefits of this became clear in January 1493, when the earl was appointed lord chancellor - the most important office of state. This was an astonishing reversal of fortune, from treasonous earl besieged by the king in his own fortress to leading figure on the royal council in little more than a year!

This prosperity, which had arrived suddenly and was built largely on personal rapport with the king, would vanish just as quickly as it had come. Though the affair would produce two children - Alexander and Katherine, who would be raised among James's other offspring (legitimate and illegitimate alike) at Stirling - by early 1496 Marion had been discarded in favour of Margaret Drummond. Moreover, as the king approached his majority, his need for a wife - and a legitimate heir - increased. King James initially hoped to secure a marriage to a Spanish *Infanta*, and in order to heighten the diplomatic pressure on the Spanish king and queen Ferdinand and Isabella, James prepared for war with England. Renewed Anglo-Scottish war would distract Henry VII from Continental affairs, which in turn would disrupt Ferdinand and Isabella's efforts

to construct the web on anti-French alliances they had been working on for some time. In this context, Earl Archibald - who was still seen as inherently 'pro-English' after his earlier dealings with Henry VII - was hardly a suitable chancellor, and thus he was replaced by George Gordon, 2nd earl of Huntly, in 1497. The earl may have overplayed his hand during his brief period at the heart of the Scottish government, perhaps - as the late Dr Norman Macdougall suggested - using this as an opportunity to promote himself as heir to Douglas estates lost during the downfall of the Black Douglases in 1455. Certainly, the years after 1497 saw a marked cooling of the personal relationship between Earl Archibald and King James.



Rothesay Castle on the Isle of Bute. The fifth earl was imprisoned here from 1502-1509, separating him from his lands and his regional following. While the fifth earl was here, the castle would have been directly on the coast, with the buildings on the right having been built on reclaimed land in the eighteenth-century. Image source: Yours truly.

The last 'personal' exchange, if that is the appropriate phrase, between the two men came in 1498, when the earl's mistress Janet Kennedy left him for the king, taking with her lands in Lanarkshire that the lovestruck Archibald had granted to her. In 1501, Earl Archibald was briefly imprisoned by the king at Dumbarton Castle, probably due to a dispute with James over wardship of lands belonging to the late John Auchinleck, and he was imprisoned again at Rothesay Castle on the Isle of Bute for no less than seven years from 1502-1509, possibly because of his efforts to recover the lands he had lost to Janet Kennedy. In early 1510, soon after his release, Earl Archibald found himself being pursued for massive fines for non-entry (i.e., failure to procure legal confirmation of his inheritance) to his lands of Kirriemuir in Angus and Eskdale in Dumfriesshire. He thus found himself owing 45 years-worth of back-rent on these estates - £45,000 for Kirriemuir and £44,000 for Eskdale, though he was able to negotiate this down to a (still substantial) payment of 5,000 marks of Kirriemuir and presumably a similarly reduced figure for Eskdale. Only half of his debts for Kirriemuir had been paid by 1512, and the financial burden



probably consumed most of the earl's resources for the remainder of his life. Earl Archibald was not the only victim of this kind of legal extortion. James IV was notorious for and ruthless in his exploitation of his feudal rights as a source of royal income. But the enormity of the sums demanded seem to have hamstrung the earl's activities thereafter. He does appear to have offered the most vocal parliamentary opposition to King James's proposed invasion of northern England in 1513. He was proven right in this instance, as the king's catastrophic defeat and death - alongside the earl's two eldest sons George, Master of Angus, and Sir William Douglas of Glenbervie - at the subsequent Battle of Flodden attests. Such bitter ironies were, as we have seen, a common feature of the fifth earl's career, although this fact can have been little comfort to him when he died at Whithorn in October 1513. His tenure had been a time of great turbulence for the Red Douglases, and not least for Tantallon itself, and that of his successor would prove even more tumultuous.

Highs & Lows: Tantallon under the sixth earl of Angus



The stone by which James IV reputedly mustered his army ahead of the disastrous Flodden campaign. The defeat at Flodden had such a profound impact on the outlook and ambitions of the entire Scottish community, shattering Scottish military confidence for a generation. The refusal of successive Scottish armies to cross the border into northern England in September 1522 and October 1523 is illustrative of this. Image source: Yours truly.

With his eldest son dead at Flodden, the fifth earl was succeeded by his grandson and namesake - Archibald Douglas, 6th earl of Angus. The sixth earl's earliest known contribution to public life was his marriage to Hepburn's daughter Margaret in mid-1509, a union that may have facilitated his grandfather's release from Rothesay Castle around this time. Despite the difficulties his grandfather had faced in the last decade or so of his life, the younger Archibald enjoyed two significant advantages when he inherited the Red Douglas possessions in late 1513. Firstly, the death of James IV alongside a substantial portion of government personnel had greatly destabilised the Scottish royal administration. This left Archibald, despite the fact he was still only in his mid-twenties, as one of the senior magnates in Scotland while simultaneously making it much easier to ignore the outstanding debts the new earl had inherited from his grandfather. Secondly, the late king's widow Margaret Tudor had ostensibly assumed responsibility for governing the kingdom on behalf of her seventeen-month-old eldest son James V. However, as we have seen, the position of a woman, and especially an Englishwoman, as 'regent' was intensely vulnerable, forcing Margaret to seek out allies who could bolster her authority. On paper, the sixth earl filled this role well, being about the same age as Margaret, being an obviously eligible bachelor, and offering widespread lands and political networks that touched many disparate regions of Scotland. On or around 6 August 1514, Archibald and Margaret married in secret, the ceremony being officiated by Archibald's kinsman John Drummond. The reason for the secrecy was because James IV's provision of Margaret as regent for their son was specifically predicated on her remaining single. The

intended arrangement was probably that Earl Archibald would use his political connections to uphold Margaret's status as regent, while Margaret would govern in a manner that suited the interests and ambitions of her new husband.



As it turned out, the marriage was a gross miscalculation for both parties. When the union inevitably became public knowledge, it cost Margaret the regency. Instead, John Stewart, duke of Albany (the son of the Duke Alexander who had caused so much trouble for the fifth earl in the 1470s and 1480s), was invited back to Scotland from France to govern on behalf of the young James V. Having lost both the regency and custody of her children to Albany, Margaret - now heavily pregnant with Earl Archibald's child - withdrew to England, apparently hoping to seek the assistance of her brother Henry VIII in restoring her position in Scotland. Here, she gave birth to a daughter - also Margaret - at Harbottle Castle in Northumberland in October 1515, and it was probably due to complications with the birth (which was reportedly difficult and almost proved fatal) that it was not until the following May that Margaret finally met with Henry to personally discuss the situation in Scotland. In the meantime, Earl Archibald and Alexander, lord Hume (son of the lord Hume who had been a rival

of the fifth earl), botched an attempt to seize Margaret's children back from Albany at Stirling, after which Archibald seems to have cooled on the notion of achieving greater power through the restoration of his wife's status as queen dowager. This was probably bound up in the beginning of an affair between the earl and Lady Janet Stewart of Traquair, to whom he had been betrothed before his marriage to Margaret. Margaret only seems to have become aware of the affair after her return to Scotland in May 1517 and she was understandably scandalised by it. She was unable to stop the affair however, and even her brother King Henry showed no

interest in applying any pressure to her wayward husband to mend his philanderous ways. Instead, poor Margaret found herself living at Edinburgh Castle while her children remained in Albany's custody at Stirling Castle, and Tantallon Castle became, as it had been in the 1370s and early 1380s, a love nest, this time for the sixth earl and Lady Janet.

Though he no longer seems to have viewed Margaret as a conduit through which he could exert his authority over the Scottish government, Earl Archibald retained a fierce ambition to influence the minority regime. The passage of Albany to France in June 1517 for talks with King François I provided an ideal opportunity to pursue his aim, though doing so brought him into conflict with another aspiring magnate - James Hamilton, earl of Arran. This culminated, on 30 April 1520, in a bloody confrontation between his and Hamilton's men on the streets of Edinburgh, known as 'Cleanse the Causeway' due to the war-cry of the sixth earl's men as they slaughtered Hamilton's followers and drove the survivors out of the town. This briefly delivered control of the minority government to Archibald, but in December 1521 Albany returned to Scotland, being personally welcomed into Edinburgh by Margaret, who by now was so alienated from her husband that she was seeking a divorce and looking to Albany to assist in this. It is a striking indication of the extent to which the sixth earl was now seen as a rival not just to Hamilton but also to Albany that, as Albany arrived in Scotland, Earl Archibald left for France. It is an even more striking indication of the extent to which the earl was now in effect an agent of his brother-in-law Henry VIII that during his absence he was financially supported by a 1000 mark pension from the English crown.



Margaret Tudor and the sixth earl from a painted family tree of King James IV of Scotland and I of England, c. 1603. This union was probably intended to bring the sixth earl closer influence over the administration of the realm and secure for Margaret the sixth earl's influence within the wider political community. In fact, it brought both partners - each on their second marriage - nothing but misery. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Margaret_Tudor_and_Archibald_Douglas.jpg



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Looking south down Blackfriars Street, formerly Blackfriars Wynd, in Edinburgh. It was here that the followers of the sixth earl and his rival the earl of Arran violently clashed in April 1520. Victory in this engagement delivered the sixth earl control of the town and also control of the government, but this dominance proved fleeting. Image source: Google Maps



A portrait of King Henry VIII of England after Hans Holbein the Younger, attributed to Hans Eworth. The sixth earl's relationship with his brother-in-law Henry VIII would have perhaps a more profound impact on the earl's political activities than any other relationship in his life, and certainly more than any of the three Scottish monarchs whose reigns he witnessed. Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:After_Hans_Holbein_the_Younger_-_Portrait_of_Henry_VIII_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

as they slaughtered Hamilton's followers and drove the survivors out of the town. This briefly delivered control of the minority government to Archibald, but in December 1521 Albany returned to Scotland, being personally welcomed into Edinburgh by Margaret, who by now was so alienated from her husband that she was seeking a divorce and looking to Albany to assist in this. It is a striking indication of the extent to which the sixth earl was now seen as a rival not just to Hamilton but also to Albany that, as Albany arrived in Scotland, Earl Archibald left for France. It is an even more striking indication of the extent to which the earl was now in effect an agent of his brother-in-law Henry VIII that during his absence he was financially supported by a 1000 mark pension from the English crown.

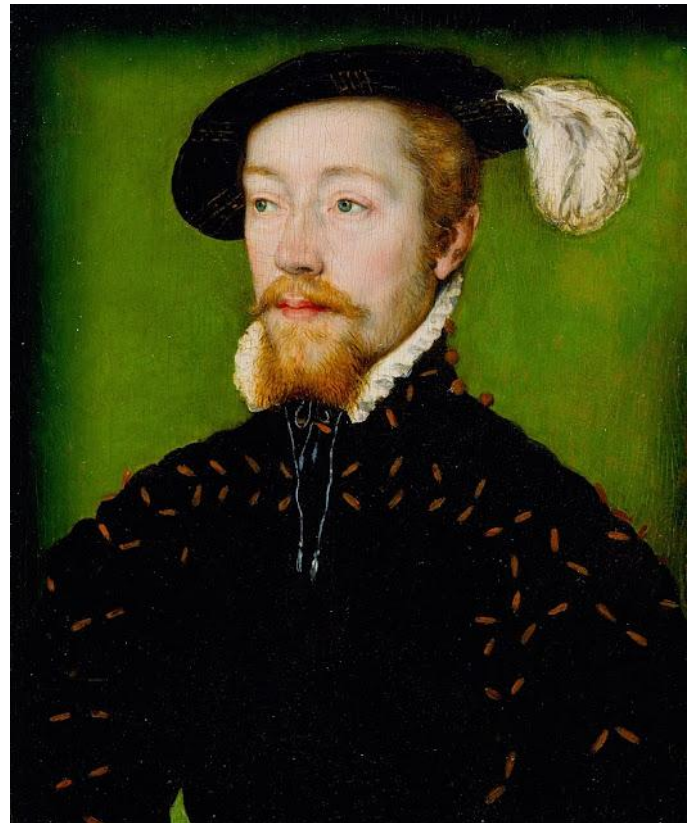
Yet in spite of these two facts, Earl Archibald remained popular in Scotland, much more so it seems than either Albany or Margaret. Albany travelled to France again in May 1524 and in November the sixth earl returned to Scotland, tellingly via England. In July, shortly after Albany had left for France, Margaret and her ally Hamilton had formally declared an end to James V's minority, despite him still being only twelve. Their plan was apparently to end the 'official' regency while continuing to exploit the king's youth to govern on his behalf. When Earl Archibald approached Edinburgh with a company of armed men, apparently hoping to take custody of the young king himself, Margaret reputedly had the cannons at the castle unleashed on him! But this was perhaps as much a symptom of Margaret's desperation to cling to power as it was reflective of the personal bitterness between the unhappy couple. There was a growing perception among the Three Estates that Margaret was relying on too small a group of lords to counsel her in the governance of the realm. She had begun an affair of her own, with Henry Stewart, later



lord Methven (and eventually Margaret's third husband). While Margaret can hardly be blamed for this given her husband's own infidelity, this relationship only added to the impression that Margaret's regime was too narrow and unrepresentative of the interests of the realm as a whole. The sixth earl seems to have exploited this in order to undermine his wife's position, as well as leveraging his own popularity and his status as King James's stepfather (ironically through his dismal marriage to Margaret) to secure for himself a prominent position in the new minority government. In February 1525, Margaret lost control not only of the government but also of her Scottish lands, which were taken into custody by her hated husband. That July, a rota was drawn up by which custody of the king would be shared between four discrete groups of named lords, each of whom would 'remane with the kingis grace' for a period of three months and therefore have *de facto* control of the minority government for that time. Earl Archibald was part of the first group, but when his time to surrender custody of the king came - on 'All Hallowmess' (i.e., 1 November) 1525 - he simply did not do so, retaining power for the remainder of James's minority.

This was a somewhat similar situation to that which had prevailed between 1466-1469, when the Boyds had dominated the royal administration through physical possession of James III. The sixth earl's regime was less acquisitive than the Boyds' had been, though he undoubtedly exploited his influence to promote the interests of his kin. He appointed his uncle Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie as treasurer, his younger brother George Douglas of Pittendreich as master of the royal household, and even made another kinsman James Douglas of Drumlanrig master of the royal wine cellar! The earl secured the revenues of Holyrood Abbey and Coldingham Priory for his youngest brother William, while he also oversaw the nomination of his literarily-minded uncle Gavin Douglas as Bishop of Dunkeld. But Earl Archibald's long-standing good relations with Henry VIII also ensured peace with England during his tenure as 'regent'. This in turn freed him up to focus on firmly re-establishing law and order in the marches after the long period of instability that had begun with defeat at Flodden. That Earl Archibald played a leading role in this is doubly ironic, partly because he had played such a key role in prolonging that instability, but significantly because he was now a Douglas lord trying to curtail precisely the kind of highly militarised border lordship that had been the bedrock of Douglas advancement since the beginning of the fourteenth-century. This is an early indication of how drastically Scottish border society would change during the sixteenth-century. These changes were partly due to the loss of Scottish military confidence brought about by Flodden, but more importantly due to successive Scottish monarchs' hopes of inheriting the English throne based on the marriage of James IV and Margaret Tudor in 1502. The sixth earl's energetic and frequently violent strategy for pacifying the Scottish border communities would be adopted enthusiastically - and with even more success - by James V and his grandson James VI.

Despite his notable successes as 'regent', Earl Archibald understandably faced considerable domestic opposition to his continued dominance of the minority regime. Some of this was personal. Margaret still hated him and desired to exert her own authority over the government through her son. Hamilton too continued to seek ways to reverse his previous defeats at the hands of the sixth earl. But other lords reasonably objected to the means by which the earl had achieved power and/or resented his relentless promotion of his kin. In 1526, three separate attempts to violently separate King James from the earl



King James V of Scotland, c. 1536, by Dutch portraitist Cornelis van Den Haag. Technically the sixth earl's stepson through the latter's marriage to Margaret Tudor, James V offered a pathway to supreme power after the sixth earl took custody of him in 1525. However, once James assumed personal authority, he decisively broke the earl's authority in Scotland and remained fundamentally suspicious of the earl's kin for the remainder of his life. Image source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_James_V_of_Scotland_\(1512_-_1542\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_James_V_of_Scotland_(1512_-_1542).jpg)



took place. In January, Margaret and Hamilton sought to reassert their claims to control the royal administration, but swift action by the sixth earl - and the same wider suspicions that had seen the pair side-lined by the Three Estates in the first place - saw this attempted coup founder. In August, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch - namesake and ancestor of the famous Victorian novelist - ambushed the sixth earl and the royal party near Melrose but was vigorously driven off. Most seriously, on 4 September, a bloody skirmish was fought near Linlithgow between Hamilton (who had been forced to come to terms with Earl Archibald at last) and his own nephew John Stewart, earl of Lennox, who hoped to take King James into custody

himself. Once the fighting was over, Lennox was dead, and while in the short term this meant that Earl Archibald retained possession of the young king - and through him control of the government - the death of a fellow aristocrat did much to undermine his previously positive relations with the wider political community. It also seems to have had a profound impact on the young James V, who had turned fourteen in April 1526 and increasingly grew to resent his custodian's influence on government.

In May 1528, James V finally escaped from Earl Archibald's keeping, literally, by stealing away from Edinburgh and travelling to Stirling. From here, he began to govern his realm independently for the first time. His primary concern was, of course, disentangling the sixth earl and his kin from the existing royal administration. By September, King James was finally confident enough to hold a parliament at Edinburgh, and on 5 September he forfeited Earl Archibald, his brother George of Pittendreich and his uncle Archibald of Kilsplindie for 'treason and the crime of lese-majesty' (*prodicionis et criminis lese majestatis*). One of the specific charges levelled at the earl was 'the municioune of the castell of Temptalloune...aganis his hienes and his autorite'. In October, King James V set out for Tantallon with an army, which reportedly marched towards the castle chanting the phrase 'Ding doon Tantalloun' in anticipation of the vengeful destruction they expected to unleash on the earl of Angus's primary residence. Earl Archibald himself must have feared that they would succeed in their aims, for he himself took refuge at his barony of Bonkyl in Berwickshire, leaving defence of Tantallon in the hands of a subordinate named Simon Penango. Added to the already substantial royal artillery train were cannons borrowed from the duke of Albany and brought from Dunbar, which included 'tuo gret cannonis...tua greit battartis



The barbican at Tantallon Castle. This part of the castle apparently bore the brunt of the damage during the siege of 1528, resulting in it being rebuilt and remodelled. The rebuilding work was undertaken with greenish basalt stone and can thus be seen quite clearly when compared to the areas of original red sandstone. The walls would have been harled - i.e., limewashed - when the castle was still in use, and so the different stonework would not have been so obvious. Image source: Yours truly.

[lit. 'bastards', probably meaning slightly smaller cannons] and tua myans [i.e., medium-sized cannons] and tuo doubill fallcons and foure quarter fallcons ['doubill' and 'foure quarter' probably refer to the width of the barrels of these weapons] with thair powder and bullatis and gouneris [i.e., engineers] for to wse them'. For twenty days, beginning on 23rd October, the artillery pounded the walls of Tantallon Castle, but as in 1491 the thick walls, soft sandstone, and cunning outer defences defeated this bombardment. As Hume of Godscroft puts it: 'The Castle was well defended for certain dayes, none hurt within; many without were wounded with shot from the Castle, and some burnt and scalded with their own Powder, which



took fire unawares, and divers killed. The besiegers were troubled without by the horsemen, who assaulted them daily at their trenches, so that seeing no hope of carrying it, they raised their siege, and retired.' To add insult to injury, as the slow-moving royal artillery train moved off, the sixth earl's forces attacked them in the rear, killing one David Falconer - described by Pitscottie as 'ane nobill captane of weir' and by Hume of Godscroft as 'a principall Cannonier' - and capturing two of the king's cannons!



Blackness Castle in West Lothian. Like Tantallon Castle, Blackness was originally built as a lordly residence, but in 1454 King James II of Scotland took it into royal custody. Of little use to the Scottish crown as a residence, it was primarily utilised as a gaol for the king's enemies. The sixth earl himself was imprisoned there from April-May 1544. From 1534-1540, Hamilton of Finnart oversaw extensive remodelling work here, lowering the profile of the castle to turn it into a formidable artillery fortification for defending the upper reaches of the Forth. Similar redevelopment was unfeasible at Tantallon however, as it was primarily built to face threats from the landward side rather than from the river. Image source: Yours truly.

that wald come to persew it'. Though it was now technically a royal castle, Tantallon does not appear to have been extensively used by James himself. Though its defences were formidable, it was primarily designed to repel attacks from the land, which were never a significant threat again between 1528 and the king's death in 1542. The castle's design did not lend itself well to being adapted for use in defending the Firth of Forth from naval incursions, as for example Blackness Castle would be later in James's reign. And as a residence, though it was again sumptuous and impressive within, it could not replace nearby Edinburgh Castle as the king's primary residence in the Lothians.

Meanwhile, during his thirteen-year exile, Earl Archibald became in effect a fully committed subject of King Henry VIII. To an extent, he had little choice but to acquiesce to Henry's demands for fidelity, since his livelihood now rested exclusively on the English king's charity. Yet the sixth earl seems to have thrown himself into the role of chief prosecutor of King Henry's aggressive foreign policy towards Scotland. He certainly proved himself to

Although Tantallon itself had held out against the royal onslaught, Earl Archibald himself could not. For once, Henry VIII's support for the earl's chicanery was not forthcoming, and in May 1529 he was forced to accept a period of exile in England. During his absence, his Scottish property - including Tantallon - would remain in royal custody. Perhaps recognising the value of this formidable fortress after having personally failed to overcome it in 1528, or perhaps simply to repair the damage he had inflicted on it during the siege, James V undertook a major building programme at the castle. He substantially remodelled the central tower, which may have borne the brunt of the bombardment, filled some of chambers that had previously riddled the landward wall, and, in Pitscottie's opinion, 'maid all massie wark to that effect that it sould be wnwinnabill in tymeis comming to ony enemeis



A sixteenth-century (probably contemporary) portrait, believed to be of Archibald Douglas, 6th earl of Angus. The heart-shaped necklace is certainly suggestive of Douglas associations. Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:6th_Earl_of_Angus.jpg



be one of the most effective of 'fifth-columnists' that the English crown nurtured as a means of undermining the Scottish royal administration since the 'Disinherited' in the early fourteenth-century. Part of the particular animosity he seems to have felt was likely based on the continued hostility shown by King James towards Earl Archibald's kin and allies even after the earl himself had been driven into exile. The king's anti-Douglas attitude even led to the earl's sister Janet being burned at the stake in 1537 after she was convicted of communicating with her exiled brother and supposedly plotting to poison King James. During his exile, the sixth earl led several destructive cross-border raids, no doubt utilising his detailed knowledge of the geography of southern Scotland to facilitate these attacks. He also seems to have maintained far-reaching and reliable spy networks across southern Scotland, again presumably based on his historic personal ties in the region, and he was apparently one of the first of King Henry's servants to receive news of King James's death at Linlithgow Palace in December 1542.

Following the death of James V and the accession of his six-day-old daughter Mary as Scotland's first Queen Regnant, a parliament at Edinburgh appointed James Hamilton, 2nd earl of Arran, 'lawful tutor to the queen's grace and governor of this realm' ('tutour lauchtfull to the quenis grace and governour of this realme') on 13 March 1543. Ironically, given the bitterness that had existed between Earl Archibald and Hamilton's father, the new governor was quick to invite the treasonous Archibald to return home. This reflects a feeling among the Estates that aristocratic power had been too savagely curtailed during James V's reign, and thus the restoration of an earl whose family traced their origins back to the Wars of Independence served as a conspicuous way to demonstrate that this policy was being redressed. The sixth earl's return to Scotland was accompanied by the return of his various forfeited possessions, including Tantallon Castle. Yet even now the earl remained committed to pursuing an essentially pro-English (or, at least, pro-Henry VIII) stance in his political dealings. Shortly before leaving England, he formally committed himself to securing for Henry the marriage of the infant Mary and Henry's young son and heir Edward (later Edward VI). He



James Hamilton, 2nd earl of Arran and duke of Châtelherault, in a 1578 portrait attributed to Arnold Bronckorst. Despite the long-standing and deep-seated bitterness between his father and the sixth earl of Angus, one of his earliest acts as 'governor' of Scotland was to restore the sixth earl to his former estates and titles in Scotland. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:James_Hamilton_2nd_Earl_of_Arran.jpg



Re-enactors representing Scottish troops at the Battle of Pinkie. An adherent of the sixth earl can be seen on foot to the left of the image, with the earl's coat of arms visible on his back. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Re-enactors_some_of_the_banners_of_the_Scottish_army_at_Pinkie_in_2017.jpg

used his influence among the Scottish nobility to develop a vocal political faction in favour of the marriage, and when King Henry's ambassador Sir Ralph Sadler was violently chased out of Edinburgh in September 1543, the earl allowed him to seek refuge at Tantallon.

In maintaining this 'pro-English' stance, especially as the English crown grew increasingly violent in its efforts to have the marriage accepted, the sixth earl was biting the hand that fed him. Hamilton, after a brief flirtation with Protestantism, publicly announced his adherence to Catholicism at Stirling in September 1543, confirming the minority government's hostility towards an English marriage alliance. In January 1544, the sixth earl and his allies made a public display of defiance towards Hamilton, but Archibald's powerbase proved to be too small to resist the governor's response. In April, the sixth earl was imprisoned at Blackness Castle, and while the English army that sacked Edinburgh in May apparently chose not to damage Tantallon or its environs - apparently still viewing Earl Archibald as an ally - it became clear even to the maverick earl



that preserving his position within Scotland meant shifting his political allegiance. In the earl's defence, his activities as a reformed Scottish patriot would prove critical in rescuing the kingdom from what has become known as 'the Rough Wooing'. When, in late 1544, Hamilton fled Edinburgh in the face of renewed English aggression, the sixth earl assumed leadership of the Scottish war effort in his place. At Ancrum Moor on 27 February 1545, Earl Archibald defeated an English army



Mary, Queen of Scots, and her first husband Dauphin ('Dolphin') François of France. The sixth earl's support for this union, which restored a fragile peace between Scotland and England without bowing to Henry VIII's demands for a marriage between Queen Mary and his son, helped to preserve his posthumous reputation as a patriot. Image source: <https://digital.nls.uk/mqs/>

perhaps twice the size of his own by luring them into an ambush with a feigned retreat. More than 1,000 Englishmen were captured in the fighting and a pamphlet celebrating the victory, entitled *La deffaicte des anglois par les ecossois faicte le jour de jeudi saint dernier*, was widely circulated in France. Though the earl's military skills were unable to secure another victory for the Scots at the Battle of Pinkie on 10 September 1547, his share of the blame for this defeat is diminished because Hamilton took the lead here. Moreover, his division appears to have suffered the lightest casualties, while those led by Hamilton and George Gordon, earl of Huntly, were decimated. Most importantly, his defeat of another English raiding force - again through a surprise attack - in February 1548 led to the reversal of the territorial gains made by the English after Pinkie and cemented his reputation as the kingdom's premier war leader. That October, Tantallon itself came under attack from English forces led by English march warden William, lord Grey of Wilton, though the formidable defences meant Grey ultimately had to satisfy himself with devastating the surrounding farmlands instead.

Alongside Hamilton, the sixth earl now became one of the key exponents of the plan to marry Mary to the French dauphin François, later François II, as a means of permanently freeing her from King Henry's machinations. With this achieved, and peace tentatively restored between Scotland and England, Earl Archibald spent most of the rest of his life trying to regain the full extent of his territorial claims from before 1528. Although he had regained all of his possessions which were still held by the crown in 1543, some estates had been alienated to other lords during James V's reign. By the time he died, apparently at Tantallon, in January 1557, he had largely accomplished this, a final success in a career that had closely skirted total catastrophe on more than one occasion. However, three marriages (his marriage to Margaret Tudor, which was already his second, had finally been annulled in 1527, and he had married Margaret Maxwell soon after his return to Scotland in 1543) had not produced any sons who had outlived him. He had one surviving daughter from his disastrous second marriage - Margaret Douglas, countess of Lennox, whose son was the infamous Henry, lord Darnley. But since the Douglas estates were still entailed in the male line (despite his daughter's best efforts to be acknowledged her as his heir), the sixth earl's estates and



A portrait of James Douglas, 4th earl of Morton, attributed to Arnold Bronckorst and dating from c. 1580. The castle visible through the window in the background is believed to be Tantallon, although hopefully it is clear from the photos of the castle shared here that it is a highly inaccurate depiction. Nevertheless, it demonstrates both the contemporary perception of Tantallon as an isolated coastal fortress that was virtually inaccessible by land or sea, as well as the significance possession of Tantallon had for the earl's sense of prestige. This is particularly striking given that he did not own the castle himself, but rather held it in ward for his nephew Archibald Douglas, 8th earl of Angus. This portrait too can be seen daily for free at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery on Queen Street in Edinburgh. Image source: <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/3326>



titles descended to his nephew David Douglas (the son of George Douglas of Pittendreich). This David enjoyed his status as seventh earl of Angus for less than six months, dying in June 1557 and leaving the Douglas estates to his two-year-old son, Archibald. This therefore delivered Tantallon into the hands of the eighth earl's ambitious uncle James Douglas, 4th earl of Morton, at least until the eighth earl came of age.

The post-interesting bit: Early modern Tantallon, 1557-1651

Morton (b. c. 1516) was the second son of George Douglas of Pittendreich and may have joined the sixth earl in exile from 1529-1543, though Hume of Godscroft claims he spent the period hunkered down in Aberdeenshire with Sir Archibald Douglas of Glenbervie (a grandson of the fifth earl and thus another of the sixth earl's cousins). He inherited the earldom of Morton around 1548 through his wife Elizabeth, who was a granddaughter of James IV but, more importantly, a descendant of the Douglasses of Dalkeith. The Douglasses of Dalkeith had been created earls of Morton for their support in the destruction of the Black Douglasses in the 1450s, and the title elevated James to the highest rank of the Scottish aristocracy.

Nevertheless, before 1557, Morton's activities was largely defined by service to his more influential uncle the sixth earl of Angus. The sixth earl's 'conversion' into the arch-patriot and leader of the Scottish war effort after 1544 brought a degree of martial prestige and active military experience for Morton, although it also led to him being wounded and captured while defending Dalkeith against the English in 1548. He was at liberty again by 1550, now styling himself earl of Morton, and in 1552 he became a privy councillor, giving him valuable influence over the minority government of the absent Mary, Queen of Scots. His power and prestige increased following the death of his elder brother the seventh earl of Angus in June 1557, after which he assumed responsibility for administering the extensive Red Douglas estates on behalf of the infant eighth earl. That possession of Tantallon in particular played an especially significant role in the maintenance of this prestige is suggested by the castle's inclusion in the portrait of the earl, produced c. 1580, which can be seen (for free) in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh.



A portrait, painted c. 1537, by Corneille de Lyon of Mary of Guise, mother of Mary, Queen of Scots, and regent of Scotland from 1544-1560. Opposition to Mary's regency was central to Morton's early political career after the sixth earl of Angus's death. However, he was likely driven more by distaste over Mary's gender and nationality than the religious convictions that motivated most of Mary's enemies. Image source: <https://www.national.galleries.org/art-and-artists/3214/mary-guise-1515-1560-queen-james-v>

By the mid-sixteenth-century, religious reform was quickly becoming the defining theme of the era. Morton was somewhat circumspect in his attitude towards this at first, seemingly unwilling to risk the wide-ranging landed interests he had acquired by committing too firmly to either the reformist or the conservative factions. Nevertheless, he was a signatory of the 'first band' on 3 December 1557, by which a cadre of Scottish lords - later known as the lords of the congregation - pledged themselves to pursuit of the goal of religious reform contrary to the Catholic preferences of Mary of Guise, Queen Mary's mother and - since 1554 - regent. In his capacity as a major border magnate, he also helped negotiate the Treaty of Berwick in February 1560, which secured direct military intervention from the Protestant English crown against Mary of

Guise, and in the following January he approved the first *Book of Discipline*, which proposed the reform of the Scottish Church along Presbyterian lines. Morton's early vacillation certainly suggests that his convictions were more political than spiritual, and his prominence in the governance of the realm continued even after the widowed Queen Mary herself returned from France in August 1561. Later that year, he - along with Mary's half-brother James Stewart, earl of Moray - oversaw the pacification of the Scottish marches in much the same robust manner as his uncle the sixth earl had done in the 1520s. In 1562, he helped the crown suppress a rebellion by George Gordon, earl of Huntly, and was rewarded for this with his appointment as chancellor, the office briefly held by his great-grandfather the fifth earl in the 1490s. He played a key role in



A portrait by an unknown artist from c. 1564 of the teenaged Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, shortly before his marriage to Mary, Queen of Scots. Morton was a firm supporter of the marriage between Darnley and Queen Mary, although he primarily saw the union as a means of settling the dispute over the inheritance of the earldom of Angus - and Tantallon Castle - in favour of his nephew the eighth earl. Image source: <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/2256>

arranging Mary's second marriage to Henry Stewart, lord Darnley, in 1565, in part because the offer of this union helped him persuade Darnley's mother Margaret Douglas, countess of Lennox, to abandon her claims as heir to the earldom of Angus. As noted above, Countess Margaret was the sixth earl's daughter and thus the ten-year-old eighth earl's cousin, potentially threatening the rights of Morton's nephew to his newfound earldom - Tantallon included.

Like many (male) members of the Scottish aristocracy, Morton seems to have hoped that Darnley's marriage to Mary would lead to the effective side-lining of the queen and Darnley's emergence as the *de facto* ruler of the kingdom. It was likely to court Darnley's favour that Morton supported the plot to assassinate Mary's secretary David Riccio, with the earl even being physically present when Rizzio was murdered, in March 1565. However, this backfired spectacularly, seeing Morton stripped of the chancellorship and briefly exiled to England by the understandably furious Queen Mary. He was reconciled in December, but the experience seems to have at least alienated from Darnley, for he later admitted to having knowledge of the plot that led to Darnley's assassination - though he simultaneously insisted that he played no part in the conspiracy. He was again a signatory of the Ainslie Bond in April 1567, which approved Mary's marriage to James Hepburn, earl of Bothwell, but very soon afterwards he emerged as a leading figure within the faction opposed to Mary and Bothwell's

government. When the 'royalist' forces faced off against the rebel army at Carberry Hill in East Lothian in June 1567, Bothwell personally challenged Morton to a duel, a decision perhaps partly motivated by memories of the animosity between the two men's great-grandfathers in the reign of James IV. At Carberry, Mary ultimately surrendered herself into the custody of the rebels, and she formally abdicated her queenship on 24 July. Four days later, at Stirling parish church, Morton took the coronation oath on behalf of the one-year-and-one-month-old King James VI, signalling his status as one of the preeminent figures in the minority administration of the new king.

Though Mary's half-brother Moray served as regent in the early years of James VI's minority, Morton enjoyed immense privilege and prestige in the royal administration from the very outset of the reign. He led the vanguard of the 'King's Men' at the Battle of Langside in May 1568, a victory that saw Queen Mary herself flee the kingdom. Interestingly, when Moray earned the dubious honour of being the first person in recorded history to be assassinated by a firearm (in Linlithgow at the hands of his domestic rivals the Hamiltons) in

January 1570, Morton did not initially make a bid to become regent himself. Instead, he supported the rights of Darnley's father Matthew Stewart, earl of Lennox, to the office. Morton likely felt that there remained a sufficiently strong Marian faction among the Three Estates who would still see him as a fundamentally unsuitable candidate, and he thus satisfied himself with the chancellorship rather than risk an unsuccessful bid for greater power. However, after Lennox was killed in a brawl



A portrait by Hans Eworth from 1561 of James Stewart, earl of Moray and half-brother of Mary, Queen of Scots. He and Morton were longtime collaborators, and so unsurprisingly Morton enjoyed a prominent position during Moray's regency on behalf of the young King James VI of Scotland. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:James_Stewart_Earl_of_Moray.jpg



A portrait by an unknown artist from c. 1575 of Queen Elizabeth I of England. Elizabeth's concern for ensuring Scotland remained Protestant and detached from its traditional alliance with France, a mission in which Morton was a frequent collaborator. Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Darnley_stage_3.jpg

- again with the increasingly fractious Hamiltons - in September 1571, Morton was finally given authority over the governance of the realm until James VI reached maturity.

To some extent, Morton had the regency thrust upon him. He no doubt desired the top job, as it were, but he had probably hoped that he could wait out the ongoing domestic conflict and attain the regency when the political situation had stabilised. Instead, he now inherited not only the authority and prestige of the regency, but also the ongoing - and increasingly violent - disputes with the Hamiltons and their allies the Gordons, the Setons, and John Stewart, earl of Atholl. Edinburgh Castle also continued to be a problem for the minority regime. In early 1571, Sir Walter Kirkcaldy of Grange - who had fought fiercely against Queen Mary at Langside in 1568 - ensconced himself at Edinburgh Castle with pro-Marian troops and had violently resisted all efforts to extricate him from there ever since. Morton showed striking political acumen in resolving these crises relatively quickly. The so-called 'Pacification of Perth', achieved with the help of English ambassador Henry Killigrew in February 1573, saw a peaceful settlement reached with the Hamiltons and the Gordons, allowing them to retain their possessions and avoid legal recriminations for their recent rebellious activities in return for their recognition of the young James VI as the rightful king. In April, a separate agreement with Atholl, who had been left politically isolated after the 'Pacification', neutralised him as a threat as well. A more direct approach was taken to ending the 'Lang Siege' at Edinburgh, where in May 1573 the castle and town were bombarded into submission with English artillery, after which Kirkcaldy of Grange was hanged as a traitor.

Morton's regency remained relatively peaceful and stable until 1578. His mismanagement of a long-running feud between Atholl and Colin Campbell, 6th earl of Argyll, drove these two men into an alliance against him which forced him to resign his position, although within a year he was able to restore his position - though not the title of regent - by turning the Atholl-Argyll faction against the long-suffering Hamiltons. Unfortunately for Morton, a more serious threat to his interests was presented by the arrival in Scotland of Esmé Stewart in late 1579. Esmé was a distant cousin of the young King James VI, related to him through James II. His personal charm and air of Continental sophistication seems to have quickly won him the admiration of the teenaged king, who in March 1580 helped him secure his rights as heir to the earldom of Lennox. Esmé quickly became a focus of opposition to Morton, particularly among those who for one reason or another resented Morton's long-standing dominance of the minority regime. In 1578, Morton had been assisted in navigating his way out of danger by another English ambassador, Robert Bowes, a reflection of the fact that Elizabeth I seems to have seen Morton as a valuable ally in the minority administration of James VI whose influence she therefore needed to maintain. Given the new earl of Lennox's French connections, Elizabeth initially seems to have feared the anti-English, pro-French, and above all anti-Protestant influence he might have over the impressionable James VI. In these circumstances, Morton might once again prove to be a useful agent for the English crown to ensure their northern neighbour remained peaceable and Presbyterian. However, when it became clear that Lennox's rise did not threaten the Reformation in Scotland, Morton's English allies - already distracted by developments on the Continent - abandoned him. On 31 December 1580, Morton was arrested for - of all things - complicity in the



The 'Maiden', a rudimentary guillotine currently on display at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Reputedly introduced by Morton, he would become one of its victims on 2 June 1581. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Maiden,_National_Museum_of_Scotland.jpg



The ruined 'Douglas Tower' and the range of buildings extending along the edge of the promontory behind it. The splendid furnishings listed in the 1581 inventory probably belonged to the private quarters in this tower. Image source: Yours truly.

assassination of Darnley - and imprisoned at Dumbarton Castle, far away from his traditional powerbases in the south-east and Angus.

The list of charges had swelled considerably by the time Morton was brought back to Edinburgh for trial in May 1581 and now included supporting Mary's marriage to Bothwell, financial mismanagement of the realm as regent, and conspiracy with the English. Indeed, the accusations were so manifold, and could be applied to so many Scottish lords of his generation, that Morton could hardly fail to be guilty of at least some of them! In the end, these were whittled back down to conspiracy to assassinate the king's late father, probably to speed up the judicial process against him, and on 1 June a jury packed with his political opponents found him guilty. The following day, at 4 o'clock, he was executed beside the mercat cross in Edinburgh by use of 'the maiden', an early type of

guillotine that according to tradition he himself introduced to Scotland. Given the allegation(s) levelled at Morton, his possessions were forfeited to the crown, as were those of his nephew Archibald Douglas, 8th earl of Angus. The young earl had long left his uncle's wardship, being in his mid-twenties at the time of Morton's execution, but he had remained closely associated with his influential kinsmen throughout his life. Between the beginning of Morton's regency in 1571 and 1580, the eighth earl had served in a variety of border offices on behalf of his uncle, including sheriff of Berwickshire, warden of Liddesdale, warden of the west march, and lieutenant of the marches, gaining valuable military experience enforcing royal authority over the fractious 'border reiver' kindreds. He had been integral in keeping Morton informed of developments at court during his uncle's brief fall from grace in 1578, and he threatened violence when Morton was arrested. Within a week of his uncle's execution, however, the eighth earl had crossed into England, where he personally sought Elizabeth I's intervention to redress the perceived wrongs done to him and his kin. Happily for us, a document survives from this time period in which the earl inventoried the goods he had 'receaued oute of Tantaloon in the tyme of his banissement', which offers a tantalising glimpse of how sumptuous the castle's furnishings were toward the end of the sixteenth-century. This inventory includes 34 wall hangings, a green taffeta quilt, bed canopies of red and green velvet and cloth of gold, four curtains of green damask 'frenzeit with golde and grene silk', three more curtains of red damask, three yellow satin curtains, valances of various types, a silver basin and ewer, a gilded cup 'with ane cover', 'ane fyne burde [i.e., table] payntit black and gold', and more.

As it happened, developments in Scotland overtook the earl and restored him to his former possessions without English interference. On 28 August 1582, a small band of Protestant hardliners, led by William Ruthven, earl of Gowrie, abducted the sixteen-year-old King James in an incident remembered as 'the Ruthven Raid' and, in doing so, effectively seized control of the government. As an



The statue of a border reiver by Thomas J Clapperton in Cornmill Square, Galashiels, first unveiled in 1925. Reiving had its origins in the fearsome martial culture cultivated in the Scottish marches during the Wars of Scottish Independence. The Douglases had, during the fourteenth- and fifteenth-centuries, exploited this culture to maintain and expand their authority in the south of Scotland. However, throughout the sixteenth-century they increasingly supported a more peaceable relationship between Scotland and England, and thus they sought to curb reiving activities to soothe Anglo-Scottish tensions. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Galashiels_Reiver_Statue_02.JPG



enemy of the 'papist' Lennox, the eighth earl was able to affect a reconciliation with the Gowrie regime, regaining his former lands, titles, and castles - including Tantallon. He was also able to arrange the removal of Morton's head from the Edinburgh tolbooth, where it must have been on display for more than a year, and had it 'layed in a fyne cloath, convayed honorabile and layed in the kist where his bodie was buried' in Greyfriar's kirkyard. In June 1583, King James - now aged seventeen - escaped Gowrie's custody and, with James Stewart, earl of Arran, began to form a new administration that sought to present James as a 'universal king' for Protestant and Catholic alike. The eighth earl, who had been educated at the University of St Andrews and moulded into a staunch Protestant by his kinsman John Douglas, later the first Protestant archbishop of St Andrews, participated in a failed coup against this new administration in April 1584, which ended with Gowrie's execution and the earl once more exiled to England. However, in October 1585 he returned to Scotland with the support of Elizabeth I, and within a month Arran had been removed from office and the eighth earl restored to his lordly possessions yet again.



King James VI of Scotland and I of England by Flemish artist Daniël Mytens 'the Elder'. Painted in 1621, this portrait shows James in his full finery as King of Great Britain. His positive attitude towards the eighth earl of Angus owed much to his desire to secure his smooth inheritance of England from Elizabeth I. Image source: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:James_I_of_England_by_Daniel_Mytens.jpg

The eighth earl's final restoration in 1585 owed much to James VI's growing interest in developments in England. Elizabeth I was by now in her early fifties, unmarried, and without offspring of her own. James was her nearest male relative, thanks to the marriage of James's great-grandfather and namesake James IV to Elizabeth's aunt Margaret Tudor in 1502. In theory, this made him Elizabeth's heir to her entire kingdom. With typical shrewdness however, Elizabeth declined to formally acknowledge him as her successor, encouraging the Scottish king to work as hard as he could to maintain good relations with her and her subjects in an effort to secure his future accession as King of England. Reconciling with the eighth earl not only meant welcoming back a lord who clearly had Elizabeth's favour, it also helped King James deal with one of the main irritants in Anglo-Scottish relations in the sixteenth-century - the much-vaunted 'border reivers'. As noted above, the Anglo-Scottish conflicts of the fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century had led to the communities of southern Scotland becoming highly militarised, with the local regional lords dependant on regular periods of intense border warfare to justify their personal authority and enrich their tenants. The downfall of the Black Douglases in the 1450s had encouraged many previously minor lords to act increasingly independently, and the disruptions to border society brought about by the disaster at Flodden in 1513 and the long minorities of James V, Mary, and James VI had accelerated and exacerbated this process. The raiding activities of certain border kindreds gave the marches of both kingdoms a reputation for lawlessness and understandably undermined Anglo-Scottish relations. As an influential and militarily-experienced border magnate himself, the eighth earl was ideally placed to pacify marcher society, and this was the role he played on behalf of King James for the remainder of his life.

In July 1587, the eighth earl was acknowledged as earl of Morton in right of his late uncle, a sure sign of the esteem in which James VI now held him. However, he died a little over a year later, and despite having been thrice married he had no male offspring to succeed him. The earldom of Morton was thus inherited by William Douglas of Lochleven, but the earldom of Angus - including of course Tantallon - was inherited by William Douglas of Glenberrie, son of the Sir Archibald who may have given shelter to the future fourth earl of Morton in the period 1529-1543. Despite the good relations between James VI and the eighth earl, the ninth earl was forced to legally contest his inheritance with the king himself, who attempted to claim the earldom of Angus as a grandson of Margaret Douglas, countess of Lennox. Though the ninth earl was able to prove his rights on the basis of Countess Margaret's renunciation of her claim in 1565, he was nonetheless compelled to



pay the king 35,000 merks and was also forced to surrender lands at Braidwood in Lanarkshire in return for royal acceptance of his inheritance. This expensive legal wrangling may have soured the relationship between the ninth earl and the king. He would serve on the council that governed Scotland while James VI travelled to Oslo to collect his new queen Anne in 1590 and played a minor role in Anne's coronation after her arrival in Scotland. But he played little other role in 'national' politics. He died in July 1591, aged fifty-nine, and for the first time since 1463, an earl of Angus was succeeded by his adult son - in this case another William.

The tenth earl injected a new strain of controversy into Red Douglas history because, while living in France in the late 1570s, he converted to Catholicism. He was ordered into exile in 1589 and 1591, avoiding it only because in the first case he arrived at Aberdeen after the sailing season was over and in the second because of the timing of his father's death and his inheritance of the earldom. Thereafter, the tenth earl became a frequent and active opponent of the Protestant James VI's policies. He was nonetheless able to secure his appointment as king's lieutenant in the north in 1592, an office in which he demonstrated commendable political skills in resolving a feud between the earls of Atholl and Huntly. The connections he made during this time paid off when, having been imprisoned at Edinburgh in January 1593 for his suspected involvement in a Spanish-backed Catholic plot against King James, he escaped after a little over a month in custody and raised the two earls in rebellion against the king. The three earls refused every opportunity at armed confrontation, but also refused offers of a formal reconciliation with the king, and were technically attainted in June 1594. Although the king's agents reoccupied Tantallon, the tenth earl remained in Scotland, again refusing open confrontation but fomenting dissent against King James in the localities. In June 1597, he finally made his peace with James and was restored to his previous estates, after three years of what must rank as probably the most absurd period of royal-magnate tension in Scottish history. In June 1598, the



The tomb of William Douglas, 10th earl of Angus, in the Chapel of St Joseph at the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris. Paid for by his son and successor, the magnificent effigy and ornate decoration speak to the earl's firmly held but - in early modern Scotland at least - high controversial Catholic faith. Image source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paris_\(75\),_abbaye_Saint-Germain-des-Pr%C3%A9s,_chapelle_St-Joseph,_monument_Joseph,_monument_de_Guillaume_Douglas_2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paris_(75),_abbaye_Saint-Germain-des-Pr%C3%A9s,_chapelle_St-Joseph,_monument_Joseph,_monument_de_Guillaume_Douglas_2.jpg)

tenth earl was appointed 'lieutenant and justice within the boundis of the eist, middill and west marcheis of this realme foiranent [i.e., opposite] England and all the schirefdomes within the samyn', resuming his family's traditional role as chief marcher lord. Yet he remained a figure of suspicion, both due to his history of dissent and his religious convictions. In 1602, James Law, who would afterwards become Bishop of Orkney, was imposed upon him by church authorities as his personal chaplain, and it seems that Law's role was essentially to report back on the earl's spiritual life. It was no doubt on the basis of such reports that he was once again exiled to France in 1609. His requests to meet personally with James VI and to have his younger son James join him in exile, as well as a later request to return to Scotland, were refused, and he died in France in March 1611. He was buried at the abbey of St Germain-des-Prés in Paris, where his eldest son and successor - yet another William - nonetheless paid for an elaborate tomb to be created in his honour.

The eleventh earl was born in 1589 and was thus too young to be actively involved in his father's political vacillations in the 1590s. However, one of the conditions of his father's rehabilitation with James VI in 1597 was that his son be placed in the care of his Protestant kinsman William Douglas, 6th earl of Morton. Young William seems to have appreciated his time in wardship and established lasting personal ties there, and when he travelled aboard from 1616-1619 he was accompanied



by his former guardian's grandson William Douglas, 7th earl of Morton. Despite this early grounding in the king's preferred religion, he was no stranger to controversy after he took over his father's earldom in 1611. A little over one year after he inherited the earldom, he became involved in a legal dispute with the Kerrs of Ferniehirst over the right to hold bailie courts in Jedburgh Forest. This dispute saw the earl's brother John imprisoned for a time at Blackness Castle, although ultimately the earl's claims were vindicated in court. He also quarrelled with the earl of Huntly over their respective places in the opening procession of the parliament held at Edinburgh in January 1621. At the same parliament, the earl supported the unpopular 'Five Articles of Perth', by which King James proposed to reorganise the Scottish church along Anglican lines (proposals that would eventually lead to the covenanting movement). He repeatedly found himself under suspicion for his supposed Catholic sympathies from the presbytery of Lanark. These suspicions seem to have first been raised following his second lengthy sojourn on the Continent from 1623-1625, when he spent most of his time in Paris and - more concerningly for the presbytery - Rome.

Fundamentally, the eleventh earl seems to have preferred academic pursuits rather than political advancement. It was he,

for example, who oversaw the posthumous publication of Hume of Godscroft's panegyric in praise of the Douglases in 1644. But his socio-political prospects enjoyed a marked uptick on the accession of King Charles I in 1625. The two men apparently shared similar perspectives on how the Scottish church should be administered, although these opinions increasingly ran contrary to popular opinion. In March 1630, Charles renewed the grant of the earldom of Angus on the eleventh earl and



Charles I in Three Positions (1635-1636) by Flemish painter Sir Anthony van Dyck. Charles I was a generous patron of the eleventh earl of Angus's career. The earl himself however showed little interest in exploiting this patronage to further expand his influence. Image source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_Anthony_Van_Dyck_-_Charles_I_\(1600-49\)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_Anthony_Van_Dyck_-_Charles_I_(1600-49)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)



The entrance to the Douglas Tower from the wall-walk at Tantallon. The eleventh earl spent considerable time at Tantallon and may have regularly used this door when passing to and from his personal chambers in the Douglas Tower to those of his subordinates in the central tower. Image source: Yours truly.

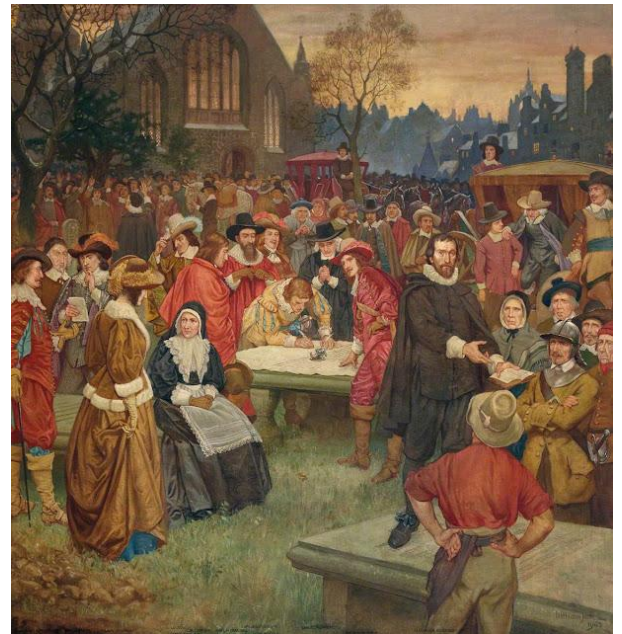
clarified his parliamentary privileges. During Charles's Scottish coronation on 17 June 1633, the earl carried the king's crown during the procession and was rewarded with his creation as first marquess of Douglas. In 1634, he served as justiciary for Walston parish in Lanarkshire and was appointed justice of the peace for Lanark. For the following two years (1635 and 1636), he also participated in a cross-border commission intended to maintain stability along this once war-torn frontier. It must be said, however, that the newly-minted marquess does not seem to have sought these accolades, and it is perhaps telling that they were of largely local, rather than national, significance.

On 28 February 1638, at a meeting at Greyfriar's Kirk in Edinburgh (where the fourth earl of Morton had been buried following his execution in 1581), the National Covenant was signed. This document sought to mobilise popular religious zealotry and fervent patriotism in opposition to Charles I's efforts to continue his father's policy of bringing the Church of Scotland closer in line with the Church of England. Within a year, tensions between the covenanters and the king led



to open warfare, with the marquess's residences at Douglas and Tantallon both being occupied by the former. The marquess himself absented himself from the political and military manoeuvring, but when a fragile peace was restored in 1640, King Charles warned him to re-garrison his strongholds in anticipation of future violence. In fact, when civil war erupted between King Charles and the English parliament in 1642, the marquess sought to stand aloof from the conflict yet again, though he was eventually harangued into signing the covenant by the increasingly frustrated Lanark presbytery in 1644. Ostensibly, this put him in opposition to Charles I, but his lack of enthusiasm for this is demonstrated by the fact that when James Graham, marquess of Montrose, defeated a larger covenanting army at Kilsyth in Stirlingshire on 15 August 1645, the marquess of Douglas swiftly switched sides. He was put to work by Montrose as lieutenant of Clydesdale, but Montrose's defeat at Philiphaugh in September and subsequent flight to Norway left the marquess of Douglas high and dry. The marquess was imprisoned for a time at Edinburgh Castle in 1646, securing his release in return for a hefty fine and an admission that he had scurrilously breached the covenant.

The humiliations of 1646 did not shake the marquess of his royalist convictions, however. When Charles II sought Scottish support - exploiting their fears of parliamentary policy both on religious practice and Scotland's future - for his kingship in the wake of his father's execution in 1649, the marquess responded positively. Oliver Cromwell - now commander-in-chief of all the land forces of the Commonwealth - responded to fears of an alliance between Charles and the covenanters by invading southern Scotland in July 1650, and on 3 September he utterly crushed a Scottish army in battle at Dunbar. In the wake of this disastrous defeat, a small company of 91 moss-troopers (i.e., highly mobile border raiders) occupied Tantallon and used it as a base from which to harass Cromwell forces. These were not necessarily in the employ of the marquess, though they were certainly advancing the royalist cause



The Signing of the National Covenant in Greyfriars Churchyard, 1638 (1903) by William Brassey Hole. The first marquess of Douglas frequently ran afoul of the covenanters due to his Catholic sympathies. Image source: <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-signing-of-the-national-covenant-in-greyfriars-churchyard-1638-93406>

that he favoured. In retaliation, Cromwell dispatched his artillery expert Major-General George Monck in February to lay siege to the castle and neutralise this threat. Even then, nearly three centuries after its construction, Tantallon's thick landward wall presented too daunting a prospect for Monck's cannons. However, in a demonstration of his keen grasp of siege warfare, Monck seems to have overcome this by simply ignoring the wall and concentrating his fire on the towers, particularly those at the east and west ends of the castle. After twelve days under bombardment, during which a major breach was made in the Douglas Tower (i.e., the west tower), the defenders surrendered. Much of the damage visible at Tantallon now, particularly to the range of buildings on the western side of the promontory, was likely done by Monck and his troops *after* the surrender and was designed to make it impossible to easily refortify in the near future.



The ruined outer defences at Tantallon Castle. It is difficult to differentiate now between damage sustained during the siege of 1651 and damage done by Monck's troops in the immediate aftermath of the siege intended to make Tantallon Castle indefensible in the future. Image source: Yours truly.



The ruined east tower at Tantallon Castle, with the landward wall and central tower visible behind it. It is striking how badly damaged the tower is compared to the relative lack of damage to the wall itself. Some of the destruction wrought on the three towers at Tantallon may have occurred after the siege was over, but the absence on any obvious impacts on the walls suggests that Monck concentrated his fire on the towers in an effort to deprive the enemy of their most effective ways of fighting back against the besiegers. Image source: Yours truly.

Tantallon was not the only local castle to suffer a similar fate at Monck's hands. Between November 1650 and March 1651, Dirleton (another East Lothian stronghold), Edinburgh, and Blackness in West Lothian were also reduced. Of these, only Edinburgh and Blackness would later be reoccupied. 1651 would be the end of Tantallon's history as a lived-in building. Marquess William's royalist associations led to him being fined £1000 under the 1654 'Act of Grace'. The fact that this sum was reduced to £333 6s. 8d. shortly before his death in April 1655 demonstrates the woeful state of his financial affairs after the recent civil wars. It also indicates how little of a threat he was now perceived as by those who had emerged victorious from this period of conflict. His grandson James, who succeeded him as second marquess, was still a minor when he inherited, but his assumption of personal responsibility for his estates in 1668 only brought further financial ruin. By 1698, the second marquess was found to have debts of more than £240,000 Scots, largely due to the mismanagement of his estates by the corrupt William Lawrie, 'tutor' of Blackwood. It was likely to settle some of these eye-watering debts that in the following year he sold the ruined Tantallon to Sir Hew Dalrymple, a successful lawyer and politician who had been lord president of the Court of Session since June 1698. Tantallon thus became just a windswept bit of scenery on the Dalrymple estates, a curio for important visitors to be taken around. Queen Victoria for instance visited in August 1878, a visit commemorated - in typically arrogant Victorian fashion - with a carving inside the landward entrance. Happily, the castle was taken into state care in 1924 and is now open daily for the public to enjoy. Hopefully, these two exhaustive - and exhausting - posts have demonstrated that Tantallon and those who lived there have had a tremendous impact on Scotland's history, quite apart from the magnificence of the building itself. Tantallon is, quite simply, my favourite castle.



Callum Watson has a PhD in History from the University of Edinburgh, with a focus on warfare, politics, and society in late medieval Scotland. He works for the National Trust for Scotland at the Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre, where he provides guided tours of the exhibition center and the battlefield. He writes on various subjects relating to Scotland's 14th and 15th century history at Knight of the Two L's blog, which is a regular feature in the Dubh Ghlase Newsletter. He can also be found on Facebook and on Instagram. He has appeared in BBC's Rise of the Clans episodes on Robert Bruce and James I, and in Britain's Lost Battlefields episode on Bannockburn, as well as serving as one of the historical Advisors for the Netflix film *Outlaw King*.

If you appreciate his work, please check out Dr. Watson's blog, follow him on Facebook and Instagram or email Dr. Watson at:



DrCallumWatson@gmail.com



FROM COAST TO FRONTIER: The Southward and Westward Migration of the Douglas Family in America

William Douglas, *The Douglas Archives*

The Douglas name first appeared on American shores in the mid-1700s, arriving with Scottish and Scots-Irish settlers seeking refuge and opportunity.

I am attempting to trace the migration from bustling eastern harbours - Philadelphia, Charleston, Norfolk - through Ashboro's crossroads to the fertile banks of the Catawba River, where families forged their frontier legacy by wagon and pack horse.

Some, like William Douglas, landed in Pennsylvania, while others established roots in Virginia and the Carolinas.

Migration routes converged around Asheboro, becoming a crossroads for Douglas pioneers and other Scots-Irish settlers. As tensions rose in the northern colonies, families migrated south and inland, seeking fertile ground and freedom. By 1773, William Douglas had settled near the Catawba River in North Carolina.

But there were many others like him.

The Douglas name became woven into the fabric of South Carolina's upcountry, where they fought in the Revolutionary War, founded towns, and built Presbyterian communities. Their tenacity shaped local identity, often standing in contrast to established elites. By the 1800s, Douglas descendants moved westward, into Tennessee, Kentucky, and later Arkansas, Texas, and the Oklahoma Territory. Some families like the Covington-Douglas line settled along trade routes and goldfields in the West. Their names appear on land deeds, muster rolls, and town charters across the expanding map of America.

Every surname carries a story. Whether your ancestors arrived by ship, wagon, or sheer will, their journey forms the foundation of your heritage. The Douglases carved a path through wilderness and uncertainty, and so did countless other families—perhaps yours among them.

One such story is that on Edward Douglass.





The First Douglas in Tennessee: A Frontier Legacy

In the waning light of a Virginia afternoon, Edward Douglass, Sr. stood at the edge of his land in Fauquier County, surveying the horizon with a quiet resolve. A man of education and conviction, he had served as a commissioned officer in the War of Independence, offering legal counsel to neighbours and friends, though he never practiced law formally. But now, in the year 1785, the war was behind him—and a new frontier beckoned.

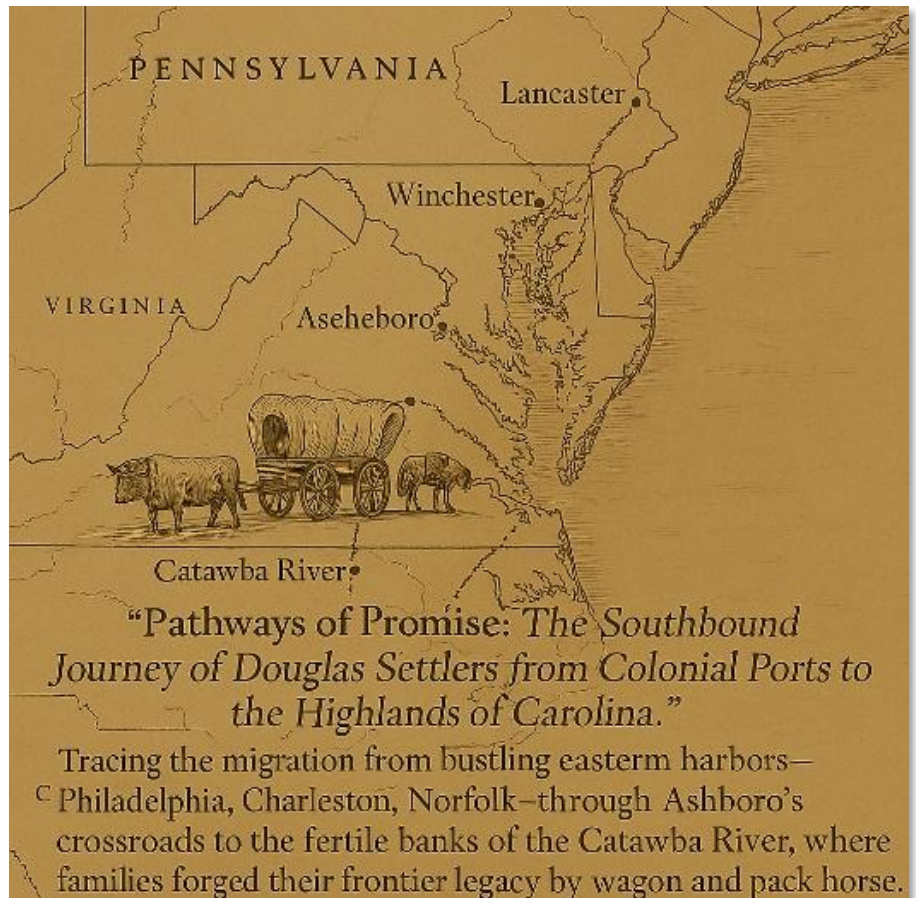
With his wife Sarah George and their children, Edward packed up their belongings and set out westward, joining the tide of pioneers pushing into the untamed lands of Tennessee. Their destination: the fertile valleys of Sumner County, where Station Camp Creek meandered through the wilderness. It was a land of promise, but also peril—Indian raids, harsh winters, and the uncertainty of frontier life loomed large.

Yet Edward was undeterred. Upon arrival, he built a homestead near what would become Salem Camp Ground. His home quickly became more than a shelter—it was a centre of community. In 1788 and again in 1790, before Tennessee was even a state, the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions convened at his residence. Edward had become one of Sumner County's first magistrates, a trusted figure in public affairs, dispensing wisdom and justice with humility and fairness.

His children carried forward his legacy. John Douglass gave his life on a mission to Native tribes. Edward Jr. and James Douglass became justices under Tennessee's first governor, John Sevier, and both served as sheriffs. Edward Jr. even rose to the state senate, helping shape the laws of the fledgling state.

Edward Douglass, Sr. died in 1795 at Cage's Bend, leaving behind a legacy rooted in courage, service, and community. His descendants remained in Sumner

County, their names etched into the land he helped tame. And so, the story of the Douglass family in Tennessee began—not with fanfare, but with quiet determination and a belief in the promise of a new beginning.



William Douglas is the compiler of ***The Douglas Archives***, a digital collection of historical and genealogical records: www.douglashistory.co.uk.

He is seeking assistance with telling the story from arrival to settlement of families who came to America from Scotland or Ireland – of their struggles to overcome the hardship living on the frontier and building their new homes.





News From All Over



The Stirling Classic Scottish Festival Yukon, Oklahoma May 30 - June 1, 2025

The Stirling Classic Scottish Festival was held in Yukon, Oklahoma, on May 30 through June 1, 2025. This year's event had 14 clan tents, which might be the most yet, the heavy athletics competition, and a good number of Celtic-themed vendors and food options, Celtic bands, traditional Scottish dancers, pipe bands, sheep herding dogs, highland cows, traditional blacksmiths demonstrating their trade and selling their wares, and our own resident unicorn.

Special events held during the festival included a fire ceremony on Friday evening with a ceilidh afterward, a well-attended Opening Ceremony on Saturday with the Yukon Police Department's color guard, whisky tastings, and a kirken o' the tartan on Sunday morning. We also had a new herding dog who was more interested in people's food than the sheep so the sheep got to go on an unplanned adventure running around and in between the audience at the athletics field.

We had a number of visitors at the Clan Douglas tent on Friday night and Saturday. It was very exciting to have some Blaylock cousins visit from Oklahoma and Missouri, athlete Bobby Douglas and his wife stopped by after a weekend of participating in the athletics competition, and it was great to see a number of new Douglases at the tent throughout the weekend as well. Ron and Donna Hopkins kindly donated the use of their tent for the festival and were a great help on Sunday.

A big storm decided to drop over two inches of rain and small hail on Yukon on Saturday night so that seemed to scare off most of the crowds on Sunday. Thankfully our tent wasn't damaged but several other clans and vendors weren't so lucky.

The next festival in Oklahoma will be the Oklahoma Highland Gathering on October 11-12 in Choctaw, OK.

Respectfully,
Jody Blaylock
Oklahoma Regent



Russell Blaylock (center) with his father David Blaylock and daughters Emma (back) and Sophie and son Evan.



Clan Douglas member Kim Hawkins with Dazzle the unicorn were a huge attraction.





Wesley Hedrick and son traveled from western Oklahoma to attend the festival.



Athlete Bobby Douglas and his wife Kathy Douglas.



Dazzle the Unicorn showing off her Douglas colors.



Sisters Sophie and Emma Blaylock carried the banner in the clan march during the opening ceremony.



Brothers Phillip Douglas and Josh Douglas brought their extended family to the games and visited the Clan Douglas tent.



Duluth International Dance Competition Duluth, Minnesota ~ June 14, 2025

The Duluth MN International Dance Competition was held on Saturday, June 14, 2025 at the Great Lakes Aquarium. It was 42 degrees at about 8:15 a.m. upon arrival and 52 degrees upon leaving that afternoon. The event was held indoors as the photos show.

The dances by Primary through the Premier were the Pas de Basques, Lilt, Fling, Seann Truibhas and others. Twenty-three participants competed.

On behalf of Clan Douglas, I presented two medals to deserving dancers.

It was a good event even if small.

John (Jock) Glendenning
Minnesota Regent



Clan Douglas Society of North America table.



Event attendees.



Intermediate dancers.



Maddie Vaillant, Thunder Bay--Trophy winner, Best Dancer.

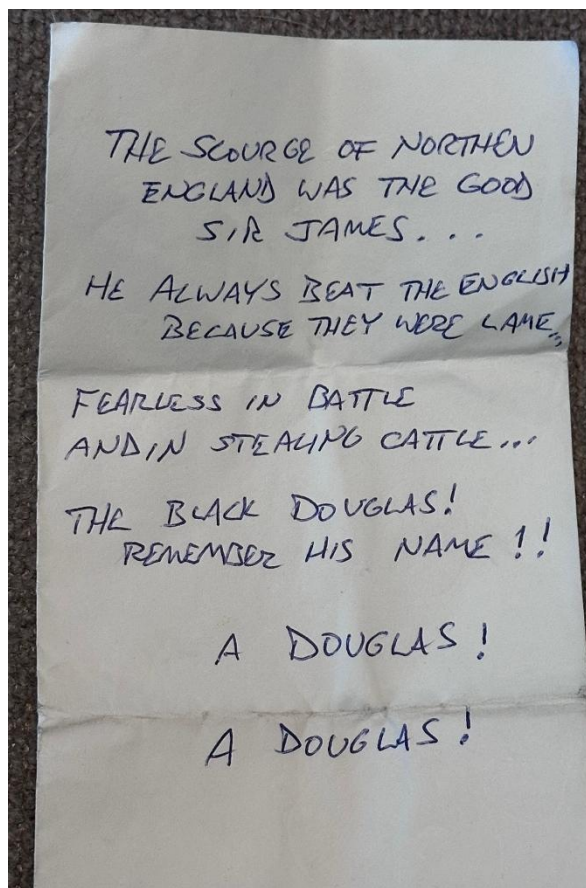


Duluth Scottish Heritage Association Pipes and Drums performing at closing.



Grandfather Mountain Highland Games Linville, North Carolina July 10-13, 2025

The 2025 Grandfather Mountain Highland Games started off in true Scottish form with a torrential downpour before the start of the Torchlight Ceremony Thursday night. Fortunately, the skies cleared for the Calling of the Clans where North Carolina Regent Chris (mŌg) Mogensen represented Clan Douglas with a rousing limerick about Sir James the Good, the Black Douglas.



Sir James the Good limerick.

With the incredible help from our CDSNA Storekeeper Brandy Mahoney and her lovely daughter, as well as our East Coast Vice President Curtis Rowell with his wife and daughter, we were able to get our tent set up and ready for all the guests to come by. The next three days were filled with lots of people stopping by to learn more about Clan Douglas as well as Clan Douglas members checking in. We were able to renew some lapsed memberships as well as add new members and life members to CDSNA! In conjunction with some other clans, we sent our young Border Reivers out to "steal" stuffed coos that were marked with tartan to bring back to our little herd. Of course, these sweet coos found their way back home before the end of the day. The children knew not to get caught and if they did, they were not able to take a coo.

After a long weekend filled with busy days, we are eternally grateful for the help from Curtis, Nikki, Michelle, Brandy, and Raewyn throughout the entire weekend setting up and breaking down the tent as well as talking to all the visitors who stopped by. In addition, on Sunday we were greatly assisted with additional Clan Douglas members from NC and as far away as Canada in loading up and hauling everything to the vehicles! THANK YOU!!!

The Grandfather Mountain Highland Games is the largest gathering of clans in the world with 109 clans represented in 2025! A new record for GMHG! We are honored to host the Clan Douglas tent at these Games where CDSNA started in 1975.

As a special note to all of you, it is SO helpful signing in at the tent if there is a sign-up system so that we can remember everyone who stopped by!

Chris and Kirsten Mogensen
North Carolina Regents



Calling of the Clans Torchlight Ceremony.



The Calling of the Clans with Clan Douglas leading the line.



CDSNA Storekeeper Brandy Mahoney and daughter Raewyn.



The rains prior to the Torchlight Ceremony.



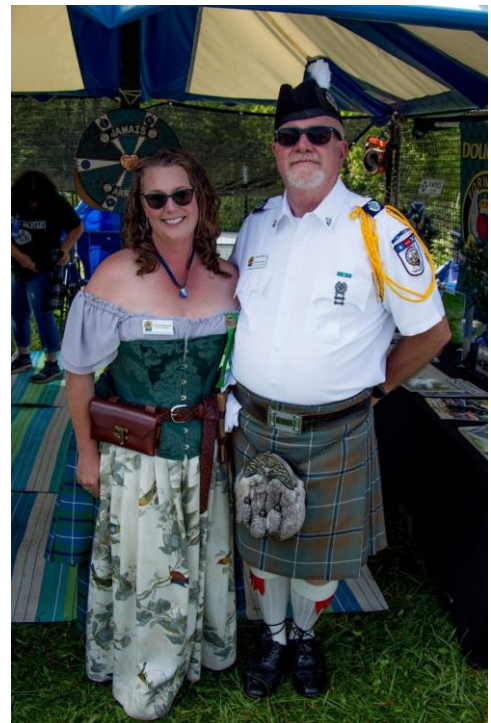
One of the afternoon rains sending everyone to the nearest clan tent or shelter.



Clan Douglas representing at the Parade of Tartans in the shadow of Grandfather Mountain.



Clan Douglas tent displays.



NC Regents Chris Douglass Mogensen and Kirsten Williams Moaensen.



Brandy Mahoney carrying the Douglas tartan in the Parade of Tartans.



Douglas reivers.



NC Regent Kirsten Williams Mogensen and Michelle Rowell.



Chris Mogensen, NC Regent and SAMS Post 1775 member, playing tunes to send the rains away.



NC Regents Chris Douglass Mogensen and Kirsten Williams Mogensen.



Not only is he the North Carolina Regent for Clan Douglas, he is also a Clan Douglas Piper - mÒg the Piper!



A Douglas!





33rd Annual East TN Celtic Festival Johnson City, Tennessee August 29-31, 2025

The weekend of August 29-31, 2025 was the 33rd annual Upper East Tennessee Celtic Festival at the beautiful and rustic Tipton-Haynes Historic Site in Johnson City, Tennessee.

Over 2000 people attended this event that consisted mainly of vendors & music. There were also sword and medieval demonstrations, blacksmithing, children's area and highland games workshops. There were 9 clans represented this year (same number as last year).

We got to talk with a lot of Clan Douglas allies and families and pass out samples of home-made Scottish Shortbread. Several new connections & friendships were made.



Life Member Skyler Chastain, Regents Betsy & Tyson Chastain, Abbey & Maizey



Skyler Chastain participating in the heavy athletics workshop

Clan Douglas Life Member, Skyler Chastain learned how to compete in heavy athletics by attending the highland games workshops. The workshops were 3 hours long and the participants were schooled in hammer toss, weight over bar, stone throw and sheaf toss. Also, Skyler won 3rd place (out of 10) in the Bonny Knees contest! A Douglas, a Douglas!

Quite a bit of fun was had by all who attended this great festival on a picture-perfect Labor Day weekend!

Tyson & Betsy Chastain
TN (East) Regents



Skyler Chastain (left) does Clan Douglas proud in the Bonny Knees Contest!





A History of the House of Douglas

from the earliest times down to the legislative union of England and Scotland
(published 1902)

By Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, Bt. 1845-1937

The free source book from which this series of chapters from volume one of Maxwell's two-volume work is found is on the *Internet Archive* site: <https://archive.org/details/historyofhouseof01maxw/mode/2up>

Here is a screenshot image of the numerous download options for this book...

A history of the house of Douglas from the earliest times down to the legislative union of England and Scotland

by [Maxwell, Herbert Eustace, Sir, bart., 1845-1937](#)



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And on to Chapter 10

~ The Douglasses of Dalkeith and Morton ~



CHAPTER X

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231 Founds the Collegiate Church of Dalkeith, June 1406.	239 His death, <i>c.</i> 1504.
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232 His will, 1390-1392.	242 Marries Janet Crichton.
235 xxxi. Sir James Douglas, 1st Lord Dalkeith, <i>c.</i> 1372- <i>c.</i> 1441.	242 His death, <i>c.</i> 1528.
236 Created a Lord of Parliament.	242 xxxv. James Douglas, 3rd Earl of Morton, 5th Lord Dalkeith.
236 His death, <i>c.</i> 1441.	243 Marries Katherine Stuart.
237 xxxii. Sir James Douglas, 2nd Lord Dalkeith.	243 Deprived of his earldom and lands, 17th October 1540.
237 Marries Elizabeth Gifford.	244 Deprivation of Douglas of Lochleven, January 1541.
238 xxxiii. Sir James Douglas, 1st Earl of Morton, 3rd Lord Dalkeith, <i>ob.</i> <i>c.</i> 1504.	245 Morton is restored, 24th April 1543.
	245 His death, 1552.

IN accordance with the provisions of the will of the Knight of Liddesdale, his possessions passed to James, the eldest son of his brother John, by his wife Agnes Monfode. But in these possessions were not included Hermitage and Liddesdale, which were held to revert to the Crown in consequence of the deceased knight's treasonable acceptance of them from the King of England, and were conferred by King David upon William, Lord of Douglas [xi].¹ Sir James Douglas therefore became at once a very extensive landowner, and immensely increased his wealth by marrying, in 1372, Agnes, daughter of "Black Agnes" of Dunbar, the famous Countess of March,² who brought as her dowry not only the lands of

¹ Fraser, iii. 360.

² Morton, ii. 100, 102.



Mordington and Whittinghame and an estate in the Isle of Man, but also the liberal sum of one thousand merks a year, secured by royal grant upon the customs of Haddington and Aberdeen, *pro apparatu et amictu ipsius*—that is, for pin-money.¹ In addition to all this, Sir James's brother-in-law, George, Earl of March, bestowed upon him the castle and lands of Morton, and the lands of Whittingham in East Lothian, and of Dabton, Drumcork, and Thornhill in the county of Dumfries.²

Sir James accompanied Sir Archibald the Grim [xiii.] and the Bishop of Glasgow on their embassy to France in 1371;³ and he was one of the Scottish Commissioners with the Earl of Moray and Sir Archibald, who fixed the truce with the English at Ayton, 7th July 1384. But in the course of a long life he does not seem to have taken any leading part either in the agitating politics of the time or in the constantly recurring warfare, although proving himself an active and excellent man of business, as a large number of the papers in the Morton chartulary amply testify, a great benefactor to the Church, and superior in education to most of his rank at that period. In 1372 Robert II. granted to his "beloved kinsman, James de Douglas," licence to endow a chaplainry in the chapel of St. Nicholas, in the town of Dalkeith, with the annual sum of £6, 13s. 4d., charged upon the lands of Horsburgh in the county of Peebles.⁴ In 1377 Sir James endowed another chaplainry in the same chapel from the lands of Quilt and Fethane, also in Peeblesshire, for the salvation of his father John, his mother Agnes, his brother John, his uncle the Knight of Liddesdale, and the knight's daughter Mary. He made it a condition that the chaplain should be constantly resident and should attend to his duties, and threw an interesting side-light upon contemporary ecclesiastical habits by the significant

¹ *Morton*, ii. 84.

² *Ibid.*, 78.

³ Godscroft says it was James, afterwards 2nd Earl of Douglas [xii.], who did so, but this James was but a child in 1371. To meet this difficulty Godscroft alters the date of the embassy to 1381.

⁴ *Morton*, ii. 98.





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provision that, should the said chaplain keep a concubine *publice*, and refuse to dismiss her upon being warned to do so, he should vacate the chaplainry.¹ In 1406, having obtained the consent of Bishop Wardlaw of St. Andrews,

Founds the
Collegiate
Church of
Dalkeith,
June 1406.

Douglas erected the chapel of St. Nicholas into a collegiate church, endowing it with funds out of his lands for the support of a provost and five prebendaries as perpetual chaplains, with suitable "manses." The provost and chaplains were to reside continually, and all were to attend divine service daily, "decently dressed in gown and black hood furred with lamb's-wool," except one of their number detailed to celebrate mass daily in the chapel of Dalkeith Castle. All this was done "in memory of the Kings Robert I., David II., and Robert II., their predecessors and successors, of Sir John de Douglas our father, and Lady Agnes our mother, Sir William Douglas Lord of Liddesdale our uncle, and his daughter Mary, of Agnes also and Egidia our wives, of John, Sir Henry, Thomas, and Nicholas Douglas our brothers, of John Douglas our son, Elena and Margaret our sisters, and for the salvation of all faithful departed souls, and of our own, and of that of Sir James, Sir William, and Sir James our sons, and that of our daughters, and of all others procreated or to be procreated of our body, and of Sir William Douglas our brother and his sons, and for the welfare of Elizabeth our sister, so long as we shall remain upon earth, and after death for the salvation of our souls."²

Besides this church of St. Nicholas in the town of Dalkeith there was a chapel of Our Lady and St. John the Baptist within the castle, which Sir James endowed in 1384 with a chaplainry in memory of his first wife, supported by funds from his lands of Louchurde and Kirkurde, providing that, should the demolition or repair of the said castle interrupt the services, they should be held in the chapel of St. Nicholas, or, if war rendered that impossible, then in the parish church of Lasswade.³

Sir James Douglas died of influenza in 1420. Bower

¹ *Morton*, ii. 125.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 324.

³ *Ibid.*, 151.



mentions that it was very destructive in that year,—“not only nobles, but the commonalty succumbing to it.” This mysterious epidemic, he says, was vulgarly called “the Quhew,” just as at the present time we may hear it spoken of as “the flue”; and although Bower quotes the highest medical opinion to prove that it was the result of certain peculiarities in the season, its causes, prevention, and treatment were just as little understood in his day as they are in ours.¹

Death of Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith, 1420.

Sir James's first wife, Agnes of Dunbar, died before 1384. His second wife was Egidia, or Giles, daughter of Walter the Steward, half-sister of King Robert II., and relict of (1) Sir James Lindsay of Crauford, and (2) Sir Hugh Eglinton.

Sir James had two legitimate sons, both by his first wife—(1) Sir James [xxxi.], who succeeded him; and (2) Sir William. He left three daughters—(1) Margaret, who married Philip Arbuthnot of that ilk;² Agnes, who married John Livingstone of Callander;³ and Jean, who in 1388 married Sir John Hamilton of Cadzow.⁴

Besides his legitimate issue, Sir James left two illegitimate sons, John Douglas of Aberdour, and Sir James Douglas, also of Aberdour, Roberton, etc., whom the good knight is careful to name along with the rest of his children and relatives in the dedication of the collegiate church of Dalkeith.

By far the most interesting memorial left by this worthy knight remains in two wills, dated respectively 30th September 1390 and 13th September 1392. Except

His last will and testament, 1390-1392.

the testament above mentioned of his uncle, the Knight of Liddesdale [xxviii.], these are the oldest wills known to be extant executed by any Scotsman,

¹ Bower, xv. 32.

² *Ibid.*, 97.

³ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. p. xxxviii. The original indenture under which this marriage was arranged remains at Dalmahoy, and is an exceedingly curious document, illustrating Sir James Douglas's shrewd business mind. The seal appended thereto bears the earliest extant example of the Hamilton cinquefoils.



SIR JAMES'S FIRST WILL 233

and "are better calculated to convey a just notion of his rank and importance as a Scottish baron than any historical document that remains to us."¹ By these documents Sir James constituted his eldest legitimate son James as his heir, with Archibald the Grim [xiii.] and Sir Henry Douglas [xxix.], the testator's brother, as guardians, failing whom, George, Earl of March. Commending his soul to the keeping of the Virgin and all saints, he directed that his body should be laid beside that of Agnes, his first wife, in the monastery of Newbattle, leaving half of his free goods for the expenses of his funeral and for masses and alms for his soul's sake. The vicar of Lasswade was to have his best horse and, curiously enough, his arms, as funeral fee, under the express condition that the said vicar was not to ask nor sue for any more [*sic quod pro funerali meo ulterius non petat nec calumpniat*]. To James his heir he left his helmet and arms and plate armour, with the silken surcoat worn over the armour, his second best horse, and his jack and tushes. Also an "owche" with a ruby in the middle, a ring *de columna Christi*, a cross made of the true cross *super quam pendebat Jesus*, a silver reliquary enclosing hair of Mary Magdalene, and a gilt girdle. Among other legacies to James were mentioned a golden circlet, a great "counterfillet" of gold, a silver basin and cover valued at £15, 3s. 8d., his best gilt cup at £18, 2s., and his best sapphire ring, which he, the testator, had received from his mother with her blessing, and now left to his son James with his own cordial blessing. To James also he left a large quantity of silver plate valued at £24, 4s. 8d., his best bed, and all his books, including the Scottish statutes as well as the romances, except those on grammar and logic, which were bequeathed to his illegitimate son John of Aberdour, upon whom also he settled £10 a year until he should be provided with land to that amount. In regard to his library there is a most exemplary and commendable clause in his will, to the effect that all books which he had borrowed should be returned to their owners.

¹ *Miscellany of the Bannatyne Club*, ii. 101-120.



His daughter Jean received a golden circlet valued at forty merks in full discharge of the balance of her dowry. His illegitimate son James got his father's second best girdle, a pair of plates, and a suit of tilting armour. His brothers William and Nicholas each received suits of armour with an allowance of twenty and ten merks a year respectively. All the rest of the knight's armour was to remain in Dalkeith Castle perpetually.

The rest of his bequests consist chiefly of articles of which the mere mention must turn all good antiquaries green with despair because of their disappearance. The Earl of March received a ring with a ruby; John de Livingston a ring with a St. Christopher; the church of Newbattle a jewel of St. John that cost forty merks, with twelve silver plates of the value of £18, 6s., for the use of the refectory, and his third best horse. To Elizabeth, his sister, he bequeathed a gold brooch; to Sir Henry, his brother, a sapphire ring; to Archibald the Grim, a ring with a ruby "endlang" inscribed *Vertu ne pus auoir conterpois*, a sapphire on a gold stalk for the purification of the blood, and his second best gilt cup and cover valued at £8. To his second legitimate son William he left an emerald ring with a poesy beginning "Remembrance," and to his second wife Egidia an "owche" which she had given him, "provided she does not lay any claim to the other jewels."

The next provision in this remarkable will must be for ever deplored by historians, for it decreed "for the weal of my uncle's soul and my own," that all the bonds of the Knight of Liddesdale should be destroyed by fire. The solemnity of the injunction suggests that these documents were of much importance, not exclusively creditable to the said uncle, and capable of throwing much light upon disputed points in his later career. Other provisions settled a chalice and missal on the church of St. Nicholas in Dalkeith, sums of various amounts for building and upkeep of different churches, legacies to the friars of Haddington and Edinburgh, the monastery of Kelso, and a number of



HIS SECOND WILL

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private individuals. All his horses except those above specified were to be divided among his brothers by his executors, of whom there were nine named in the first will, to wit—Egidia, his wife; William, Henry, and Nicholas, his brothers; James of Aberdour, his natural son; Hamilton and Livingston, his sons-in-law; Andrew Crocket, chaplain; and William de Kincardine, priest. The residue of his plate was to be sold for the good of the poor; his robes of cloth of gold and silk were left for vestments to the churches of St. Duthoc at Tain and St. Nicholas at Dalkeith; Andrew Crocket, chaplain, Richard Melok, William of Dreghorn, and other priests were to share his furred garments; his green robe went to the parish church of Lasswade; his robe with a fetterlock, “which John Gibson last bought in Flanders,” to the parish church of Newlands, and so on, all the rest of his wardrobe to be distributed among his poor servants at the discretion of his executors.¹

In the will of 1392, revoking that of 1390, there are some slight alterations in these bequests, but the most significant, perhaps, is the omission of Sir James’s wife, Egidia, from the list of executors. The trifling bequest to her remains, the “owche” that she had given her husband; but his affection for her does not seem to have been great, judging from the *caveat* that she is not to claim any of the other jewels. The most important new provision was that of the bequest of all his goods, after legacies and debts, to the building and decoration of the chapel of St. Nicholas.²

In 1378 James, son and heir of Sir James Douglas of Morton and Dalkeith [xxx.], was betrothed to one of the daughters of the Earl of Carrick, afterwards King Robert III. Inasmuch as his father was only married about 1371, the bridegroom could not have been more than seven years old; but precocious matrimony was promoted in those days by far-seeing parents and guardians. “To one of the daughters,” I have said, because the indenture only binds young James to marry “one of the two daughters of the said Lord John

xxx. Sir
James Doug-
las, 1st Lord
Dalkeith,
c. 1372-1441.

¹ *Morton*, ii. 170-176.

² *Ibid.*, 179-186.



[Earl of Carrick], either Margaret his elder daughter or Elizabeth his younger daughter, according to his own fancy and choice [*secundum libitum et electionem ipsius*].”¹ He chose Elizabeth. In 1392, when it is supposed the marriage took place, James’s father infest him in the castle and town of Dalkeith, with 500 merks of land;² and in 1393 he added, by permission of Archibald, Earl of Douglas and Lord of Galloway, the barony of Prestoun in Galloway.³ In 1401 the younger James’s father-in-law, King Robert III., bestowed upon him the lands of Morton in Nithsdale, Mordington in Berwick, and Whittinghame in East Lothian,⁴ and in the following year granted him £40 a year from the customs of Edinburgh.⁵ It has been stated that King James I. made him a lord of Parliament under the style of Lord Dalkeith, but evidence is wanting on this point.

Sir James Douglas, Lord Dalkeith, died about 1441, having married, first, Elizabeth, daughter of John the Steward [afterwards King Robert III.], by whom he had three sons—

- (1) William, who married in 1421 Margaret, daughter of Sir William Borthwick, and widow of Sir William de Abernethy, and died during his father’s life without issue.
- (2) James [xxxii.], who succeeded as 2nd Lord Dalkeith.
- (3) Henry, to whom his father gave a charter of the lands of Borgue, etc., in Galloway, whereof he had sasine from Archibald, Earl of Douglas and Lord of Galloway [xiii.]. Henry married Margaret, daughter of James the Gross, 7th Earl of Douglas [xix.], and had a son, Hugh of Borgue, who in 1474 renounced in favour of his cousin, the 1st Earl of Morton [xxxiii.], all rights to the lordship of Dalkeith, except what might come to him as heir male of the line.⁶

Lord Dalkeith married, secondly, Janet, daughter of Sir

¹ *Morton*, ii. 136.

² *Ibid.*, 188.

³ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 222.



INSANITY OF 2ND LORD DALKEITH 237

William Borthwick¹ of that ilk, by whom he had a son William. Upon his father's death, *c.* 1440, this Sir William became proprietor of Morton and Whittinghame, and progenitor of the family of Douglas of Whittinghame, a line which ended in an heiress Elizabeth, who married Alexander Seton, Viscount Kingston. Lady Kingston's daughter married Hay of Drummelzier, whose descendants became the lineal representatives of Douglas of Whittinghame in this country.² In 1474 Sir William Douglas renounced his right to the lordship of Morton in favour of James, 1st Earl of Morton [xxxiii].³

Lord Dalkeith's second wife survived him, and married the Admiral of Scotland, Sir George Crichton, Earl of Caithness.

James, 2nd Lord Dalkeith, married Elizabeth, daughter of James Gifford of Sheriffhall; but having become insane during his father's lifetime, upon his succeeding in 1441, the King appointed James Gifford, Lady Dalkeith's brother, his curator for nineteen years, with full powers to administer the estates and to collect the rents.⁴ By the same instrument Gifford was constituted constable of Dalkeith Castle, a stronghold of considerable importance to that party in the kingdom which should hold it in those days of dissension. Consequently King James's Government spent considerable sums in repairs and upkeep during the tutelage of Gifford, the bills for iron, Prussian timber, etc., amounting to £122, 15s. 5d. during the years 1444-1445.⁵

Lord Dalkeith left two children by his wife—(1) James [xxxiii.], who succeeded him, and (2) Beatrix, who married

xxxii. Sir
James Doug-
las, 2nd Lord
Dalkeith.

¹ *Morton*, ii. 330.

² The male line is still represented by Carl Wilhelm, Count Douglas [born in 1824], *premier gentilhomme de la chambre* to the King of Sweden. Count Douglas traces his descent from Patrick Douglas of Standing Stones, sprung from a younger brother of Douglas of Whittinghame. Patrick's son Robert [born in 1611] served under Gustavus Adolphus; was created Baron of Skalby in 1651, Count of Scheningen in 1654, and Field-Marshal in 1657.

³ *Morton*, ii. 207.

⁴ *Exchequer Rolls*, v. 146 *et passim*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 207-209.



the first Earl of Errol, Constable of Scotland. The brothers and step-mother of the 2nd Lord Dalkeith made some attempt to set aside or infringe upon James's right of succession, on the ground of his father's insanity, but without success, and he became 3rd Lord Dalkeith in due order. In 1458 he was belted Earl of Morton on the occasion of his marriage with Joan, third daughter of James I. The lustre of this alliance is sadly overcast by the surmise, amounting almost to certainty, that this unlucky princess was deaf and dumb. There is no contemporary evidence to prove it, but in the divorce proceedings of Hugh, 3rd Earl of Eglinton, against Joanna Hamilton, his wife, in 1562, on the plea of consanguinity, it is set forth that the earl and countess were descended from a common ancestress, namely, Joan, Countess of Morton, or Lady Dalkeith, known as *muta domina*, the dumb lady. James Douglas therefore had to make some sacrifice in return for his earldom, and the prospects of offspring between the son of a madman and a dumb lady were anything but reassuring.¹

Nevertheless, the 1st Earl of Morton proved shrewd enough in his benefactions to the Church. In 1471 Pope Sixtus IV. wrote to him urging him to join in the projected crusade against the Turks in Europe,² an invitation which he was far too prudent to accept. Lord Morton increased and re-endowed the collegiate church of Dalkeith, founded by his great-grandfather [xxx.],³ and in 1474 founded a hospital of St. Martha in Aberdour, for the comfort of travellers and the support of the poor, being moved thereto, as he expressed it, by the "pious importunity" of John Scott, canon of Inchcolm and vicar of Aberdour.⁴ For a "purprusione" made upon the King's

¹ The Lady Joan must have been of at least mature age at the time of her marriage, because, eighteen years before, she had been betrothed to James Douglas, 2nd Earl of Angus [xxxix.], who, by hook or by crook, managed to evade the alliance.

² *Morton*, ii. 217.

³ *Ibid.*, 226-235.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 235-243.



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moor of Peebles, Morton was adjudged to pay James III. the sum of £100. Even the wealthiest nobles of that period found it exceedingly difficult to meet their obligations with cash; accordingly King James was content to take £50 down, and in pledge of the balance received "ane chene of gold with ane crucifix of gold hyngand at the same."¹

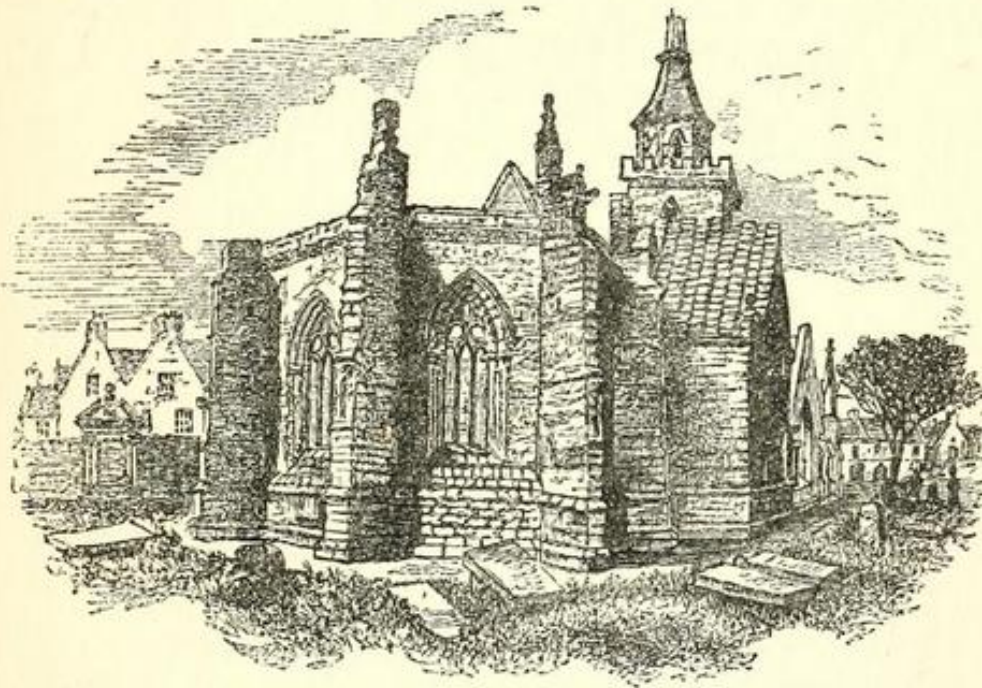


Fig. 30.—Ruins of the Collegiate Church of Dalkeith.

Morton died about the year 1504, leaving two sons—
 (1) John [xxxiv.], who succeeded to the earldom; (2)
 James; and one daughter, Janet, who married
 Patrick, Earl of Bothwell.

Death of the
 1st Earl of
 Morton,
 c. 1504.

An interesting memorial of the 1st Earl of
 Morton and his wife, Lady Joan,² remains, sadly
 dilapidated, in the ruined chancel of the collegiate church

¹ *Morton*, ii. 243.

² According to modern usage this lady would be entitled princess, but the sons and daughters of the Kings of Scotland [were seldom given that style of courtesy until after the union of the Crowns.



of Dalkeith. It is a sepulchral monument, with two recumbent figures, which were long reputed to represent individuals of the Graham family, who preceded Douglas in the lordship of Dalkeith; but the late Mr. James Drummond satisfactorily proved, from the armorial bearings, that the figures were those of the 1st Earl of Morton and his royal spouse.¹ The arms shown on one shield are the paternal coat of Douglas, lords of Dalkeith, which showed only two stars or mullets in chief instead of three, as in the arms of Douglas, lords of Douglas. The other shield shows Douglas, as above, impaling the royal arms of Scotland on the wife's side.

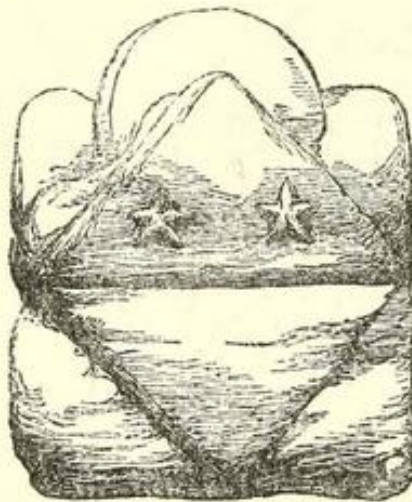


Fig. 31.

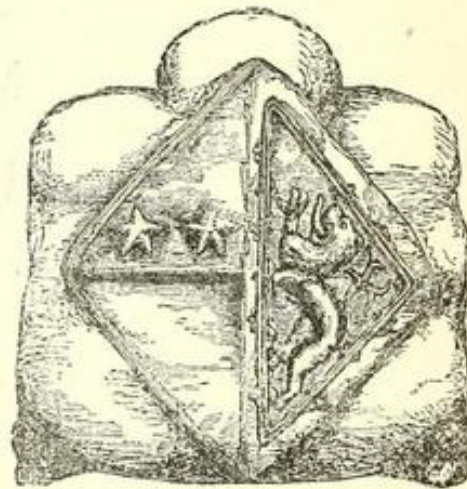


Fig. 32.

Armorial Stones in Dalkeith Church.

Patrick Graham, who succeeded his able half-brother Kennedy as Bishop of St. Andrews, resembled his predecessor only in so far as he was an active and masterful politician. Now, success in politics at that period consisted, or was held to consist, in possession of the person of the young King, James III., to effect which Lord Kennedy, elder brother of the late Bishop of St. Andrews, made a bond with Lord Fleming and Sir James Boyd, whereof

xxxiv. Sir
John Douglas,
2nd Earl of
Morton,
4th Lord
Dalkeith,
ob. c. 1528.

¹ *Proceedings of the Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 25.





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the members agreed "to stand in afald kendnes, supple and defencs, ilk an til odir, in all thair caussis and querrell, leiful and honest, movit and to be movit, for all the dais of thair liffis, in contrery and aganis al maner of persones that leiff or dee may." At the same time Fleming made a similar cabal, including Bishop Graham of St. Andrews, and the Lords Boyd, Crawford, Hamilton, Livingstone, Cathcart, and Montgomery. These confederates obtained their primary object in the seizure of King James's person at Linlithgow on 10th July 1466. How eagerly they desired to secure the great territorial influence of the Earl of Morton, including possession of the important stronghold of Dalkeith, seems indicated by a document dated a few days before their *coup d'état*. On 30th June Morton was induced to execute an indenture with the Bishop of St. Andrews, binding the earl's son John to marry Elizabeth, daughter of David Graham, the bishop's brother, "the tyme God willing that thai cum to lachful and perfite age of mariage." Failing the life of John, his brother James was taken bound to marry the lady, "and sa furth quhill the said Lord James Erle of Mortone have ony sone and the said Daudid ony dochteris lachfully gottin." In return, the bishop, his brother David, and Robert Graham of Fintry, their father, bound themselves to do all in their power to help the earl to recover his lost heritage in Whittinghame and Morton, then in possession of Sir William Douglas, son of the 1st Lord Dalkeith [xxxi.] by his second wife. If the said earl should be reinstated in these lands, he was to pay the Grahams 1500 merks.¹

Seven years later, in January 1474, Morton was so reinstated upon the renunciation of Sir William Douglas *per fustem et baculum*,² but by that time the Boyds had come to ruin, and their estates had been forfeited to the Crown. Bishop Graham, also, had fallen upon evil days, for, after obtaining the erection of his see into an archbishopric, he was inhibited by the rector of St. Andrews University, persecuted by Schevez, the future archbishop, and

¹ *Morton*, ii. 213.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 219.



became hopelessly insane. Under these changed conditions the 2nd Earl of Morton easily escaped from his engagement to Elizabeth Graham, marrying instead Janet, daughter of Crichton of Cranston-Riddell. He died before 1528, leaving issue—(1) James [xxxv.], who succeeded as 3rd earl; (2) Elizabeth, who married Robert, Lord Keith; and (3) Agnes, who married Alexander, 5th Lord Livingstone. The only distinction which can be claimed for the 2nd Earl of Morton above many other powerful and more famous landowners of his day, is that he had the good sense and good luck to keep clear of the sordid intrigues and bitter factions which rent the kingdom during the reign of James v.; but it does not follow therefrom that his life was wasted. Too much of written history is made up of the doings of noisy demagogues and ambitious oligarchs; the silent, unobtrusive influence of peace-loving men of means upon the national character and development of industry, is apt to be overlooked; and it is possible that this earl may have done much good upon his estates, whereof the record has passed clean away.

At the second earl's death the lands and lordships passed to his only son, who was a confirmed invalid, but who, in one respect at least, showed the instincts of an improving proprietor. Magnificent in extent as were the territories of the lords of Dalkeith, the richest part of them lay beneath the surface, of which the first three Earls of Morton seem to have had an inkling, for in 1530 John Crichton, vicar of Dalkeith, entered into an indenture with the 3rd earl, in which the following sentences occur:—

xxxv. James,
3rd Earl of
Morton,
5th Lord
Dalkeith,
ob. c. 1553.

“Forsamekill as the said schir Johne Creichtoun, vicare forsaid, consideris, understandis and perfittly knaws the greit travell, coistis and expensis sustenit and borne be umquhile¹ of gud memorie James erle of Mortoun, lord of Dalkeith, Johne erle of Mortoun, lord of Dalkeith, and now lately the sumptuous labouris, exorbitant expensis and greit diligence done and debursit be the said nobill and mighty lord, James erle of Mortoun, lord of Dalkeith, sone and air of the said umquhile Johne erle of Mortoun, lord of Dalkeith, for to fynd and obtene the

¹ By the late.



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coles of Colden and Dalkeith lyand within the scheriffdome of Lowdiane and regalite of Dalketh, and the importance and emolumentis the said vicare and his successouris nicht haue therthrow, giff the saidis coles wer wonnyng¹ and gottin.—Thir² causis and considerationis moving the said schir John, vicare forsaid, he ryply avisit³ and aluayis providing the utilite, augmentatioun and singulare proffit of the kirk and vicarage of Dalkeith, and to giff the said nobill and mighty Lord James erle of Mortoun, lord of Dalkeith, and to his ane successoure, all and hale the teynd coles of Colden and Dalkeith” . . .

—all for the annual rent of forty shillings.⁴ It is strange to look upon the great Lothian coalfield, as it appears now, with its annual output of many hundreds of thousands of tons, and trace the origin of that great industry to the “sumptuous labouris, exorbitant expensis and greit diligence” of the shrewd Earls of Morton.

Having married Katherine, a natural daughter of James IV. by Mary Boyd, the Earl of Morton in 1540 was coerced by James V., under “dredour” of imprisonment in Inverness, to resign his earldom and lands in favour of Robert Douglas of Lochleven, reserving only his own liferent and a reasonable terce [*rationabilis tercia*] for his countess in the event of her surviving him.⁵ No reason is alleged for this arbitrary procedure in the King’s letter to his treasurer

Deprived of
his earldom,
17th October
1540.

¹ Obtained. ² These. ³ Ripely advised. ⁴ *Morton*, ii. 260.

⁵ *Ibid.*, ii. 261-269. It is no figure of speech to say that King James “coerced” his luckless brother-in-law, as the following passage from the judgment of the Lords of Council in 1543 upon the transaction proves:—“The gift maid [by the Earl of Morton] to the said Sir Robert Douglas was maid be dreid that mycht fall in ane constant man, in consideration that the said James Erle of Mortoun was chargit immediatlie of befor to pass to Invernes, to the extreme north partis of the realme, and ther remane in ward in the sesioun of wynter; to permut and change the halsoum and warme air with cauld and tempestious air; the natural fudis [foods] with the quhillkis he was nurist all his lifyme with rude and unganand [unsuitable] metis; and quhair sic thingis as accordit to his estait and preservatioun of his lif mycht not be had; and als to permute ane plesand palice, castell, yardis, toun, college, with diverse otheris plesouris, with hummil [humble] and sober lugeingis [lodgings], with diverse incommoditeis and displesouris quhillkis were lang to rehers, the said Erle being ane of the maist nobill baronys of the realme, and impotent of his leggis, aigit, occupyit and detenit with diverse malededis in his persoun.” The judgment goes on to recite how the resignation was extorted at Brechin, and how the King sent daily from his “lugeing,” pressing for Morton’s consent, otherwise the earl was to go to prison in Inverness straightway.—*Ibid.*, ii. 289, 290.



on 18th October notifying the transfer, which he says has been effected "for gude caussis," as Lochleven would explain to him. Among the "caussis" given to Robert of Lochleven to account for the King's extraordinary favour to him would be, no doubt, the fact that Morton had no male issue. Moreover, Morton was a cripple, having been absolved for life from all military service and wappinshaws on account of his being "subject to diverse seikness and infirmiteis in his persoun, havand ane sare leg, and not habile to endure greit travel in weifare without extreme danger to his persoun."¹ It was of the utmost importance, Lochleven would be told, that, in these troubled times, the feudal lord of such great possessions should not only be well affected to the monarch, as Morton undoubtedly was, but able to exercise his power, which he was not. Douglas of Lochleven was suitable in both these respects, but it is not surprising that the Countess of Morton offered vigorous opposition to the King's design,² which, however, was duly carried out.³

But Robert Douglas's illusion was as brief as his enjoyment of the honours so unexpectedly conferred upon him.

Compulsory resignation by Robert Douglas, January 1541. King James's real motives were rudely unravelled and disclosed by the Lords of Council when they came to try the case in 1543. "Our said umquhile Soverane Lord, quhem God assolze, labourit allways to that effect that he mycht have the saidis lordschippis and lands heritable"; a conclusion to which the King's catspaw, Lochleven, was forced when, three months after the date of his infestment, namely, on 20th January 1541, he resigned the earldom of Morton and lordship of Dalkeith into the King's hands, protesting at the same time that he did so under coercion, in fear of death and of losing his estate of Lochleven.⁴

Upon James v.'s death, 14th December 1542, the Earl of Arran, Morton's son-in-law, became Regent; against whom Morton immediately brought an action for the re-

¹ *Morton*, i. 3.

² *Ibid.*, i. 3, ii. 269.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 261-267.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ii. 281-293.



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duction of the "pretendit" resignation. After hearing all parties, the Lords of Council pronounced in judgment that the said resignation should "be reducit, cassat, annullit, declarit and decernit to have bene fra the begynnyng and to be in all tyme cuming of nane avale, and the said James Erle of Mortoun to be reponit in the samin stait tuiching the saidis lordschippis and landis, like as he was befor the making of the said pretendit resignatioun."¹

Restoration
of the earldom
in favour of
James Doug-
las [xxxvi.],
24th April
1543.

Robert of Lochleven's resignation of the earldom, etc., into the King's hands was also annulled as matter of course; and Morton executed a conveyance of the earldom and his estates to his son-in-law James Douglas [xxxvi.], second son of Sir George Douglas of Pittendreich [li.], and brother of David, 7th Earl of Angus [lv].²

The 3rd Earl of Morton died in 1552, leaving, by his wife Katherine Stuart, three daughters—

His death,
1552.

- (1) Margaret, married James, Earl of Arran, Duke of Chatelherault, Regent of Scotland;
- (2) Beatrix, married Robert, 6th Lord Maxwell, and became mother of John, 8th Lord Maxwell, upon whom James VI. bestowed the earldom of Morton in 1581; and
- (3) Elizabeth, who married in 1543 James Douglas [xxxvi.], who became 4th Earl of Morton.

¹ *Morton*, ii. 281-293.

² *Ibid.*, 294-298.



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