Volume 2 No. 4

The Douglas Archives

October 2025 Newsletter

Volume 2; Number 4

What's Inside:

The Douglas Archives are, at the time of writing, a collection of 13,750+ files containing material, some still un-edited, from a wide variety of sources. New material is included almost daily. The result is a dynamic archive of biographies, anecdotes and historical material about the Douglas family

Welcome to Douglas History Magazine

This magazine is a tribute to the Douglas legacy - not just the bold deeds of warriors and statesmen, but the quieter stories of ministers, migrants, and makers.

As steward of the Douglas Archives, I've seen how history lives in both grandeur and detail. Here, we explore it all: heraldry and homesteads, rebellion and resilience.

This issue blends research, storytelling, and visual interpretation. It's an invitation to reflect, contribute, and carry the legacy forward.

Jamais arrière — never behind.

William Douglas

The Douglas Archives

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Scottish and Irish Migration: A Two-Stage Journey Through the American South

The story of Scottish and Irish migration to West Florida is best understood as part of a broader, two-stage movement that unfolded across the 18th and 19th centuries. While East Coast ports served as the initial gateway, the eventual settlement of Florida - particularly its western panhandle - was shaped by generations of internal migration, frontier expansion, and shifting colonial allegiances.

The Scots-Irish and the Great Wagon Road

One of the most significant migration patterns involved the Scots-Irish, descendants of Scottish settlers in Ulster, Ireland. In the 18th century, thousands arrived at mid-Atlantic ports such as Philadelphia and towns along the Delaware River, including Chester and New Castle. Some earlier arrivals landed in New England ports like Boston, though they often encountered hostility and moved on.

Unable to afford land in the settled coastal regions, these immigrants pushed inland and southward, traveling the Great Wagon Road's rugged corridor that traced the Appalachian spine. Along this route, they established communities in the backcountry of Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. These settlements often served as a buffer between coastal populations and Native American territories further west.

By the early 19th century, following Florida's acquisition by the United States in 1821, descendants of these Scots-Irish pioneers continued their southward journey. Migrating overland from the Upper South, they settled small farms in West Florida and the panhandle, becoming part of the region's early Anglo-American population - often referred to as "Florida Crackers." In this way, East Coast ports were not the final destination but rather the starting point of a generational migration that culminated in Florida's interior.

Direct Migration and Later Settlements

While the Great Wagon Road route dominated, other pathways brought Scottish and Irish individuals directly to Florida:

- Colonial Period (1763-1783): During the British occupation of Florida, Scots and Irish served as soldiers and colonists, including participants in the ill-fated New Smyrna settlement in East Florida. Under Spanish rule, Irish soldiers in the Regimento Hibernia served the Crown and settled in Pensacola, the capital of West Florida.

- Post-Famine Immigration (1840s): The Great Potato Famine triggered a massive influx of Catholic Irish immigrants to the United States.

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While most remained in northern cities like New York and Boston, a smaller contingent—estimated at up to 100,000 - migrated southward. Some eventually reached Florida via coastal routes or railways, contributing to the state's growing diversity.

- The Sarasota Colony (1880s): A rare instance of direct Scottish migration occurred when the Ormiston Colony, organized in Glasgow, sailed to New York and traveled by train and boat to Sarasota on Florida's west coast. Misled by promotional materials promising a thriving settlement, most colonists left quickly. However, those who remained helped lay the groundwork for modern Sarasota, even though the region was historically distinct from West Florida.

For many Irish emigrants, the journey itself was harrowing. Departing from ports like Liverpool, they endured overcrowded, unsanitary conditions aboard "coffin ships", a grim term reflecting the high mortality rates during passage.

Douglas Family Footprints in Southern Migration

Though not direct founders of West Florida, several Douglas families exemplify the broader Scottish presence in the Southern colonies - communities from which many later Florida settlers emerged:

- Archibald Douglas: A Scottish Highlander who settled in the Cape Fear region of North Carolina in the 1740s, marking him among the earliest wave of Scottish landholders in the South. He was probably part of the so-called Argyll Colony of 1739, which came from the Highland county of Argyll and settled on the Cape Fear River between Cross Creek and the Lower Little River. Numbering some 350 men, women, and children, the group was led by Highland gentry who provided much of the financing for the venture and received the largest grants of land. Gabriel Johnston, a Lowland Scot and North Carolina governor from 1734 to 1752, was accused of showing favouritism to his compatriots, and the General Assembly exempted the newcomers from taxation for ten years after their arrival.

- Daniel Douglas: Born circa 1735 and died in Richmond County, North Carolina, in 1816. His lineage reflects the Scots-Irish migration down the Great Wagon Road and into the Carolinas. Daniel Douglas was born around 1735 in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, the son of Robert Douglas and Margaret McCutcheon. Like many Scots of his generation, Daniel would eventually seek a new life across the Atlantic. He married Effie McLean, likely from the Isle of Skye, and together they became part of the Scots-Irish migration that shaped the early American South. They had eight children.

The couple first settled in the region that would later become Laurinburg, North Carolina - a frontier area at the time, marked by scattered farms and emerging communities.

As opportunities shifted, they moved south into Chesterfield County, South Carolina, before returning northward around 1784 to Richmond County, North Carolina. There, Daniel lived out his final years, passing away in 1816.

- Alexander Douglas: A Presbyterian clergyman, educated at the University of Edinburgh, who settled in St. James, South Carolina, around 1750, highlighting the religious and cultural infrastructure established by Scots-Irish communities along the migration corridor.

This layered migration narrative - spanning colonial service, frontier expansion, and post-

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famine displacement - reveals how Scottish and Irish heritage helped shape the social and cultural fabric. Immigrants from the Scotland often retained distinctive elements of their culture. The Gaelic language was spoken by some to at least a limited extent until the mid-nineteenth century. Presbyterianism continues to flourish in the areas of Scottish settlement, and Scottish music influenced the development, and Scottish music influenced the development of local musical forms. Clan societies and the Highland Games at Grandfather Mountain and elsewhere in North Carolina continue to help keep alive a sense of the importance of the state's Scottish heritage.

Bed of Black Douglas

This imposing and historically resonant bedstead is traditionally linked to Threave Castle, the principal seat of the Black Douglases during the 14th and 15th centuries. Following the castle's siege and fall under James II, the bed is said to have been removed and passed through several notable families, including the Gordons of Lochinvar and the Greenlaws of Galloway.

THE BED OF BLACK DOUGLAS
Artistic Impression

Later acquired by the antiquarian Joseph Train, its documented provenance extends no further than the preceding century. Yet its craftsmanship hints at a much earlier origin. The crudely carved human figures bear hallmarks of medieval artistry, while the bed's structural elements reveal a more refined hand. Some scholars have noted similarities between its carved features and coinage from the reign of Alexander III (1249–1286), suggesting a possible 13th-century genesis.

Though continuous documentation is lacking, the bed remains a compelling artefact. Its enduring association with the Douglas name and the turbulent legacy of Threave Castle lends it both cultural weight and historical intrigue.

The bed's present location is unknown.

End of an era: The Last of the Douglases of Cavers

Throughout history, the weight of family tradition has often defined the lives of the landed gentry. Entailed estates, a lineage of male heirs, and a duty to the land were the cornerstones of a world governed by ancient customs. For the Douglas family of Cavers, this legacy stretched for centuries, a story woven into the very fabric of their ancestral home. But as the world changed, and a new era dawned, the last of the Douglas lairds faced an impossible choice. As James Ninian Douglas writes, this is the story of how an enduring dynasty came to an end, not with a roar, but with a quiet and poignant farewell.

Life nowadays is quite different from the world that our grandparents grew up in, as it was also for them in comparison to their own grandparents. Indeed, that's very much been the case since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the mid-18th century, but prior to that, change was measured in centuries rather than decades, and family traditions were respected and adhered to.

Society was far more gender and class dominated then than today's improved if still imperfect equilibrium and nowhere were those distinctions more evident than in the world of the landed gentry. Entitled privilege brought increased burdens of responsibility though, especially for first-born males who were expected to not only follow in their father's footsteps but also sire male heirs with wives who were not necessarily their preferred choice of potential mate.

The history of Cavers is pretty much unknown prior to the late Middle Ages, and it wasn't until 1320 that a charter provides evidence of the first Douglas 'ownership'. However, in those days 'The Crown' legally still owned the land, so a charter was the monarch's means of bestowing property to a faithful ally, with subsequent

Cavers

Painting of the NW aspect (1854)

inheritance requiring royal approval. In special cases though, the sovereign might grant a right of 'entailment', which under Scots law was a mechanism to restrict the ownership and inheritance of land, ensuring it remained within a specific family line for generations. Essentially, it involved creating a deed that dictated how property would be passed down, preventing the current owner from selling or bequeathing it to anyone outside the designated line of heirs, who by law were designated as male. Thus,

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when King David II entailed the estate of Cavers amongst others to William 8th Lord of Douglas in 1333, it meant that the family had a greater confidence that the land would remain theirs for generations to come.

But rules had to be followed, and when Isabella, the Countess of Mar, moved into Cavers in 1388 upon the death of her young brother Sir James Douglas, the 2nd Earl, and declared it her own, aided by the fact that her nephew Archibald, the natural successor, was only aged 10 at the time, she was effectively doing so illegally. As time passed by and Archibald entered adulthood, Isabella decided that Cavers was actually a nice place to live and resisted all attempts by him to vacate her from the property. Simply by virtue of her gender though she had no right to remain there without royal sanction, so King Robert III decided to make an example of her and conferred the entire estate to Sir David Fleming of Biggar, thereby reinforcing the unwritten law that what the King giveth he can also taketh away. If for no other reason than there would be no need for this story to be written, it was fortunate that Sir David didn't survive long enough to take possession, and Archibald was quick to replace Isabella in situ. Technically Archibald didn't become 1st Laird until 30 November 1412 when King James I of Scotland ratified his ownership, but thereafter the family enjoyed eleven consecutive generations of successful inheritance.

By having more than one son, a Laird could ensure a greater likelihood of succession, so large families were often created. That would prove to be a wise investment in the case of Sir William 11th Laird and his wife Katherine Rigg. Their eldest son William 12th Laird died without leaving an heir, so the barony passed to his younger brother Archibald 13th Laird. Together with his wife Anna Scott, they conceived an impressive tally of 14 children, but it is at this point that the family's run of good fortune came to an end.

Cavers 1860

A very early photo of Cavers House showing NE aspect

This was the early 18th century; a time when smallpox was particularly prevalent, and two of their eleven sons would succumb to the disease at a young age. Of the other nine, the first four died in age order without issue, whilst the remaining five had also all preceded the fourth-born, leaving him as last in line. Thus Lairds 14 – 17 were all brothers, and when John 17th Laird passed the family had something of a crisis on their hands with it seeming that a "judgement to heaven that the cradle should never rock again in Cavers House" curse had indeed come to pass.

However, a first cousin-once-removed was alive and well, so George 18th Laird was able to fill the void and successfully continued the lineage through his son James 19th Laird. The family had originally experienced a narrow escape following Isabella Countess of Mar's selfishness, and more recently when nine sons had failed to produce heirs, so the very last thing they needed was someone who would wilfully choose to end the male line.

James the 20th Laird and eldest son of his namesake 19th Laird was an intelligent and well-educated man having been privately tutored at home under his father's direction, possessing

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James (20th) & Mary Agnew circa 1853. There are no known photos of them together, even from their 1858 wedding.

Edward & Mary Palmer Douglas (1906)

strong religious beliefs and having a love of literature. However, he had a very different side to his personality too, and when his parents threatened to disinherit him if he continued his relationship with a Swiss lady whom they felt was beneath his social standing, he undertook to gain an exacting and damaging revenge. Playing the role of the dutiful son, he married his parent's first choice, his cousin Mary Graham Agnew, but he then calculatingly failed to consummate the marriage and spent their remaining years living apart from her in full knowledge of the likely consequences of his lifestyle choice. For her part, Mary chose to accept her fate rather than expose the scandal, let alone seek divorce on entirely legal grounds.

James had a younger sister Mary who had married and given birth to a daughter, also called Mary, in 1859 before dying a few days later from complications arising from the birth of her daughter. Therefore, when her uncle James died in 1878 Mary Douglas Malcolm inherited Cavers and became its 21st Laird. The following year she married Captain Edward Palmer, thereby creating the secondary Palmer Douglas line.

Mary was succeeded by her elder son Archibald, who became 22nd Laird when he attained the rightful age in 1905, before his elder son James became the 23rd and final Laird in 1949. Whilst succession had been problematic at times, solutions had always been found, but now an entirely new threat was on the horizon, and one which would deal a fatal blow to the dynasty. Duty was a word that 23 Lairds had been accustomed to repeatedly hearing as they grew up and was nothing to fear…. until now.

In the aftermath of the Second World War the British political landscape had dramatically changed, and the Labour government of the time were determined to squeeze every possible penny from the country's more affluent citizens in order to fund its spending plans. Large estates were an easy target so, when James 23rd Laird came to succeed, his inheritance came with a very large bill…. Estate Duty, which had recently increased to a crippling 75%. Also known as death duty', that was a one-off payment, but there would also be ongoing annual Land Tax to be paid. First introduced in 1692, it was originally a tax on real estate and personal property, but from the 1730s it was

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mainly levied on land value based on rental assessments.

The estate's main asset was Cavers House itself, but high Land Tax rates were off-putting to potential buyers, to such an extent that James was unable to even give it away to The National Trust for Scotland which was founded in 1931 to conserve Scotland's heritage.

His only viable option was to decant the family to a nearby smaller property and empty the house of anything that had a value, even the glass in the windows. High-end items were auctioned at Christies in London to cover the death duty, and the British Army was brought in to reduce the building to rubble so that the stone could also be recycled. However, the walls of the main tower were so thick that most of it remained unscathed, but at least the building was no longer habitable, and thus the Land Tax could be avoided.

North East view of remaining ruins (August 2025)

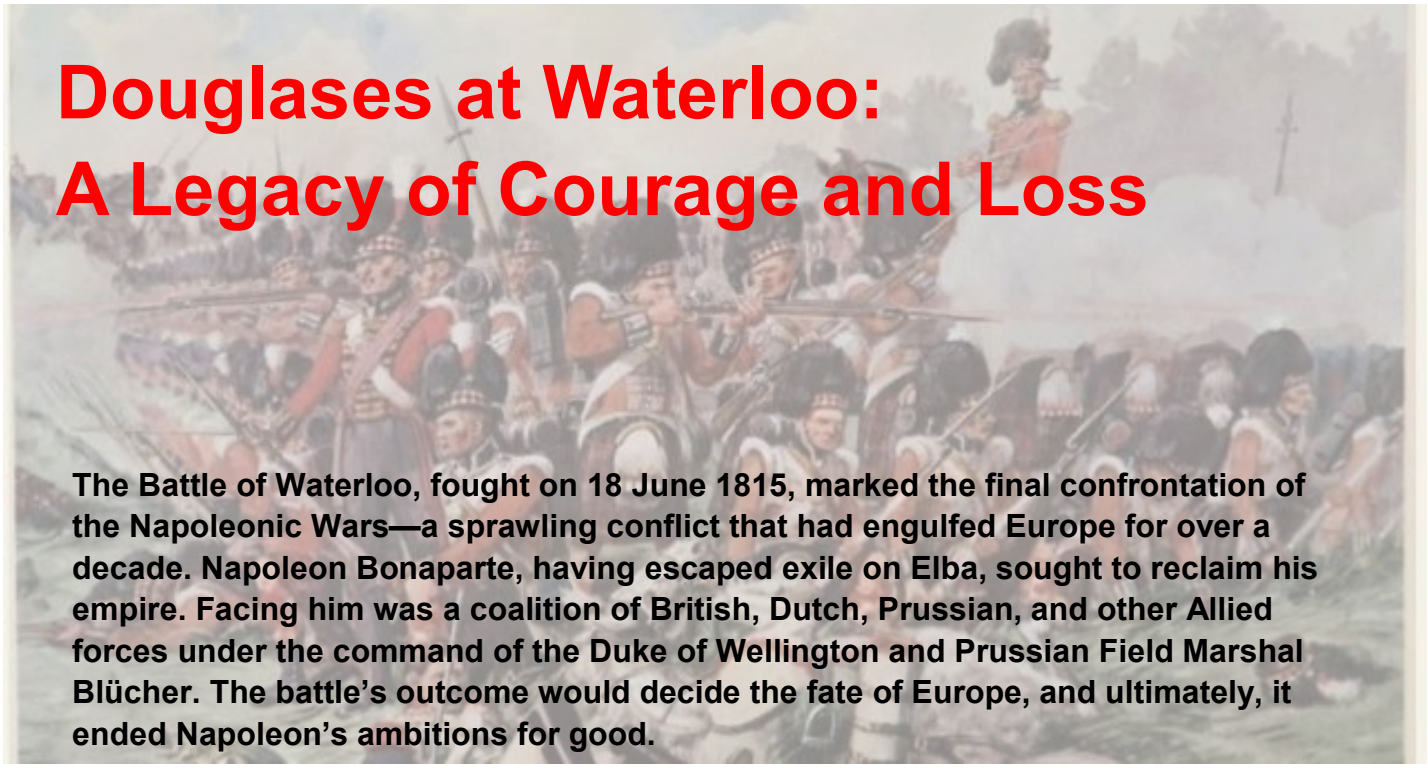
There was still a large estate to be run though. Originally stretching to 10,000 acres, a series of sales that began in 1913 had halved its size by the time that James inherited it, but it was no longer a viable proposition and further disposals during the next 60 years reduced it to less than 1,000 acres. A messy divorce in 1975 necessitated the sale of most of the balance to cover the settlement, but James still clung onto the main house ruins and the land upon which they stood in the forlorn hope that he might somehow experience a dramatic upturn in fortunes. This was pre-National Lottery times though, and no magic Premium Bond fix was forthcoming either, so at the age of 58 he decided enough was enough and in 1980 finally relinquished his hold on that too.

All that now remains in family ownership is a single acre behind Cavers Auld Kirk which comprises a consecrated family burial plot in which James was interred in 2013. His five children were spread far and wide across the UK, with only his youngest son Stephen domiciled in the locality. Stephen was a regular visitor to Cavers and a blurred photo exists of him salvaging a large stone lintel (above) from the estate in July 1995. The Douglas of Cavers motto 'Doe Or Die' is inscribed on it, and whilst it's suspected to date from circa 1885 and was possibly above the N entrance door, nobody knows its origins for certain. Sadly, Stephen died in 2024 aged 62, and whilst his ashes were scattered elsewhere his name was added to the gravestone of his father's double plot. In Stephen's memory, his elder brother and eldest sister spent Easter 2025 renovating the site making it easier to maintain but also to make it a bit more welcoming to visitors, some of whom even make the pilgrimage from North America to plant their feet on the earth of their ancestors.

However, it's unlikely that this small parcel of land will be maintained by future generations, as James' three sons will leave no issue, whilst the children of his two daughters show little interest in their heritage, preferring to leave the past as the past. So, although a candle still flickers, even that will extinguish once James' offspring depart this world, and they effectively become the last of the Douglases of Cavers.

James Ninian Douglas – September 2025

Douglases at Waterloo: A Legacy of Courage and Loss



The Battle of Waterloo, fought on 18 June 1815, marked the final confrontation of the Napoleonic Wars—a sprawling conflict that had engulfed Europe for over a decade. Napoleon Bonaparte, having escaped exile on Elba, sought to reclaim his empire. Facing him was a coalition of British, Dutch, Prussian, and other Allied forces under the command of the Duke of Wellington and Prussian Field Marshal Blücher. The battle's outcome would decide the fate of Europe, and ultimately, it ended Napoleon's ambitions for good.

Among the Allied ranks were several officers named Douglas, each contributing to the campaign in distinct ways. Their stories reflect not only military service but personal sacrifice and enduring legacy.

Lieutenant Francis James Douglas: Coldstream Guards

In 2013, the Waterloo Medal awarded to Lieutenant Francis James Douglas of the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards surfaced at auction, selling for £4,300. Douglas had joined the Guards in 1814 and fought at Hougoumont, a key defensive position on the Allied right flank. The Coldstream Guards' steadfast defence of the farmhouse gate was pivotal to Wellington's victory. Douglas's medal, inscribed with his name and regiment, marked him among the survivors of one of history's bloodiest battles.

Tragically, Douglas died in a riding accident in St James's Park in 1821, aged just 27. His medal remains a poignant symbol of honour and a life shaped by war.

Other Douglas Officers at Waterloo

The Douglas name appears across several regiments:

- **Captain George Douglas**, 1st (Royal) Regiment of Foot, was wounded at Waterloo and later promoted to major.
- **Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Douglas** led the 1st Battalion of the 91st Regiment of Foot (Argyllshire Highlanders), stationed in reserve in Belgium.
- **Captain Archibald Douglas**, 42nd Regiment of Foot (Black Watch), fought in the battle and was commended for his conduct.
- **Lieutenant James Douglas**, Royal Scots Greys, served in the famed cavalry regiment known for its charge at Waterloo.

The Douglas Archives has identified at least twenty more soldiers bearing the name Douglas who fought at Waterloo and likely received the campaign medal

Enduring Heritage

The Douglas officers at Waterloo represent more than battlefield valour—they embody the interwoven threads of family, history, and sacrifice. Their presence at Hougoumont, in cavalry charges, and across regimental lines speaks to a broader legacy of service. Behind each medal lies a life, and behind each name, a story worth remembering.

William Douglas of Nova Scotia

James A. McQuiston, Fellow/Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and, Member of the Scottish Rite Research Society, is the author of about 20 books, most with some connection to Scotland and 15 with a connection to Nova Scotia, including 13 with a connection specifically to the Oak Island mystery. What began as an interest in that story has blossomed into a study of Nova Scotia history principally during the Scots and French adventures there from 1604 through 1632.

William Douglas: Mariner, Knight, and Pioneer

The story of the Scottish presence in early Nova Scotia (then Acadia) is intricately linked with the influence and actions of individuals bearing the Douglas name, particularly the mariner William Douglas, or Quilliam Du Glas. His involvement in the foundational French explorations set the stage for later Scottish attempts to control the lucrative fur trade and colonize the territory.

The commercial value of Acadia was established early, demonstrating a massive return on investment from the fur trade. The subsequent "race" for control intensified in 1604 with a major French expedition led by Sieur Du Mons and Samuel Champlain. A key ship in this endeavor was the Espérance (Hope), sometimes referred to as the Espérance en Dieu (Hope in God). The captain of this ship was a Scotsman, William Douglas, who was in the service of the Knights of Malta (also known as the Order of St. John).

The Names and Titles of Quilliam Du Glas

* Douglas had commanded the Espérance since at least 1600 at Honfleur.

* Champlain's records refer to him as Quilliam Du Glas. The spelling Guillaume Du Glas or Guillaume le Glas is also a more typical French rendition of his name. This surname variant was frequently used by Douglases residing in France who supported the French crown against England.

* Douglas was a highly placed figure; one old record refers to him as the **Count of Douglas and Duke of Touraine** (France)—the latter being a nominal title held by an earlier Archibald Douglas.

* He is also footnoted as Douglas of Douglas, suggesting his identity as the chief of a specific branch of the overall clan.

Passage Du Glas and the Knights of Malta

The most enduring evidence of William Douglas's impact on the region is cartographical. The strait between Cape Breton and Nova Scotia was named the "Passage Du Glas" on a map drawn by Champlain in 1612. This name persisted on maps until at least 1633 before Champlain began referring to it as the "Passage de Canceau" (the modern Strait of Canso).

Douglas's career as a master mariner was defined by his association with the Knights of Malta. This order, whose emblem—the eight-pointed cross—was a familiar sight in early colonial efforts, relied on skilled captains like Douglas.

* By 1612, William Douglas was back on Malta, having served the Hospitallers as a mercenary in their wars against the Turks and Barbary Corsairs before joining the Order itself.

- The Scottish traveler William Lithgow met Douglas there in 1616, recording the encounter in his log and confirming that Douglas was "solemnely Knighted, and made one of their order" for his long service at sea. Douglas had commanded the

Espérance and one other ship for the Order.

Douglas Connectons to the Scottish Claim

After the French established a foothold, the Scots, led by William Alexander, pushed for control. Alexander was granted the territory of Nova Scotia (New Scotland) in 1621 with a monopoly on the fur trade. To finance his settlement efforts, Alexander created the prestigious Knights Baronet of Nova Scotia in 1624.

The Douglas clan was integrated into this initiative from the start, securing an elite position in the colonization venture:

* William Douglas of Glenverbie was created a Baronet in the very first year of the order's existence (1625).
* The line of Douglas of Kelhead followed with a Baronetcy in 1668.

These Knights Baronets provided the critical funds and men necessary for Alexander's son, William Alexander Jr., to lead the Scottish settlers to Port Royal in 1628-1629.

The Espérance en Dieu in Later Conflict

The name of the Espérance en Dieu reappeared in the ongoing struggle for Acadia. While William Douglas captained a ship of that name in 1604, a vessel named L'Espérance-en-Dieu carried later French settlers, including those associated with the Knights of Malta, to Nova Scotia in 1632. This later voyage was captained by Charles de Menou d'Aulnay, a figure central to the decade-long conflict with fellow nobleman Charles de Saint-Étienne de la Tour - both of whom were heavily involved in the lucrative beaver pelt trade.

Intriguingly, the phrase "Espérance en Dieu" was also given as the name of a settlement established by French Huguenots near the LaHave River. Also known as Scotch Fort, this community, part of Sieur de Mons's larger French establishment, was intended as a religious refuge.

In 1612, William Lithgow (left), the famous Scottish traveller and pilgrim, stopped off at Malta on his journey back from gypt and the Middle East. There he met a countryman, William Douglas.

Douglas had fought for the Hospitallers as a mercenary in their wars against the Turks and their allies the Barbary Corsairs, before eventually joining the order himself.

It is of note that Lithgow identifies William as Scottish. However, the French Douglas family of Pratulo records show several links with Malta.

Charles du Glas, who had 23 children. Of these the third son was a Knight of Malta, 'currently in Malta'. (Undated)

The Attainder of the Black Douglases: A Turning Point in Mediaeval Scotland

The attainder of the Earl of Douglas in 1455 was a dramatic and decisive episode in the power struggles of late medieval Scotland. This legal act marked a turning point in the decline of the Black Douglas line, once the most powerful noble family in the realm. It fundamentally shifted the balance of power, weakening the magnate class and consolidating authority under the Crown.

George, 4th Earl of Angus defeating the Black Douglases at the Battle of Arkinholm, 1455

Rise and Fall of the Earls

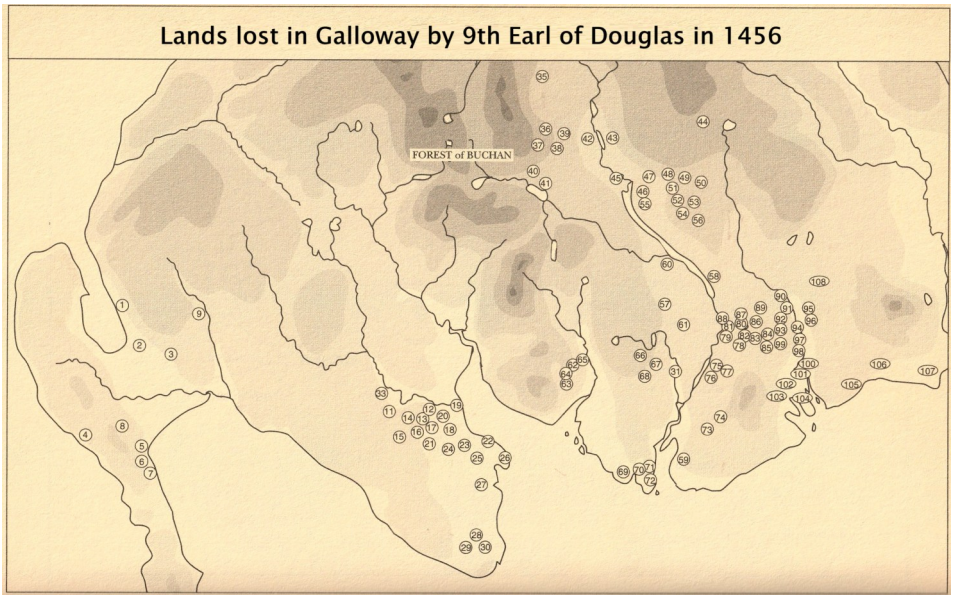
By the 15th century, the Douglas family had grown so powerful that its influence rivaled the Scottish monarchy itself. This dominance made them a direct threat to royal authority, especially under King James II The central figure in their downfall was James Douglas, the 9th Earl of Douglas (often mistakenly referred to as the 8th). The rebellion began after the king personally murdered his brother, William Douglas, 8th Earl of Douglas, at Stirling Castle in 1452. Rather than submit, James Douglas raised a rebellion, allied with other disgruntled nobles, and even sought support from England.

The Attainder and Its Consequences

The conflict culminated in the Battle of Arkinholm in 1455, where Douglas forces were decisively defeated by royal troops. Following this defeat, Parliament passed an Act of Attainder against the Earl and his brothers. This legal measure served as a swift and severe punishment:

- Stripped of Everything: The Earl was declared guilty of treason without a trial. This act stripped him of all his titles, lands, and rights.
- Corruption of Blood: His blood was declared "corrupt," which meant that his descendants could not inherit titles or property.
- Forfeiture of Estates: The vast Douglas lands, including the mighty Douglas Castle, were forfeited to the Crown. These estates were then redistributed, with the Red Douglas line (the Earls of Angus) being the primary beneficiaries due to their loyalty to the King.

This act effectively ended the Black Douglas line's political power, centralizing authority in the Crown and forever altering the political landscape of Scotland.



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What Was an Attainder in Medieaval Scotland?

In medieaval Scotland, an attainder was a legal and political act used to punish individuals—usually nobles—accused of treason, rebellion, or serious crimes. It allowed the Crown or Parliament to declare someone guilty without trial, often through an Act of Parliament.

The consequences were severe: the person's lands and titles were forfeited to the Crown, they lost all civil rights, and their heirs were barred from inheriting—known as corruption of blood. This effectively erased a family's legal standing and disrupted hereditary succession.

Attainders were especially common during periods of unrest, such as under James III and James IV, and later during the Covenanter conflicts and Jacobite uprisings. They were used to suppress dissent and redistribute power, particularly in regions like the Highlands and Borders where loyalty to the Crown was contested.

Some attainders were later reversed through acts of rehabilitation, restoring status and property to heirs who pledged loyalty or proved their case. For historians and heritage researchers, attainders help explain sudden breaks in lineage, shifts in estate ownership, and the political marginalisation of certain families—making them key to understanding Scotland's turbulent past.

Redistribution of Power and Wealth

Following the attainder, the Crown strategically divided the immense wealth and titles of the Black Douglases among loyal allies and the monarchy itself. This redistribution was key to consolidating King James II's power.

Red Douglas Gains (Earldom of Angus)

The head of the rival Red Douglas line, George Douglas, 4th Earl of Angus, was the primary beneficiary. He was rewarded with significant portions of the forfeited Black Douglas estates, including:


Bothwell Castle

- The Lordship of Douglas: The historic heartland of the family in South Lanarkshire, including the ancestral Douglas Castle.
- Bothwell Castle: This important castle and its surrounding lands were eventually acquired by the Red Douglases.
- Other Douglasdale Holdings: Various other ancestral lands in the Douglasdale region.

Crown and Others' Gains

The King also ensured the monarchy directly benefited from the forfeiture.

- Threave Castle: The last stronghold of the Black Douglases in Galloway was taken by royal forces and became a possession of the Crown.
- Lordship of Galloway: Much of the powerful and wealthy Lordship of Galloway reverted to royal control, weakening the magnate class's power in the Lowlands.
- The Scottish earldoms of Moray and Ormonde and their lands, both held by the Black Douglas family, were also forfeited to the Crown.

A Chilling Legacy

The attainder was a masterstroke of royal consolidation and a chilling reminder of how swiftly fortunes could turn in medieaval Scotland. The Douglas name survived, but it was the Red Douglas line that rose to national prominence, playing crucial roles in later Scottish politics, while the sweeping authority of the Black Douglases was lost forever.

The Douglass Family and the Westward Passage (1802—1810)

Crossing Boundaries:

Stories from the Creek Nation Passport Records

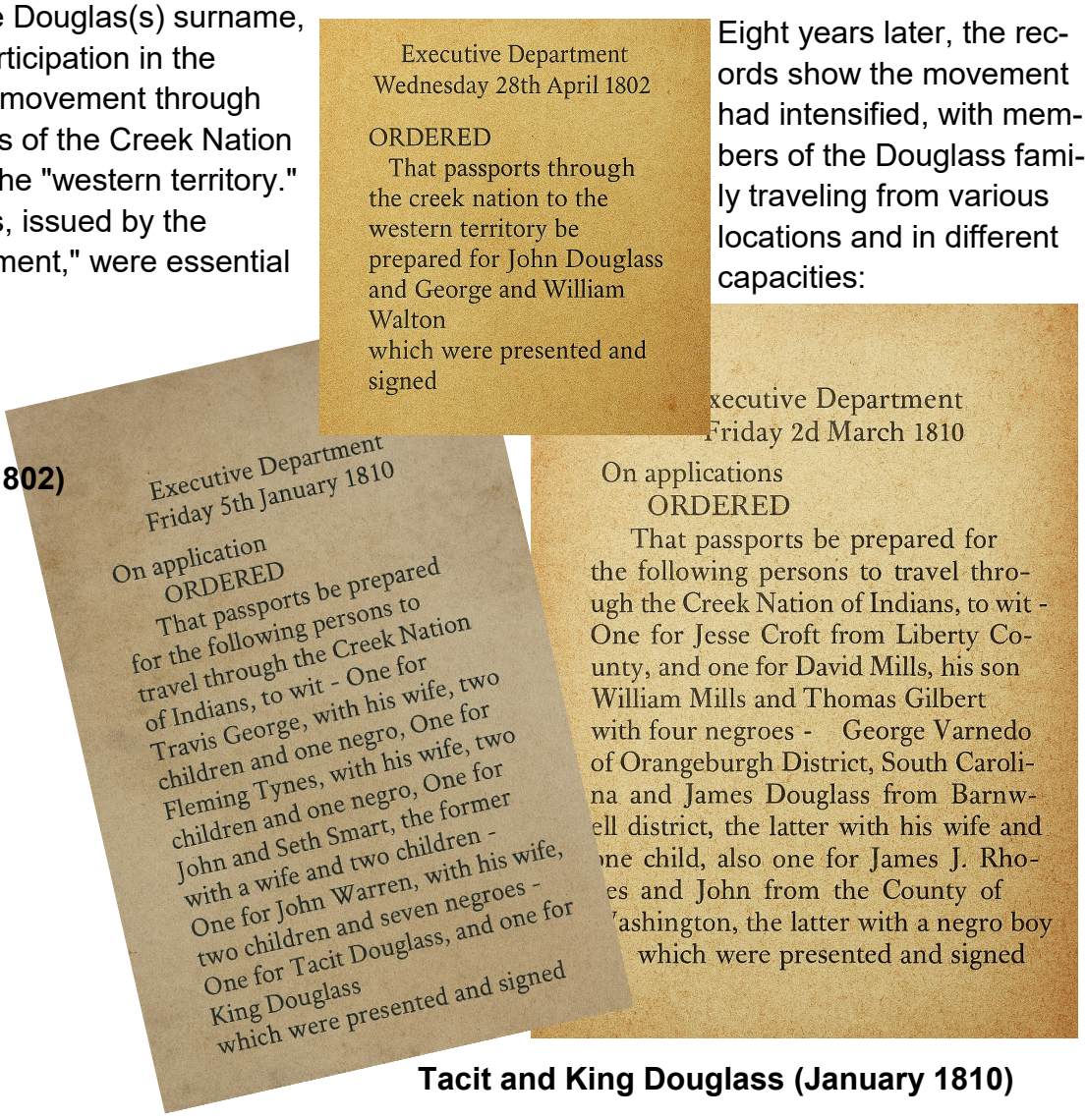
These historical records, dating from 1802 to 1810, track the authorized travel of several individuals bearing the Douglas(s) surname, illustrating their participation in the broader American movement through the sovereign lands of the Creek Nation of Indians toward the "western territory." These permissions, issued by the "Executive Department," were essential passports for westward expansion.

Early Movement: John Douglass (1802)

The earliest recorded passage, dated Wednesday 28th April 1802, established the initial flow of migration. The government ORDERED a passport prepared for John Douglass to travel "through the creek nation to the western territory." This entry confirms that individuals with the Douglass name were among the first to receive official authorization for this journey.

Later Waves: Tacit, King, and James Douglass (1810)

Eight years later, the records show the movement had intensified, with members of the Douglass family traveling from various locations and in different capacities:



Executive Department
Wednesday 28th April 1802

ORDERED
That passports through the creek nation to the western territory be prepared for John Douglass and George and William Walton
which were presented and signed

Executive Department
Friday 5th January 1810

On application
ORDERED
That passports be prepared for the following persons to travel through the Creek Nation of Indians, to wit - One for Travis George, with his wife, two children and one negro, One for Fleming Tynes, with his wife, two children and one negro, One for John and Seth Smart, the former with a wife and two children - One for John Warren, with his wife, two children and seven negroes - One for Tacit Douglass, and one for King Douglass
which were presented and signed

xecutive Department
Friday 2d March 1810

On applications
ORDERED
That passports be prepared for the following persons to travel through the Creek Nation of Indians, to wit - One for Jesse Croft from Liberty County, and one for David Mills, his son William Mills and Thomas Gilbert with four negroes - George Varnedo of Orangeburgh District, South Carolina and James Douglass from Barnwell district, the latter with his wife and ne child, also one for James J. Rhoes and John from the County of ashington, the latter with a negro boy
which were presented and signed

Tacit and King Douglass (January 1810)

On Friday 5th January 1810, two passports were ORDERED separately for Tacit Douglass and King Douglass. Their inclusion in a group that included several other families, all traveling

(Continued from page 14)

with enslaved persons, suggests they were participating in the major migration push at the turn of the decade.

James Douglass (March 1810)

Just two months later, on Friday 2nd March 1810, James Douglass received authorization. His entry highlights the family-centric nature of the migration, as he traveled with his wife and one child. The document also specifies his origin, noting he was traveling from the Barnwell district (South Carolina) before crossing the Creek Nation territory.

Collectively, the records show the Douglass name attached to authorized passage in both the early (1802) and later, more intensive (1810) phases of migration, confirming their consistent presence in the flow of settlers heading for the new lands in the American West.

Passage through the Creek Nation Lands

In the early decades of the 1800s, as the young United States pushed westward, the frontier was not simply open land - it was a patchwork of sovereign nations, tribal territories, and contested borders. Among these, the lands of the Creek Nation stretched across parts of Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, forming a formidable barrier to settlers, traders, and government agents alike.

Travel through these regions required more than courage - it required permission.

From modest government offices and military outposts, officials issued handwritten documents known as 'passports'. These were not the polished booklets of modern travel, but rather formal orders - often penned on parchment and signed by territorial governors or Indian agents - granting safe passage through Native lands. They listed names, companions, and sometimes enslaved individuals, and they carried the weight of diplomacy.

A settler named John Douglass, for instance, might have stood before the Executive Department in Georgia, requesting a passport to cross Creek territory en route to the western frontier. His name would be recorded alongside others - families with wagons, traders with goods, and surveyors with mapsâ€”each seeking access to lands not yet theirs.

The Creek Nation, like many others, had its own laws and leadership. Travel without permission risked confrontation, arrest, or worse. These passports served as a fragile bridge between two worlds: one expanding, one resisting. They were part of a larger system of negotiation, control, and uneasy coexistence.

Some were issued by Indian agents like Return J. Meigs, who worked closely with the Cherokee. Others came from figures like Governor John Sevier, whose authority extended across the Southwest Territory. Occasionally, even tribal leaders themselves granted passage, recognizing the shifting tides of diplomacy.

By the 1820s, as treaties were signed and lands ceded, the need for such passports began to fade. But for a time, they were essential - quiet artifacts of a complex and often painful chapter in American history.

Heraldic Flags in Scotland: Banners, Standards, and the Symbols of the Clan

In medieval and early modern Britain, flags were potent symbols of identity, allegiance, and authority. In Scotland, as elsewhere, these flags were vital instruments of communication, particularly among the nobility and clan chiefs. The two primary forms were the banner and the standard, each possessing distinct characteristics and functions shaped by unique Scottish heraldic tradition.

Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn

The Scottish Standard: A Rallying Point and Unique Design

The standard was a long, narrow flag, typically tapering to a pointed, rounded, or swallow-tailed end. Evolving from the smaller pennon—a flag affixed to a lance—the standard became an independent, pole-mounted ensign used to mark a noble leader's presence, serving as a critical rallying point for their followers, particularly the clansmen.

Design and Decoration of the Scottish Standard

Scottish standards followed a visual logic distinct from their English counterparts.

Absence of Divisions: They notably did not feature the horizontal colour divisions or the diagonal motto bands common in English standards.

Motto Placement: Any motto present was displayed in a straight line across the flag, rather than on diagonal bands.

The Saltire: The Cross of St Andrew (the

Pipe Banners:
Left: William Douglas
Right: William & Lydia Douglas

Saltire, the national flag of Scotland) appearing nearest the staff. However, some surviving Scottish standards omit any cross altogether.

Charges and Livery: The main field of the flag

Replica of the Douglas of Cavers Otterburn pennant

would display the owner's livery colours (the principal metal and colour from their shield) and be profusely decorated with their badges or charges, drawn from their family or clan arms.

While official guidelines for length existed in general British heraldic practice (e.g., 9 yards for a king, 7 for a duke), these impractical measurements were rarely followed in Scotland or in battle, where standards were typically

Clan Douglas march up the Royal Mile at the 2009 Clan Gathering in Edinburgh

The Duke of Buccleuch's standard flies over Drumlanrig Castle

shortened for mobility.

The Banner: Heraldry in Full

The banner remained consistent with wider British practice: it was a square or oblong flag bearing the full coat of arms of its owner, painted or embroidered. As a direct, legible extension of the owner's armorial bearings, the banner was a formal, prestigious emblem of rank and lineage. It was designed for instant recognition on the battlefield or at ceremonial gatherings, communicating the chief's identity and authority.

These differences between Scottish and English standards underscore broader distinctions in heraldic practice, shaped by regional traditions, the importance of the clan system, and unique aesthetic preferences within Scotland.

Percy's pennant captured by the Earl of Douglas at Newcastle

The Enduring Legacy of the Douglas House of Kalabari

The Douglas House stands as one of the most distinguished royal and mercantile families within the Kalabari Kingdom of Nigeria's Niger Delta. Its legacy, rooted in trade, tradition, and transformation, spans centuries and continues to shape Kalabari identity and influence today.

Origins and Migration: The Kalabari Dispersal

The Kalabari people, a subgroup of the Ijaw—Nigeria's fourth largest ethnic group—migrated eastward around the 13th century from the Mein cluster near the Bayelsa/Delta border. Led by their epochal ancestor Perebo, a senior son of Mein Owei, they settled peacefully in the swamps of present-day Rivers State. This strategic relocation brought them into early contact with European merchants, catalyzing rapid economic and social development.

From their original settlement at Elem Kalabari (Old Town), the Kalabaris expanded into thriving towns such as Abonnema (Nyemoni), Buguma, Bakana, and Kula. These became hubs of legitimate trade—especially in palm oil—and centres of western education, producing some of Nigeria's earliest professionals and bureaucrats.

The town quickly blossomed into a commercial entrepôt, and by 1884, Kalabari land became part of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, later absorbed into Southern Nigeria under British colonial rule.

Founding of the Douglas House

Amidst the pivotal Kalabari dispersal of the mid-19th century, Chief Orubibi Douglas formally established the Douglas House in 1864. A descendant of King Amachree I, Orubibi was a spiritual leader and merchant whose foresight helped shape the future of Kalabari society. He created the Orubibi chieftaincy stool in Elem Kalabari and played a foundational role in the establishment of Abonnema, alongside other "Merchant War Chiefs."

Scottish Connections: The Name "Douglas"

The surname Douglas—derived from the Gaelic dubh glas ("dark stream") - was adopted by Chief Orubibi during the height of 19th-century trade with European merchants. It served as a commercial identity, facilitating transactions and symbolizing international influence. Likely inspired by a respected Scottish trading partner, the name reflected both wealth and strategic alignment with British interests.

(Continued on page 19)

Alabo Tamunotenyim Omubo Graham-Douglas: A Farewell

Born on May 8, 1939, in the distinguished Douglas family of Abonnema, Alabo TOG passed away on April 25, 2022, after a prolonged illness. A proud Kalabari and Ijaw son, he left an indelible mark on Nigeria's public life.

As Commissioner for Culture in Rivers State, he introduced Carniriv, a vibrant cultural festival that celebrated drama, dance, and Kalabari heritage.

Graham-Douglas was one of the few Nigerians appointed minister four times, serving under both military and civilian governments. His roles included:

- Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture (1989)
- Minister of Aviation (1990)
- Minister of Labour and Productivity (1999)
- Minister of Culture and Tourism (2000–2001)

TOG, as he was addressed also had siblings who were super accomplished in different professions. His more visibly known older sibling was Nabo Graham Douglas who was SAN number two after Chief Rotimi Williams. Nabo was also the first Attorney General of Rivers state following its creation in May, 1967 and served under the outstandingly accomplished Alfred Diete Spiff administration. He had another sibling, Donald Graham-Douglas, who was one time Chief Judge of Rivers State. Another brother Melford Graham Douglas was a respected medical doctor.

This naming practice was common among influential Kalabari traders, and it cemented the family's dual identity: royal lineage and commercial acumen.

Royal Lineage and Mentorship

The Douglas House traces its ancestry directly to King Amachree I. Chief Orubibi Douglas was mentored by Chief Owukori Manuel, a grandson of Amachree I, alongside Omekwe Horsfall. This triad of mentorship and kinship forged enduring political and social networks, with each founding a major chieftaincy house that remains central to Kalabari governance.

Generational Impact and National Influence

From these foundations, the Douglas House has produced a remarkable lineage of leaders across law, diplomacy, medicine, academia, and the arts. Notable descendants and kinsmen include:

- Chief Dr. Nabo Graham-Douglas – Attorney

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

General and pioneer Senior Advocate of Nigeria

- Chief Donald Graham-Douglas – Former Chief Judge of Rivers State

- Professor Melford Graham-Douglas – Founding Professor of Paediatric Surgery at UNILAG

- Ambassador Joe Iyalla, Professor Karibi-Whyte, Cardinal Rex Lawson, and Taribo West – Each a national icon in their field

These figures exemplify the Douglas House's enduring role in shaping Nigeria's intellectual, cultural, and political landscape.

Heritage and Continuity

Raised in a family of merchants turned public servants, Alabo TOG (Theophilus Orubibi Graham-Douglas) embodied the fusion of tradition and modernity. His dapper attire and public presence popularized Kalabari heritage, while his lineage—rooted in Chief Orubibi's vision—continued to influence national affairs.

The Douglas House remains a cornerstone of Kalabari royal life, its legacy woven into the fabric of Nigeria's history and its future.

Sokari Douglas Camp, born in 1958 in Buguma, Rivers State, Nigeria, is the daughter of a Kalabari chief and fisherman, and a mother who sold palm oil. After her mother became unwell, she lived with anthropologist Robin Horton in Ilé-Ifè. She moved to the UK around 1970, attending boarding school in Devon. Douglas Camp studied Fine Art in California and Sculpture in London, earning awards and exhibiting widely. Her steel sculptures draw on Kalabari culture, theatre, and protest. Honoured with a CBE in 2005, she lives and works in London, with pieces held in major UK, US, and Japanese collections.

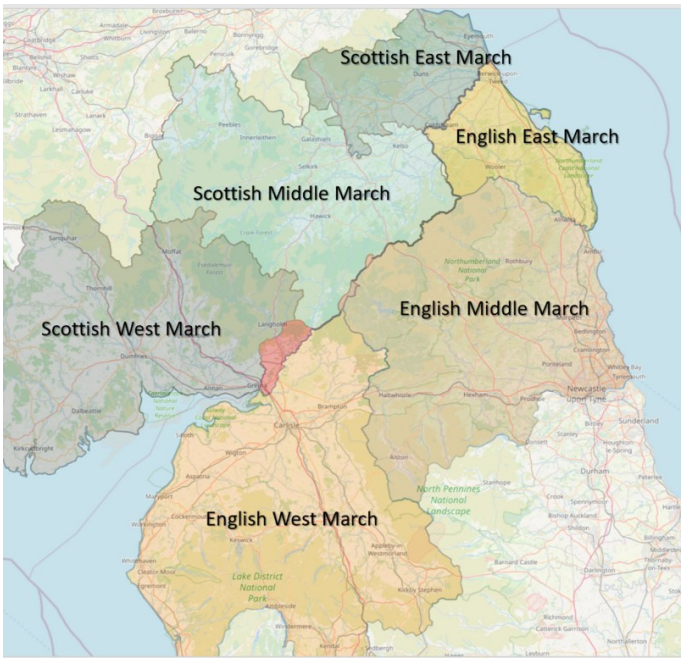
Bikiya Graham-Douglas is a Nigerian-born British trained actress and performing artist. She is the daughter of Nigerian politicians Alabo Graham-Douglas and Bolere Elizabeth Ketebu. Graham-Douglas has attended and taken courses at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, Oxford School of Drama, Bridge Theatre Training Company and Point Blank Music School. She has B.A. degrees in business economics and business law from the University of Portsmouth.

Graham-Douglas is the founder of the Beeta Universal Arts Foundation (BUAF).

Blood and Borders: The Douglases and the Lawless Legacy of the Scottish Marches

For centuries, the Scottish Marches - those rugged frontier lands straddling the border between Scotland and England - were a realm apart. From the Norman conquest until the union of the crowns in 1603, these territories were defined not by peace, but by persistent conflict, shifting allegiances, and a unique brand of justice. At the heart of this volatile landscape stood the Wardens of the Marches, and among them, none were more formidable than the Douglases.

The Marches were divided into three sectors - East, Middle, and West - each governed by a Warden responsible for defending the realm and maintaining order. But in practice, justice was elusive. Raids, feuds, and retaliations were commonplace, and the Wardens often walked a fine line between law enforcement and political opportunism. The Douglases, with their deep roots in the borderlands and their unrivalled military clout, became the dominant force in this frontier theatre.



James Douglas, “The Good”, was appointed Warden of the West March in 1314, setting the tone for generations of Douglas leadership. His daring raids and loyalty to Robert the Bruce made him a legend. Later, Sir William, Knight of Liddesdale, held the Middle March in 1343, earning the title “Flower of Chivalry” for his bold campaigns.

In 1364, Archibald Douglas, 3rd Earl of Douglas, was appointed Warden of the Western March, despite English control of Annandale. Through relentless raids, he reclaimed the territory and was named Lord Warden of the Marches by 1368. His son, Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl, resumed the role around 1414, funding border defense through customs levies when royal support waned.

The Douglas grip extended across the Marches. William Douglas, 2nd Earl of Angus, held the Middle March in 1433. His brother, William Douglas of Cluny, succeeded him as Warden of the Eastern and Middle Marches in 1464. Even when William, 8th Earl of Douglas, was stripped of his national command, King James still appointed him Warden of the West and Middle Marches - proof of his enduring influence.

(Continued on page 23)

Book Reviews

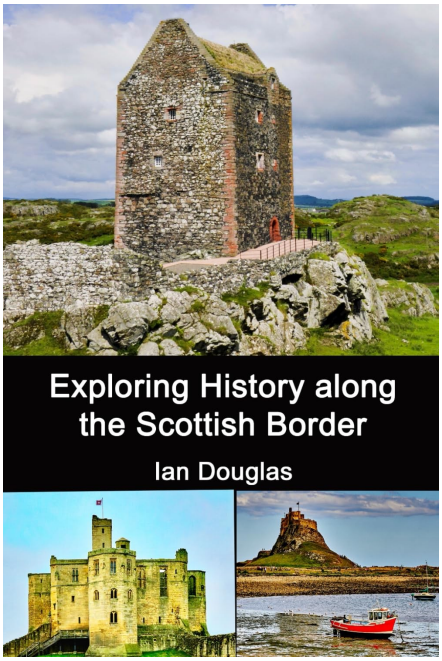
Your Clan Heritage: HA Edington

You would need a big sporran to slip this in, but it is an ideal reference book for those attending Highland Games and Clan Gatherings who want a bit of help with their history and heritage.

If you belong to the Clan Douglas, then this clan book is an easy to use guide to navigate through the often convoluted history of this amazing Scottish Clan.

Available from Lulu.com £14 +P&P

Many will be familiar with Ian's series of books featuring Clan Douglas.



"**Exploring History along the Scottish Border** by Ian Douglas is a major update to his earlier "Exploring History in the Scottish Borders", with much new material.

Whilst the Douglas dynasty straddled much of Scotland, Douglas history is particularly focused on the border area.

Exploring History along the Scottish Border covers the history of the Scottish and English side of the border. Illustrated by many colour photographs, the book also acts as a guide to the key historical sites in the borderland.

Available from Amazon.com £11.99 (+P&P in some areas)

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In 1525, Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Angus, was tasked with restoring order as Lord Warden. His efforts to suppress anarchy were decisive. Later, Sir James Douglas of Drumlanrig negotiated the division of the Debateable Lands and served as Warden of the West Marches in the 1550s, briefly holding Hoddam Castle in 1568.

Justice in the Marches was rough and often symbolic. Monthly Days of Truce saw Wardens from both sides meet to resolve grievances. Trials could involve twelve "honest" men—six Scots, six English - or rely on the word of a Warden, an avower, or compurgation. But honesty was scarce, and verdicts rarely satisfied.

By 1603, with the union of the crowns under James VI & I, the Marches were dissolved and renamed the Middle Shires. The Douglas legacy, however, endures - etched into the history of a land where justice rode on horseback and the broken spear was a badge of honour.

Continued from page 22

Black Douglas Chronicles explores the rise and fall of one of Scotland's boldest clans. From fierce loyalty and battlefield glory to betrayal and ambition, the Douglases shaped the fight for independence—yet remain in the shadows of Wallace and Bruce.

Blending fact with fiction, Nigel Rennie's book reimagines their story through historical records and vivid narrative, restoring their place in Scotland's turbulent past.

Available from Amazon.com £8.50 (+P&P in some areas)

The Douglas Archives: A Living Legacy of Clan and Kin

In the digital age, where heritage risks being buried beneath the noise of the now, the Douglas Archives stand as a beacon of continuity—a sprawling online repository and vibrant community dedicated to one of Scotland's most storied lineages: Clan Douglas.

More than a mere collection of names and dates, the Archives are a living tapestry of history, genealogy, and global connection. They serve scholars, descendants, and curious wanderers alike, offering a gateway into the lives and legacies of Douglases past and present.

What Lies Within?

At the heart of the Douglas Archives is a genealogy database of staggering scope—nearly 200,000 individuals mapped across centuries, continents, and kinships. Whether you're tracing a direct line to Sir William 'Le Hardy' Douglas, famed ally of William Wallace, or uncovering a forgotten branch that settled in the Arctic or Fiji, the Archives offer a trail of ancestral breadcrumbs waiting to be followed.

But the story doesn't stop at lineage. The Douglas History section dives deep into the clan's cultural and political footprint, with biographies, anecdotes, and timelines that illuminate the roles Douglases played in shaping Scottish and European history. From castles and tartans to heraldic crests and family cyphers, the Archives preserve the visual and symbolic identity of the clan with meticulous care.

A Global Clan, A Shared Story

The Douglas name has travelled far—from battlefield to parliament, from medical halls to literary salons. The Archives reflect this global footprint, capturing stories of migration, resilience, and reinvention. They also provide a community network where descendants and researchers can connect, contribute, and collaborate—whether through shared files, discussion forums, or initiatives like the Douglas DNA Project.

Purpose and Vision

The mission is clear: to preserve and promote the contributions of Clan Douglas across disciplines and generations. While the Archives exist online, they complement physical institutions like the Museum in Douglas, Lanarkshire, bridging the gap between digital access and tangible heritage.

In essence, the Douglas Archives are more than a website—they're a living monument to a clan whose influence spans centuries and continents. For anyone seeking to understand their Douglas roots, or simply to marvel at the sweep of Scottish history, this is a place where the past speaks, and the present listens.

Looking Ahead: Stewardship for the Future

As the Douglas Archives continue to grow in depth and reach, there is a quiet but pressing call for a successor—someone with a passion for heritage, a knack for digital stewardship, and a commitment to preserving the legacy of Clan Douglas for generations to come.

The role is not merely technical; it's custodial, creative, and collaborative. Whether a seasoned genealogist or a curious newcomer, the next steward will inherit a living archive and a global community, with the opportunity to shape its future while honouring its past.

If this is something that you would like to get involved with, there are two routes to follow:

Contact the President of the Clan Douglas Association of North America who is assisting in the process,
Secretary@comcast.net

Or

Get in touch with the present compiler of the Douglas Archives, William Douglas.
William@douglashistory.co.uk

The Douglas Archives Community Forum

Whether you're tracing your Douglas lineage, exploring family lore, or breaking through research brick walls, this is your space to collaborate, discover, and share, you should join the Douglas Archives Community Network — where history meets connection.

Join today and connect with other researchers just like yourself!

What You Can Do:

* Network: Connect with others researching their Douglas ancestry.

* Share: Post birth, death, and marriage certificates, research discoveries, and family lore.

* Explore: Set up your own page, post in the Forum or Blog, and share photographs.

* Contribute: Get involved with groups, including the popular Douglas DNA Project

* Collaborate: Disprove or, better yet, prove your family's stories together!

Click here to join the Douglas Archives Community Network and start your discovery journey!
https://douglashistory.ning.com/?xgi=4BbpFaD3fX6Mbv

The Art of Duncan Brown:

Artist, Piper, Historian, Storyteller and Contributor to the Douglas Archives

Many visitors to the Douglas Archives Community Forum will be familiar with Duncan Brown's evocative artwork, where he re-imagines figures from Scotland's past with both flair and insight. While the true likenesses of James Douglas or Robert the Bruce remain lost to history, Duncan's interpretations invite us to engage with these legendary characters in ways that both stir the imagination and deepen our understanding.

Born in 1950, Duncan Brown has spent a lifetime honing what he calls the "gift of observance"—a childhood instinct that grew into a remarkable ability to capture Scotland's soul in paint, music, and words. Today, he is known as an artist, musician, writer, educator, and passionate interpreter of Scottish heritage.

From an early age, Duncan was drawn to both visual art and music. His love of the bagpipes led him to play across the world in one form or another, and he now delights in performing the Scottish Small Pipes at house parties and gatherings. He also plays the melodeon squeeze box and bodhrán, adding rhythm and warmth to community celebrations.

Duncan's artistic journey formally began 45 years ago when he started teaching art students. Around that time, he organised his first exhibition—opened by none other than Nigel Tranter. That moment proved transformative: Tranter didn't just open the exhibition, he opened Duncan's eyes to Scotland's history in a way no school ever had. Many Scottish politicians have echoed that sentiment over the years.

Tranter's influence lingered. Duncan would later sit in the balcony of the Scottish Parliament as his book *My Hero, My Soldier Laddie*, a tribute to Scotland's Victoria Cross recipients, was debated for 35 minutes in 2010. It was a proud moment for an artist whose work continually bridges the personal and the national.

Duncan's paintings have adorned many public spaces, including the old train station in Renton, owned by The Bruce Heritage group. When asked to contribute, Duncan envisioned something bold: a ceiling mural of Bruce's generals who followed him to Bannockburn. With twelve 8ft x 4ft panels painted and mounted overhead, the stationwas later voted the best decorated of its kind in Britain. "Job done," Duncan said. "I had painted a ceiling. It was time to move on."

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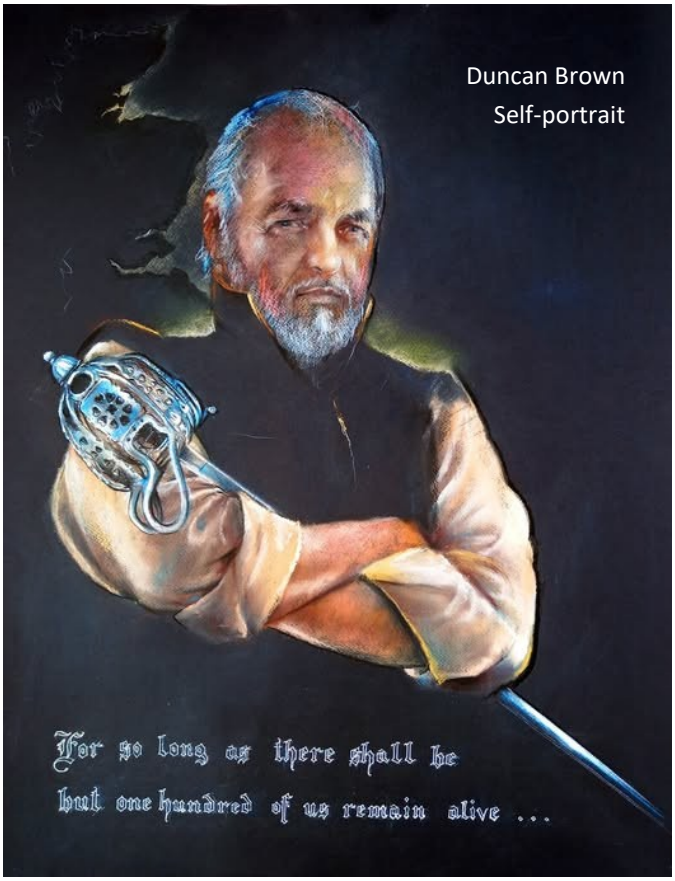


His exhibitions have been opened by a host of notable figures, including the legendary folk duo The Corries and Jimmy Reid, the Clydeside union leader who led the famous “work-in” of the 1970s. Politicians and TV personalities have followed suit, recognising Duncan’s enduring commitment to celebrating Scotland’s story.

Today, Duncan continues to paint, teach, and perform, with a new exhibition being held between 7th and 20th November—this time focused on Clan Douglas, one of Scotland’s most storied lineages. The people of the village of Douglas have invited him to contribute, and Duncan, ever modest, is happy to oblige “with the limited skill that I have as an artist.”

Whether painting Highland glens, piping a tune, or recounting tales of yesteryear, Duncan Brown remains a cultural steward of Scotland—an artist, a piper, a historian, and a character of note.

The Death of Douglas at Teba in 1330

After Sir James was killed by the Moors at Teba in the south of Spain, they were clearing up, and looting the bodies of those killed, when they recognized the three silver stars on his coat of arms. They then sent a message up to the Spanish king Alphonse in the castle to ask him if he wanted the body of the great warrior returned,. Indeed he did, and the Moors put a few shields together with some animal skins on them, and ceremoniously carried the body of James Douglas back in to the castle.

I sensed the honour in it, and had to do the painting you see here. The people of Teba to this day have an annual celebration of that battle, and when they saw this painting, they asked if they could use it as an advertising poster for the event, which I think they still use.

Words and painting by Duncan Brown

The Scots Crusaders

For the Douglas family, the Crusades were more than a call to arms; they were a proving ground for a legacy already forged in the defence of Scotland's honour. Far from mere quests for faith or fame, these distant campaigns became an extension of the Douglases' enduring role as champions of their homeland — carrying its banner into foreign fields with unflinching resolve.

Their earliest known involvement came with Sir William of Douglas, who joined the ill-fated crusade of Prince Edward in the late 13th century. Though the campaign itself faltered, the gesture was unmistakable: the Douglases were not content to defend Scotland's borders alone — they sought to uphold its honour on the world stage. This martial instinct, rooted in loyalty and ambition, would echo through generations, from the Holy Land to the Iberian Peninsula, where later Douglases fought alongside Christian forces in the Reconquista. Each campaign added a thread to the family's tapestry of service, sacrifice, and symbolic defiance.

Scottish involvement in the Crusades began tentatively but grew steadily across the centuries. Though unnamed in surviving records, Scots reportedly fought alongside Hugh de Payens, founder of the Knights Templar, during his ill-fated campaign to capture Damascus in 1129. It was not until the Third Crusade (1189–1192), with figures like the Scoto-Norman noble Robert de Quincey, that individual Scots began to emerge from the mists of martial legend into the realm of historical record.

By the 13th century, crusading had become a more visible pursuit among Scotland's nobility. Major dynasties such as the Stewarts, Balliols, and Bruces took up the cross, reflecting how the Crusades had become entwined with both piety and prestige. Even the Gaelic tradition was drawn into the movement: poets like Gille Brighde Albanach and Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh joined the Fifth Crusade (1217–1221), striking their own literary chords amid the clangour of Damietta. Muireadhach, an Irish-

born bard exiled for murder, sought absolution under arms, praying in verse, “Protect us in the hot land, gentle Lady Mary.”

The fall of Acre in 1291, during the Ninth Crusade, marked the end of Christian strongholds in the Holy Land — but not of crusading itself. Its stage merely shifted: from the Levant to the Iberian Peninsula, the Mediterranean, and the Baltic.

One of the most celebrated Scottish crusading episodes came in 1330 with Sir James Douglas, the Black Douglas and trusted lieutenant of Robert the Bruce. After the king’s death, Douglas bore Bruce’s heart in a silver casket, fulfilling the monarch’s unfulfilled vow to go on crusade. Setting out for Jerusalem, Douglas and his band paused in Spain, where they joined King Alfonso XI of Castile’s campaign against the Emirate of Granada. They fought at the siege of Teba Castle, where Douglas was killed in battle. Though the heart never reached the Holy Land, his journey immortalised the Douglases in both crusading lore and chivalric romance. The heart was eventually returned to Scotland and interred at Melrose Abbey — a potent symbol of loyalty and martial devotion.

By the later 14th century, the most active crusading theatre for Scots had become the Baltic, where the Teutonic Knights — a militant German order — led annual raids into pagan Lithuania. These so-called “summer crusades” attracted nobles from across Europe, drawn by faith, ritualised warfare, and the promise of glory. Feasting, jousting, and armed raids became part of the seasonal rhythm.

Among the Scottish participants was Sir William Douglas, Lord of Nithsdale, a fierce knight and seasoned veteran of campaigns against England. In 1390, he issued a challenge to his English rival, Thomas, Lord Clifford, though the duel never took place. The following year, Douglas journeyed to Prussia to join the Teutonic Order’s crusade. At Königsberg, a dispute erupted when Douglas and his followers were denied entry to a church — an affront he blamed on a group of English knights that included Clifford. Douglas ambushed them at the church doors; although he only wounded a squire, he and two fellow Scots were killed in the skirmish. The Teutonic hosts, wary of Anglo-Scottish feuding undermining their cause, diverted their guests with a swift raid into Lithuania.

Back in Scotland, the Crusades left their mark not only in blood but in stone. Both the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller established preceptories, raising funds and men for the Holy Land. The Hospitallers’ Scottish headquarters at Torphichen eventually became a seat of political power; its last preceptor, James Sandilands, converted to Protestantism during the Reformation, surrendering the order’s lands in exchange for becoming Lord Torphichen.

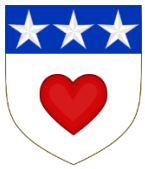
Crusading zeal persisted even after the Reformation. In 1560, James Irving left for Malta and served the Hospitallers for nine years. Half a century later, the ever-curious traveller William Lithgow passed through Malta and met another William Douglas, a Scottish mercenary who had fought for the Order against Ottoman Turks and Barbary Corsairs before fully joining their ranks.

From the deserts of Egypt to the forests of the Baltic, crusading carried Scots far beyond their homeland — and brought back stories, scars, and spiritual reckonings. For the Douglas family, in particular, the Crusades were not just a matter of faith or fame, but a continuation of their defining role as guardians of Scotland’s honour in foreign fields.

Douglas Nicknames: Names Wrought in Deeds

Across centuries of conflict, diplomacy, and legend, the Douglas family carved a legacy not only in stone and parchment, but in the nicknames bestowed upon its most memorable figures. These names — sometimes reverent, sometimes sardonic — reflect how individuals were perceived by allies, enemies, and chroniclers alike. From the towering “Longlegs” to the fearsome “Black Douglas,” from the gallant “Flower of Chivalry” to the reluctant “Hugh the Dull,” each epithet offers a glimpse into character, reputation, and the shifting values of medieval Scotland.

This timeline traces the evolution of Douglas nicknames from the 13th to the 15th century, revealing how martial prowess, political daring, and even ecclesiastical retreat shaped the identity of one of Scotland’s most storied clans. Heraldic accents accompany each entry, echoing the symbols that once adorned banners, seals, and battlefield standards.

Century	Nickname(s)	Individual(s) & Title(s)	Origin / Meaning	Heraldic Symbolism
13th	**Longleg**	William Douglas, Lord of Douglas (d. c.1274)	Likely referred to his tall stature and commanding presence	
	The Hardy	Sir William Douglas (d. 1298)	Known for resilience and military skill during the Wars of Independence	
14th	**The Black Douglas**	Sir James Douglas (c.1286–1330)	English nickname for his fearsome guerrilla tactics	
	The Good Sir James	Same as above	Scottish epithet for loyalty and courage	As above
	The Knight of Liddesdale	Sir William Douglas, Lord of Liddesdale (c.1300–1353)	Title from his lordship and exploits in the Borders	
	The Flower of Chivalry	Same as above	Celebrated for martial excellence and knightly virtue	As above
	Archibald the Grim	Archibald Douglas, 3rd Earl of Douglas (c.1328–1400)	Stern appearance and formidable reputation	

Century	Nickname(s)	Individual(s) & Title(s)	Origin / Meaning	Heraldic Symbolism
14th	**Hugh the Dull**	Hugh Douglas, Lord of Douglas (c.1294–1342)	Nicknamed for his lack of martial or political ambition; entered the Church	
15th	**The Red Douglases**	Douglas Earls of Angus	Junior branch, distinguished by colour or political rivalry	
	Bell the Cat	Archibald Douglas, 5th Earl of Angus (c.1449–1513)	From fable; volunteered to confront royal favourites	
	Greysteil	Sir Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie (c.1475–1522)	Named after romance hero for strength and agility	
	The Gross	Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Douglas (c.1390–1455)	"Gross" meaning great or large — a powerful diplomat	
	The Tyneman	Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl of Douglas (c.1370–1424)	Scots for "loser" — known for military defeats but political influence	

Echoes of Honour and Irony

The nicknames of the Douglas family are more than colourful labels — they are fragments of cultural memory, forged in the fires of war, court intrigue, and poetic imagination. Some, like "Bell the Cat" or "Greysteil," celebrate boldness and strength; others, like "The Tyneman" or "Hugh the Dull," hint at misfortune or retreat. Together, they form a mosaic of identity that spans generations and geographies.

In these names, we find not just individuals, but archetypes — the warrior, the diplomat, the romantic, the rebel, the recluse. Their stories continue to resonate, reminding us that history is not only written in chronicles, but whispered in the nicknames that endure.

How the Douglases came to Patogonia

The Long Road South: Tracing the Douglas Settlers from Scotland to Patagonia

The history of the Douglas family in South America is not a simple tale of direct immigration. Instead, it's a three-chapter saga spanning the Scottish Lowlands, the rugged Falkland Islands, and the vast, windswept plains of Patagonia. The settlers who bore this ancient Scottish name were part of a complex 19th-century migration, driven by the search for land and opportunity in the Southern Hemisphere's burgeoning wool trade.

A Name Forged in Scotland's "Black Stream"

The story of the Douglas name begins centuries before the family stepped onto the shores of the South Atlantic. The surname is one of the most distinguished in Scotland, originally a *locative name* derived from the Scottish Gaelic elements dubh, meaning 'dark' or 'black,' and glas, meaning 'stream' or 'river.' The name literally means "black stream" and is linked to the Douglas Water in Lanarkshire.

The Douglases rose to become the powerful leaders of a family whose dominance in the Scottish Lowlands often saw them holding the real power behind the throne. This heritage instilled a culture of resilience, resourcefulness, and a deep connection to the land—qualities that would prove essential for survival in the remote and harsh environments of the Falklands and Patagonia.

The Falklands Stepping Stone: Douglas Station

By the mid-19th century, economic pressures and a growing population in Scotland prompted a massive exodus, with many Scots drawn to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) to develop the fledgling colony's sheep farming industry. It is here that the Douglas name became a permanent geographical marker.

The settlement known as Douglas Station on East Falkland was not, in fact, founded by a Douglas but by a fellow Scot, Robert Greenshields, in 1867. Greenshields, originally from Lanarkshire, named the settlement after a village near his own birthplace. Despite the founder's surname, the station's legacy soon intertwined with the Douglas family

through marriage.

The key connection was established when William Douglas (born c. 1846 in Scotland), a shepherd employed by the Falkland Islands Company, married Robert Greenshields' daughter, Jane Greenshields. This union inextricably linked the Douglas surname to one of the Falklands' most prominent sheep farming families and the estate that carried the name.

However, the Falklands, while providing a foothold, ultimately lacked the sheer scale of opportunity that many ambitious settlers craved. As the 1880s approached, the island's land was largely consolidated under the control of a few major companies, leaving little room for shepherds and stockmen to become independent ranch owners. This shortage provided the motivation for the second, more permanent migration.

The Patagonian Promise: Land and Wealth

The final chapter for the Douglas settlers was written on the South American mainland. In the 1880s, the governments of Argentina and Chile—especially in the territories of Santa Cruz and Magallanes—were actively seeking skilled farmers to develop their vast Patagonian lands. They offered lucrative land leases that were unattainable in the Falklands.

The settlers, already acclimated to the South Atlantic climate and skilled in high-volume wool production, saw the Patagonian plains as a limitless horizon. The journey from the Falklands to the mainland—particularly to the bustling port of Punta Arenas in Chile—became a common migratory route.

William Douglas Tennant, 1903

Two prominent Douglas lines exemplify this final move:

1. The William Douglas Line (Argentine Patagonia)

William Douglas and Jane Greenshields moved from the Falklands to the Argentine province of Santa Cruz around 1883. They settled near Río Gallegos, where the wool trade was booming. William's connection to the Greenshields family proved vital when he inherited a half-share of Useful Station (Estancia Esperanza), a major ranch, from his brother-in-law. The descendants of William and Jane thus became foundational members of the Argentine Patagonian ranching aristocracy.

Héctor Douglas Tolentino

2. The Thomas Douglas Line (Chilean Patagonia)

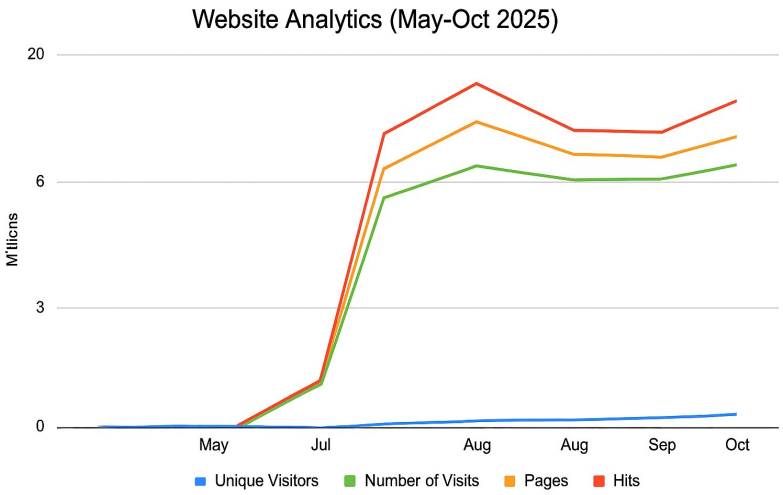
Thomas Douglas (b. 1846) and his wife Annie Tennant followed a similar trajectory, settling in Punta Arenas, Chile, around 1885. Thomas was a pioneer in the Magallanes livestock industry, while Annie Tennant Douglas gained distinction as possibly the first qualified nurse to practice in the region, highlighting the varied contributions of these settlers.

Their descendants spread across Chilean and Argentine Patagonia, contributing to livestock, social, and economic life. Family branches include the Douglas-Ojeda, Douglas-Tolentino, Wever-Douglas, Nielsen-Douglas, and Douglas-McLean lines. Among them, Thomas Douglas Ojeda was a celebrated athlete with Club Olimpia, while great-grandsons Alfredo and Oscar Douglas Dobson were known for their sporting achievements in athletics and motor racing.

The Douglases, like hundreds of other Scottish families who followed the same route, successfully transported their centuries-old connection to the land across two continents. From the "black stream" of Lanarkshire to the sheep-dotted fields of the Falklands, their final destiny was to establish one of the great pioneering lineages in the history of Patagonia.

The Douglas Archives: A Global Phenomenon with Local Roots

What began as a personal passion project has grown into one of the world's most-visited family history websites. For the past 25 years, I've been curating The Douglas Archives - a digital repository of clan history, heraldry, and genealogical detail that reflects both my heritage and my commitment to preserving it.



Until recently, the site was something of a well-kept secret, known mostly to the extended Douglas family. But in recent months, visitor numbers have surged - reaching an astonishing one million hits per day. In the world of family history, that kind of traffic is almost unheard of, and it's placed the Archives in a league of its own.

This surge has brought both excitement and its fair share of challenges. Increased demand has occasionally strained the site's bandwidth, and I now receive a growing number of enquiries from around the globe: descendants eager to trace their roots, historians exploring the influence of the Douglas name, and curious visitors drawn to Scotland's mediaeval legacy.

Thankfully, that peak of 10 million visitors in 10 days has dropped, but the site still received 4 million page views in October 2025.

At its core, The Douglas Archives remains what it has always been - a labour of love. And in this new chapter of digital discovery, I'm proud to welcome more people than ever into the living legacy of one of Scotland's most storied families.

William Douglas

The following have generously contributed to this edition of our magazine:

James Ninian Douglas

James A. McQuiston

Duncan Brown

Andrew Spratt

Our community forum contributors