

The Douglas Archives

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Newsletter

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Our place in history;

In the margin, about one-third into The Book of Clan Douglas, Volume III, are written the words: 'This is about the time when the Earth began.' (Mary Murray, nee Mary Douglas, of Earltown: 1991)



The origins of the Douglas family are shrouded in mystery, but there's no shortage of intriguing tales about where the name came from.

Last time, we explored a couple of legends - and now, we've got a few more for you to enjoy. There's no definitive answer, so feel free to choose the story that speaks to you the most! After all, a great tale doesn't just entertain—it strengthens the identity and legacy of the family and clan.

Let me know what you think!

The Douglas Archives

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A man with a long beard and hair, wearing dark medieval armor, stands in a forest. He is looking towards the right. In the background, there is a stream flowing over rocks, surrounded by trees and foliage. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting a misty or overcast day.

“Sholto du glasse!”

“Behold the black gray man!”

The Douglasses, hailed as the most influential Lowland family, reached the zenith of their power in the 15th and 16th century to arguably become Scotland's foremost family.

In the 17th century, Hume of Godscroft penned a historical account chronicling the origins of the Douglasses, suggesting their roots in the native people of Clydesdale. According to his narrative, dating back to 767 during the reign of King Solvathius, a rebellion led by Donald Bane posed a threat to the Scottish throne. In the heat of battle, an enigmatic nobleman, disapproving of the usurper's cause, intervened with great prowess, securing victory for the king. This mysterious figure earned the moniker "Sholto Du Glasse," translating to the black or dark man. In gratitude, King Solvathius granted him the surname Douglas and bestowed extensive lands in Clydesdale, later known as Douglasdale.

However, skepticism surrounds the account's veracity, lacking supporting evidence. The term "Douglas" likely originates from the Gaelic "dhu glass," signifying a black or dark stream, suggesting the family's name may have been derived from the land they held, Douglasdale bisected by the Black Water, now Douglas water, a tributary of the River Clyde.

Continues on next page

An artistic impression

The Origins of Clan Douglas:

Continued from Page 3

The narrative introduces William, the first Lord of Douglas, supposedly created at a Parliament convened by King Malcolm Canmore in 1057 or 1061. The story traces succession through William's sons, Sir John Douglas of Douglasburn and William of Glendinning. While early generations remain elusive in Godscroft's account, subsequent records confirm the existence of individuals like William, Archibald, and William Douglas.

The Parliament of Malcolm Canmore in 1057 or 1061, as mentioned by Godscroft, is considered a myth, likely a fabrication by Hector Boece, who may have confused it with a later historical event.

In essence, Godscroft's historical tale unveils a mixture of legend and potential historical facts, weaving the Douglas family's purported origins into the complex tapestry of medieval Scottish history.

Sholto Du glasse apart, the earliest mention of the name dates back to 1175 when William de Douglas witnessed a charter by the Bishop of Glasgow to Kelso's monks. Sir James Douglas, renowned for his valour as Robert Bruce's chief lieutenant, received significant land grants. His heroic exploits, unfortunately, met a tragic end when he was killed by the Moors in Granada while attempting to transport Bruce's heart to the Holy Land. His nephew ascended to the title

of Earl of Douglas, later adding Mar through marriage.

The Douglases' strength and affluence posed a perpetual challenge to the Stewart Kings. A strategic alliance with the English crown and the Lord of the Isles against the Scots crown led to their forfeiture in 1455, marked by the bombardment of Threave Castle with the renowned cannon, Mons Meg. George, the 4th Earl of Angus, head of



the Red Douglases, assumed leadership of the entire clan. Archibald, known as "Bell-the-Cat," spearheaded the noble rebellion against James III, culminating in the monarch's demise at the Battle of Sauchieburn in 1488.

Archibald's grandson, also named Archibald, cemented the family's legacy by marrying Margaret Tudor, James IV's widow from the Battle of Flodden. Lady Margaret, their daughter, wed the Earl of Lennox, whose son, Lord Darnley, married Mary Queen of Scots and fathered James VI & I.

The Douglases continued to play a pivotal role in Scotland's history, serving as ancestors to prominent titles, including the Earls of Morton, Douglas, Annandale, Moray, Ormond, Angus, and Forfar, and the Dukes of Touraine, Queensberry, Buccleuch, and Hamilton.

Did you know?

Douglas is often used as a boy's first name, but during the 17th and 18th centuries, it was sometimes used as a girl's name.

Did you know?

Douglas also appears in the following countries/origins/languages: American, Australian, Celtic, Danish, English, French, German, Irish, Scots, Swiss

Did you know?

The image on the front cover is a hand coloured tinsel print depicting Mr Gomersall as Earl Douglas in Chevy Chase, published by Orlando Hodgson, London, 1832.

Did you know?

Earl Archibald Douglas is captured after Homildon Hill in Shakespeare's Henry IV, Part 1's opening scene. He reappears in the final act, aligning with Hotspur's rebel army against the king

Publications wanted for the Douglas Archives library:

- Hounam & Linton. This is a cemetery listing of Douglas names for the parishes of Hunan and Linton Roxburghshire in the border area of Scotland.
- Douglases. Written by Barbara Sopp, Rosalind Meade and John Douglass of Adelaide. This tells the story of the descendants of James Main and Mary Lightly Douglas of Bishopwearmouth Sunderland, Durham, England and of Adelaide, South Australia.
- The story of the Reverend James Douglas of Preston.
- The story of the Right Reverend John

Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury.

- Happy Was Our Valley compiled by Barbara Mullins and edited by Ern Carmichael of South Australia. This tells the story of the descendants of Henry Douglas of Tooting Surrey, England, who arrived at Kangaroo Island, South Australia in 1836. He married Miss Lydia Blunt in 1839 and proceeded to their land grant at Happy Valley.
- From Glens to Gullies. Edited by Wendy L. Hiscock. This book tells the story of the Drysdale and McLeish families of Yea, Victoria, Australia
- A family history from 1868 when James Crawford Douglas married Mary Michael and settled in Woodstock, Victoria, Australia.

Threave Castle



A reconstruction
by Andrew Spratt

The Grim Fortress: A Witness to the Rise and Fall of a Scottish Dynasty

On a lonely island in the River Dee, shrouded in mist and mystery, stands Threave Castle – a formidable stone sentinel bearing the scars of a turbulent past. Built in the 14th century by the aptly named Archibald the Grim, it became the heart of a power struggle that would echo through the annals of Scottish history.

Archibald, a member of the infamous Black Douglases, wasn't a man known for warmth. His formidable presence solidified as Threave rose from the island, a defiant tower house casting a long shadow over the surrounding lands. Threave became a symbol of Douglas dominance, a place where their writ ran supreme.

But power, like the River Dee itself, can be a fickle current. Archibald's granddaughter, Margaret, the "Fair Maid of Galloway," brought a touch of grace to the castle's harsh visage. Yet, even she couldn't halt the gathering storm. The Douglases, their ambition as boundless as the Scottish hills, grew too powerful for the king's comfort.

Enter James II, a young monarch determined to clip the wings of his overmighty subjects. Threave, the very embodiment of Douglas strength, became the target. In 1455, the king's forces surrounded the island, laying siege to the castle. The Black Douglases, ever resourceful, had bolstered Threave's defenses with a revolutionary artillery wall

– a testament to their ingenuity and a sign of their defiance.

For weeks, Threave withstood the onslaught. Then, in a moment of drama worthy of Shakespeare himself, the garrison succumbed – not to force, but to a cunning bribe. The Douglases, their fortunes waning, were ousted from their island stronghold. Threave, the scene of their triumphs, echoed with the hollow clang of defeat.

The castle's fate mirrored that of the Douglases. It passed through various hands, a pale imitation of its former glory. Battles raged within its walls once more, but the fire of the Black Douglases was extinguished. Today, Threave stands as a haunting reminder of a bygone era, a place where whispers of the Grim and the Fair Maid mingle with the wind whistling through the battlements. It's a testament to the fleeting nature of power, a lonely sentinel guarding the memory of a dynasty that rose and fell within its formidable walls.

A shocking story!

The Smiths were bursting with pride over their illustrious lineage—a family tree with branches reaching all the way back to the Mayflower. Their ancestors had included pious pastors and cunning Wall Street wizards, and now they wanted to preserve their grand legacy in a family history book. They hired a fine author to chronicle their story, but there was one rather... electrifying dilemma: how to elegantly weave in the unfortunate tale of Great Uncle George, who had met his end courtesy of the state's electric chair.

The author, a master of discretion, assured them she could handle it with the utmost tact. And indeed, when the book was finally published, the family turned eagerly to Uncle George's section. There, they read:

"George Smith occupied a distinguished chair of Applied Electronics at a highly regarded government institution. His tenure was marked by the strongest ties to his position, and his departure was truly shocking."

Now, that's what you call a positively charged family history!

The Fair Maid of Galloway: A Legacy of Beauty, Power, and Tragedy

Margaret Douglas, Countess of Douglas, known to history as the "Fair Maid of Galloway," lived a life marked by both extraordinary privilege and profound tragedy. Born around 1427 (or 1435, according to some accounts), she was a member of the powerful Black Douglas family, a lineage that held significant influence in 15th-century Scotland. Her father, Archibald Douglas, 5th Earl of Douglas, left behind a vast inheritance, both wealth and political clout, that would shape Margaret's destiny.

Margaret's early life was overshadowed by the violent events known as the "Black Dinner" in 1440. Her brothers, including William Douglas, 6th Earl of Douglas, were murdered at Edinburgh Castle, a devastating blow that shattered the Douglas family's dominance. This act propelled Margaret into a position of considerable power, as she inherited vast estates, including the strategically important Galloway region with Threave Castle at its heart.

Her wealth and renowned beauty made her a highly desirable match. However, in 1444, she married her cousin, William Douglas, 8th Earl of Douglas, a union intended to consolidate the family's holdings. However, this marriage was tragically cut short when King James II, wary of the Douglas family's power, assassinated William.

This act ignited a bitter feud between the Douglases and the Crown. In an attempt to maintain control of the Douglas estates,

Margaret became embroiled in the political turmoil. A controversial marriage was planned between her and James Douglas, William's brother, who became the 9th Earl of Douglas. A papal dispensation was obtained for this union, signaling the political complexity of the situation, though the marriage's validity remains debated.

James, however, continued to rebel against King James II. This rebellion eventually led to the siege of Threave Castle, Margaret's stronghold. Legendary accounts suggest that the massive cannon "Mons Meg" was specifically built for this siege. Tales recount a devastating first shot that severed Margaret's hand and her wedding ring, a symbolic end to her union with James.

The rebellion ultimately failed, and the Douglas lands were forfeited to the Crown. Margaret, separated from James, was then married to John Stewart, 1st Earl of Atholl, half-brother to the King, a move perhaps intended to further weaken the Douglas influence. They had two daughters, Janet and Elizabeth, who went on to marry into other prominent Scottish families.

Legend also tells of King James II, captivated by Margaret's beauty, granting her Balvenie Castle for the annual rent of a single red rose. This poignant detail underscores the complex interplay of power, beauty, and tragedy that defined Margaret's life.

Margaret Douglas, the Fair Maid of

Galloway, navigated a treacherous political landscape, surviving violence and upheaval. Though her family's dominance was ultimately broken, her resilience and intelligence secured her future, leaving behind a legacy that continues to fascinate. Her story serves as a compelling reminder of the turbulent times and the enduring power of historical figures.



Mons Meg

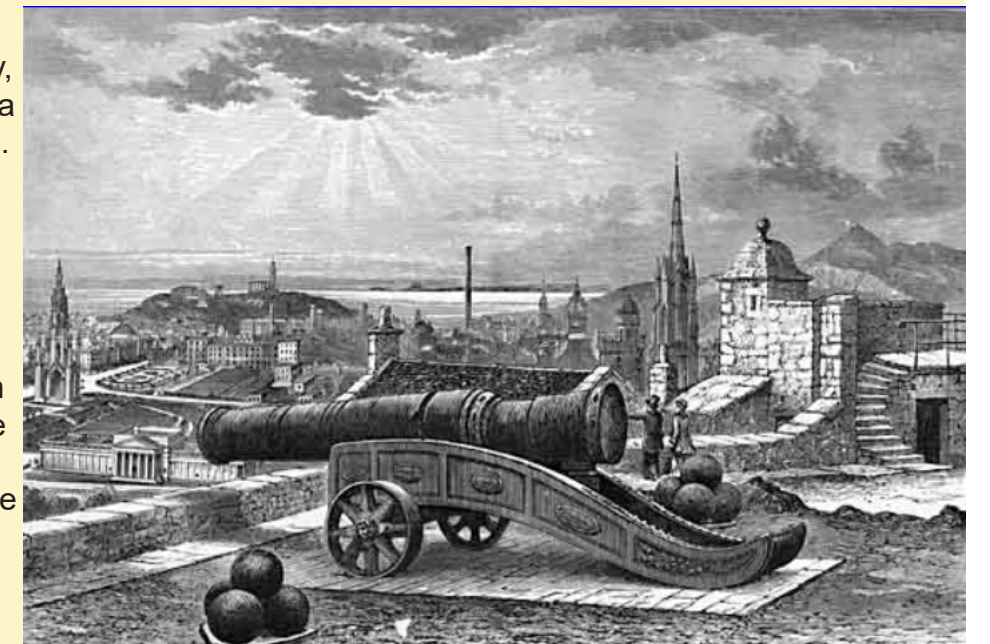
at Edinburgh Castle

Mons Meg was once seen as cutting edge military technology, the 13-ton siege gun could fire a 3cwt gunstone for up to 2 miles.

First used at Threave Castle, in 1460, James II had Mons Meg hauled 80km (50 miles) to the siege of Roxburgh Castle. This was no small task: even a team of oxen couldn't move her more than 5km (3 miles) a day. But the unlucky king was killed there when another of his cannons exploded.

King James IV put Mons Meg back in action, first to attack Dumbarton Castle and then Norham Castle. She ended her fighting days in King James V's navy, retiring around 1550.

Now on the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle, Mons Meg sits on four wheels.



The Irish slaves myth

The journey of Irish and British immigrants to the Americas was often one of hardship and forced relocation. In the 17th and 18th centuries, many arrived not by choice but through penal transportation or indentured servitude.

Long before Australia became the destination for Britain's convicts, North America served as London's primary penal colony.

Many were sent across the Atlantic as punishment for crimes or political dissent, while others found themselves bound into servitude, compelled to work for a set number of years to repay the cost of their passage.

Virginia alone saw an overwhelming number of its early colonists - up to 75% - arrive as servants, some having been kidnapped by unscrupulous recruiters eager to exploit the need for labour.

Over time, a false narrative emerged, conflating the experiences of these Irish indentured servants with the brutal hereditary chattel slavery endured by Africans brought to the Americas. Some white nationalists and those seeking to downplay the lasting impact of slavery on African Americans propagated the "Irish slaves" myth, using it to distort historical injustices and dismiss calls for racial equity.

In reality, historians Jerome S. Handler and Matthew C. Reilly have made clear that labeling Irish and other indentured servants

as "slaves" is misleading, if not entirely erroneous.

Unlike African slaves, who faced a lifetime of bondage passed down through generations, indentured servants had a contractual end to their servitude, however grueling their conditions may have been.

This myth, which emerged and spread widely through online discourse in the 1990s, also obscures Ireland's role in the transatlantic slave trade.



Irish merchants and financiers played their part in the economic systems that upheld slavery, yet such facts are often lost amid efforts to rewrite history.

The reality of colonial migration was complex, shaped by political maneuvering, economic necessity, and the harsh conditions of servitude—but it is vital to distinguish between different forms of oppression rather than falsely equating them.

Robert Douglas: A lost name in Scotland's shadowed servant trade

The tragic journey of a young boy from Aberdeen into the brutal world of forced labour in the 18th-century Atlantic

Robert Douglas remains an enigmatic figure within the tragic history of forced labour and servitude in the 18th century. Described only as "a poor lad," his arrival in Jamaica in June 1721 hints at a grim story of displacement and exploitation, though little else is known about his life. He was one of many Scottish youths who fell victim to the rampant trade in kidnapped servants—an illicit practice that saw hundreds of children and adults spirited away from Aberdeen and other parts of Scotland into indentured labour in Britain's American and Caribbean colonies.

The Atlantic servant trade of the time blended coercion and consent, with some individuals willingly signing indentures for passage, while others—like Douglas—were forcibly taken and sold into servitude. The realities of this system often mirrored outright slavery, with many bound for years under harsh conditions, subject to

mistreatment, meagre rations, and violent retribution for perceived infractions. Some, like Peter Williamson—abducted from Aberdeen in 1743—would later return to Scotland and expose the mechanisms behind this exploitative trade.



Williamson's lawsuits, though marred by questions about his credibility, unearthed extensive records that reconstruct Aberdeen's role in the broader transatlantic trade in servants. These sources illuminate how vulnerable individuals, including children, were preyed upon by merchants and magistrates who justified their actions as economic necessity or poor relief. Despite the legal facade of indentured servitude, many bound individuals—especially kidnapped children—lived under conditions indistinguishable from lifetime slavery.

Douglas's story is an example of the many lost narratives—those taken from their homeland, stripped of autonomy, and absorbed into the brutal colonial labour systems. While historical records preserve little of his fate, his name stands as a testament to the darker currents of Scotland's historical entanglement with Atlantic servitude.

We don't know what became of Robert, but we can assume that he had a hard life. However, there is also a possibility that he 'made good'. We just don't know.

Are the Douglasses a clan or a family?

The Douglasses are both a clan and a family!

Here's why:



Clan: The term "clan" (from the Gaelic "clanna," meaning "children") in a Scottish context refers to a close-knit tribal grouping settled in a particular territory, whose members historically owed loyalty to a chief. Clan Douglas fits this description as an ancient and powerful group from the Scottish Lowlands with recognized territories and a history of strong leadership. Even though they do not currently have a recognized chief by the Lord Lyon King of Arms, they are still considered a clan. They also have associated "septs" or allied families who are considered part of the wider clan.

Family: At its core, the Douglasses are a family, with a shared ancestry tracing back to the 12th century. The name itself became a hereditary surname, and the descendants of the early Douglasses formed a significant and influential family in Scottish history, branching out into various noble houses like the Black Douglasses and the Red Douglasses.

So, while they function as a clan with a shared heritage, traditions, and associated families, the Douglasses are fundamentally a large and historically significant family.

Comment:

Although Gaelic has been supplanted by English in the Lowlands of Scotland for nearly a thousand years, it is an acceptable convention to refer to the great Lowland families, like the Douglasses, as Clans, although the heads of certain families, such as Bruce, prefer not to use the term.



What are the Douglas Archives?

A digital collection of biographies, histories and genealogical records pertaining to the worldwide Douglas family.

The Douglas Archives seeks to preserve, protect and make widely known the enormous contribution that members of the Clan Douglas have made, and are still making, in politics, medicine, literature, music, sport, exploration and other forms of scientific endeavour, military campaigns and many other fields.

This is a digital archive and so we are not able to preserve manuscripts, artefacts, buildings or other tangible assets. It is regretful that there is no international clan centre that is able to do this. However, we recognise that the great Douglas families, the Dukes of Buccleuch and Hamilton, and the Earls of Home and Morton, do

much to protect their family heritage, and that the Museum in the village of Douglas, in Lanarkshire, also lays its part part.

The Douglas Archives ensures that the clan members' achievements are not forgotten in our collection of biographies and histories. It also promotes the continuing contribution of the extended Douglas family in these areas.

The Douglas Archives are, at the time of writing, a collection of 13,500+ files containing material, some still to be fully edited, from a wide variety of sources. New material is included almost daily, though not necessarily published immediately. The result is a dynamic archive of biographies, anecdotes and historical material about the Douglas family.

The Douglas Archives and A.I.



The Douglas Archives magazine aims to be a fascinating blend of history and innovation. To achieve this, I combine the power of Artificial Intelligence generated illustrations with the thoughtful transformation of historical texts into modern prose. Through AI capabilities, intricate visual interpretations breathe life into the past, while carefully updated writings preserve the essence of historical narratives in a way that resonates with contemporary readers.

This unique approach, I hope, bridges generations, making historical accounts more accessible, engaging, and visually captivating. Whether unveiling forgotten stories or re-imagining timeless tales, The Douglas Archives magazine offers a fresh perspective on history,

Clan Douglas and the founding of a nation



In 1787, the First Fleet set sail from Britain, embarking on a journey that would forever alter the course of history. Eleven small ships carried more than 1,480 men, women, and children—convicts, sailors, and free settlers—to the distant shores of Australia. This formidable undertaking, often likened to the challenge of colonising Mars today, was not only a test of endurance but a defining moment in the founding of modern Australia.

Among those aboard were individuals whose names and lineage connected them to Clan Douglas. Some

arrived as part of the military, wearing the uniforms of the British Navy and Marines. Others came unwillingly, bound in chains, forced to endure hardship in a foreign land. One such individual was William Douglas, a man whose fate was shaped by a single crime.

Convicted in Lincoln, England, in July 1785 for stealing a silver watch, Douglas was sentenced to seven years of transportation. He spent time on the *Justitia* hulk before boarding the *Alexander* in January 1787, arriving in Sydney a year

later as part of the First Fleet.

His journey was far from smooth—by December 1790, he had been ordered into a work gang after assaulting two seamen. But he persisted, carving out a life in the new colony. On 1 June 1788, under the name William Douglass, he married Mary Groves at St Philip's Church in Sydney.

By 1794, Douglas was granted 30 acres of land at Mulgrave Place, marking his first step toward independence. Over time, his circumstances shifted—his wife Mary disappears

from historical records after 1796, but Douglas continued to build a life, forming relationships with Sarah Bailey and later Eleanor Carthorne.

By 1828, he had settled with his son-in-law Daniel Jurd at Pitt Town and was making a living as a butcher.

Douglas's story is a small yet significant thread in the broader tapestry of Australia's founding. He exemplifies the resilience of those who, willingly or unwillingly, left their homeland to carve out a

new existence in unfamiliar territory. His journey - marked by survival, adaptation, and transformation - reflects the struggle and perseverance of the many who helped shape the early colony.

William Douglas died on 27 December 1838 at St Albans, leaving behind a legacy intertwined with the story of Australia's beginnings and the endurance of Clan Douglas across generations. From these challenging beginnings, many men and women affiliated with Clan

Douglas went on to become key figures in the development of modern Australia, shaping the nation from colonial times through to post-Federation.

Their contributions—whether in politics, industry, agriculture, or community leadership—left a lasting imprint on Australia's growth and identity.

As time moves on, their stories too will be shared here and recorded as part of our Clan history, ensuring their place in the rich tapestry of Australia's past.

Inspired by the Clan Douglas of Australia newsletter; 2017

"The Douglas Controversy"

Did William and Mary found a 'dynasty'?

It is highly debatable how many children William Douglas and Mary Groves, both First Fleet convicts, had; the number is hotly contested. The *Hawkesbury Pioneer Register* had named seven; they were George, John, Elizabeth b.1796, James b.1797, Thomas b.1804, William b.10th of June 1809 and Sarah b.1810. Described as "The Douglas Controversy" it appears totally unlikely that James, Thomas, William and Sarah were the offspring of Mary Groves and William Douglas.

Mary Groves and William Douglas had one daughter, Elizabeth, born on the 8th of February 1796; they had two sons, John born on the 9th of April 1793, who was buried in the grounds of St Phillip's Church of England, Sydney. The other son was Joseph (a twin to Elizabeth) born on the 8th of February 1796. Both boys died in infancy.

Elizabeth married Daniel Jurd, founding the 'Jurd Dynasty'.

Drumlanrig Castle



and the Douglas Family

The barony of Drumlanrig, which later became the seat of this family, was originally part of the extensive holdings of the powerful Douglas family. This is confirmed by a charter found in the Drumlanrig muniment room. In 1356, King David II of Scotland issued a new grant and confirmation to William, Lord Douglas, bestowing upon him all the lands, revenues, and possessions he held—whether by his own right or through inheritance from his uncle, James, Lord Douglas, or his father, Archibald de Douglas. This included the barony of Drumlanrig, along with all associated rights and privileges. The grant extended to Lord Douglas and his wife, Marguerite, the king's cousin, and had originally been given by Marguerite's brother, Thomas, Earl of Mar, on November 13th, in the twenty-eighth year of David II's reign.

This appears to be the earliest mention of the barony in any recorded charter, dating it to at least 1356. However, just a few years later, on May 28th, 1374, King Robert II issued a charter under the great seal, granting James Blair the lands of Corshoggyl (now known as Coshogle) within the barony.

Later, James, Earl of Douglas and Mar, conferred the barony upon his son, Sir William de Douglas, who became the first Baron of Drumlanrig. This grant, made in a charter without a recorded date but certainly before August 19th, 1388, transferred the entire barony of Drumlanrig—situated in Dumfriesshire—including its mills, woodlands, fisheries, and rights to jurisdiction, hunting, and hawking. The only right retained by Earl Douglas was regality, while all other privileges were freely given as a fee to Sir William and his legitimate heirs, under the condition of knightly service.

The charter was witnessed by several notable figures of the time, including Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway; James Douglas, Lord of Dalkeith; James Lindsay, Lord of Crawford; William Lindsay; Robert Colville; William Borthwick; Adam Forrester; Adam de Hoppringle; Alan de Laudrev; and many others.

The castle

Drumlanrig Castle likely served as the original manor-house of the barony, positioned at its

very edge, so close to the neighboring lands of Tybaris that an arrow could easily reach them. Over time, the Douglases expanded their estates, gradually making the surrounding landscape their own.

The exact origins of a residence on this site remain unclear, but it was likely established after Sir William Douglas acquired the barony in 1388. Built on a ridge overlooking the Marr Burn, the location provided sweeping views of the Nith Valley. Tradition suggests that two earlier structures stood here before the later castle, though no definitive records confirm this.

Remnants of the older castle still exist, particularly in the southeast corner, where the former dungeon—now a wine cellar—can be found. The present quadrangular structure, often attributed to Inigo Jones, was actually built between 1679 and 1689 under William, the first Duke of Queensberry. Though it resembles Heriot's Hospital in Edinburgh, there

is no solid evidence linking either building to Jones.

Construction followed a wooden model crafted by the master builder, Mr. Lukup, though the true origins of the design remain uncertain. Some believe Lukup may have created it, based on supposed foreign records, but no verifiable proof supports this claim.

An earlier reference to Drumlanrig Castle appears in a 1492 charter from James IV, marking its first recorded mention. The oldest dated stone found on-site, inscribed with "1645," further hints at its longstanding history. Later, Lady Catherine Hyde ordered a water diversion that created a dramatic cascade in view of the castle's grand rooms - an act some believed fulfilled an old prophecy. When Duke William died in 1810 without an heir, many saw this as confirmation that the prophecy had come true, with the estate passing to the Buccleuch family.

The Drumlanrig Archives

Drumlanrig Castle holds the private historical archives of the Montagu Douglas Scott family, the Dukes of Buccleuch and Queensberry, focusing on the Queensberry Estate in Dumfriesshire. These records include estate papers, rentals, maps, and family correspondence.

Public access to the Drumlanrig archives is generally limited due to their private nature. Researchers interested in this material should first explore the extensive Buccleuch collections held at the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh, which are publicly accessible. For potential limited



Image courtesy of Drumlanrig Castle

access to the Drumlanrig archives, direct inquiries can be made to the Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust, outlining the specific research project, although access is not guaranteed and subject to approval.



An 19thC painting of Drumlanrig by William Leighton Leitch R.I.

The Douglas family of Drumlanrig

1. **Sir William de Douglas**, the first Baron of Drumlanrig, was the son of James, Earl of Douglas and Mar, who was killed at the Battle of Otterburn on August 19, 1388. He received the barony of Drumlanrig as a grant from his father.

Sir William played a significant role in the political affairs of his time. In 1416, he was part of a commission, along with the Earl of Athole and other nobles, to negotiate with the English for the release of King James I, though the talks were unsuccessful. In 1420, when the English took King James to France in an attempt to sway Scottish troops fighting for the French, Sir William travelled to France to support his king. He was granted safe passage by the King of England—but with the peculiar condition that he would not act against the interests of either the English monarch or the King of France.

He was knighted at King James's coronation in 1424, and it is believed that he died at the Battle of Agincourt in 1427. Sir William married Elizabeth Stewart, daughter of Sir Robert Stewart of Durisdeer and Rosyth, and had at least one son, who inherited his title and lands.

2. **William Douglas**, heir to his father, was among the hostages sent to England in 1427 to secure the release of King James I. He later gained recognition for his role in the Battle of Sark in 1448, where the English suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of Earl Douglas and Hugh, Earl of Ormond.

Despite a royal mandate issued on June 7, 1451, William, Earl Douglas, his superior, refused to formally acknowledge him. A notarial protocol recording the Baron's protest against this decision remains among the historical documents of

Drumlanrig.

William Douglas died in 1458. He was married to Janet, daughter of Sir Herbert Maxwell of Caerlaverock, and was survived by their son.

3. **William Douglas of Drumlanrig**, who distinguished himself at the siege of Roxburgh, where James II was killed in 1460. He was also present in 1463 at Alnwick, where the French garrison was relieved by the Earl of Angus. He died in 1464, leaving by his wife Margaret, daughter of Sir William Carlyle of Torthorwald, a son.

4. **Sir William Douglas** was killed while serving in the Royal army during the battle against the Duke of Albany and the Earl of Douglas near Lochmaben on July 22, 1484.

On June 7, 1482, King James III issued a charter in Sir William's name, granting lands upon his resignation. The charter extended rights to his wife, Elizabeth Crichton, and their heirs. If they had no direct heirs, the lands would pass to his broader family. These lands—Nether Dalpeder, Glennyn, and several other parts of the Barony of Drumlanrig—were now held directly under the Crown, rather than Earl Douglas.

Sir William married Elizabeth Crichton, the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Crichton of Sanquhar. They had several children, including James; Archibald, who became the ancestor of the Douglasses of Coshogle; George, ancestor of the Douglasses of Penzerie; and John, who served as vicar of Kirkconnel. His daughters also made notable marriages - Margaret wed John, 2nd Lord Cathcart; Janet married William, Master of Somerville, and later Sir Alexander Gordon of Lochinvar; and Elizabeth married the son and heir of James Campbell of Wester Loudon.

5. **James Douglas** married Janet, the eldest daughter of Sir David Scott, in 1470. Sir David was an ancestor of the Duke of Buccleuch.

In a document dated September 1, 1490, Grierson of Kepanoch granted James a letter of reversion regarding a portion of land in the Drumlanrig barony, which had been pledged to Kepanoch as security for a payment of £20 Scots.

James Douglas died in 1498, leaving behind a daughter, Janet, who married Robert Grierson of Lag, and a son.

6. **Sir William Douglas** was killed at the Battle of Flodden on September 9, 1513. In 1508, he assisted Lord Maxwell in expelling Lord Sanquhar, the Sheriff of Nithsdale, from Dumfries, where he governed in the king's name. He was later tried in Edinburgh on September 30, 1512, alongside John Fergusson of Craigdarroch and his son Thomas, but all were acquitted.

On June 4, 1509, Sir William entered into an agreement strengthening his ties with the Maxwells. John Maxwell had pledged that his son, Sir Robert Maxwell, would marry Sir William's daughter, Janet. In return, Sir Robert and Janet, along with their heirs, were to be granted lands in Renfrew and Caerlaverock, including Hesildene, Tydwood, Humby, Glencapil, Glenhowane, and Langside—totaling 50 merklands. Sir William, in turn, agreed to pay Lord Maxwell £1,000 under the terms of the bond.

Sir William married Elizabeth Gordon, daughter of Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar. He had two sons—James, who succeeded him, and Robert, who served as Provost of Lincluden and Collector-General of the Superplus of the Teinds in Scotland.

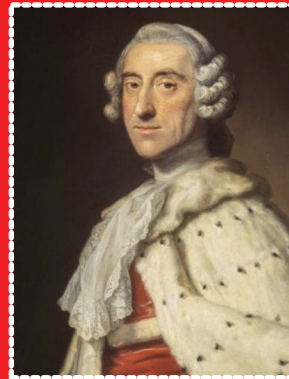
7. **Sir James Douglas**, the future Laird of Drumlanrig, first appears on record in September 1518. A "manrent bond" shows him becoming a loyal retainer of Lord Robert Maxwell. This was a standard feudal agreement, where Douglas pledged lifelong service in peace and war, with the key exception of his allegiance to the King. He promised his best advice and secrecy to Maxwell and vowed to protect him from harm.

Later, in 1526, Sir James sided with Sir Walter Scott of Branxholm in a failed attempt to free James V from the Earl of Angus. By 1543, however, he had joined Angus's faction. The turbulent era saw him caught between various powerful lords, as evidenced by a letter from Angus in 1547-48 concerning a potential attack on Drumlanrig. Despite these shifting alliances, his lands were plundered in 1549. In 1552, he served as a commissioner to settle border disputes with England. Knighted in 1553, he became the respected guardian of the western marches for many years. He was also a signatory to the First Book of

other named Douglas relatives.

He married Mary, daughter of Lord Fleming, and they had four sons and two daughters. His eldest son, William, faced accusations in 1611 of unlawfully imprisoning William Kirkpatrick. However, Kirkpatrick himself stated he was treated well and had freedom at Drumlanrig, leading to William's exoneration. Sir James's other sons were James of Mousewald, David of Ardoch, and George of Pinzierie. His daughters married into the Livingston and Menzies families.

9. **Sir William Douglas**, succeeding his father in 1615, hosted James VI in 1617



L-R
 William Douglas, 1st
 Duke of Queensberry
 James Douglas, 2nd
 Duke of Queensberry
 Charles Douglas, 3rd
 Duke of Queensberry

Discipline in 1561 and opposed Mary, Queen of Scots, after her capture in 1567, even intervening to save a rival's house from destruction.

8. **Sir James Douglas** the younger took over in 1578 and actively worked to quell border unrest. He died in October 1615. In 1593, he formed an alliance with Robert Maxwell of Castlemilk and Thomas Kirkpatrick of Closeburn to enforce a royal order against Sir James Johnstoun of Dunskeillie. Two years later, he joined Lord Hay in a raid into Annandale, seizing significant goods.

Reflecting a family concern about the inheritance, Sir James reinforced the line of succession in 1604 with another entail. This ensured the property would pass to his male heirs, and if none existed, then to

and was ennobled by Charles I as Viscount of Drumlanrig in 1628. In 1633, he was elevated to the Earl of Queensberry. A 1636 charter consolidated his lands into the Earldom of Queensberry and Lordship of Drumlanrig. He married Isobel, daughter of the Earl of Lothian, fathering James (his heir), William, Archibald, Margaret (married to the Earl of Hartfell), and Janet (married to Lord Kirkcudbright). He died in 1640.

10. His son, **James, the second Earl**, inherited in 1640 and supported Charles I during the Civil Wars. In 1645, en route to join Montrose, he was captured and heavily fined. Drumlanrig was attacked in 1650 by Parliamentarian forces, including Sir George Maxwell of Pollok, resulting in damage and losses for tenants. In 1661, the Earl sought redress from Parliament, leading to a demand for £2000 sterling

from those involved. He was later fined by Cromwell and died in 1671.

Correspondence from 1661 reveals the Earl's pursuit of compensation from individuals involved in the 1650 attack, including a letter to Sir George Maxwell requesting his presence in Edinburgh for an amicable settlement. Maxwell, through his father-in-law Sir Archibald Stewart, denied involvement. Despite this, Maxwell was later assessed £1044 9s. Scots for damages. A list from 1662 names numerous individuals, including prominent figures and Glasgow merchants, who allegedly participated in the attack. The Earl's actions to seek compensation are understandable given his own Royalist losses.

11. **William, the third Earl of Queensberry**, was born in 1637. In 1667, he was appointed to the Privy Council under King Charles II. After Sir George Mackenzie's removal, William became Justice-General on June 1, 1680. Six months later, he was promoted to Lord High Treasurer of Scotland and Governor of Edinburgh Castle. On November 3, 1684, he was further elevated to the title of Duke of Queensberry, along with additional honors including Marquis of Dumfriesshire and Earl of Drumlanrig and Sanquhar.

His influence continued

under King James II, who named him Lord High Commissioner in the first Parliament session of 1685. That same year, William and James, Earl of Drumlanrig, were appointed Lords-Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire, Kirkcudbright, and Wigtown. However, when James II made moves to restore papal authority and repeal penal laws against Catholicism, William distanced himself, refusing to support such policies. As a result, he lost all his official positions and withdrew from public life. He spent his later years overseeing the construction of Drumlanrig Castle.

He married Isobel, daughter of William, Marquis of Douglas. Together, they had several children: James, his heir; William, who became Earl of March; Lord George, a promising young nobleman who died in 1693; and a daughter, Anne, who married David, Earl of Wemyss. William died in Edinburgh on March 28, 1695.

12. **James, second Duke of Queensberry**, was born on December 18, 1662. After studying at the University of Glasgow, he traveled across Europe. On his return in 1684, Charles II appointed him to the Privy Council and made him Lieutenant-Colonel of a cavalry regiment under Lieutenant-General Graham, known as Claverhouse. He held these

From the top:
 Henry, 3rd Duke of Buccleuch and 5th
 Duke of Queensberry
 William, 6th Duke of Buccleuch and
 8th Duke of Queensberry
 Richard Montagu Douglas Scott, 10th
 Duke of Buccleuch and 12th Duke of
 Queensberry



positions until 1688 when he distanced himself from King James II due to political disagreements.

He later supported William of Orange and was appointed Colonel of the Scots Horse Guards and a Privy Councillor. Following his father's death, he became Lord Privy Seal and an extraordinary Lord of Session. Under Queen Anne, he served as Secretary of State and played a key role in the 1707 Union of Scotland and England. In recognition, he was made Baron Ripon, Marquis of Beverley, and Duke of Dover.

He married Lady Mary Boyle, daughter of Charles, Lord Clifford, and had four sons and three daughters. His son Charles was created Earl of Solway in 1707. Lady Jane married Francis, Duke of Buccleuch, while Lady Ann wed William Finch, the king's envoy at The Hague. James died on July 6, 1711, and was buried at Durisdeer.

13. **Charles, third Duke of Queensberry**, was born in Edinburgh on November 24, 1698. In 1720, he was appointed Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King George I, later serving in the same role for Frederick, Prince of Wales, in 1758.

He married Lady Catherine Hyde, daughter of Henry, Earl of Clarendon and Rochester, in 1720. They had a daughter, Catherine, who died young, and two sons. Henry, Earl of Drumlanrig, born on October 30, 1722, married Lady Elizabeth Hope, daughter of the Earl of Hopetoun, on July 10, 1754. He died just months later on October 20, 1754, when his pistol accidentally discharged while traveling from Scotland to London. His younger brother, Lord Charles, born on July 17, 1726, represented Dumfries from 1747 to 1754. After Henry's death, Charles inherited the title of Earl of Drumlanrig but had to vacate his parliamentary seat due to his status as the eldest son of a Scots peer.

14. **William, third Earl of March and Ruglen**, was born on December 16, 1725, and became the fourth Duke and Marquis of Queensberry in 1778. He died unmarried on



Kitty Queensberry - Charles Douglas, 3rd Duke of Queensberry, married Lady Catherine Hyde, daughter of Henry, Earl of Clarendon and Rochester, in 1720.

December 23, 1810, leading to the extinction of some of his titles. The Earldom of March passed to the Earl of Wemyss, while the Dukedom of Queensberry went to Henry, third Duke of Buccleuch, as the heir of line. However, the Marquisate of Queensberry and several related titles, entailed by earlier patents, passed to Sir Charles Douglas, Bart., the nearest heir-male.

Upon Duke William's death, the entail created by Duke James in 1706 was reviewed, and it became clear that the

Dukedom and higher titles had to be separated from the Marquisate. Despite Duke James likely intending to retain all his honours for his new heirs, ambiguous wording in the deed of resignation prevented this.

In a legal decision from 1812, the Marquisate and related titles remained with the original heirs, even though other dignities had been resigned and regranted. The Buccleuch family inherited the Dukedom, but the Marquis of Queensberry retained a significant portion of the old Queensberry estate, valued at over £13,000 per year.

15. **Henry, third Duke of Buccleuch**, was born on September 13, 1746. In 1751, he inherited his grandfather's title and later succeeded, through his grandmother's lineage, to the titles of Duke of Queensberry, Marquis of Dumfriesshire, Earl of Drumlanrig and Sanquhar, Viscount of Nith, Torthorwald, and Ross, as well as Lord Douglas of Kinmount, Middlebie, and Dornock.

On May 2, 1767, he married Lady Elizabeth Montague, the only daughter—and eventually sole heir—of John, Duke of Montague.

16. **Charles William Henry**, the eldest surviving son, was born on May 24, 1772. On January 11, 1812, he inherited the titles of fourth Duke of Buccleuch and sixth Duke of Queensberry.

In 1795, he married the Hon. Harriet Katherine Townshend, daughter of the first Viscount Sidney. Together, they had several children, including the current Duke at the time, two more sons, and six daughters.

Charles William Henry died on June 20, 1819.

17. **Walter Francis Montague Douglas Scott, fifth Duke of Buccleuch and seventh Duke of Queensberry**, was born

on November 25, 1806. He inherited his titles while still a minor and was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, earning his M.A. in 1827. Known for his integrity and vast wealth, he became one of the most influential figures in Scottish nobility, surpassing even the authority of his ancestor, Duke James of Queensberry.

He held several prestigious roles, including High Steward of Westminster, Governor of the Charterhouse, Lord-Lieutenant of Midlothian and Roxburghshire, and Captain of the Queen's Bodyguard in Scotland. In Sir Robert Peel's administration (1842–1846), he served as Lord Privy Seal and Lord President of the Council. A strong advocate for agricultural development, he invested heavily in improving his estates. He was also a patron of the arts and literature and received an honorary Doctor of Civil Law (D.C.L.) degree from Oxford University.

In 1829, he married Lady Charlotte Anne Thynne, daughter of Thomas, second Marquis of Bath. They had several children, including William Henry Walter Montagu Douglas Scott, 6th Duke of Buccleuch (born 9 September 1831, died 5 November 1914), succeeded and was the father of the 7th Duke of Buccleuch, and Lord Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott Montagu, 1st Baron Montagu of Beaulieu (born 5 November 1832, died 4 November 1905)

18. **John Charles Montagu Douglas Scott, 7th Duke of Buccleuch and 9th Duke of Queensberry**, was born on March 30, 1864. The second of eight children of William Montagu Douglas Scott, 6th Duke of Buccleuch, and Lady Louisa Hamilton, he became heir after his elder brother, Walter Henry, Earl of Dalkeith, died in a hunting accident at the age of 25. He was a direct male-line descendant of Charles II.

In 1881, Buccleuch served as a Midshipman in the Royal Navy aboard HMS Bacchante alongside Prince Albert

Victor, Duke of Clarence, and Prince George of Wales, later George V. He was promoted to Lieutenant in September 1883.

Buccleuch had a distinguished political and military career. He represented Roxburghshire as a Conservative MP from 1895 to 1906 and held several local government roles, including Deputy Lieutenant of Edinburgh (1886) and Dumfriesshire (1887), Justice of the Peace for Selkirk and Roxburghshire, and Vice Lord Lieutenant of Selkirk (1893). In 1915, he was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire, a role he held until his death in 1935. From 1926 to 1935, he served as Lord Clerk Register for Scotland.

19. Walter John Montagu Douglas Scott, 8th Duke of Buccleuch and 10th Duke of Queensberry, was born on December 30, 1894. He was the son of John Montagu Douglas Scott, 7th Duke of Buccleuch, and Lady Margaret Bridgeman. His sister, Alice, married Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, in 1935, joining the British Royal Family.

Educated at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford, he later commanded the 4th King's Own Scottish Borderers and served as Captain-General of the Royal Company of Archers. As Earl of Dalkeith, he was MP for Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire (1923–1935)

before inheriting his father's titles. He was forced to resign as Lord Steward by King George VI due to perceived pro-German sympathies during World War II.

Scott was criticized for his opposition to Honduran forestry workers in Scotland during the war. He married Vreda Lascelles in 1921, and they had three children: Lady Elizabeth, John, 9th Duke of Buccleuch, and Lady Caroline. He died on October 4, 1973, and was buried at Melrose Abbey.

20. Walter Francis John Montagu Douglas Scott, 9th Duke of Buccleuch and 11th Duke of Queensberry, was born on September 28, 1923. The son of Walter Montagu Douglas Scott, 8th Duke of Buccleuch, and Mary Lascelles, he was

known as John and educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford.

During World War II, he joined the Royal Navy in 1942, later serving as a lieutenant commander in the Royal Naval Reserve. After the war, he entered politics, becoming a Conservative MP for Edinburgh North from 1960 to 1973. He held various parliamentary roles, including PPS to the Secretary of State for Scotland. In 1971, he suffered a severe hunting accident, leaving him paralyzed, and he became a prominent advocate for disability issues.

Upon inheriting the Dukedom in 1973, he sat in the House of Lords until the removal of hereditary peers in 1999. He married Jane McNeill in 1953, and they



Douglas Clan Gathering at Drumlanrig - 5th July 2014
Hosted by the Duke of Buccleuch



A castle guide before the family portrait of Charles, 3rd Duke of Queensberry, with his wife, Catherine Hyde, and their sons, Henry, Earl of Drumlanrig, and Lord Charles Douglas.

had four children, including Richard, 10th Duke of Buccleuch. In 2003, Leonardo da Vinci's Madonna with the Yarnwinder was stolen from Drumlanrig Castle but recovered in 2007, a month after his death on September 4. He was buried at Melrose Abbey.

21. Richard Walter John Montagu Douglas Scott, 10th Duke of Buccleuch and 12th Duke of Queensberry, was born on February 14, 1954. A descendant of James, Duke of Monmouth, he inherited his father's titles in 2007. He was Scotland's largest

private landowner until surpassed by Anders Holch Povlsen. In 2023, he was appointed Chancellor of the Order of the Thistle by King Charles III.

Educated at Eton and Oxford, he briefly worked in finance before serving on the Millennium Commission. He was Knighted (KBE) for his contributions and later became President of the National Trust for Scotland. He held roles in several heritage organizations and military honorary positions.

His estates include Boughton House, Drumlanrig Castle, and

Bowhill House. In 1981, he married Lady Elizabeth Kerr, daughter of the 12th Marquess of Lothian, and they had four children. His wife died in 2023.

He participated in the coronation of King Charles III and remains an influential figure in Scottish nobility and heritage.

This article is based on the work of Crauford Tait Ramage, *Drumlanrig Castle and the Douglases*, published in 1875.

The Ruthless Ambition of Sir James Douglas: Betrayal, Power, and a Ghost That Will Not Rest

Sir James Douglas of Drumlanrig was a man of power, ambition, and unyielding control. When Simon Carruthers perished in a brutal Border raid, James saw not two orphaned girls, but an opportunity—a chance to seize their inheritance and weave it into his own dominion.

In the cold halls of Drumlanrig, Janet and Marion Carruthers were not treated as wards to be protected, but as pieces on a chessboard, their freedom stripped away as James tightened his grip. Their uncle and kin fought for their release, pleading with the Lords of Counsel, but James held them fast, barring them from the world beyond his walls.

Janet, timid and weary of fighting, bowed to his will. She accepted the husband James had chosen, signed away her lands, and faded into quiet submission. But Marion—Marion was different. She was fierce, unbreakable, unwilling to surrender to the man who sought to claim her life.

James could not allow this rebellion. He confined her, watched her, and when she sought refuge with her allies, he dragged her before Queen Mary, demanding she comply. But Marion resisted. Even as her own sister stood against her, even as every path to freedom was closed, she fought.

And then — she fell.

The stones of Comlongon Castle bore witness to that final act. Did she leap, broken and



beaten, at last surrendering to the despair that had shadowed her life? Or did James, desperate to end her defiance, ensure that she would never rise again?

The Crown ruled it a suicide. Her lands fell into the hands of the Douglas family, sealing James's victory. Yet history does not forget, and neither does the restless spirit of Marion Carruthers. They say she still walks the castle halls, filled with grief, filled with fury. And should the name of Sir James Douglas of Drumlanrig be uttered within those walls, the air turns bitter, her sorrow unrelenting.

Power had been his prize—but his legacy remained stained with the ghost of the girl who refused to yield.

Exiled by the Lowland Clearances: How Clan Douglas Carried Their Legacy Across the Sea

The Lowland Clearances (1760s–1830s) profoundly affected the members of Clan Douglas, forcing many to abandon their ancestral homes and seek new beginnings across the sea. As the Scottish Agricultural Revolution reshaped farming practices in Lowland Scotland, longstanding traditions were uprooted, leaving families—once deeply connected to the land—displaced and uncertain of their future.

Many Douglas families, once tenant farmers and cottars, found themselves priced out of the lands they had cultivated for generations. The commercialization of farmland led to auctions where only the wealthiest could afford the rising rents. Traditional farming communities dissolved as agricultural methods changed, replacing part-time labourers with full-time workers housed in growing industrial villages. Some Douglases adapted to the new landscape, taking work in the bustling cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Others saw no path forward but to leave Scotland altogether.

For those who sought a future beyond the borders of their homeland, Ireland and America became destinations of hope and hardship alike. In Ireland, some Douglas families settled in Ulster, their Scottish heritage entwining with the complex history of the Irish land. Others boarded ships bound for the American colonies, chasing the promise of land and opportunity in the vast, untamed territories across the Atlantic. But exile came with its own trials—new climates, unfamiliar customs, and the painful knowledge that the land they had once known was lost to them forever. Historians today recognize the Scottish



Agricultural Revolution as the force that drove countless families, including the Douglases, from their traditional way of life. The once-common runrig system, which had sustained farmers by periodically redistributing land among families, became obsolete. The fertile acres that had once sustained communities were consolidated into large farms, pushing families out and changing the face of Lowland Scotland forever.

Yet the Douglas name endured. Across Ireland, America, and beyond, those who carried it built new lives, their hearts still tethered to the hills and valleys of Scotland. Though their homes were lost, their legacy remained, passed down through generations of immigrants who carried the spirit of the Clan with them, no matter where they settled.

Archibald Douglas: The Intrigues, Jewels, and Financial Woes of a Renaissance Schemer

Mary, Queen of Scots, a tragic figure from the start, inherited the Scottish throne at just six days old in 1542. Raised in France and briefly Queen consort there, the devout Catholic Mary returned to a Scotland wary of her faith and ruled by her cousin, the formidable Queen Elizabeth I of England.

Her ill-fated marriage to Lord Darnley produced her only son, James VI (later James I of England), but their relationship ended violently with Darnley's murder in 1567.

Mary's subsequent marriage to the suspected orchestrator, Lord Bothwell, sparked rebellion, forcing her abdication and a desperate flight to England, seeking Elizabeth's protection. Instead, she found herself a prisoner for years, ultimately facing execution at Fotheringhay Castle.



Mary, Queen of Scots
Image courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London

Centuries later, the discovery of a gold ring at Fotheringhay's ruins offered a poignant connection to this tumultuous period. Believed to be Mary's wedding ring to Darnley, its intertwined "M" and "H" initials and Scottish Royal Arms whispered of a fleeting union.

Today, this beautiful artifact resides in London's V&A Museum, a tangible link to a queen whose story continues to captivate. Commemorative silver replicas now circulate, ensuring her legacy sparks new

conversations about Scotland's dramatic past.

Meanwhile, another figure navigated the treacherous currents of Mary's era and beyond: Archibald Douglas, the intriguing Parson of Douglas. Not only was Archibald Douglas Parson of Douglas and of Glasgow, but he also held the titles of Senator of the College of Justice and Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth I of England. Renowned as a master of intrigue, his life was riddled with plots, financial struggles, and dealings

The Darnley Rings



This gold signet ring was reportedly discovered in the ruins of Fotheringhay Castle in 1820. It was exhibited in Salisbury in 1849 and later acquired by ring collector Edmund Waterton by 1857. Facing financial struggles, Waterton sold his collection to the Museum in 1871.

Initially, the ring was believed to be the wedding ring of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Henry, Lord Darnley. It features the initials H



and M with a lover's knot, while the back bears a rampant lion, crown, and the inscription Henry L. Darnley, 1565.

Its authenticity remained unquestioned until the Jewellery Gallery Summary Catalogue (V&A, 1982) proposed that the inscription might have been added later. Interest in Mary grew in the early 19th century, fueled by Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels and George IV's 1822 state visit.

involving precious jewels.

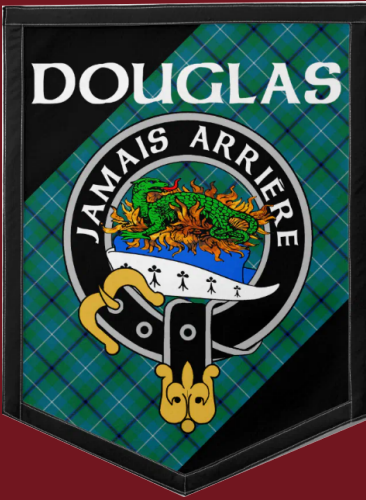
He was once considered a key player in English plots to control Edinburgh Castle. However, these negotiations led to Archibald's imprisonment in Dumbarton Castle. He even held Mary's wedding ring for a time. Records show him selling Mary's jewels for significant sums in London.

Despite promises of support from Queen Elizabeth I, Archibald's finances remained precarious, leading to further dealings with

precious stones.

Later in life, his letters reveal a talent for using anecdotes about rings – one real, one possibly fabricated – to undermine his political rivals, exposing alleged deceit and damaged reputations within the royal circles.

These tales of counterfeit gems and pawned gifts offer a glimpse into the murky world of Renaissance politics, where trust was a rare commodity and even the smallest trinket could carry significant weight.



Carrying a Clan Douglas banner in the grand parade at a clan gathering is a proud display of heritage and unity. Tartans wave, pipes echo, and clansmen walk together, honouring tradition. The procession leads to speeches and celebrations, strengthening bonds and paying tribute to ancestral legacy. It's a moment of pride and connection, rooted in Scotland's rich history.



Clan Douglas pennants are available to purchase on [Zazzle.com](https://www.zazzle.com)

Project to Commemorate The Good Sir James



James Douglas, born at Douglas Castle and knighted by Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn, played a pivotal role in Scotland's fight for independence.

After his father died in English captivity, Douglas lost his inheritance. Seeking allies, he joined Bruce in 1306, enduring hardship and proving himself a fearless warrior. In 1307, he retook Douglas Castle but destroyed it to deny the English its use—an act known as "Douglas' Larder." His guerrilla tactics and relentless raids earned him the fearsome name "The Black Douglas."

At Bannockburn in 1314, he led troops alongside Walter Stewart, helping secure vic-

tory. He continued raiding English-held lands, capturing Berwick in 1318.

In 1329, the dying Bruce asked Douglas to carry his embalmed heart to Jerusalem. En route, Douglas fought in Spain and, facing overwhelming odds, hurled the heart into battle, vowing to follow or die. He fell in 1330. His remains returned to Scotland, while Bruce's heart was buried at Melrose Abbey.

Now, Douglas village seeks to commemorate Sir James with a memorial. Design proposals and fundraising efforts will follow, with expectations to raise a six-figure sum to honour this legendary warrior properly.

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