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de Galloway, Fergus , King, 1st Lord of Galloway

GRAMPS ID

I0948

Birth Name

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Gender

male

Events

Birth

1096 at [Carrick, Ayrshire, Scotland](#) 1

Death

1161 at [Abbey of Holyrood, Edinburgh, Scotland](#) 1

Burial

[Abbey of Holyrood, Edinburgh, Scotland](#) 1

Families

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[Beauclerc, Elizabeth , Princess of England \[I0949\]](#)

Marriage

1124 at [Carrick, Ayrshire, Scotland](#) 1

Children

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[de Galloway, Margaret \[I0953\]](#)

Narrative

The Lords of Galloway

Prince Fergus de Galloway (born 1096) was a contemporary and close relative of King Somerled [King of the Isles and Man], both being direct descendants through Godfraidh (Godfrey) mac Fergus, Lord of the Isles who died in 853 A.D. Some other sources list Prince Fergus as a son of Olave the Red, King of Man and father-in-law of King Somerled, making Fergus not only Somerled's cousin through his grandfather Gilledomnan "Gilli") but also his brother-in-law through Somerled's wife Ragnhildis, the daughter of King Olave the Red. The MacDowalls of Galloway are the senior descendants in the male line of the princely house of Fergus, first of the ancient Lords

of Galloway and the Rulers of Cumbria who maintained native leadership adopting Normanization under King David I of Scotland (1124-1153). Today the family is known as the MacDowalls. The Chief of the MacDowalls of Garthland (senior stirp) holds the title as Baron of Garthland and Castlesemple.

Galloway is an ancient division of the southwestern corner of Scotland. Galloway was to the Gaelic speaker, the land of the "Gall" (stranger), where the old Pictish language was spoken. The name Galloway persisted as the Gaelic people came across from Ireland displacing the earlier inhabitants, mostly local tribes, Anglo-Saxon invaders and Norse settlers. The Rinn of Galloway and the coast of Northern Ireland are only 18 miles apart. The two areas shared a mutual language and celtic culture for centuries. Galloway still remains a pastoral land, lonely and uncultivated in many areas. Gallowegians or (Gallovidans) have always considered themselves a race apart and are fiercely independent to this day. They are the legendary "Wild Scots" of Galloway and are known in history as being fierce warriors.

-- From [Eire, the Isles, Alba and Galloway](#), COPYRIGHT © 2000 Leo B. McDowell

King of Gall-Ghaidhil (Galloway)

King Fergus, 1st Lord of Galloway, married Princess Elizabeth of England (b. 1095 at Talby, Yorkshire, England; d. Bef. May 12, 1161 in Scotland) in 1124 in Carrick, Ayrshire, Scotland. Elizabeth was the daughter of King Henry I (Beauclerc) of England, and granddaughter of King William I (The Conqueror).

Origins of Prince Fergus

By Dr. Fergus Day Hort Macdowall of Garthland

From the establishment of the nation of Scotland by King Kenneth I (MacAlpin) with the help of Galloway in 843 until 1096 when our first recognized ancestor Fergus of Galloway was born, clear conclusions are "practically impossible" about the history of Galloway and its engulfing Strathclyde and Western Isles. the time was characterized by Gaelic (Irish) settlement but Viking rule in greater pre-Galloway, the bounds of which sometimes extended over the Western half of the Lowlands of modern Scotland. As Pictavia (Cruithintuath) then Albania and later Scotia, early Scotland initially contained neither the Lowlands nor the Northern Islands (the Orkneys and Shetlands, with Caithness and Sutherland) nor the Western Isles ("Sudreys" in Norse or "Innse Gall" in Gaelic). These islands and proximal mainland were dominated by the Norse (Norwegian "Finn gall" or white strangers) cadre of Vikings. The ruling Viking Northmen in Galloway, however, were alternately Norse, Danes, and Norse. Under them Galloway "was a

power with which the kingdom founded by Kenneth, and the kingdom of the Northern English, always had to reckon".

An influx of Irish under Rueda (Riata) had returned with Scots of Galloway in support of Kenneth's northward war of succession. These Cruithne (pronounced Greenie), which means Pict but here refers to old Ulster Irish of the same stock (perhaps driven across by the Romans), continued to populate Galloway. They were "fierce, ignorant and barbarically wild with a jurisprudence of ancient custom exercised locally by the hereditary Brehon (judge) on what later became baronial Mote-hills. The Irish and Scots law of tanistry called for the best qualified successor in the Chiefly family, and Brehon law required male ownership of and succession to land. The politics as in Ireland were tribal. Each tribe or "tuath" in Ireland or "cenel" (Cinel) among Scots was governed by an ordained, semi-sacred "king" chosen from the patriarchal family of the cenel, and this was not disrupted by invasion or conquest by outsiders. One of the several kings in a region was the "ruiri" or overking; and within a province such as Galloway these were subject to a sovereign called an "ollam ri" which made Galwegians compatible with overlordship by the Norse, Danes, and others. The arrangement still allowed the Scottish monarchy to occasionally assume a fourth tier of government corresponding to a "high king" in Ireland.

Initially, the alliance of the Norse with Kenneth I was evident among the honors given to Galloway for its assistance in the recovery of Scottish Dalriada and the crown of Pictavia from the Picts. Kenneth macAlpin gave his daughter, "a Galloway lass both by birth and kindred", to Olaf (Olave) a Norse chief of Galloway, who not long after was seated on the throne of Dublin by the assistance of the Galwegians. Olaf later captured Dumbarton in his unsuccessful claim to the Scottish throne when Kenneth died in 860.

The Danes invaded Galloway and Strathclyde to its North and East from Dublin in 870 and from Northumberland in 875. As a result of pressures by Danes, Saxons and Scots, a mass exodus to Wales was made by many of the Britons of the kingdom of Strathclyde which had included Galloway from the 6th century but was still separate from Cumberland South of the Solway. Further colonization of Galloway by Cruithne and Scots from the West probably succeeded these Cymric (Welsh) Celts. Another major event occurred in 937 when Aethelstan king of Saxons defeated a combined army of Danes, Scots under Constantine, Britons and Galwegians at Brunanburh in Dumfriesshire to reclaim Northumberland and Cumberland. In 975, however, Kenneth III of Alban (971-995) conquered and terminated the kingdom of Strathclyde under King Dunwallon (d. 974) and became nominal sovereign (high king) of Galloway as well. The possibility that Galloway had a separate king "Jacobus" in 973 was refuted by M'Kerlie, but the Danes were still there.

Occupation of all or part of Galloway and also the Western Isles by the Danes of Dublin ended in 989 with the death of Godred king of Man. He was Gofraigh macArait, the Danish king of Innse Gall in Dalriada according to the Ulster Annals or in the "Dali" of the Nials Saga. The Norse Earl Sigurd II then asserted dominion over the Western Isles together with the entire Western half of Scotland. Danes who had been displaced from

Northumbria westward as far as Galloway by the temporarily revived Angles and Saxons attempted to recoup under their king, Earl (or "Duke" in British accounts) Ronald the Dane of Galloway. He and his brother Sihtic retook Northumbria, but they unsuccessfully opposed Constantine III (995-997) who again nominally incorporated Galloway into Albany.

Malcolm II (1005-1034) consolidated the kingdom of Scotia which was a third of modern Scotland, the Southeastern Highlands from the Forth to the Tay. He avoided conflict with the powerful Sigurd who held increasing sway over Galloway. In the Eastern Lowlands Malcolm acquired Lothian (Lothian) by defeating the Northumbrians at the battle of Carham in 1018. Malcolm did this with the assistance of Owen Galvus the last sub-king of Cumbria, who was also known as Eugenius or Eogan the Bald and died in the battle or shortly after it. "There is a considerable probability that Owen Galvus son of Domnall of Malcolm's royal house was descended from Strathclyde's king Dunwallon (the British form of the Irish Dovenal, Donal or Dowall) and the epithet Galvus may be considered as establishing a kind of connection with Galloway". From the Scotian view Cumbria included the ancient Strathclyde which had apparently lapsed to Sigurd's control as an extended Galloway.

Sigurd (II, "The Stout", Earl of Orkney) was allied to Scotland by marriage in 1008 to Bethoc, a daughter of Malcolm II and his Irish wife, by whom Sigurd's son Thorfinn "The Skullsplitter" was born in 1008. Sigurd was overlord of Galloway which was governed for him by Jarl Melkoff (Earl Malcolm, a Gaelic overking) probably from Craggerton Castle near Whithorn in Wigtownshire. Sigurd was killed in 1014 when the Norse and Danes lost their final battle against the Gaels for the domination of Ireland, at Clontarf near Dublin. Thorfinn continued development under the protection of his Gaelic uncle Earl Gilli, a native king of Innse Gall who married Sigurd's sister Svanlang and served as Sigurd's lieutenant for the Isles. Thorfinn became the most powerful of Norsemen. He received the earldom of Caithness and Sutherland from his grandfather King Malcolm, succeeded to the Orkneys from his brothers and forcibly acquired Galloway when Malcolm died in 1034. He used it as his headquarters for summer offences (offensives). Apparently Suibne MacKenneth for a time ruled the Isles, probably after Earl Gilli, and also Galloway until killed when Thorfinn conquered Galloway and made his cousin Earl MacGill (son of Gilli) his lieutenant there. Thorfinn defeated Malcolm's other grandson and successor King Duncan and divided Scotland with MacBeth, Ri or Mormaer of Moray, after the latter slew Duncan to become King of Scotia (1040-1057). As a result Thorfinn possessed 9 earldoms in Scotland, the whole of the Sudreys and a large riki in Ireland. His wife was Ingibiorg, born 1015, a daughter of Finn Arnason king of Norway.

Following the efforts of Danish Earl Siward of Northumbria against MacBeth in 1054, which reclaimed Cumbria and Lothian for Duncan's son Malcolm, and also after the release by Thorfinn's death of his provinces to native rule, Malcolm III "Canmore" regained the crown of Scotland from MacBeth in 1057. He married Thorfinn's widow to conciliate the Norwegian element in the country and to attract Sigurd's territorially born hereditary chiefs. Two years after the conquest of England in 1066 by William Duke of

Normandy (William the Conqueror), Malcolm (III "Canmore") married Princess Margaret sister of Edgar (the) Aetheling the refugee Saxon crown prince of England. Paradoxically, Queen Margaret introduced Norman culture with the Church of Rome into Scotland. This led to the widespread development of Norman baronage in support of the reigns of her three sons Edgar, Alexander I and David I. Norse sovereignty in Galloway, however, was still exercised and based at Dublin until Norse Godred Crovan King of Man subjected both Dublin and Galloway to his rule. He also fended off King Malcolm of Scotland. Diarmid king of Danes and Innse Gall then took over Galloway as king of "Britons" until slain by the Irish in 1072. After this an Irish Donald ruled Galloway until the year Malcolm III died (1093) when King Magnus Bareleg of Norway took possession. Magnus was killed in Ireland in 1103 when King Edgar of Scotland was 31 years old. Prince David as English Earl of Cumbria was 19 and our forebear Fergus was 7 based on his age of 42 in 1138.

On his death bed four years later Edgar left Scotland-proper to his brother Alexander I (1107-1124) and bequeathed the sovereignty of districts South of the Firths, including Lothian, Cumbria and Galloway, to David as Earl. Since the death of Owen Galvus, the Crown Prince of Scotland (now David) was sub-regulus of Cumbria which surrounded the landward side of Galloway, but greater Galloway spread into it. Cumbria South of the Solway had been annexed as Cumberland in 1092 by King William Rufus of England, and David needed the same Norman arms to control the wild Norse-Irish-Scottish-British country from the Solway to the Clyde. He maintained his court at Carlisle and surrounded himself with a retinue of Norman baronial comrades with whom he had been schooled in the courts of William Rufus and Henry I (Beauclerc). He progressively feudalized Cumbria and Galloway, and in the latter he made use of its native laws and similarly normanized native leader, Fergus.

The most likely advent of Fergus is that he was judiciously selected by David, perhaps initiated by Edgar and confirmed by Henry I, for training in the Norman courts at London and Carlisle as the potential solution for the peaceful control of Galloway. The English court had proved a valuable school for David and his brothers, and even for Malcolm III, and it was considered a training ground for future kings and governors. "Undergoing the same process was another young man, destined to be the first of a famous line of Lords of Galloway - Fergus". His similar role and status was made evident by his marriage, like that of Alexander I or Scotland, to a natural daughter of Henry I of England. According to his ardent following and the law of Galloway which he maintained, Fergus would have had to have been the tanistry-elected candidate of the old native governing families of Galloway territorially born to rule over the predominantly Irish-Scots population. Strathclyde connections would bridge the time of Norse alienation of Galloway from the crown, and blood ties to the Norse or to past Danish overlords were desirable for their peoples' acquiescence.

This is partly confirmed by Dominica Legge's interpretation of the Arthurian romance "Roman de Fergus", written by Guillaume le Clerc in Old French ca. 1200, probably in honor of the wedding of Fergus' great-grandson Alan Lord of Galloway. Fergus' father is said to have been a Viking (Soumilloit in French, or Somerled in Norse). Legge

suggested that he was Sumarlidi Hauldr who was killed by Sweyn in 1156. Unless that date is wrong this identification is not likely, considering that Fergus would have been 60 years old at that time. This Sumarlidi would be little chronological improvement over Somerled king of the Isles and Argyll who was killed at Renfrew in 1164. The latter married a natural daughter of Olaf king of Man who was in turn Fergus' son-in-law. Crawford supposed that Earl Malcolm of Galloway under Sigurd II was an ancestor of Fergus. McGill ventured that Fergus inherited the lordship of Galloway by descent from the first son of Thorfinn's Earl MacGill of Galloway, and that Fergus' contemporary Somerled of Innse Gall and Argyll was also descended from MacGill's father Earl Gilli. The latter was not among Somerleds' known paternal ancestors but could have been an ordained member of the same Cinel. Some descendants of Gilli lived in Cumbria just before David's earlship. (Nigel) Tranter thoughtfully constructed the name "Fergus macSuibhne macMalcolm macGilliciaran of Carrich" and suggested that Fergus was elevated by David following their alliance to expel Hakon Claw of the Orkneys from Galloway. (P.H.) M'Kerlie was of divided opinion, for he said of Fergus, "There is every presumption that he was of Celtic origin, and held the lands of Galloway on the Celtic principle", yet he also said that Fergus was a "stranger" or "foreigner" and "of Norse origin", especially advanced and imposed on Galloway by David as Prince of Cumbria. M'Kerlie further stated, "it is just possible that Fergus, Lord of Galloway, of whose ancestry nothing otherwise is known, may have been a descendant of Earl Gilli, for the Norse element must have been strong in Galloway".

M'Kerlie again contradicted himself by saying that because Fergus brought monks from England and abroad rather than from the Irish church to occupy his new religious houses, "He was clearly of the Norman Race". (James) Affleck subscribed to this view by writing, "It is quite evident from the career and actions of Fergus that he was not a Gallovidian by birth, but one of the many Norman favourites by whom David was surrounded." The replacement of the Celtic Church by that of Rome was, however, part of the policy of Norman feudalization of King David who also behaved as a Norman without being one. David as Earl of Galloway imposed these conditions on Galloway as he did on the rest of Scotland after he became king. Even Somerled founded Sattel-Abbey for Cistercian monks. Fergus' name was of course Gaelic and he gave his sons Saxon names. (Wentworth) Huyshe referred to Fergus as "probably of Norse-Galwegian descent", (Sir Hubert) Maxwell mentioned "Fergus, of the line of Galloway princes or native rulers", and (John F.) Robertson recently stated, "Fergus had no Norman blood in him. He was of Galloway stock, his ancestors having been some of the Norse-Galwegian overlords of the province."

It is clear that King David I of Scotland and King Henry I of England recognized the native descent of Fergus Lord of Galloway whom the monks of Holyrood Abbey called Prince Fergus. This is proclaimed by his Arms which were presumably claimed by him and granted by King David, a blue field charged with a white (silver) lion rampant later crowned by King Henry. This proves Fergus' paternal descent from the Cinel Comgall in Cowal and its islands, one of the four principal families of British Dal Riata and the one to which King Kenneth macAlpin belonged. No Norse parentage was represented in Fergus' Arms; unlike the combination of the same lion and field with the Hebridean royal

galley (lymphad) in the Arms of his contemporary Somerled king of the Sudreys under Norway and sub-king of Argyll under Scotland. The Oriel-Innse Gall heritage of Somerled is known to have had an old Dalriadic connection, and his famous progenitor Godfrey son of Fergus, Lords of Oriel and the Isles, brought over from Ireland the Airgialla in support of his son-in-law Kenneth macAlpin.

In "Roman de Fergus" Fergus' mother is only described as "a very noble wife" whom Legge suggested "may have been of the old royal line of Argyll", to give him a Scots connection with his supposed Viking father. The remaining requirements for unity and peace in Galloway would be met, however, if Fergus' mother were an heiress of the native leaders of greater Galloway including old Strathclyde then within Cumbria under David. In this region the last of this line of provincial kings was Owen Galvus 'MacDowal' descended from the same royal house as Malcolm Canmore who was in turn the last king of Scotia in direct descent in the male line from the founder of the Scottish dynasty Kenneth macAlpin. As Owen's great-grandson (chronologically) Fergus would have been allied to David by kinship as he was later to both Henry I and to David again by marriage. This idea may be treated as a working hypothesis, but it is pertinent to note that Owen's Dunwallon line had our Gaelic family name. The Cumbrian origin of our eponym was also indicated by suppositions that Dunegal of Stranith, Chief of Nithsdale with the castles of Morton and Dumfries in the time of David I, was one of the Dougalls or M'Dowalls of Galloway. His grandson Dovenald was one of the Galwegian leaders who substituted for Fergus at the battle of the Standard, which was indicative of an alternative tannistic choice within the same governing Cinel. This border region would give some credence to the statement that Fergus was also of Saxon descent.

Family claims that the ancient lords of Galloway were MacDowalls were often supported by historians from the mid-16th century (Leland, Dugdale), through (Alexander) Nisbet's statement of 1742, "The old Lords of Galloway were of this name (McDowall)", to the present when Kevan McDowall cited, "Fergus Mac dubh Ghael (MacDouall) - Fergus of the clan of Black Gaels - M'Kerlie also stated, "We have generally found some basis for nearly every Galloway tradition", yet he considered this one erroneous because Fergus and his successors are only known to have used their Galwegian territorial appellation such as "de Gallouyia." Sir Herbert Maxwell said, however, "Fergus and his descendants may have been of the sept of clan MacDouall, and yet, from their conspicuous position, have never found it necessary to use the name as a distinction." After the division of old Galloway into Carrick and Galloway between Fergus' grandsons, the stirps of Fergus' son Uchtred in Galloway and designated MacUchtraig in the Annals of Ulster. This would not abrogate another Irish patronymic, or matronymic, for Fergus evidence of which is now lacking. Fergus may have had connections with the Dubh Gall race of Vikings in the West on his father's side, but there is a fair chance that he represented the clan of Dowall in the East at least through his mother. This Dovenal line of Owen Galvus cants back to our ancient family legend about Dovallus of Galloway who was allied to the Scoto-Irish long ago. The connection with the sub-kingdom of Cumbria could have been responsible for the gorging of the Dalriadic Lyon with a crown, an oft-cited and matriculated family tradition, before the lion

was capped with a crown. Fergus, which in Gaelic means "the chosen man", was in fact the allegorical Dovallus or leader of Galloway in his own time.

Prince Fergus de Galloway was born about 1090 in Carrick, Ayrshire, Scotland. He died in 1161 at the Abbey of Holyrood, Edinburgh, Scotland and is buried there. His wife Princess Elizabeth was born about 1095 in Talby, Yorkshire, England, the daughter of King Henry I of England and Sibyl Adela Lucy Corbet of France.

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I [Leo B. McDowell] ran across this extract the other day and thought it an excellent article to include here concerning the ancient home of Fergus de Galloway - 1st Lord of Galloway, and the succeeding Lords of Galloway. It is belived to have been authored about 1880 by James Afleck of Kirkcudbright.

Lochfergus.

By Mr. James Afleck

Date and Description

No one looking at the little green knoll on the right hand side of the road at Lochfergus would ever dream that it was the cradle of Galloway history, and the birthplace from which sprang all our ancient Norman castles, abbeys, priories, and churches, whose ruins are now sacred to antiquarians. Yet this is so. In olden times this little green field was a loch, and the large knoll in the centre was an island, partly natural and partly artificial. On it stood the first Norman castle or palace, built by Fergus, the first Lord of Galloway. This castle or palace was built somewhere between the years 1138 and 1140. The site, which is now barely visible, alone remains, and proves that it must have been an oblong building of great dimensions. It stood on the centre of the large island, 1140 feet in circumference, and was surrounded by a wall, with towers at each of the four corners in true Norman fashion. The southern end of the island seems to have been intersected by a moat or ditch, dividing the building proper from the courtyard. This may have been the stableyard, for it is shown as a separate island on old maps. At that period it must have been a place of great strength, as it was also surrounded by the loch. Near the southern end of the loch there was another little island, partly natural and

partly artificial. Tradition says that this island was used for stabling accommodation, and, therefore, it has been called Stable Isle." To the practical eye of the antiquarian, however, or the archaeologist, its form-height, build, and inaccessibility-proves that such a theory is quite untenable, and that it must have been an island fortress prior to the more resplendent palace on its larger neighbour, Palace Isle."

Fergus

So far as I can glean from trustworthy records, Fergus must have taken up his residence on Palace Isle " a year or so after the Battle of the Standard in 1138. He was born somewhere about the year 1096. Those were troublous times in Galloway. In 1096 the inhabitants were just emerging from the galling yoke of the ruthless Norsemen. Edgar had ascended the Scottish throne, and he was succeeded in 1107 by his brother Alexander, but when Edgar died he divided up the Scottish Kingdom. To his younger brother, David, he left the whole of the district south of the Firth of Forth, except the Lothians. David took up his residence at Carlisle, and assumed the title of Earl. The accession of David as supreme ruler of Galloway is important, because it was during his regime that we find, for the first time, the official name " Galloway " applied to our ancient province. Fergus was one of David's favourite companions and courtiers, which is amply proved by his witnessing many of the King's charters. He was also a "persona grata " at the English Court, so much so that he married the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Henry I., and thus became allied to English Royalty. And, as King Henry I. of England married David's sister, Fergus was thus also by marriage allied to the Scottish King. By Elizabeth he had two sons and one daughter-viz., Uchtred and Gilbert, and Affrica. She married Olave, King of Man. To anyone who has studied the history of Galloway carefully it is quite evident from the career and actions of Fergus that he was not a Gallovidian by birth, but one of the many Norman favourites by whom David was surrounded, and to which favourites he was very lavish with grants of land. The most of our historical accounts perpetuate the error that Fergus was of the line of native Galloway princes or rulers. I am afraid, however, that all the facts to be deduced from a careful study of his history go to prove that he was a Norman. In 1130, Angus, Earl of Moray, raised the Standard of Insurrection, and entered Scotland proper with 5000 men, with the intention of reducing the whole kingdom to subjection.

Mackenzie, Sir Herbert Maxwell, and other writers have concluded that Fergus was implicated in this rebellion, and thus forfeited the confidence and trust of David I. I cannot see what Fergus had to gain by such an action. In fact he had everything to lose. The greater probability is that it was the rebellion or insurrection by Malcolm M'Eth in 1134 to 1137 that he joined, because it was also joined by Somerled, the Regulus of Argyll, who was related to him by marriage. This is borne out by the fact that he also joined the second insurrection in 1154 by the sons of Malcolm M'Eth and Somerled, which insurrection led to his downfall.

Battle of the Standard

In 1135 Henry I., the King of England, died, and David I. invaded England in support of the cause of his niece, Matilda, who was the daughter of the English King. This invasion culminated in the great Battle of the Standard. This battle is interesting and important, because it shows the desperate savage nature of the Gallovidians at that period. The "Wild Scots of Galloway," as they were called, were pressed into the service of the King, led by their two chiefs, Ulric and Duvenald. A Monastic historian thus described the Gallovidian contingent as "that detestable army, more atrocious than Pagans, reverencing neither God nor man, plundered the whole province of Northumberland, destroyed villages, burned towns, churches, and houses. They spared neither age nor sex, murdering infants in their cradles, and other innocents at the breasts, with the mothers themselves, thrusting them through with their lances, or the points of their swords, and glutting themselves with the misery they inflicted." They met the English army on Catton Moor, near Northallerton, in 1138, and here the desperate and decisive battle was fought, called the "Battle of the Standard." The Galwegians claimed the honour of leading the van, notwithstanding the opposition of the King and his advisers. "They commenced the attack," says Hailes, "by rushing in a wedge-like shape on the enemy, with savage vociferations, loud yells, and infuriated valour." Hovedon says that "their war-cry was Albanich Albanich !" to which the English retorted Vry ! Vry ! meaning the opprobrious epithet, "Irish !" The onset was appalling, and they broke through the ranks of the spearmen, but after the battle had raged for nearly two hours they were reduced to a state of utter confusion. Both their chiefs, Ulric and Dunvenald, were slain. The English were victorious, and peace was concluded in 1139. Fergus seems not to have been at this battle, which shows that he had not yet been appointed ruler of Galloway, nor even a hereditary prince, or he would have led the Gallovidian contingent.

Fergus Pardoned by the King

It was about this time, however, that he once more made friends with the King, and was appointed Lord of Galloway in succession to Ulric and Dunvenald. The cunning ruse by which he obtained the King's pardon for his former insurrection is well worthy of record. I take the following facts from the History of the Priory of St. Mary's erected on the Isle of Trahil, i.e., St. Mary's Isle, Kirkcudbright :-" Fergus, Earl and lord of Galloway, having failed in his duty to His Majesty, and committed a grievous fault, at which the King, evidently very angry, determined to put the law in force vigorously against him. At last, in a change of habit, he repaired to Alwyn, the Abbot of the Monastery of Holyrood, the King's Confessor and confidential secretary, for advice and assistance. The Abbot compassionating him, contrived that Fergus should assume the habit of a Canon Regular, and thus, God directing, should, along with his brethren, obtain the King's pardon for his offence, through supplication under a religious habit." The ruse was successful, and he not only obtained the King's pardon, but also "The Kiss of Peace." The King and he, therefore, became reconciled. To the assistance thus rendered, and coupled with the King's extreme religious fervour, we may safely advance as cogent reasons for the many abbeys which in after years Fergus founded in Galloway.

Fergus was now supreme ruler of Galloway, and resided at his Castle or Palace of Lochfergus. Thus we may fix the building of the castle or palace at this period. For many

years he devoted his time and attention to the founding of religious houses. The first one he founded was at Saulseat, in the parish of Inch, about three miles from Stranraer, which he handed over to Monks from Premontre in Picardy. The next was the Priory of Whithorn. Some fragments of this Priory still remain, notably the beautiful south door of late Norman work. The west tower stood in the time of Sym son, when he wrote his large description of Galloway in 1684. Tongland Abbey followed next in the order of building, then St. Maria de Trayll, now known as St. Mary's Isle, Kirkcudbright, and lastly Dundrennan, which is a very fine piece of early pointed work. The Norman style of architecture and the Monks he placed in these Abbeys all go to prove that he was not a Gallovidian by birth, because the religion of the Gallovidians differed materially from that of the Abbeys. There seems no doubt that Fergus must have been a man of deep religious feeling, but at the same time we cannot but recognise the fact that in the founding of these Abbeys he was simply carrying out the orders of King David, nicknamed the "Prince of Monk feeders," or "The sore sanct to the Crown," and thus in some measure making atonement for the grievous offence which he had formerly committed against his Sovereign. Fergus Castle at this period must have been a very important place. It was the favourite home of his wife, the Princess Elizabeth, whose courtly manners and kindly disposition did much to tone down the semi-civilised inhabitants.

A Second Rebellion and the End

During the subsequent part of the reign of David there is nothing of importance to chronicle regarding Fergus or Lochfergus. David died in 1153, and was succeeded by his grandson Malcolm IV., then a minor. He was the first King who was crowned at Scone. Somerled and several others of the northern chiefs were dissatisfied with the succession, and taking advantage of the extreme youth of the King, and the distracted councils which prevailed at Court, rose in insurrection, and put forward a son of the former Pretender, M'Eth. Fergus at first did not join them, because we find that he seized the claimant Donald when he sought sanctuary at Whithorn, and sent him to prison at Roxburgh, where his father, the elder M'Eth, was also confined. However, the English King Henry II. having persuaded Malcolm to resign that part of his territory south of the Tweed and go to France to assist him in fighting his battles there, the Gallovidians refused to have an English King to reign over them, so they, under Fergus, joined Somerled. The young Scottish King hurried home, and took up arms to chastise the Gallovidians, but the impenetrable forests, the treacherous morasses, and the rugged hills of Galloway were practically inaccessible, except to those who knew them intimately. Twice Malcolm entered Galloway, but had to retire beaten and discomfited. The third time, however, he doubled his forces, and by this means, in addition to propitiating some of the rebels, he prevailed, and Somerled became reconciled. Fergus, thus deserted by his former friends, resigned the Lordship of Galloway, or what is more probable, deprived of his office, and retired once more to the Abbey of Holyrood, where he became a Canon Regular, and it is said ended his days in the following year through grief and sorrow. Before he died, however, he bestowed on Holyrood Abbey the village and church of Dunrodden (Dunrod, near Kirkcudbright). There seems little doubt that Fergus was a wise and beneficent ruler, and that Galloway made great progress under

his sway. And to any impartial historian who takes the trouble to enquire into the reasons or motives which prompted him to take up arms against his Sovereign will not only find extenuating circumstances, but in these unsettled times very good reasons for his actions. In these old times "might was right," and the succession to the throne was not always in accordance with justice.

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Prince Fergus de Galloway's successive heirs through his wife Princess Elizabeth (daughter of Henry Beauclerc - King Henry I of England 1100-1135 and his mistress Sybilla Lucy Corbet), were Uchtred de Galloway (married to Gunild of Dunbar), Roland (Rolund) de Galloway - Constable of Scotland, (born in 1164 and died in 1200 in Northamptonshire, England and married to Elena de Moreville about 1185) and Alan de Galloway (co-signatory of the Magna Carta of 15 June 1215). Princess Elizabeth, was the daughter of King Henry I of England (Henry Beauclerc), the son of William the Conqueror (King William I - her grandfather), the victor over King Harold and the Anglo-Saxons during the Norman Conquest at the Battle of Hastings (1066) and the head of the Norman line of English Kings. Alan (born about 1186 and died in 1234) was married about 1205 to Helen de L'Isle (1174-1212) the daughter of Reginald (MacDonald) Lord of the Isles and Fonia Moray. Alan and Helen MacDowall failed to produce a male heir, so, in time, Alan's daughter Devorguilla MacDowall, wife of John Balliol, passed the Lordship of Galloway and heirship of the crown to her son King John I (Balliol) of Scotland. The ruins of the Cistercian house of Glenluce Abbey, founded by Roland, Earl of Galloway in 1192, occupy a site of great natural beauty. It was visited by Robert the Bruce (King Robert I) and King James IV. Mary Queen of Scots also stayed there during a royal progress.

Devorguilla de Galloway Balliol, The Lady of Galloway, in memory of her husband John Balliol, had the Cistercian Sweetheart Abbey built in the late 13th or early 14th century and is buried in the presbytery with a casket containing her beloved husband's embalmed heart.

Roland (Rolund) (born about 1164, died in 1200) had a brother named Duegald (Dowall, killed in 1185), the younger son of Uchtred 2nd Lord of Galloway and his wife Gunild of Dunbar), from whom the surnamed "MacDowall" are descended according to Garthland records, as a result of which they carry the undifferenced Arms of Galloway, the Dalriadic lion used per pale (light blue) by Somerled, Or (gold) quartered by the MacDougall, except crowned in Galloway. Roland is buried at the abbey of St. Andrew in Northamptonshire, England where the family also held lands. The Clan Ferguson also claim descendency from Prince Fergus de Galloway, 1st Lord of Galloway, as do the MacDonals and Galloways.

Because John (The Red) Comyn of Badenoch, the grandson of Dervorguilla MacDowall Balliol, Lady of Galloway, was murdered at the alter rails at the Dominican Greyfriars'

Kirk in Dumfries, by Robert the Bruce, Earl of Carrick, in order to usurp the crown. John “the Red” Comyn had betrayed William Wallace at Falkirk (1306) while in the heat of battle, John and his vassals (mostly light cavalry) left the field, and it is presumed that he had conspired with King Edward to betray Wallace in this manner. Robert the Bruce's brothers Alexander and Thomas had gone to Galloway to seek aid for “The Bruce's” cause. They were captured by Comyn and the MacDowalls and turned over to King Edward I and were hung, drawn and quartered, and dragged through the streets of Carlisle. The Galloway MacDowalls were mortal foes of King Robert I (1306-1329) of Scotland and close kin and allies of the crowned Balliols of Galloway, of the MacDougalls of Argyll and Lorn, of Alexander Comyn Earl of Buchan, and of their fifth cousin King Edward I (Plantagenet) of England (1239-1307). Edward I completed the conquest of Wales and temporarily subdued Scotland. He was the eldest son of Henry III. In 1254 he was made duke of Gascony and married Eleanor of Castile (died 1290). In contrast to his father, Edward showed masterfulness in the disputes with the English barons following the governmental reforms instituted by the Provisions of Oxford (1258). He supported Simon de Montfort in 1259 but later changed sides. He fought for the king at the Battle of Lewes (1264) and himself defeated Montfort decisively at Evesham (1265), restoring royal power. In 1271-72 he was on crusade at Acre.

During the years from 1272, when Edward succeeded his father, to 1290 striking achievements occurred. Edward conquered the Welsh principality of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd in devastating campaigns in 1277 and 1282-83 and built massive castles to keep it secure. In England he held regular parliaments. (The surname prefix ap or ab in Welch serves the same purpose as Mc or Mac in Gaelic.) A program of legislation strengthened royal control over the court system and reformed the tangled feudal land law. After 1294 wars in Scotland and France dominated Edward's reign. The death (1290) of Margaret, Maid of Norway, heiress to the Scottish crown, allowed Edward as suzerain to choose a successor, John de Balliol, and then to claim direct rule over Scotland, which he subdued in 1296. It was at this time that King Edward I ripped the coat of arms off King John I (Balliol) and threw it to the floor. Upon leaving Scotland, King Edward is recorded by his royal scribe to have said: “It is good to be shot (rid) of this shyte” (referring to Scotland).

In France the conflict concerned the French king's overlordship over Edward's duchy of Gascony. In 1297, Edward attacked France to assert his rights, but the expedition was cut short by the rebellion in Scotland of Sir William Wallace. At the same time the English nobles rebelled, forcing Edward to grant Parliament control over taxes. By a treaty (1303) with Philip IV of France, Edward retained Gascony. He failed, however, to quell the risings of Wallace and Robert the Bruce (later Robert I), and Scotland remained only half-conquered at his death. He was succeeded by his son Edward II. During this time, the MacDougall clan controlled Lorn and Benderloch, the islands of Mull, Lismore, Coll and Tiree. After several battles in which the Gallowegians followed their native leader Sir Douglas MacDowyl (as translated by the English at that time), Sir Douglas MacDowall was killed and dispossessed by the Bruces. King Robert I, known as Robert the Bruce (born July 11, 1274, died June 7, 1329) the king of Scotland, restored Scottish independence from England. In 1292, Bruce's grandfather had lost his

claim to the Scottish throne to John de Balliol in a succession suit decided by English King Edward I. During the next decade Bruce, then 8th earl of Carrick, switched his allegiance back and forth between Edward and the independence of Scotland.

After the execution (in 1305) of Sir William Wallace, a national hero, Bruce, not fully trusted by either side, murdered his old enemy and rival John Comyn. This act committed him to the Scottish patriots, because Comyn had inherited Balliol's claim to the throne and was supported by Edward. On 27 March 1306, The Bruce was crowned at Scone. Following major setbacks in 1306-07, he rallied from an apparently hopeless situation and began systematically winning back his kingdom from the English. On 24 June 1314, at the Battle of Bannockburn, Bruce defeated Edward II, who had succeeded his father Edward I in 1307. This great victory established independence for Scotland and confirmed Bruce's claim to the throne. King Robert I spent the remainder of his life fighting the English in Ireland and along the Scottish borders. In 1328, England formally recognized Scottish independence. Robert was succeeded by his son, David II.

The Clan MacDougall prized trophy - the Brooch of Lorn that was ripped, along with the tartan cloak, from the treacherous Robert the Bruce, Earl of Carrick as he narrowly escaped death at the hands of our kinsmen at the Breadalbane Pass on 19 June 1306.

That same year (1306), the forces of John (Ewen) of Lorn were slaughtered without mercy between Ben Cruachan and Lochawe in the mountain gorge. The Bruce besieged Dunstaffnage castle and received the submission of Alister of Lorn, John's father. Alister fled to England, was allowed to retain the district of Lorn, but forfeited the rest of his possessions. As Alister and John arrived in England, King Edward I (Edward "Longshanks") was making preparations for the expedition, which terminated in the ever-memorable defeat of his son and heir King Edward II at the Battle of Bannockburn. John was received with open arms by King Edward I and appointed to the command of the English fleet. The Bruces' forces surprised and dispersed John's fleet at Kintyre and Knapdale. John, Lord of Lorn was captured, sent to Dumbarton, and afterwards to Lochleven, where he was detained in confinement during the remainder of King Robert I's reign.

In 1354 however, some of the former lands of the clan were restored when John (Ewen) MacDougall of Lorn married King Robert the Bruce (King Robert I)'s granddaughter and through her not only recovered the ancient possessions of his family, but even obtained a grant of property of Glenlyon. John (Ewen) died without male heir and his daughters married brothers of clan Stewart, thereby passing all lands and possessions to the Stewarts (The present British Royal family is of Clan Stewart). Thus ended the great power of the clan and of the descendants of Somerled and Prince Fergus de Galloway.

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[My McDowell Family \[S0161\]](#)

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