

The Tartan

The Clan MacDougall Society of North America

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Portrait of Our Chief
- President's Report to the Membership
- The MacDougalls in Argyll and Exile

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- The Portrait of our Chief of Clan MacDougall 1
- From Our President 3
- President's Report to the Membership 4
- The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile 1296-1360 6

The Portrait of our Chief of Clan MacDougall

There were many enjoyable experiences that we shared at the 2019 International Gathering of Clan MacDougall in Oban, Scotland in early August, but my favorite and most memorable moments occurred just before we ate at the big clan dinner on the last night. It was The Presentation.

For quite some time a number of us who have been actively involved in the affairs of Clan MacDougall have wondered how we might memorialize the years of Morag being Chief, because they were very important years. At the previous Gathering of the Clan in 2014, I happened to hear Chief Morag's husband, Richard, say to her, "You really should have your portrait painted". I thought - what a wonderful idea, I hope it goes forward; and so did the family and staff of Dunollie. But the Chief herself was too modest to take it seriously.



**Morag MacDougall of MacDougall, Chief
Given by Richard T. MacDougall, Past Pres.
For The Clan MacDougall Society of North America
August, 2019**

Early this year, thinking about the next Gathering, I inquired about the status of the portrait idea. I found that family and friends and staff were all still keen on the idea, but no progress had been made. This modest, self-effacing lady could see no point in spending money on an unimportant scheme. Well, everyone else involved in Clan MacDougall affairs disagreed. Morag



MacDougall

The Portrait of our Chief (cont.)

was certainly the most important, productive, personally involved and beloved leader of the Clan's recent history; furthermore, only the Clan's 2nd woman Chief. Think of all the important things she has instigated - to Gylen Castle, Dunollie Castle, and to Dunollie House and Museum and organisation. Surely her portrait deserves to hang in Dunollie House and Museum along with other memorable Chiefs.

Furthermore, we all were aware of the passage of time and our lives, and realized that if we didn't make it happen now, it probably wouldn't ever get done. Not being able to think of another plan that wasn't too slow and complicated, I offered, if Morag and the family would agree, to pay for the portrait to be painted by a professional. Thankfully, Morag finally agreed, and our faithful and very capable friend in Argyll, Mike Robertson, picked up the ball and ran with it. After many complications and small decisions, and finding a professional portraitist, and keeping the whole project pretty much a secret - it got done! And it was beautiful.

So, with a huge amount of personal pleasure and pride and excitement, for the Clan MacDougall Society of N.A., I unveiled and presented the portrait of Morag MacDougall of MacDougall for posterity to the assembled members of Clan MacDougall. And they loved it!

Pridefully submitted,
Dick MacDougall
Past President



Speech from Richard MacDougall
©MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust

Come to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) for all Society Members

From 2-4 p.m. on Saturday October 19, 2019 in the Clan Meeting Tent at the Stone Mountain Highland Games and Scottish Festival in Stone Mountain, GA.

The AGM is followed by an informal dinner beginning at 5 pm at the Blue Ribbon Grill at 4006 Lavista Rd in Tucker, GA about 10 miles west of the Games site.

Highland dress is welcome but not required.

View their web site at <http://blueribbongrill.com/>

From Our President

This issue of The Tartan newsletter comes to you after our very successful 2019 Gathering in Oban, Scotland. As you saw on our front page, the highlight of the Saturday evening Dinner was the surprise presentation of a portrait to Morag MacDougall of MacDougall, Clan Chief of Clan MacDougall, by past President Richard MacDougall in front of an audience of 250 guests.

As mentioned in our August e-newsletter Special Edition, we played a new 8 minute video at our Society Table in the Marquee Tent at the 2019 Gathering. We had specially created it in order to tell the story of how we Scots outside of Scotland have been retaining our heritage. Our visitors thoroughly enjoyed it and many of them asked us to find ways to show it again. Now we have posted a hyperlink to this video for you to view it along with many photos on our new 2019 Gathering web site page at <https://macdougall.org/2019-international-gathering-oban-scotland/>. You may also view our video on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/clanmacdougall/>.

In this issue we have news of a new option under discussion to allow for our e-newsletter readers to voluntarily subscribe to receive paper copies of The Tartan newsletter issues printed three times each year, if they wish to pay the cost. No member would be under any obligation to use this option. More details are in the President's Annual Report. Also, in this issue we are bringing you a special history article. We thought it was time to put our clans' turbulent history in mediaeval Scotland into a proper context with this lengthy article.

I want to invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM). We rotate our AGM locations in order to meet more of our members. This year, for the first time, our AGM will be held on Saturday October 19 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Clan Meeting Tent during the Stone Mountain Highland Games at Stone Mountain Park on the east side of Atlanta, GA. The Games web site at <http://www.smhg.org/> has excellent maps and directions.

Our AGM is specially for our members. It will be held in one of the Clan Meeting Tents at the Stone Mountain Games and if you come to our Society Tent you will easily find us and obtain directions to it. Our AGM Meeting in the Meeting Tent at the Games site will be followed by an informal dinner beginning at 5 p.m. at the Blue Ribbon Grill at 4006 Lavista Rd in Tucker, GA about 10 miles west of the Games site. View their web site at <http://blueribbongrill.com/> Highland dress is welcome but not required.

Scott MacDougald
President

Kyle Jones
President-Elect

The Clan MacDougall Society of North America

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MacDowall

President's Report to the Membership

It was a pleasure to meet so many of you at the 2019 Gathering in Oban and to receive compliments for the work our Society is doing to support and preserve our heritage. Your support is what makes this all possible. I hope to meet more of you at our AGM at Stone Mountain GA on October 19.

Our Society is continuing to change and improve to meet the challenges of the future. We have updated our Internal record keeping and financial systems. We are also adapting how we communicate with our members so that we reach more of you with the kind of information you want to receive. One way we do this is by contacting you and speaking with you personally. If you have changed email or postal addresses or have new telephone numbers in recent years, please let us know by sending an email to us at Records@macdougall.org or by correcting your contact information shown in the letter we mail to you every October.

The Tartan for Email Readers

Some of you have told us that you would like the opportunity to receive The Tartan newsletter in paper format by postal mail. We could not provide it in paper format to everyone without a substantial dues increase to cover the estimated additional cost of about \$8000 per year to deliver it to every current member. That is nearly half of our annual budget.

However, we have come up with an option which may suit some of you who currently receive The Tartan by email.

At our July Board Meeting we discussed a proposal to permit Members to voluntarily subscribe to a paper issue of The Tartan newsletter if they are already receiving it by email. It reads:

MOTION

Members who receive their Society newsletters by email will be permitted to purchase a subscription to receive an additional set of paper copies of The Tartan newsletter to be delivered by postal mail. The initial subscription price of \$14 per year may be adjusted from time to time to cover the Society's costs. Members who receive their Society newsletters by email will be offered postal subscription periods of one, two, and three years. This new provision does not apply to or affect any Member already receiving their Tartan newsletter by postal mail.

For those who voluntarily request to pay for a subscription, issues of The Tartan newsletter currently issued in April, September and December, would be made available in a black and white paper format for delivery by postal mail. The Tartan would also continue to be delivered in color in electronic format as we do currently. We know this option is not perfect for everyone but we are considering making it available for those who wish to have this opportunity.

Our shorter e-newsletter which is currently published nine times per year and is delivered by email is not intended for postal delivery and would not be affected by this proposal.

President's Report to the Membership (cont.)

Conclusion

With your continued support we are operating in the black financially, our membership is slowly increasing, and we are better fulfilling our Society's stated Purposes each year. More Society Tents are appearing at Games and events but there are areas we have yet to reach. If you would like to volunteer to help us, please fill out our Volunteer Form at <https://macdougall.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Volunteer-Sign-Up-Sheet-Rev.-8-30-2019.pdf> or send an email to us at info@macdougall.org to ask about volunteering.

Thank you to all of you who have responded during this past year to our telephone calls and have taken the time to talk with your Society representatives at games and events. Our communication brings us all closer together and builds a better Society. We hope to speak with many more of you in the coming year.

Scott MacDougall

President

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile 1296-1360

Note: Much has been written about the MacDougalls, MacDowalls, Baliols, Comyns, Robert the Bruce, and King Edward I. I will try to explain the context in which the events occurred using modern surnames for simplicity.

Scott MacDougald

Prelude

In 1292 King Edward I of England acted as the judge to select the proper claimant among the contestants for the vacant throne of Scotland. Both John Baliol and his rival Robert Bruce the elder were from rich Norman-Scots families with extensive lands and family in both England and Scotland. Both had strongholds in south east Scotland where Baliol's mother was related to the MacDowalls of Galloway.

Edward chose John Baliol as having the better ancestral claim to the throne of Scotland but now considered Baliol to be his vassal. However, as King of Scots, John Baliol dared to act independently of Edward. The end came when Baliol made a mutual aid Treaty with Edward I's enemy and brother-in-law Philip, the King of France. In the spring of 1296 Scotland sent an ineffective raid into England to support its new alliance with France. Edward I of England retaliated against the alliance by marching into southern Scotland. The Wars of Independence between Scotland and England had begun. They would continue intermittently for the next 60 years.

Edward did not like being defied. In July 1296 he made John Baliol his prisoner and stripped him of his crown and royal regalia. To ensure that no more Kings of Scots would ever exist to trouble him, Edward I stripped Scotland of its symbols of independence including its Royal Archives and the Stone of Scone upon which its kings were crowned. He imprisoned Baliol's powerful supporters, relatives, administrators, and allied nobles. He especially targeted the Comyns, the richest and most respected family in Scotland whose leaders had worked diligently for decades to keep Scotland free of the grasping hands of English kings like Edward's father, Henry III. Families intermarried with the Comyns included Baliols, Murrays, and Alexander, 4th



MacDougall

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

Chief of the MacDougalls, and many others. Edward imprisoned many of these supporters of John Baliol in hopes of cowering them into submitting to his overlordship of Scotland. In their place he installed Englishmen to rule Scotland for him.

Edward also required over 2000 nobles and men of importance to sign an oath of loyalty to him which became known as the Ragman Roll, a term now retained in the English language as “rigmarole”. Most signed, except for a few men like William Wallace. Edward I now had a witnessed copy of their signed allegiance to him. If any of them were ever to turn against him, their signature on this oath of loyalty would be self-condemning legal proof of their treason against him. They would then suffer the death penalty for treason without any need to find further evidence. Edward liked bureaucratic efficiency.

In Argyll for over 130 years since the death of Somerled in 1164, the MacDougalls had dominated a dozen or more other clans as powerful local governors for the Kings of Scots. Most recently they had been acting as the king’s Sheriff of Argyll enforcing the distant rule of John Baliol. However, some Argyll clans such as their independent minded MacDonald cousins, some Stewarts, and some small clans such as the Campbells resented powerful MacDougall rule. Suddenly in 1296, Edward I’s intrusion into Scotland overturning the legitimate government became a golden opportunity for some clans to side with an extremely powerful king against their resented MacDougall rulers.

With the MacDougall leaders overthrown or imprisoned by Edward I, leaders of opposing clans soon accepted offices from Edward to control Argyll for him as part of his well-organized bureaucracy. Edward I now had a MacDonald Chief as his Admiral, a MacDonald as his Bailie in Kintyre, a Stewart Sheriff, and a Campbell Chief as his Baile in Argyll; all to do his bidding. Now they were the king’s representatives with legal and military authority in Argyll; but they were in service to the English government of Edward I. They did not represent the King of Scots as the MacDougalls had.

On 10 September 1296 Edward issued a decree appointing the Argyll Earl of Menteith (a Stewart) to seize the lands and properties of Alexander MacDougall, the 4th Chief, and his son, John of Lorn. In a separate decree on the same day Edward’s local Bailies such as Cailean Mór, the 4th Chief of Clan Campbell, were ordered to support such confiscations. MacDonalds, Stewarts and Campbells were now required and empowered to confiscate MacDougall properties and assets. Even though Alexander MacDougall had signed the Ragman Roll Loyalty Oath like 2000 others, he was arrested and imprisoned at Berwick for being a strong supporter of Baliol. His brother Duncan and his son John of Lorn were not caught. Edward did not trust anyone who had been close to the King of Scots.

Three Rebellions in Support of John Baliol

In May 1297 Edward released Alexander MacDougall, expecting him to be tamed by his nine month imprisonment but he was not cowed. He was a proud Highland Chief who had been mistreated and humiliated. Alexander reacted explosively. Vengeance was required. With the aid from his wife’s Comyn of Badenoch in-laws, his son-in-law’s MacRuairis, and some other local allies, Alexander and his MacDougall family immediately began a long war in Argyll by ferociously attacking Edward I’s new Argyll supporters.

This was much more than civil war or an anti-English war; those were the surface issues. Argyll became the scene of a bloody extended family feud fueled by long held clan grudges and grievances which would continue in various ways for the next 60 years. Alexander MacDougall’s primary target was his own powerful son-in-law, Alexander Og, the MacDonald Chief who was Edward’s Sheriff of Kintyre and his Admiral of the Western Seas (Irish Sea). Alexander’s forces pursued his son-in-law for more than a year before they cornered him in 1299 and killed with many of his supporters.

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)



Map by Walter M. MacDougall

There were now two Comyn supported rebellions occurring against Edward. When Alexander MacDougall's rebellion began in Argyll in May 1297, his nephew, the very able Andrew Moray who had escaped from Edward's imprisonment, was already leading a successful guerilla war in Comyn dominated areas in the northeast such as Inverness and Aberdeenshire. Andrew Moray's mother was a Comyn and a sister of Alexander's wife, Julianne Comyn. Edward had sent his loyal Sheriff Alexander Og MacDonald north to fight against Moray but his heavy horsemen had failed to defeat Moray in the bogs and thick forests he controlled.

Meanwhile early in that same month of May 1297, William Wallace was beginning his own rebellion with a spontaneous rising in the south with Stewart and Church support. Moray would soon join forces with Wallace while Alexander continued fighting in Argyll. It is fair to assume there were links between these risings. The MacDougall rebellion in Argyll supporting Baliol was the longest of the three rebellions but it is little mentioned. Records of the MacDougall rebellion are sparse perhaps because of subsequent developments in Scotland. Alexander continued to fight for the deposed king's cause for about five years despite diminishing resources.



MacDowall

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

Unfortunately, Wallace and Moray attempted to fight conventional warfare against the most powerful army in Europe. They won a major victory at Stirling Bridge in 1297 where Moray was either killed, or was fatally injured and died of wounds in the fall of 1297. Wallace was heavily defeated in a traditional style battle at Falkirk in July 1298. He resigned his Guardianship of Scotland in December 1298 and was succeeded by two rivals. One was Robert the Bruce (later King Robert I), a grandson of Baliol's rival Robert Bruce the elder. In the coming years he would change sides a few times. The other appointed Guardian of Scotland was John the Red Comyn, Alexander MacDougall's wife's nephew.

Eventually Edward I made a long truce with France in 1301. Soon he would be able to turn all of his power against the remaining Scottish rebels. Even so, many Scots continued to fight, often ably and bravely led by John the Red Comyn. In February 1303 Comyn was one of the leaders of the humiliating defeat of a large English force at the battle of Roslin while Edward was away in France. When Edward returned, he convened a meeting to analyse the Scots' victory. Edward I could not bear the humiliation of a defeat.

Once Edward got his peace treaty with France in May 1303, he led a well-planned invasion which focused on the Comyn family lands in the north. This time he sent the 29 year old Robert Bruce to Scotland ahead of his invading army and navy to gather supporters to fight in King Edward's name. This time Edward was well prepared to stay the winter in Scotland and to not leave without victory. Seeing this, John the Red Comyn as a leader of Scots resistance commenced negotiations with Edward I "on behalf of the community of Scotland". His major victory at Roslin had bought credentials and leverage for Scotland in the bargaining.

Negotiations concluded on February 9, 1304 with the wholesale submission of the Scots upon generous terms. In September 1305 . Edward I appointed 22 Scottish magnates to his newly created Advisory Council to advise John of Brittany, his Royal Lieutenant for Scotland. Among those serving on this new Council of 22 were Alexander MacDougall, Robert Bruce, John the Red Comyn, four bishops, four abbots, five earls, and other nobles. Now for once the Comyns, MacDougalls, Bruces, MacDonalds and Campbells and others were all on the same side and at peace. In that same month of September 1305 Edward brutally executed William Wallace, one of his few remaining opponents in Scotland, Edward thought he had finally won, but the peace was not to last.

Vying for the crown of Scotland

Edward I believed he was now the rightful king of the land of Scotland and set about annexing it to his realm of England. If he succeeded, there would never be another King of Scots. It seemed that the deposed John Baliol would never return from imprisonment and exile but there were two ambitious men who had some legitimate color of right to inherit Baliol's crown of Scotland through hereditary descent. They were rivals and there was only a throne for one, if Edward didn't get it first.

After slipping away from the assizes in Dumfries on 10 February 1306, the two met secretly inside Greyfriars Kirk and spoke in a private conversation near the altar with only monks nearby. One had come into the church secretly armed, in violation of Church rules. Their retainers waited outside in the cold. Inside, Robert Bruce, the grandson of the Robert Bruce the elder who had contended against John Baliol for the crown in 1292, fatally stabbed his rival John the Red Comyn the nephew of Alexander's MacDougall's wife Julianne Comyn. No one knows what they discussed and there are no records of their meeting except for Bruce's confession in his plea quoted by the Pope four years later that he had been "persuaded by the devil".

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

The murders of the unarmed John the Red Comyn, and the killing of his Comyn uncle in the ensuing melee, and the wounding of others in their party within the sanctity of a Church where arms were forbidden, was sacrilege. The murderers were soon hunted by the law, and at least one was caught and executed. Bruce escaped and sought forgiveness from his Bishop supporters in the Scottish Church whom Edward I, against their wishes, was trying to make subservient to the Archbishop of Canterbury in England. Less than six weeks later on 23 March 1306 in the Abbey of Scone, Bruce was hastily crowned as Robert I, King of Scots. Now he openly claimed the crown of Scotland which Edward I believed was his. There was no turning back. The victim's powerful relatives sought vengeance for the treacherous sacrilegious murder of a noble kinsman and proven defender of Scotland. Edward I sought his military destruction with no quarter to be given to a treasonous usurper of the crown. He also sought the newly crowned king's Papal excommunication for sacrilege. Edward I did not tolerate anyone taking what was his.

The new King of Scots, Robert I, soon suffered two major military defeats at the hands of his victim's relatives. On 19 June 1306 his encampment was overrun at Methven in a no quarter night attack led by the murdered Red Comyn's brother-in-law Aymer de Valence. A few days later the new king's retreating force of 300 to 500 men and women was blocked and decimated at Dalrigh near modern day Tyndrum by the MacDougalls and their MacNaughtan allies and perhaps others led by John of Lorn, the murdered Red Comyn's first cousin. The MacDougalls were likely forewarned of his approach by their nearby MacNab allies for which they would later pay dearly.

In late 1306 Robert I, now a king in the heather on the run with a handful of loyal supporters, fled to Kintyre with John of Lorn in close pursuit. While he was being hunted one Robert I's greatest supporters, William Douglas, loyally stayed to protect and to keep him alive. This brave Scottish hero should be given much credit for winning many of Robert I's victories.

In Kintyre the fugitive king on the run met with Angus Og, Chief of the MacDonalds, whose elder brother Alexander Og had been killed in 1299 by Alexander MacDougall. Angus Og MacDonald was now Edward I's Admiral of the Western Sea and also his Sheriff. Angus Og ought to have taken Robert I prisoner and turned him over Edward for his crimes; but instead Angus Og changed sides, accepted Bruce as his guest, joined his cause, hid him in the islands, and helped him to find shelter with Amy MacRuari.

For this treason to Edward I, Angus Og forfeited his high positions which he and his brother before him had held for ten years as Edward's loyal allies. Angus Og was soon joined by his relatives the MacRuaries and by Clan Campbell whose Chiefs were related by marriage to the Bruce's. Their 4th Chief Cailean Mór, "Big Colin" had been Angus Og's grandfather and a Baile in Edward I's Argyll administration. Cailean Mór had been killed by a MacDougall arrow ten years before during a skirmish at the Battle of the Red Ford while routing a smaller party of MacDougalls coming to a conference. Once again, the MacDonalds and their Campbell allies chose to be on opposite sides to the MacDougalls.

John of Lorn was soon appointed to Angus Og's vacancy of Sheriff of Argyll and the Hebrides with full authority to hunt down the fugitive Robert I. In early 1307 Robert I returned from the isles to Ayrshire and Galloway to await two of his brothers landing with an Irish force they had recruited. Two weeks later Sir Dungal MacDoual (Dougal MacDowall) intercepted their landing in Galloway, killed most of their 700 warriors, captured the two Bruce brothers, and turned them over to Edward where they met a brutal traitor's execution. Still John of Lorn, often along with his MacDowalls allies, doggedly pursued Robert I's little band of fugitives; sometimes being only days or hours behind him. On one occasion in Galloway he tracked the fugitive king with his very own bloodhound. He was only minutes behind when the fugitive killed his own pursuing dog with an arrow in order to escape capture. Then fortune's wheel turned. While enroute to Scotland to finish off the fugitive king,



MacDougall

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

Edward I died on 6 July 1307 just before reaching the border. His successor was his son Edward II, a financially strapped, weak, and unlucky king who was unable to support his allies. Robert I's luck had changed and he fought back in a brilliant campaign.

Without Edward I's strong leadership to unify them, Robert I picked off his enemies one by one by making truces with some and attacking others, beginning in Galloway. He focused on the powerful Comyn families whose support for the Balliol's legitimate right to the throne of Scotland posed a serious threat to the legitimacy of his own claim to the crown. In 1308 he devastated the rich Comyn lands in Galloway in the southwest and in Buchan in the north east in order to obliterate the Comyns from Scotland. He killed so many of them in his "herschip of Buchan" and so utterly destroyed their buildings and possessions that their devastated lands in Buchan did not recover for a century. Then he headed for Argyll to turn on the now isolated MacDougalls who were among the last still standing against him.

Exile and The Disinherited

In August 1308 John of Lorn's MacDougalls had been defeated while trying to blockade the Pass of Brander against Robert I's army which then headed directly for Dunstaffnage Castle. For a few weeks John of Lorn gathered up family and a few followers before sailing to exile in England. His aged father, Alexander MacDougall the 4th Chief, soon accepted Robert I's terms and surrendered his besieged seat of Dunstaffnage Castle. For a few months Alexander remained in Scotland and attended Robert I's first Parliament in 1309 where he was a signatory to its repudiation of the legitimacy of the previous king, John Balliol, whom he had supported so diligently. Alexander de Ergadia must have deplored this political fiction but was powerless to stop it. Alexander then fled to join his son John of Lorn in exile. The submission of Alexander to Robert I and his subsequent flight to Edward II were intolerable to the king, who had done much the same several times in the past.

Robert I usually granted away most of his enemies' lands as rewards to his supporters. However, he first disabled or razed their fortifications except for a few that he kept for the crown as strategic royal castles. Accordingly, the MacDougall lands were soon forfeited. The principal immediate beneficiaries in Lorn were the MacRuairis with the largest spoils of various lands from Lorn to Loch Linnhe, taken circa 1313 from the very heartland of the MacDougalls. Their leader Roderic Macalan or Roderic of Ylay was designated "High Chief of Lorn" between the years 1315 and 1325 until he was attainted by Parliament and the lands reverted to the crown.

Secondly the MacDonalds benefitted with grants of MacDougall islands such as Mull, and forfeited MacDougall and Comyn mainland lands to the north. Some lesser lands went to branches of the Campbells. Dunstaffnage Castle was retained by the crown as a royal castle operated by Sir Arthur Campbell who was granted nearby lands extending to Dunollie Castle. There is a MacDougall tradition that a small portion of the lands around Dunollie were retained by Duncan MacDougall, a younger brother of Alexander who is said to have fought with Wallace. There may be something to the story because during the three rebellions of 1297 Wallace was a partner with Alexander's nephew, Andrew Moray, but no documentation of this survives from that period except for a later poetic reference by Barbour.

John of Lorn would never surrender. He carried on the fight from exile alongside many other Scots like his friend and ally Sir Dungal MacDoual of Galloway, the leader of the MacDowalls of Galloway. King Edward II billeted these exiled families near York on estates which had been forfeited from the Knights Templar to the English crown in 1307. John of Lorn's family was domiciled at Temple Newsome. These Scottish exiles likely did not expect their families to remain there for decades

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

but they did. Their sons grew up in exile and many, including MacDougalls, earned their living as valets and knights of the Royal Household carrying on their fathers' battles against the Bruce dynasty, and sometimes dying in the fight to return to their homeland. Because Robert I had deprived these exiled Scots of their lands for opposing him, they became known as The Disinherited. There would be three generations of them in an exile of over forty years. When Robert I launched his guerilla warfare policy of sending his loyal friend William Douglas raiding and pillaging deep into northern England these new English homes were suddenly near the front lines of the war.

Though Robert I had recaptured most of Scotland by 1310 he had not gained the peace treaty which would recognize him as the legitimate holder of the crown of Scotland. That crown had been claimed by Edward I of England and by his successor son, Edward II, who dare not concede its loss. With the cold winter of 1309 the long Mediaeval Warm Period which had supported centuries of increasing food and population was abruptly ending but no one knew it. The war was about to continue intermittently during some of the worst weather of the Middle Ages with years of bitterly cold winters and record rainfall causing famine, disease and economic failure. Between long truces, the war continued fitfully on land in the Borders and Galloway, and on the waters of the North Sea in the east, and in the Irish Sea in the west. Neither side could achieve a compelling victory to force the other to sue for peace. Even Robert I's overwhelming defeat of Edward II's much larger army at Bannockburn in June of the rainy summer of 1314 was not enough; it merely forced the English to seek their own huge victory to counter it.

The Irish Sea and Ireland

The key to the western seas was Ireland. Whoever controlled nearby Ireland, in places only 20 miles from Scotland, had a major source of men and food to support and sustain them in war torn Scotland. As seafaring descendants of the Norse and of Somerled, the MacDonalds and the MacDougalls were both excellent choices to command the Irish Sea. Once it had been Angus Og MacDonald, but now John of Lorn who was receiving appointments as Edward's Admiral of the Western Seas in 1311, 1314 and 1315 though Edward had other Admirals too. In early 1315 John of Lorn was preparing to support an invasion of the west coast of Scotland from bases in Ireland and the Irish Sea but his sea campaign of 1315 never materialized. The climate was changing. Most of his supporting fleet was held up in Portsmouth by contrary winds and tempests until the money ran out.

At the same time, Robert I was arranging his own invasion of Ireland to be led by his mercurial brother, Edward Bruce. The Scots plan was to make Edward Bruce the High King of Ireland and to take over the English supply lines for themselves. The Scots struck first. On May 26, 1315 a Scottish fleet obtained from commerce combined with the galleys of the MacDonalds and the MacRuairies left Ayr and landed an estimated 6000 veteran Scots soldiers on the Antrim coast at Oldfleet just south of Larne. The same fleet that carried Edward Bruce's force to Ireland then proceeded against Argyll, where his older brother Robert I took the homage of the western lords.

At some point in this period Robert I attacked John of Lorn's fleet in the Irish Sea. Barbour, the poet, sixty years later composed a long history poem, *The Brus*, which asserted that King Robert dragged his ships across the Kintyre peninsula at Tarbert rather than sail around it so as to catch John of Lorn by surprise from behind. Having sailed up the entrance of Loch Fyne to Tarbert in Kintyre, he dragged his vessels westward for a little more than an English mile upon a slide composed of smooth planks of trees laid parallel to each other. He slid the ships westward across the narrow isthmus, just as the Norwegian King Magnus Barelegs had done in 1098. Admiral John of Lorn's fleet lay between the isles of Islay and Gigha facing the enemy fleet of Angus Og MacDonald to the southwest. King Robert's surprise attack from the rear defeated his fleet.



MacDowall

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

For a while it was Bruce's turn to command the sea lanes in the west. His Scottish privateers were smuggling provisions to Scotland and threatening shipping and supply lines in the Irish Sea. These pirates were such a blatant threat that John of Lorn wrote to Edward II before September 27, 1315 pleading for six ships to remain with him in Irish ports to harass the enemy pirates during the coming winter but he likely did not get them.

Meanwhile the unusually rainy and stormy weather of 1315 was destroying the harvests in Ireland; there would not be enough food for the coming winter. Then the harvest of 1316 failed when the grain would not ripen. In so much rain hay and straw for livestock could not be dried and brine could not be evaporated to produce the salt required to preserve meat and fish or to make cheese from the spoiling milk. People across northern Europe were starving to death during this "Great Famine of 1315-1317."

As social disorder increased and the population fell, people in their desperation refused to share food with children and the old, or even turned to cannibalism. Meanwhile the war dragged on but the famine favored neither side. In Ireland Edward Bruce's brutal tactic was to take a large number of men through a territory to strip it and destroy anything, or anyone, of value to his opponent with no quarter given. However, it was the local inhabitants who suffered the most from this total warfare. In Ireland there no discernible difference in the starvation endured by the armies of the Scots and Irish attackers from that of their English and Irish opponents. Their fighting quieted down for lack of food for their forces and from the inability to move heavy equipment and supplies over the sodden earth.

All remained quiet in Ireland until the long awaited good harvest of 1318 provided food for soldiers. Edward Bruce moved his army southward out of Ulster in an October campaign which ended in his own defeat and death at Fochart (Fauchart) at the mouth of a key pass near Dundalk on October 14, 1318. His head was cut off by the leader of the English forces and sent to Edward II while his body was carved into quarters and sent to the four corners of Ireland. He had been Robert I's last remaining brother. Along with him died important supporters including leading men from the MacDonalds and MacRuairies though their exact identities have been disputed.

At the time, Fochart was seen by the English as the great victory finally avenging Bannockburn. It was expected to be the turning point in the English-Scottish war but it turned out to be much less. While younger generations continued the fight of their fathers, a peace treaty would wait another ten years to be signed. John of Lorn would not live to see it.

John of Lorn's Last Days 1316-1317

In May 1316 John of Lorn had been forced by ill health to retire to London; "impotent in body and his lands in Scotland totally destroyed" according to his old friend and ally Sir Dungal MacDoual. John's eventual fate has been the subject of later accounts, mostly untrue. One untrue tale contended that he had been taken prisoner at the great naval battle of 1315 and imprisoned in Dumbarton Castle near Glasgow. Another account incorrectly states that he died in captivity. Another incorrect version states that he was released, probably because of ill health, and exiled to England, where he became a pensioner of the English monarch. Several sources also incorrectly say John of Lorn died in 1316.

Sir John of Lorn's actual fate was described in an English document dated March 4, 1327 recording a petition to King Edward III from the executor of Sir John's estate, his friend and ally Sir Dungal MacDoual of Galloway. This entry no. 912 from Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Vol. 3 reads:

912. The K. on the petition of Duugall Macdowelle executor of the late John of Argyll (Daragille), —shewing that the late K., in the 9th of his reign, granted John, who had then returned to London from serving in Ireland, (being impotent in body, and his lands in Scotland totally destroyed,) the sum of 200 marks yearly

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

for his support, of which, though he lived a year and half afterwards, he only drew 100 marks, and that divers creditors were pressing him as executor for John's debts,—grants him the arrears of the annuity for the payment of these. Westminster. [Close, 1 Edw. III. p. 1, m. 4-]

(CDC, 3, no. 912.)

John of Lorn died in September 1317 at Ospring in Kent, England, likely at the Maison Dieu of St. Mary pilgrim hospital, while on a religious pilgrimage to nearby Canterbury. John of Lorn was buried at the now long gone Greyfriars Church on Newgate Street, just inside the city walls of London where several royal family members of the era were buried. It is known that his father's sister Mary de Ergadia was buried there, and likely his own father Alexander as well.

The Next Forty Years

In 1328 King Robert I eventually got his peace treaty with England recognizing him as King of Scots. With it came agreement that his young son David would marry the King Edward II's daughter. Robert I died the following year. His son David became a child king and the children were married as agreed in the peace treaty. Within four years war again broke out when Edward Baliol, son of the deposed John Baliol's invaded Scotland with a small force of The Disinherited and used a new tactic of massed bowmen to decimate the Scots army with arrows at Dupplin Moor in August 1332. Edward Baliol then made himself King of Scots but his rule lasted only a short while before he was pushed back to Galloway. Then intermittent warfare with David II's supporters continued for years. However, as the new King, Edward Baliol did make a policy of restoring The Disinherited to their family properties seized in Robert I's forfeitures.

Records are scarce but John of Lorn's eldest son Ewen appears to have returned to Scotland as one of The Disinherited in Edward Baliol's invasion of 1332 and settled in Netherlorn in the 1330s. In 1336 the Chief of Clan Donald refused to agree to any restoration of the forfeited MacDougall lands which Robert I (Bruce) granted to the MacDonalds. However, John of Lorn had a second son named Alan whose son, John Gallda, is on record as serving in English forces garrisoning Aberdeen, Scotland in 1338. In 1346 David II invaded England and was almost immediately captured. David was held for ransom for ten years by his brother-in-law Edward III of England. While David II was held a pampered royal prisoner, he and John Gallda became close friends with John Gallda supporting his return to Scotland.

In the midst of David's captivity all of Europe was infested by the deadly Bubonic plague. This "Black Death" reached Bristol in the summer of 1348 carried by the fleas of rats arriving on the ships importing grain and supplies to Europe. It continued to spread and so decimated all levels of the population that trade, taxation, economic and social order were collapsing and Scotland was no exception. In 1357 Scotland agreed to pay a king's ransom that it did not have in order to allow David II to return home, John Gallda was then permitted to return to Argyll to end the long exile of the remaining Disinherited MacDougalls. David II restored to John Gallda what remained of the crown's holdings seized from the MacDougalls, including Dunstaffnage Castle and some of the old forfeited MacDougall lands in Lorn. The MacDougall exile was over.

John Gallda's marriage circa 1360 to David II's niece and Robert Bruce's granddaughter, Joanna, ended the old rivalry between the Bruce and MacDougall families. David II had no children and John Gallda's marriage to Joanna was hoped to provide male heirs to continue the Bruce royal dynasty but it produced only daughters. With the death of David II in 1371 the royal dynasty of Bruce ended and the Stewart dynasty began. The MacDougalls would remain a force in Argyll for centuries to come but they had lost much wealth, land, and power which they would never regain.



MacDougall

The MacDougalls in Argyll and in Exile (cont)

Meanwhile Galloway had been the site of much of the fighting in the past 50 years and the MacDowalls had been heavily involved. We hope to make this a subject of a future article.

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