

# CLAN HAMILTON, A HISTORY

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Since at least the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Hamiltons have played an important role in the history of Scotland. However, the precise origins of the family prior to 1300 have been lost in the mists of time. The name itself is derived from the place name Hameldon, which is believed to be a contraction of the Old Norse words ‘hamelan dene’ which meant ‘scarred hill’ or ‘crooked hill.’ The northern half of modern day England was settled and ruled by the Vikings in the ninth and tenth centuries. As a result, there are hundreds of towns, villages, hilltops and other sites that have Norse names, including the name Hameldon. It is believed that the first ‘Hameldons’ took their name from one or more of these sites. Around the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at least one of these Hameldon families settled in Scotland. In the Gaelic language that dominated Scotland at the time, the “d” sound would almost never appear in the middle or end of a word. In such cases, the “d” sound would be replaced by a “t” sound. Thus, in Scotland the name Hameldon became Hamilton.

The Hamiltons are believed to have descended from the Normans who invaded England in 1066 as part of the Norman Conquest. The Normans were Vikings who had established the province of Normandy in northern France only a century earlier. There is a strongly held belief that the Hamiltons descend from a prominent Norman family by the name of Beaumont. The Beaumonts became the Earls of Leicester in England and there was a manor called Hameldon within the shire of Leicester. In addition, the Beaumont and Hamilton coats of arms are strikingly similar. However, there are competing theories that have the Hamiltons descending from a number of other Norman families.

After Scotland’s King David I ascended the throne in 1124, he and his successors brought many Norman families to Scotland and granted them lands and titles. These included the Bruces, the Frasers, the Grahams, the Gordons, the Hays, the Lindsays, the Montgomeries and many others. The Hamiltons share a Viking/Norman heritage with all of these clans.

By the late 1200s, there were several Hamiltons who appear in the historical record. A certain Gilbert de Hamilton was granted the use of Cadzow Castle by King Alexander III sometime around 1270. Cadzow is an old Celtic-Brythonic name that is pronounced “KAH-dee-oh.” The castle had previously served as a royal hunting lodge for the ruling House of Canmore since the time of King David I. A certain Gilbert de Hamilton also served as a witness to a charter issued to Paisley Abbey by King Alexander in 1272. Whether or not these two Gilbert de Hamiltons are the same person is a source of debate.

Walter FitzGilbert de Hamilton first appears in the 1290s. The “FitzGilbert” name was the Norman way of saying “son of Gilbert.” Sometime around 1291, Walter FitzGilbert was given lands in Renfrewshire by his godfather and namesake, Walter Stewart, Earl of Menteith. The record indicates that Walter Stewart gave these lands as a “godbairn gift,” i.e. a gift to his god-son. In 1292, along with hundreds of other Scottish landowners, Walter FitzGilbert de Hamilton signed the first Ragman Roll – swearing allegiance to Scotland’s King John Balliol and to England’s King Edward Longshanks. In 1294, Walter served as a witness to a charter issued to Paisley Abbey by James Stewart, the Lord High Steward. In 1296, after Longshanks stripped King John Balliol of the Scottish crown, hundreds of landowning Scots, including Walter FitzGilbert, signed the second Ragman Roll, again swearing allegiance to Longshanks.

By 1307, the majority of Scots had resigned themselves to the fact that they were being ruled by the English. William Wallace had been executed a few years earlier, and the rebellion of Robert the Bruce had been quashed and the Bruce had fled to Ireland. Longshanks placed Scotland in the hands of a Scottish council under Sir Adam Gordon, whom Longshanks appointed Justiciar of Scotland. Adam Gordon was also the chief of the Clan Gordon. Sometime between 1307 and 1310, Walter FitzGilbert de Hamilton married Mary Gordon, one of Adam Gordon's daughters.

Longshanks died later in 1307. His son, Edward II, then became King of England. At the same time, Robert the Bruce returned to Scotland and renewed the war for Scottish independence. In 1310, Edward II appointed several Scottish governors to oversee the most important Scottish castles. Walter FitzGilbert de Hamilton was appointed governor of Bothwell Castle, probably through the influence of his father-in-law, Adam Gordon. At the same time, Robert the Bruce's campaign was meeting with much success. By 1312, the Bruce had gained control over most of Scotland. In that year, the Bruce issued a charter granting Walter FitzGilbert large tracts of land in Lanarkshire. However, the charter was not made public at the time and Walter continued to command Bothwell Castle for the English.

By the spring of 1314, the Bruce had recaptured every major castle in Scotland except for Stirling and Bothwell. Stirling Castle had been under siege by Bruce's forces for almost a year, but Bothwell Castle had been left alone. It was the one castle that the Bruce never attacked, and everyone wondered why this was the case. In June of 1314, England's Edward II marched into Scotland once again. This time, he was at the head of the largest invasion force that he or his father had ever assembled. His first objective was to march straight to Stirling and relieve the siege of Stirling Castle. Robert the Bruce staged his own forces just south of Stirling and directly in Edward's path, on a field called Bannockburn. The Battle of Bannockburn lasted two days, but by the second day it was obviously becoming a rout. The entire English army began to run in all directions. Many ran southwesterly toward Bothwell Castle which was only a short distance away.

The English assumed that Bothwell Castle would be a safe haven. They could easily hold out at this fortress until more English relief forces arrived. Hundreds of mounted knights arrived at Bothwell. The castle's governor, Walter FitzGilbert de Hamilton, allowed fifty of the most senior knights to enter the gates and directed his garrison troops to escort these knights to areas where they could rest and recover. He then closed and locked the doors on the unsuspecting English and declared them to be his prisoners. Shortly thereafter, Edward Bruce, brother of the King, arrived at Bothwell Castle. Hamilton himself walked out of the gates to greet Bruce and to announce the capture of the Bannockburn escapees.

Among Hamilton's prisoners were some of England's most prominent nobles. These prisoners were ultimately returned to the English in exchange for Scottish prisoners that included Robert the Bruce's wife, his daughter Marjory, his sister Christina, and many others. For this, the King of Scots remained grateful to the governor of Bothwell Castle for the rest of his life. Hamilton was thereafter knighted by the Bruce and was granted a royal charter for the use of Cadzow Castle "to be held in as ample a manner as Sir Gilbert his father had held the same." New charters were issued for his previously held lands in Lanark and Renfrew in the west, and he was granted additional landholdings in Kinneil and elsewhere in the east.

There is evidence that Walter may have had a younger brother named John FitzGilbert de Hamilton. From sometime around 1315 until at least 1332, John FitzGilbert was Bailie of Bute and Keeper of Rothesay Castle for his overlord, the Lord High Steward. His own coat of arms is the same as Walter FitzGilbert's with the addition of a chevron, presumably to differentiate his arms from those of his brother. In some charters he is listed as "John fitz Gilbert," while in others he is listed as "John fitz

Gilbert fitz Gilbert,” further demonstrating that there had probably been more than one Gilbert de Hamilton.

According to legend, King Robert the Bruce sent one Gilbert de Hamilton to England in 1325 to represent the Bruce at the English court. There, Hamilton got into a fight with a member of the powerful Despencer family and killed him. Hamilton and his squire fled toward Scotland, hotly pursued by members of the enraged Despencer family. At a certain point, their horses were tiring and Hamilton and his squire believed they were close to being captured. They were entering a forested area when Hamilton spotted two woodcutters cutting down an oak tree with a two-man frame-saw. Hamilton and his squire quickly exchanged clothes with the woodcutters, grabbed the saw and continued sawing away at the oak. As their enemies drew near, Hamilton noticed that his squire was looking decidedly nervous. Afraid that the squire might give them away with his frightened stares, Hamilton diverted the squire’s attention by shouting **“THROUGH!”** which in those days was the warning given when a tree was about to fall. The squire redirected his attention toward the oak, and the Despenchers rode off in further search of their quarry. The Hamiltons subsequently adopted the cry of **“THROUGH!”** as their motto or battle cry, and the clan crest contains an oak tree being cut by a frame-saw.

Yet another Gilbert de Hamilton appears in many accounts as the husband of Isabelle Randolph whose mother was a sister of Robert the Bruce and whose father was Thomas Randolph, Scotland’s Lord High Chamberlain. This Gilbert who supposedly married Robert the Bruce’s niece and the Gilbert who was cutting down the oak tree may, or may not, be one and the same. However, they are certainly of a later generation than the Gilberts described earlier, further bolstering the idea of multiple Gilbert Hamiltons.

When Robert the Bruce died in 1329, his son David Bruce (King David II) was five years old. Edward Balliol, son of the former King John Balliol, then invaded Scotland with an English army and seized the throne. Young King David was smuggled off to France for his own protection. In 1333 and 1334, Balliol began attacking all of Bruce’s former supporters. Walter FitzGilbert Hamilton’s son, David Hamilton, was laird of Cadzow at this time. When Balliol and the English attacked Cadzow Castle, Hamilton and his forces were unable to withstand the onslaught. Hamilton had to abandon the castle which Balliol then granted to one of his own supporters. David Hamilton continued to fight for King David’s cause and allied himself with King David’s cousin, Uilleam, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Ross. In 1336, Balliol was finally defeated and Hamilton was able to recover Cadzow Castle. King David Bruce returned from France in 1341 and was placed on the throne at the age of seventeen. David Hamilton became a member of the King’s council. The two Davids fought side by side against the English at the Battle of Durham in 1346 (what the English call the Battle of Neville’s Cross). The two of them were captured together and were imprisoned together in England for an extensive period.

David Hamilton married Margaret of Ross, daughter of Uilleam, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Ross. Cadzow Castle had suffered severe damage during the Balliol wars and David built a manor house on adjacent Cadzow lands. This area was known as “The Orchard” and the new manor house took on this name as well. The house included at least two towers and is sometimes referred to as a tower house. David and Margaret’s oldest child was a son, also named David. This second David Hamilton became the chief of what was now an ever expanding clan by the name of Hamilton. David married Janet Keith, daughter of Sir William Keith of Galston.

The eldest son of David and Janet, and subsequent chief of the clan, was John Hamilton. John married Janet Douglas, daughter of Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith. This marriage brought the Hamilton clan within what was called the “Douglas Alliance.” John and Janet Hamilton named their first born son

after Janet's father. This James Hamilton grew up in the shadow of the Douglas Alliance. He eventually married Janet Livingstone, daughter of the Earl of Douglas's steward.

It was around this time that Scotland's thirty year old King James I was released from the Tower of London after having been a prisoner of the English since he was twelve years old. The King was released on condition that twenty-one prominent Scots be sent to England to serve as hostages for their King. One of these prominent Scots was James Hamilton, chief of the Hamiltons. Hamilton was eventually released from captivity sometime around 1440. Unfortunately, he died shortly thereafter. His son, also named James, now became chief of the Hamiltons at the tender age of seventeen. He later married Euphemia Graham, widow of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Douglas. Their daughter, Elizabeth Hamilton, eventually married David Lindsay, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Crawford.

In 1443, one William Douglas became the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Douglas and chief of the Douglasses. James Hamilton, laird of Cadzow, became his closest friend and ally and one of the most important lairds within the Douglas Alliance. A civil war had broken out in Scotland between the Douglas Alliance and a group of families that had acquired power at the royal court during the minority of King James II. After a year of fighting, the Earl of Douglas essentially ruled Scotland in the name of the thirteen year old King. In 1445, at a King's Council convened by the Earl of Douglas, King James granted James Hamilton of Cadzow the title of Lord Hamilton. All of Hamilton's various lands and estates throughout the Clyde valley and elsewhere were consolidated into a new lordship to be called Hamilton. The town of Cadzow itself took on the name of Hamilton. The grant stated that the seat of the Hamilton lordship "shall be the manor house known as The Orchard."

When King James came of age, he declared war on the Douglasses. Douglas and Hamilton sent word to their clans and liegemen to assemble in arms. When the Douglas army was assembled, it rivaled the King's army in size. The Hamiltons were the largest contingent within the Douglas army, aside from the Douglasses themselves. Many intermediaries, wishing to avoid warfare, sought to arrange peace talks between the two sides. In February of 1452, the Earl of Douglas agreed to accept King James' invitation to have dinner with him at Stirling Castle. Douglas arrived in Stirling with only a fraction of his army and, after billeting his army in the town, he and Lord Hamilton made their way up the hill to Stirling Castle. Hamilton got into a scuffle with the guards at the gate because the guards had been ordered not to let Hamilton accompany Douglas into the castle. Douglas himself finally indicated to Hamilton that he would proceed alone. At dinner, a very heated argument ensued, during which the King drew a knife from his belt and stabbed Douglas in the neck. The King's aides then rushed in to finish the job.

Open warfare now resumed. The Hamiltons and the Douglasses burned the town of Stirling to the ground. The brother of the murdered 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Douglas now became the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl. A letter of defiance was nailed to the door of the Scottish Parliament, listing the crimes of King James II and declaring that he had forfeited his right to the crown. The letter was signed by the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Douglas and the Lord Hamilton. Although Lord Hamilton and the new Earl of Douglas had never cared for each other, Hamilton kept his clan within the Douglas Alliance out of a sense of loyalty to his friend, the murdered 8<sup>th</sup> Earl. The new Earl of Douglas made plans to go to England to meet with the English King and ask for military assistance against the King of Scots. Lord Hamilton objected to this on the grounds that public opinion was currently leaning in favor of the Douglas Alliance, but the Alliance would lose this popular support if they brought the English into the war. Hamilton also argued that the Alliance did not need assistance from England in the first place. This on-going argument between Hamilton and Douglas only served to further the tensions and the bad blood between the two men.

After months of fighting, King James II and his counselors decided that they could no longer continue this war with the Douglases. They sent envoys to seek a truce and to ask for peace talks with the leaders of the Douglas Alliance. The King and his council met with the Earl of Douglas, Lord Hamilton and others. One of the King's most trusted advisors was James Kennedy, Bishop of St Andrews. Bishop Kennedy became impressed with Lord Hamilton during these talks. Although nothing came of these negotiations, the Bishop sent word to Hamilton that Hamilton would be welcomed at the King's side at any time he wished.

When the King himself later took command of a siege of Abercorn Castle, a Douglas stronghold in eastern Scotland, the Earl of Douglas and the army of the Douglas Alliance marched toward Abercorn. Upon arrival, they could see that the castle was completely surrounded by the King's army. The Earl of Douglas had his forces set up camp a fair distance behind the King's forces. They remained encamped there for some time without taking any action. On one particular evening when the leaders of the Alliance were meeting with the Earl of Douglas in his tent, Lord Hamilton stated that he was tired of waiting around and demanded to know why they were not already attacking the siege forces. Douglas replied that the time was not right. Hamilton responded that the time would never be more right than it was at that moment. The longer they waited, he said, the more chance that the King's numbers would increase and his reinforcements would be able to form up behind the Douglas lines in the same way that Douglas was now positioned behind the King. The Earl of Douglas rose to his feet and leaned into Lord Hamilton's face as he responded angrily, "If you are tired or afraid, you may depart when you please!"

Without another word, Hamilton turned and walked out of the tent. If anyone was tired or afraid, he thought, it was the Earl of Douglas. More importantly, the Earl of Douglas had severely insulted Lord Hamilton and had done so in front of other members of the Alliance. The relationship between this Earl of Douglas and Lord Hamilton had never been the best, but Douglas had now destroyed it forever.

Hamilton spent the rest of that evening pondering the situation that he and his clan now found themselves in. Late that night, he gave orders to his chief lieutenants to rouse their men and be prepared to move out of the camp. Lord Hamilton was taking the Hamiltons over to the King's side. Hamilton sent messengers ahead to announce to the King and the Bishop of St Andrews that he was coming to pledge his fealty to the King. Though Hamilton remained cautious and suspicious, the King welcomed him warmly and the Bishop praised him highly. Throughout the rest of the night, other members of the Douglas Alliance also arrived at the King's camp and brought their clans with them. These other nobles and clan chiefs had always held Lord Hamilton in high esteem. They regarded him as one of the true leaders within the Douglas Alliance. They did not agree with the way that Lord Hamilton had been treated, and they did not choose to fight against the King's army if the Hamiltons were now a part of it.

When the Earl of Douglas awoke the next morning, he found that most of his army had deserted him. He gathered up what remaining forces he had and left the field. The King declared the siege of Abercorn to be a great victory, and he let it be known that he attributed this victory to the actions of Lord Hamilton whom he now considered a close friend and trusted servant of the crown. From this point forward, the Hamiltons became one of the most trusted and loyal allies of the Royal Stewart family. (The victory at Abercorn became a symbol of this trust and loyalty. Almost one hundred and fifty years later, King James VI bestowed the title of "Lord Abercorn" on Lord Hamilton's great-great-grandson in honor of the years of loyalty and service that the Hamiltons had provided to the royal family.)

The Royal Stewart family was descended in a female line from the famous Somerled, Lord of the Isles. Alexander Stewart, Lord High Steward, had married Somerled's great-granddaughter, Jane, sometime

around 1240. Lady Jane had inherited the Isle of Arran through her Somerled line. This inheritance then passed down through the Stewart line to King James III, who granted the Isle of Arran to his sister, Mary, along with the title Countess of Arran. The Countess of Arran eventually married Lord Hamilton as his second wife.

Lord Hamilton then spent a significant amount of time on the Isle of Arran, refurbishing the island's primary stronghold, Brodick Castle. The son of Lord Hamilton and the Countess of Arran was named James Hamilton. He became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Hamilton upon the death of his father. Through his mother, the young Lord Hamilton was a first cousin of the future King James IV. From that point on, and for several generations thereafter, the next in line to succeed to the throne after the reigning Stewart was a Hamilton. Historians refer to this as ***The Hamilton Temptation***. Despite centuries of murder and mayhem having been foisted upon the Kings and Queens of Scotland by close relatives and others, the Hamiltons never gave in to this temptation but remained fiercely loyal to their ruling cousins.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Hamilton eventually inherited the Isle of Arran from his mother. His cousin, King James IV, bestowed upon him the title of Earl of Arran in 1503. The Earl of Arran became a noted warrior, jouster, and military commander. In 1502, he had led a Scottish expedition to Scandinavia to assist the King of Denmark in a war against the Swedes and Norwegians. At an international tournament in 1503, the Earl of Arran won all of the archery contests, whether with longbow or crossbow, and whether on horseback or foot. In 1504, the King sent the Earl of Arran to the western isles to restore order among the MacDonalds, the MacLeods and the MacLeans who were suspected of being in league with the English. In 1513, the Earl of Arran was appointed Lord High Admiral of Scotland and commanded the Scottish fleet during another war with the English. As chief of the Hamiltons, he also led his clan against the Douglases in the bloody battle now known as "Cleanse the Causeway" on the High Street of Edinburgh in 1520.

When the seeds of the Protestant Reformation first took hold in Scotland, the Earl of Arran's nephew, Patrick Hamilton, was burned at the stake as Scotland's first Protestant martyr (1528). Only a few years later, one of the Earl's illegitimate sons, John Hamilton, became Archbishop of St Andrews and tried to reform the Catholic Church from within, but it was too late. The Reformation was already overwhelming Scotland. In the civil war that followed, the Archbishop was eventually hung from the gallows (1571).

Another of the Earl of Arran's illegitimate sons was Sir James Hamilton of Finnart, notoriously well known as the Bastard of Arran. An expert swordsman, he was recognized in battle for his defiance of anyone and anything. He would give all prisoners his "mark" – a swordcut across the face. James Hamilton of Finnart was also an accomplished engineer and architect, having studied these subjects while in school in France. At the request of King James V, he designed and built the royal palace and other buildings within the walls of Stirling Castle. He also redesigned and rebuilt Linlithgow Palace, including the elaborate fountains and statuary in the courtyard.

James Hamilton of Finnart also built the first castles in Scotland designed to withstand artillery fire. Two of these became Hamilton strongholds. One was Craignethen Castle, the other was a smaller castle built quite near the manor house known as The Orchard. This second castle was initially known as "the castle in the woods" and was meant to serve as a place of refuge if The Orchard should come under attack. The situation is confusing because the original Cadzow Castle had fallen into disuse by this time and ultimately crumbled away. This new "castle in the woods" later became known as Cadzow Castle. Finnart's father, the Earl of Arran, also had Finnart rebuild Kinneil House, transforming it from the simple keep that had been built in the 1200s into a significant manor house that included towers. Finnart

acquired Strathaven Castle (also known as Avendale Castle) for himself in 1534 and made major improvements to that castle as well. Finnart became a close friend and confidant of James V until the King later charged him with high treason. The Bastard of Arran remained defiant to the end and issued a demand for trial by combat. The King had him beheaded in 1540.

The Earl of Arran's oldest legitimate son succeeded him as 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arran and was in line for the Scottish throne after King James V. When Mary (future Queen of Scots) was born, he became her heir as well. Upon the death of James V, and while Mary was still an infant, the twenty-six year old Earl of Arran was named Regent of Scotland. The Arran Regency has been much criticized, but recent historians point out that much of that criticism was written by the Protestant revisionists of the 16<sup>th</sup> century who were trying to paint all Hamiltons and all supporters of Queen Mary with the same disdainful brush. More recent assessments view the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arran in a much different light and show him to have governed much better than most of the monarchs who came before or after him.

When the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arran negotiated Queen Mary's betrothal to the son of the King of France, the French King conferred upon him the Dukedom of Chatelherault (sha-tel-a-roe). Years later, after her French husband had died, Queen Mary and the Duke of Chatelherault had a falling out over her decision to marry Lord Darnley, but she and the Hamiltons were later reconciled. When Mary was being held prisoner at Lochleven Castle, the Hamiltons were among those who engineered her escape. A band of Hamiltons, led by the Duke's youngest son, Claud Hamilton, Lord Paisley, whisked the Queen across Scotland to the lands of the Hamiltons in the west. The Queen stayed for a time at Cadzow Castle and Craignethan Castle while she and the Hamiltons waited for the Gordons and the Campbells to join them. The chief of the Gordons was the Duke of Chatelherault's son-in-law while the chief of the Campbells was the Duke of Chatelherault's nephew. Unfortunately, the Queen's enemies engaged the Queen's forces at the Battle of Langside (1568) before the Clan Gordon was able to arrive from the north. When the Campbell chief suffered some kind of seizure at the very beginning of the battle, the Campbells immediately deserted the field and the Queen's cause. The Clan Hamilton was then left to face the Queen's enemies alone, and lost. James Douglas, Earl of Morton, subsequently became Regent and declared the Clan Hamilton to be an outlaw clan. He ordered that all of the clan's leaders be caught or killed "using whatever armed action may be necessary."

During this period, the various Regents who were ruling Scotland were all waging war on the Hamiltons. In the process, Cadzow Castle, Craignethan Castle, Brodick Castle and other Hamilton strongholds were demolished or rendered indefensible. The Orchard was burned to the ground in 1579 and Kinneil House was severely damaged as well.

King James VI eventually came of age was able to exercise his own authority. In 1585, he pardoned the Hamiltons and expressed appreciation for the loyalty that the clan had shown to his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. At the time, the chief of the clan was the Duke of Chatelherault's son, John Hamilton, 4<sup>th</sup> Lord Hamilton. King James made him a member of his Privy Council and Governor of Dumbarton Castle. In 1591, Lord Hamilton began the construction of Hamilton House on the site where The Orchard manor house had stood. He also made repairs to Kinneil House and Brodick Castle. In 1599, King James appointed him Lord High Chancellor and raised him to the title of Marquess of Hamilton. His nephew, James Hamilton, was created Lord Abercorn and eventually Earl of Abercorn. His cousin, Thomas Hamilton, became one of the King's closest advisors and was created Earl of Melrose and subsequently Earl of Haddington.

Elizabeth Tudor was Queen of England and Ireland during this period. Her closest heir was her cousin, Scotland's King James VI. By 1587, King James was already anticipating that he might become King

of England one day. He engaged a certain James Hamilton to go to Ireland and gather intelligence for him on the state of Anglo-Irish relations. This James Hamilton was the son of Hans Hamilton of Dunlop. He obtained a professorship at Trinity College in Dublin. While he became a successful and well regarded teacher, he was using this position as a cover while he served as King James' agent in Ireland.

In 1603, King James VI of Scotland became King James I of England and Ireland. He then assisted James Hamilton of Trinity College in acquiring lands in County Down. In 1609, Hamilton was knighted and in 1622 he was created Viscount Clandeboye in the peerage of Ireland. King James also conferred Irish lands and titles upon another James Hamilton, the Earl of Abercorn. The Earl of Abercorn was made Lord of Strabane in the Irish peerage in 1612. Strabane is in County Tyrone and the current Dukes of Abercorn in Ireland descend from this branch of the family. Descendants of the Earl of Abercorn, descendants of the Viscount Clandeboye, and descendants of many other Hamiltons who migrated to Ireland in the 1600s, eventually became the extremely large contingent that historians now refer to as "the Irish Hamiltons."

When James VI had gone to London to assume the English crown, he appointed the Marquess of Hamilton as his Royal Commissioner for Scotland. The Marquess was to act for the King in the King's absence. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Hamilton succeeded his father in this position of Royal Commissioner. In 1619, King James bestowed an additional title on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess. He made him Earl of Cambridge in the peerage of England. This appointment caused much furor in England because "Earl of Cambridge" had been an English title reserved for princes of the royal blood. When King James explained to the complainants that the Marquess of Hamilton WAS a prince of the royal blood, they objected that Hamilton could not be of royal blood because "he is a Scot!"

The son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess was known by the courtesy title of Earl of Arran. The young Earl grew up in Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran. As a teenager, his father brought him to England to live with his father at the royal court. There, the Earl of Arran became a close companion of the young Prince of Wales. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Hamilton died and was succeeded by the young Earl of Arran in March of 1625. The young Earl now became the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Hamilton. In the same month, King James VI died and was succeeded by the Prince of Wales, who then became King Charles I. Like his father and grandfather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Hamilton became chief of the Clan Hamilton and also the King's Royal Commissioner for Scotland. In addition, he became one of King Charles' closest advisors. The Marquess repeatedly tried to warn King Charles of the ill effects that his policies were having not only in Scotland, but in England and Ireland as well. Alas, the advice was of no avail. The Scottish revolt known as the Bishops Wars of 1639 and 1640 helped touch off the Irish Confederate War in 1641 and the English Civil War in 1642. All three of these wars soon merged into the conflagration known as the War of the Three Kingdoms.

In 1643, in the midst of this great war, the King raised the Marquess of Hamilton to the title of Duke of Hamilton, and bestowed upon him the additional title of Marquess of Clydesdale. In 1646, the King appointed the Duke to be Hereditary Keeper of Holyrood Palace and granted the Duke his own apartments there. During the War of the Three Kingdoms, the Duke of Hamilton led a Scottish army in support of the King, but was defeated by Oliver Cromwell at the Battle of Preston and was taken prisoner. Like his King, Hamilton was later beheaded by Cromwell.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Hamilton was succeeded by his younger brother, William Hamilton, Earl of Lanark. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Hamilton raised an army (consisting largely of Hamiltons) to assist the young King Charles II in his attempt to regain the throne. With the young King at his side, the Duke of Hamilton

and his army invaded England in 1651. The Hamiltons fought valiantly against Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester. The Duke himself died of mortal wounds he sustained while leading a charge against the overwhelmingly larger English forces.

Neither the 1<sup>st</sup> nor 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke left any direct male heir. So the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke's daughter, Lady Anne Hamilton, became Duchess of Hamilton in her own right. She was thrown out of Hamilton House when it was confiscated by the Cromwell government. She moved to Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran. Soon, however, she felt the need to have a residence on the mainland as well. She moved to Strathaven Castle in Lanarkshire, a former Hamilton stronghold that was already becoming a ruin. She rotated residence between Brodick and Strathaven throughout the remainder of the Cromwellian period. When she later regained Hamilton House, she began the reconstruction project that would eventually transform Hamilton House into Hamilton Palace. The Duchess married William Douglas, Earl of Selkirk. He was allowed to use the title of Duke of Hamilton during his lifetime, provided that he use the surname Hamilton (instead of Douglas). Their eldest son, James Hamilton, used the subsidiary or courtesy title of Earl of Arran.

King James VII of Scotland (James II of England and Ireland) was overthrown in 1688 when Prince William of Orange, commander-in-chief of the Netherlands republic, invaded England at the invitation of a group of English officials. The English called it a "glorious revolution" in which "not a drop of blood was spilt." However, several drops of blood were spilt in Scotland and Ireland. The supporters of King James and the Royal Stuart family became known as Jacobites while the supporters of William of Orange were known as Williamites or Orangemen. The most extensive fighting took place in Ireland from 1689 to 1692. Claud Hamilton, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Abercorn, along with the brothers Richard and Anthony Hamilton, became highly regarded generals in the Jacobite army while Gustavus Hamilton and Hugh Hamilton (whose ancestors had fought for Gustavus Adolphus in Sweden) were noted generals in the Williamite army. Gustavus Hamilton was later created Viscount Boyne.

In Scotland, the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton supported William of Orange. The Duke led a large contingent of Scottish nobles to Whitehall to meet with Prince William. The Duke then presided as these nobles met to discuss Scotland's fate. This resulted in the Duke delivering to William an invitation to take over the Scottish government. The Duke then returned to Scotland and was elected president of a convention which declared that James VII had abandoned the throne and William of Orange should be offered the crown. William accepted the Scottish crown in May of 1689.

King William appointed the Duke of Hamilton as his Lord High Commissioner for Scotland. While the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton had become Williamites, their son, the Earl of Arran, remained a devoted Jacobite. He had been a close friend and advisor to the now deposed King James, and he was suspected of being involved in several Jacobite conspiracies to restore the Stuarts to the throne. When he was first brought to London and introduced to the new King William of Orange, the young Earl of Arran boldly stated: "I bring greetings from my own King, King James, the rightful monarch."

The Earl of Arran's father died in 1694. The Earl's mother, who was still the actual holder of the Dukedom, resigned the Dukedom to her son in 1698. Thus the feisty Jacobite Earl of Arran then became the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. As the premier peer of Scotland and a friend of the exiled King, and with a not-so-distant claim to the Scottish throne himself, Hamilton continued to serve as a thorn in King William's side. At one point, King William raged, "I wish to heaven that Scotland were a thousand miles off, and that the Duke of Hamilton was king of it! Then I should be rid of them both!"

In 1702, William of Orange's sister-in-law, Anne Stuart, ascended to the thrones of Scotland, England and Ireland as Queen Anne. She immediately embarked on a project to unite Scotland and England into one nation. Between 1705 and 1707, the Scottish Parliament hotly debated a proposed treaty called the Treaty of Union. If the treaty was approved, the Scottish and English parliaments would be dissolved, there would be one combined parliament in London, and England and Scotland would be combined into a new country to be called the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Jacobites and Scottish patriots argued against the treaty. The 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton was viewed as the leader of the patriot cause and another Hamilton, John Hamilton (Lord Belhaven), is credited with delivering the most passionate and memorable speeches against the treaty. After much controversy (and a fair amount of rioting throughout Scotland), the treaty was approved. The United Kingdom of Great Britain was established on May 1, 1707.

In 1712, the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton was challenged to a duel by a life-long enemy. The duel was to be fought with swords. The two parties, accompanied by their seconds and other witnesses, met in Hyde Park, Westminster. Hamilton mortally wounded his opponent, but was then attacked from behind by the opponent's second and was mortally wounded himself. He was succeeded in the Dukedom by his eldest son.

Several Jacobite risings occurred after the Union of 1707. Anthony Hamilton, who had served as a Jacobite general in Ireland in 1689, subsequently served King James VII's court in exile in France. He assisted in the planning of the failed attempt to invade Scotland in 1708. Lieutenant General George Hamilton of the British army (a cousin of the Earls of Haddington) surrendered his commission in order to take command of the Scottish Jacobite army during the rebellion of 1715. King James VIII (known as the Old Pretender) landed in Scotland but the 1715 rebellion failed. The 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton went to Rome to secretly meet with the Old Pretender in 1726. The secret meeting was discovered and the Duke had to endure the wrath of King George I.

When Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) landed in Scotland in 1745, the Prince spent time at Hamilton Palace with the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. The Prince was only twenty-five years old while the Duke was only twenty-one. The Duke seemed to be weighing his options before making a full commitment to the Prince. In the meantime, Jacobite captains like John Hamilton of Leith and George Hamilton of Redhouse (grand-nephew and namesake of the Lieutenant General) fought bravely on behalf of Prince Charles. Other Hamiltons fought just as bravely for King George and the British army. One of these was Lieutenant General Archibald Hamilton who commanded the King's 14<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Dragoons, otherwise known as Hamilton's Dragoons.

In 1752, the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton married the Irish actress and celebrated beauty Elizabeth Gunning. As Duchess of Hamilton, Elizabeth was chosen to serve as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III. Elizabeth's two sons by the Duke eventually became the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Dukes of Hamilton. After the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke passed away, Elizabeth remained the Dowager Duchess of Hamilton. She continued to use the surname of Hamilton and the title of Duchess even after she remarried. Her second husband was the son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll. By then, Elizabeth had become a favorite of both Queen Charlotte and King George and was a constant fixture at the royal court. The King and Queen eventually decided that she should have a title and estate in her own right. In a deliberate reference to the Hamilton origins, Elizabeth was granted the ancient manor of Hameldon in Leicestershire. Elizabeth became Baroness Hamilton of Hameldon. Her second husband eventually succeeded to his father's title and became 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll. Two of Elizabeth's sons from this second marriage became the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Dukes of Argyll. Thus, the Baroness Hamilton of Hameldon became the mother of four separate Scottish Dukes.

The eldest son of the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton and the Baroness of Hameldon was James Hamilton who became the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. The 7<sup>th</sup> Duke fell heir to a strange inheritance in 1761. Since 1633, the chief of the Clan Douglas had held the title of Marquess of Douglas. In 1703, Archibald Douglas, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Douglas, had been raised to the title of Duke of Douglas. Queen Anne had granted Archibald the title of Duke for his lifetime only, i.e. the title was not to be inheritable. So when the Duke died childless in 1761, the title of Duke of Douglas died with him. However, the title of Marquess of Douglas was able to be passed on and went to Archibald's nearest male heir, his distant cousin (second cousin, twice removed) James Hamilton, 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. So the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton became the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Douglas. Upon his death, his heir simultaneously became 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton and 5<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Douglas.

For at least four generations, those descendants of Duchess Anne who inherited the Dukedom used the surname of Hamilton. Most of the other branches of the family (descendants of Anne's younger children) used the hyphenated surname Douglas-Hamilton. It was sometime after the Dukes of Hamilton became the Marquesses of Douglas that they also adopted the hyphenated Douglas-Hamilton name.

The last of the Jacobite line of Stuart kings was Bonnie Prince Charlie's younger brother, Henry Benedict Stuart. After Henry died in Rome in 1807, Alexander Hamilton, 10<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton, believed that he was the rightful heir to the Scottish throne. He undertook yet another great expansion of Hamilton Palace, turning it into the largest and most majestic non-royal palace in all of Europe. The Duke himself, of course, intended it to serve as a "royal" palace, fit for the heir to the Scottish throne. He also built the nearby Hamilton Mausoleum and had his ancestors placed there. In addition, he built a hunting lodge in the surrounding parklands and called it Chatelherault.

William Douglas-Hamilton, 12<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton, died in 1895 without a direct male heir. His only child was a daughter, Lady Mary Louise Douglas-Hamilton. The 12<sup>th</sup> Duke's nearest male heir was Lieutenant Alfred Douglas-Hamilton of the Royal Navy. The 12<sup>th</sup> Duke and the younger Alfred were fourth cousins (Alfred descended from a younger son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke). The 12<sup>th</sup> Duke had become close with his young heir and had tried to arrange a marriage between Alfred, his heir, and Lady Mary, his daughter. This plan did not work out, however. When her father died, Lady Mary inherited much of her father's estate, including Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran, but Alfred inherited the Dukedom and Hamilton Palace. In 1906, Lady Mary became Duchess of Montrose when she married the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Montrose. She and her husband took up residence at Brodick Castle. After the Duchess passed away in 1957, Brodick Castle was acquired by the National Trust for Scotland.

Lieutenant Alfred Douglas Douglas-Hamilton became 13<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. During World War I, the Duke invited the Royal Navy to use Hamilton Palace as a naval hospital. The Duke and his family moved out of the Palace and took up residence at Dungavel House, a Hamilton hunting lodge and summer home near the old Strathaven Castle, about six miles south of the town of Hamilton. After the war, the Palace was in less than pristine condition. In addition, its foundations were soon found to be suffering subsidence from the coal mining being conducted beneath it. The Palace finally had to be demolished in 1927 and the Duke's family remained at Dungavel.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Duke had four sons, all of whom joined the Royal Air Force. In 1933, the eldest son, Douglas Douglas-Hamilton, was the first pilot to fly a plane over Mount Everest. By the time World War II broke out, all four sons had attained the rank of Squadron Leader or higher, an accomplishment that is still noted in British military history. While still serving in the RAF, Douglas Douglas-Hamilton

became 14<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton upon the death of his father in 1940. At the close of the war, he left the RAF with the rank of Air Commodore. In 1947, he purchased Lennoxlove House in East Lothian, just south of the town of Haddington. He then moved his family from Dungavel, and Lennoxlove has been the seat of the Dukes of Hamilton since then.

Since long before the time of King Malcolm Canmore, the honor of carrying the Scottish Crown and placing it on the head of a new monarch was the hereditary right of the Mormaers of Fife and the later Earls of Fife. Because of a failure in the Fife line, this honor passed to the Lords of Abernethy and then to the Earls of Angus who later became the Marquesses of Douglas and then the Dukes of Hamilton. Therefore, at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953, the Crown of Scotland was carried by the 14<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. The Dukes of Hamilton continue to serve as the bearers of the Scottish crown at official ceremonies.

Angus Douglas-Hamilton became 15<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton upon the death of his father in 1973. He had studied engineering at Oxford and been a Flight Lieutenant in the RAF, flying reconnaissance missions for British forces in Malaya in the early 1960s. He had later served as a test pilot for Scottish Aviation, Ltd. By the late 1960s, he had become an accomplished race driver and held several land speed records and racing titles. He later became heavily involved in the design and development of various military vehicles and weapons systems. The 15<sup>th</sup> Duke passed away in 2010. The current Duke is Alexander Douglas-Hamilton, 16<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. The Duke's seat is Lennoxlove House in East Lothian in Scotland. Traditionally, the Duke's son and heir uses the courtesy title Marquess of Douglas and Clydesdale.

In Ireland meanwhile, John Hamilton, 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Abercorn, was created Marquess of Abercorn in 1790 by King George III. His grandson, James Hamilton, became 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Abercorn in 1818. He was appointed to Prince Albert's privy council and became a prominent member of Queen Victoria's court. In 1868, Victoria raised him to Duke of Abercorn and appointed him Viceroy of Ireland. When the partition of Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland (the future Republic of Ireland) took place in 1921, James Hamilton, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Abercorn, was appointed as the first Governor of Northern Ireland. He served in that capacity until 1945. The current Duke is James Hamilton, 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Abercorn. The Duke's seat is Baronscourt in County Tyrone in Northern Ireland. Traditionally, the Duke's son and heir uses the courtesy title Marquess of Hamilton.

After the 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Hamilton married Lady Mary Stewart (James II's daughter) way back in 1474, they not only became the parents of the son who became the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Arran. Their daughter, Elizabeth Hamilton, married Matthew Stewart, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Lennox. Elizabeth Hamilton's great-grandson by this marriage was Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, who married Mary, Queen of Scots. Queen Mary's son (Elizabeth Hamilton's great-great-grandson) became King James VI of Scotland and King James I of England. The current Queen Elizabeth and her son Prince Charles descend from King James and are therefore descendants of the Hamiltons. In addition, James Hamilton, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Abercorn, was the father of Lady Cynthia Hamilton who married Albert Spencer, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Spencer, in 1919. The Earl of Spencer and Lady Cynthia were the grandparents of Lady Diana Spencer who became Princess of Wales when she married Prince Charles in 1981. So the modern day Prince William and his brother Prince Harry are descended from the Hamiltons on both sides of their family.