

THE FAMILY OF BRUCE

The first Bruce in Britain, known as Robert de Bruis was from Brix, between Cherbourg and Valognes, in Normandy. He accompanied William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, to England in 1066 and though he died soon after, his sons inherited great possessions in Surrey and Dorset. In 1124, When Prince David, the most powerful baron in England, and youngest son of Queen Margaret, went to Scotland to become King David I, he was accompanied by his companion-in-arms Robert de Bruis - known as Robert the Cadet. There are various spelling versions of Bruce (i.e., Bruis, Brix, Brus); and they are all part of the name of Bruce.

King David conferred the strategic Lordship of Annandale upon Robert de Bruis. In the continuing conflict between English and Scottish rulers, Bruis and his sons were torn between rival feudal loyalties and often were forced to choose between their lands in England and those in Scotland. Increasingly, Scotland became the focus of this branch of the Bruce family, and Robert, fourth Lord of Annandale, cemented ties to the royal family by marrying Isobel, a niece of King William the Lion. It was through this marriage that the Bruce family gained its claim to the Scottish throne. The deaths of Alexander III in 1286 and of his only direct heir in 1290 brought Scotland to civil war. The death of Margaret, "Maid of Norway", granddaughter of Alexander III, made the grandfather of Robert the Bruce a claimant to the Scottish Crown along with John Balliol and John Comyn.

In 1305 Robert the Bruce began the great campaign he led for 23 years. He was crowned King of Scots in 1306. His great victory at Bannockburn in 1314, insured Scottish freedom, finally in 1328 when the Treaty of Northampton at last gave to Scotland everything for which The Bruce, known as "Good King Robert", had fought.

When King Robert's only son, David II, died without any heirs in 1370, the first Stewart monarch succeeded to the throne. This was achieved through the son of Marjory, Bruce's daughter. Thomas Bruce, claiming close kinship with the Royal family organized, with Robert the Steward (later King Robert II), a rising in Kyle against the English in 1334. As payment due to his services he received part of the Crown Lands of Clackmannan and from this branch are descended the Earls of Elgin. Sir Edward Bruce was made commendator of Kinloss Abbey and appointed a judge in 1597. In 1601, he was appointed a Lord of Parliament with the title 'Lord Kinloss'. When James VI proceeded to England in 1603, to claim that throne, Bruce accompanied him. Subsequently he was named judicial officer as Master of the Rolls. In May 1608 he was granted a barony as Lord Bruce of Kinloss.

The 7th Earl of Elgin was the famous diplomat who spent much of his fortune rescuing the marbles of the Parthenon, also known as the Elgin Marbles, which were becoming ruins. His son became a much respected and eminent diplomat and Governor General in Canada. He also led two very important missions to the Emperor of China. Between 1894 and 1899 the 9th Earl of Elgin was Viceroy of India.

The present day chief, Sir Andrew Bruce, is the 11th Earl of Elgin and 15th Earl of Kincardine, Knight of the Thistle, CD, JL, JP, and has been prominent in Scottish current affairs throughout his life. He has held a number of business appointments, was Grand Master Mason of Scotland, and served for many years as the Deputy Grand Master and Governor of the Royal Order of Scotland. Since 1970, he has been Honorary Colonel of the Elgin Regiment (RCAC). He also has served as Brigadier in the Royal Company of Archers (the Queen's Body Guard in Scotland), and as Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs. Lord Elgin was appointed as a Knight of the Thistle in 1981, and in the same year was awarded the Canadian Forces Decoration.

From their beginning in Normandy in the 11th century, the Bruces rose to become Kings of Scots and great nobles of the realm. No other Scottish family could claim so illustrious an ancestor as Robert the Bruce, and it is to his success against Edward I and Edward II that Scotland owed its independence from English rule.



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An Cìrean Gearr Cinnidh
FUIMUS is Latin for
"We Have Been"