



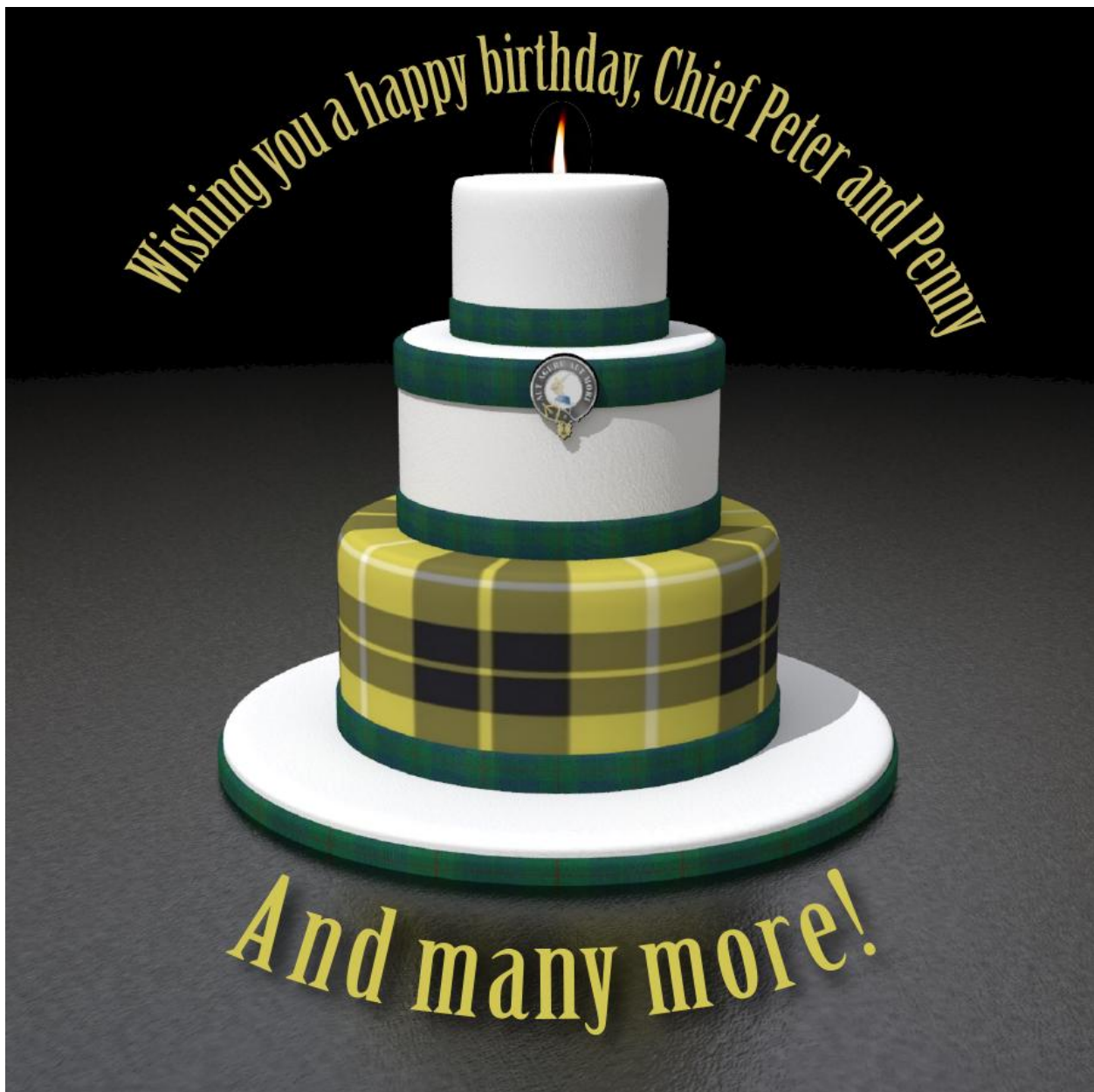
Clan Barclay International Newsletter  
*Aut Agere Aut Mori*

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# Barclay Broadside

February 2022





February is an important month for Clan Barclay! 26 February is the birthday of our beloved Chief Peter and his twin sister, Penny. The clan sends our very best wishes, Peter and Penny. Here are just a few of our birthday greetings:

Dear Chief Peter and Penny - Sending you very best wishes for a very happy day on your 84th birthdays - from **Fiona McCaul** (I have just discovered I am your 4th cousin, once removed, through James of Knockleith's sister Barbara.)

Hau'oli lā hānau e Peter ali'i o Barclay & Hau'oli lā hānau e Penny! Translation: Happy birthday chief Peter of Barclay & Happy birthday Penny! Aloha nui! **Nā Kekua** (Much love) (**Kekua's**)

Dear Penny and Peter, wishing you both the happiest of birthdays, **Tim Barclay, Clan Filidh**, and family (Australia)

I am not exaggerating when I say I think I am probably the #1 Clan Barclay enthusiast on the planet! As such, I am so grateful for the honor to have become acquainted with you both. Chief Peter and Penny, I hope your birthday is bright and happy. I hope you feel surrounded by love and best wishes. I hope you know you are appreciated both personally and for our shared family heritage—all the ones who came before us, the ones who connect us, and the ones who will come after. May you have the loveliest of birthdays and many happy returns of the day. And here's to another happy, healthy, safe trip around the sun.

Yours aye,

**Leah Parker, Clan Maor**, One of the very many descendants of Robert Barclay of Rowan County, NC, USA (1722/23-1788)



**BALVAIRD CASTLE**  
PERTHSHIRE

Peter Barclay of Towie Barclay  
London, England

*February 13, 2022*

Dear Towie,

I hope that my letter reaches you well, even amidst these troubled times. I understand it will soon be your birthday, and I am writing to wish you many happy returns. I understand it is your sister Pennys's birthday too. Please convey my birthday wishes to her as well.

As a descendant of the Barclays, I have watched with great enthusiasm as engagement with Clan Barclay has been reenergised through your efforts and those of Leah Parker, Clan Maor. A Clan and its Chief represent a line of unbroken continuity from the past to the present — it is a solemn duty you hold, but one that inspires us to make proud those whose blood, sweat, and tears, gave us this, our chance to live. Thank you for your years of service to your people.

I hope I have the opportunity to meet you in person at some point soon. It would be an honour.

In the meantime, I wish you all the best for this your 84<sup>th</sup> year.

Yours aye,

*Brady Brim-DeForest of Balvairst Castle*

# Calling All Far Flung Barclays!

We will feature some Barclays who are in the farthest corners of the earth, far away from Scotland, Ireland, and England, in an upcoming issue of the *Barclay Broadside*. I'm looking at you, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, South America, the Caribbean, Asia, and other far flung places! Please email me at [leah@clanbarclayinternational.org](mailto:leah@clanbarclayinternational.org) and tell your story in a few sentences. Where do you live (city and country)? When did your Barclays go to that part of the world and why? Where did they come from (Scotland, Ireland, England)? Of the people whose stories we feature, we will name the one who lives farthest away from Towie Barclay Castle (as the crow flies). Is that Barclay you? We look forward reading your stories!

## Message from the the Maor

*Maor*/mu:r/- clan factor (doer/maker), supervisor, officer

By Leah Parker, MAEd

Greetings Clan Barclay! We have some dates you may want to put on your calendar:

- From Anne McDonald of the Captain Barclay Allardice Society: "I am pleased to advise that the arrangements are in hand for our 2022 Captain Barclay Allardice Society Lunch, which will be held on Sunday 4th September 2022 at 1 pm at the Tor na Coille Hotel, Banchory, (Royal Deeside) Aberdeenshire . The cost will be £35 per person. Our guest speaker this year is Dr Keith Stewart, the former vice chairman of the Stonehaven Heritage Society, who will give us an illustrated talk on the connection between the Barclay Family and Stonehaven as reflected in the street names of Stonehaven." Please email Anne at [a.mcdonald0775@googlemail.com](mailto:a.mcdonald0775@googlemail.com) if you plan to attend so that she can reserve a spot for you. Anne informed me that you can pay the hotel directly by credit card or mail her a cheque a few weeks before the lunch. More information regarding the registration process coming soon...
- If all goes well, it looks like the games will go ahead this summer in Scotland. If you can, you may want to attend the games where the Towie Pipe Band, led by our own Bill Barclay, will be. Whether you are able to attend or not, check out Bill Barclay and the Towie Pipe band

[here](#). If you want to see him in person, you can find him and the Towie Pipe Band at these games:

- Forres on 2 July
  - Dufftown on 30 July
  - Aboyne on 6 August
  - Ballater on 11 August
  - Lonach on 27 August
- Bill will be performing solo at these games:
    - Oldmeldrum on 18 June
    - Tomintoul on 16 July
  - Do you know of any upcoming events that would be of interest to Clan Barclay? Please email me at [leah@clanbarclayinternational.org](mailto:leah@clanbarclayinternational.org) to let me know.

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## Presidential Connections

By Leah Parker

On 21 February 2022, Americans will observe Presidents Day. I know what you are thinking: A clan as illustrious as Clan Barclay must have connections to the office of the US president. Well, you are correct! I know of at least two such connections.

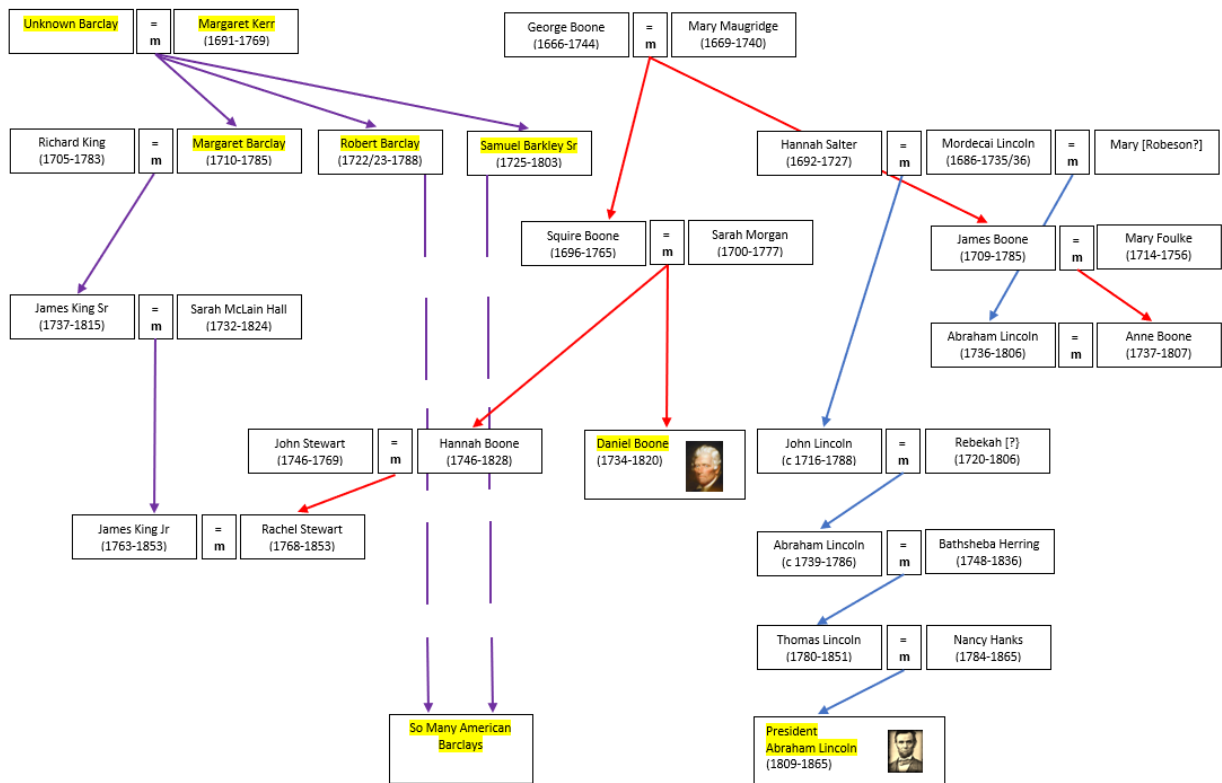
The first is to Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln is one of America's most highly regarded and beloved presidents. He was born on 12 February 1809 in Kentucky, the second child of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln. The young family moved from the slave state of Kentucky to the free state of Indiana in 1806. It is thought that the move was partly because they preferred to live in a state where slavery was not legal and partly because Kentucky land laws favored the wealthy class of large landowners, of whom Thomas was not a member. Kentucky legally observed primogeniture, and as a second son, Thomas missed out on the family's Kentucky land holdings.

Abraham Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died in 1818 when Abraham was only nine years old. Just over a year later, his father was remarried to Sarah Bush Johnson, a widow with three of her own children, and Abraham became close to his stepmother. The family farmed their land and took on

other jobs and chores for additional money. Abraham gave his father his earnings until he was 21, but he intensely disliked the physical labor he took on for his family and found it monotonous. Instead, he preferred reading and studying.

In 1830, several members of the Lincoln family, including Abraham, moved to Illinois. Largely self-educated, Abraham became a lawyer there, a member of the Illinois House of Representatives, a member of the US House of Representatives for the 7<sup>th</sup> District of Illinois, and then the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America from 1861 to 1865. He saw the country through a civil war and was assassinated in the nation's capital, Washington DC, on 15 April 1865, shortly after the conclusion of the war.

Much more can be said about Lincoln. Enough tomes have been written about him to fill a library. But let us turn now to our Barclay connection. Robert Barclay (1722/23-1788) and Samuel Barkley Sr (1725-1803), who were born in Colonial New Jersey and died in Rowan County, North Carolina, had an older sister, Margaret Barclay King (1710-1785). (Yes, they adopted different spellings for their surname.) Margaret and her husband, Richard King (1705-1783), also moved from Colonial New Jersey to Rowan County, North Carolina. Their grandson, James King Jr (1763-1853), was married to Rachel Stewart (1768-1853), the niece of American folk hero Daniel Boone (1734-1820). (More on the connection between the Barclay and Boone families in a future edition of the *Barclay Broadside*.) Daniel Boone's cousin, Anne Boone (1737-1807), was married to Abraham Lincoln (1736-1806), great-granduncle of President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).



Lincoln/Boone/Barclay Connections | Courtesy: Leah Parker

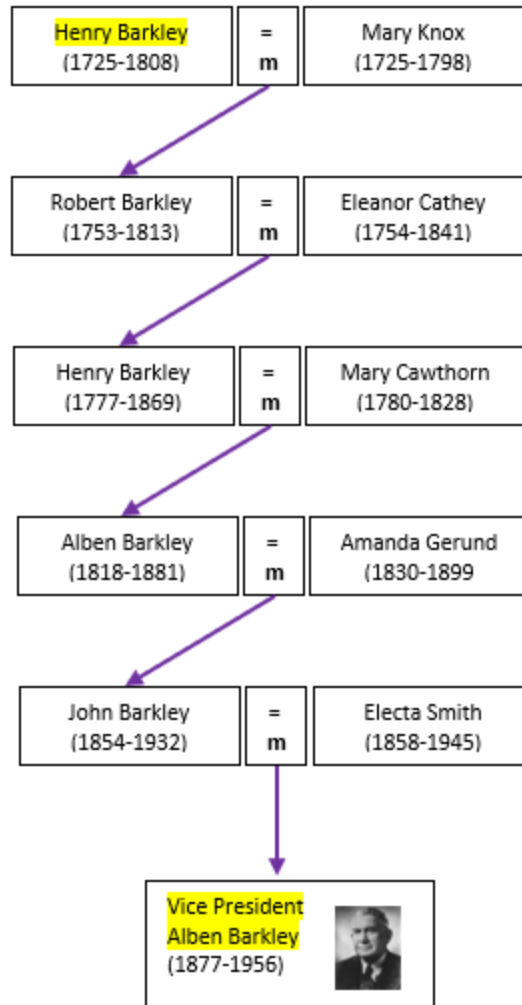
There are many descendants of Margaret Barclay King (1705-1783), Robert Barclay (1722/23-1788), and Samuel Barkley Sr (1725-1803) in the US today. Robert Barclay (1722/23-1788) was my 5 times great-grandfather. So if you are keeping score, President Abraham Lincoln was the great-grandnephew of the husband of the first cousin once removed of the wife of my second cousin five times removed. That just rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?

The second clan connection to the office of the president is to Alben William Barkley, the 35<sup>th</sup> Vice President of the United States. Like Lincoln, Barkley was born in Kentucky. Alben Barkley was born on 24 November 1877 to John Wilson Barkley and Electa Eliza Smith barkley. Growing up, he worked on his family farm and attended school between the fall harvest and spring planting.

After high school, Alben enrolled in the seminary at Marvin College, a Methodist school in Clinton, Kentucky. Although he finished his course of study, he did not pursue a position in the clergy. Instead, also like Lincoln, he started his career as a lawyer. He began as a law clerk for Charles Wheeler and went on to clerk for Judge William Sutton Bishop and former

congressman John Kerr Hendrick. Alben studied law while completing these duties, was admitted to the bar in 1901, and continued studying law at the University of Virginia Law School until 1902. He went on to become a member of the US House of Representatives for Kentucky's 1<sup>st</sup> District, a member of the US Senate from Kentucky, the Chairman of the Senate Democratic Caucus, the Senate Minority Leader, and the Senate Majority Leader. He was the 35<sup>th</sup> Vice President from 1949 to 1953 under President Harry S. Truman and was succeeded by Richard Nixon. Additionally, the beautiful [Lake Barkley](#) in Kentucky was named in honor of our Alben Barkley.

Vice President Alben Barkley was the three times great grandson of Henry Barkley (1725-1808) and Mary Knox Barkley (1725-1798).



Henry Barkley/ VP Alben Barkley Connection | Courtesy: Leah Parker



Interestingly, like Margaret Barclay King, Robert Barclay, and Samuel Barkley Sr (mentioned above), we find Henry Barkley and Mary Knox Barkley in Rowan County, North Carolina. We have descendants of brothers Robert and Samuel Sr and of Henry in the Barclay Surname Project who have completed Y-DNA testing. The results show us that although they were in the same place at the same time with the same surname, brothers Robert and Samuel Sr were not genetically related to Henry. Male descendants of brothers Robert and Samuel Sr fall in the I-P37 haplogroup, and Y-DNA data indicates they may have descended from a cadet branch of the Perceton/Pierston line of the Scottish Barclays. Descendants of Henry, on the other hand, fall in the R-M269 haplogroup, meaning that brothers Robert and Samuel Sr did not have a common male ancestor with Henry for tens of thousands of years. Given the numbers of Barkleys in the same haplogroup as Henry without any apparent connection to Scotland at all, and with close genetic relationships to a large number of people not surnamed Barkley, it is almost certain that Henry's male ancestry was English and, very probably, hailed from somewhere in or very near to Lancashire, where a large family of Barkleys unrelated to those in Gloucestershire and Scotland are found from an early date (13th century). Their name is probably derived from one of the other places in England known or once known as Berkeley, perhaps either of those in Somerset or Suffolk but more likely further north.

Records from North Carolina related to the families of Margaret, Robert, Samuel Sr and of Henry can be found in the Barclay file of the McCubbins Collection [here](#). These records were hand-typed and compiled years ago. They are a bit unorganized, but I find the Barclay file to be a treasure trove of information. Note that surname spellings Barclay, Barkley, and Bartley are used interchangeably in the records. Email me at [leah@clanbarclayinternational.org](mailto:leah@clanbarclayinternational.org) if you would like more information about what we have learned regarding the ancestry of Margaret, Robert, Samuel Sr, or Henry through documentary and DNA evidence.

Happy Presidents Day and enjoy your day off if you get one! I hope you are as proud of your Barclay/Barkley ties as I am! Please email me at [leah@clanbarclayinternational.org](mailto:leah@clanbarclayinternational.org) or tell the story on our [Facebook](#) page if you know of other presidential connections. (Please, though, let's focus on history and genealogy and keep politics out of the discussion.)

Yours aye,

Leah

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# Filidh's Feature

*Filidh* /fɪlɪ/- clan genealogist, historian, storyteller, poet

By Tim Barclay

## The Weird of Towie

Among the more legendary aspects of many Scottish family histories are the often-encountered tales concerning an ancestor supposedly connected with the world of magic, witches and spirits, frequently referred to as “the dark arts.” A weird (or curse), supposedly pronounced by Thomas the Rhymer on the males of the Towie branch of the Barclay family in response to their part in an attack on a nunnery in the twelfth century, is said to have been so feared that it factored in the decision by the owners of Towie-Barclay Castle in the late eighteenth century to sell their inheritance.

*“Towie Barclay of the Glen  
Happy to the maids  
But never to the men.”*

A simple examination requires some details be amended. Thomas the Rhymer died in 1298; the lands of Towie, on the north bank of the Ythan six kilometres south-southeast of Turriff, were not acquired by the family until around 1320; no Barclay would be referred to as “of Towie” for another fifty years thereafter.[1] Either then the rhyme’s authorship has either been wrongly attributed or the reference to Towie is an anachronism, or both. Most likely, it is of far more recent origin, perhaps composed around 1600 by the poetically inclined George Barclay of Auchroddie, brother of the laird of Towie-Barclay. Regardless, the possibility remains the rhyme otherwise preserves the memory of a real event with some degree of accuracy.

Two fundamental questions exist about when the raid that supposedly inspired the weird occurred, and which ‘nunnery’ was it that suffered this attack? The twelfth century date provided is obviously too early, but the years following the Rhymer’s death provide a useful point at which to begin an investigation. Almost a decade of campaigning for the return of the rightful king of Scots, John Balliol, had occurred before Robert Bruce’s murder of the Red Comyn at **Dumfries** and subsequent coronation at **Scone** on 27 March 1306. For many Scots this was little more than a usurpation that, having already made multiple personal submissions to the king of England over the years, was an unwelcome new hazard. However, the risk of betraying the absent Edward I had to be balanced against the more present dangers of resistance to the Bruce in Scotland, meaning most were compelled (regardless of their personal positions) to provide the military services due to

their superiors for their holdings. The subsequent events of 1306-7 thus represented one of the most dangerous periods yet in the Wars for Independence, undoubtedly necessitating acts of discretion and insurance far more frequently than those of conflict and resistance.

At least two Barclays, David and Walter, though previously Comyn supporters, are recorded as having joined the Bruce's side by mid-1306. With the defeat of the Scots at Methven in June and the arrival of Edward II's army in Aberdeen in August though, neither David, who then held the Murray lands of Avoch on the Black Isle by grant of the English king, nor Walter, whose lands at Kerko and Monycabcock were sought in a formal petition to the king, were forfeited.[2] Evidently, they had soon reaffirmed their previous allegiances, at least to the satisfaction of their immediate superiors. However, immediately following King Edward I's death in July 1307 the brothers returned to the Bruce's side and thereafter remained faithful to the king of Scots.

If the foregoing represents a typical story of shifting allegiances seen in many Scots families at the time, certain idiosyncrasies are relevant. David de Berkeley had been granted Avoch by King Edward in c.1305 at the request of his nephew, Hugh, son of Euphemia de Berkeley and William, earl of Ross.[3] David had very probably also accompanied Hugh when he, just fourteen or fifteen years old, had led the Countess Euphemia's army against the forces of Sir Andrew de Murray of Petty in July 1297.[4] The earl of Ross, imprisoned in England since being captured at the Battle of Dunbar the previous year, was not released until late 1303.[5] Both his loyalty to King Balliol and his oath to King Edward obliged William not only to refuse service to, but also actively take part against, the Bruce in 1306, and it was perhaps only natural when attempting to evade English retribution in the autumn of that year, the Barclays would seek Earl William's protection. Conversely, the Barclays were very probably employed as emissaries twelve months later in the negotiations between the earl of Ross and the king of Scots for a truce, and David and Walter de Berkeley certainly witnessed the final submissions of Earl William and Hugh MacTaggart to King Robert at Auldearn in October 1308.[6]

The agreements between the king and earl were significant. Obviously, the treaty between them in autumn 1307 allowed the Bruce to focus his forces on the Comyns and their supporters encamped in Buchan. Additionally though, as Earl William was previously both a supporter of King Balliol and the Comyns and had steadfastly refused to betray the oath King Edward had extracted from him in 1303, his change in allegiance was an example to others reluctant to accept the Bruce as king. However, the effect of these submissions was also dependent upon the king of Scots' reaction: chivalry

required his old enemies to be pardoned of all crimes and restored to all their holdings once they had come into his peace, and failure on his behalf to act so would only drive men away. No doubt though, Earl William's case must have tested the king sorely.

The reasons for King Robert's conflict and the origin of the weird of Towie are likely one and the same. For as the first phase of the Bruce's reign ended in the autumn of 1306, word reached Earl William's court that the king's wife, Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by his sisters, daughter and the Countess Isobel who had crowned Robert at Scone, had reached the sanctuary at Tain, in Easter Ross. Tain was an ancient religious institution offering refuge and protection to all within its boundaries and violation of these principles was a serious crime against the church. This normally would be deterrent enough for most men, but Earl William, as King Edward's man, was ready to emulate his royal master's approach to convention. The earl resolved on an endeavour requiring both speed and skill but not large numbers of participants. What he needed were skilled knights and their men-at-arms willing to take part in a sacrilege. What he had were his Barclay in-laws in need of his protection.

As is well-known, the Bruce *feminae* were captured by Earl William and his men at Tain and then handed over to the English.[7] Queen Elizabeth was placed under house arrest in Holderness for eight years; her sister-in-law, Christina, and daughter, Marjorie, were sent to convents; Mary Bruce and Isabel of Fife were confined in cages hung from the turrets at Roxburgh and Berwick castles. In the weeks that followed, scores of Bruce's supporters were also executed in a spectacular display of cruelty and slaughter.[8] But no Barclays were to suffer this fate. Their lands were not forfeited, no penalties were imposed. Their loyalty to the English king had been confirmed in action with their brother-in-law at Tain.

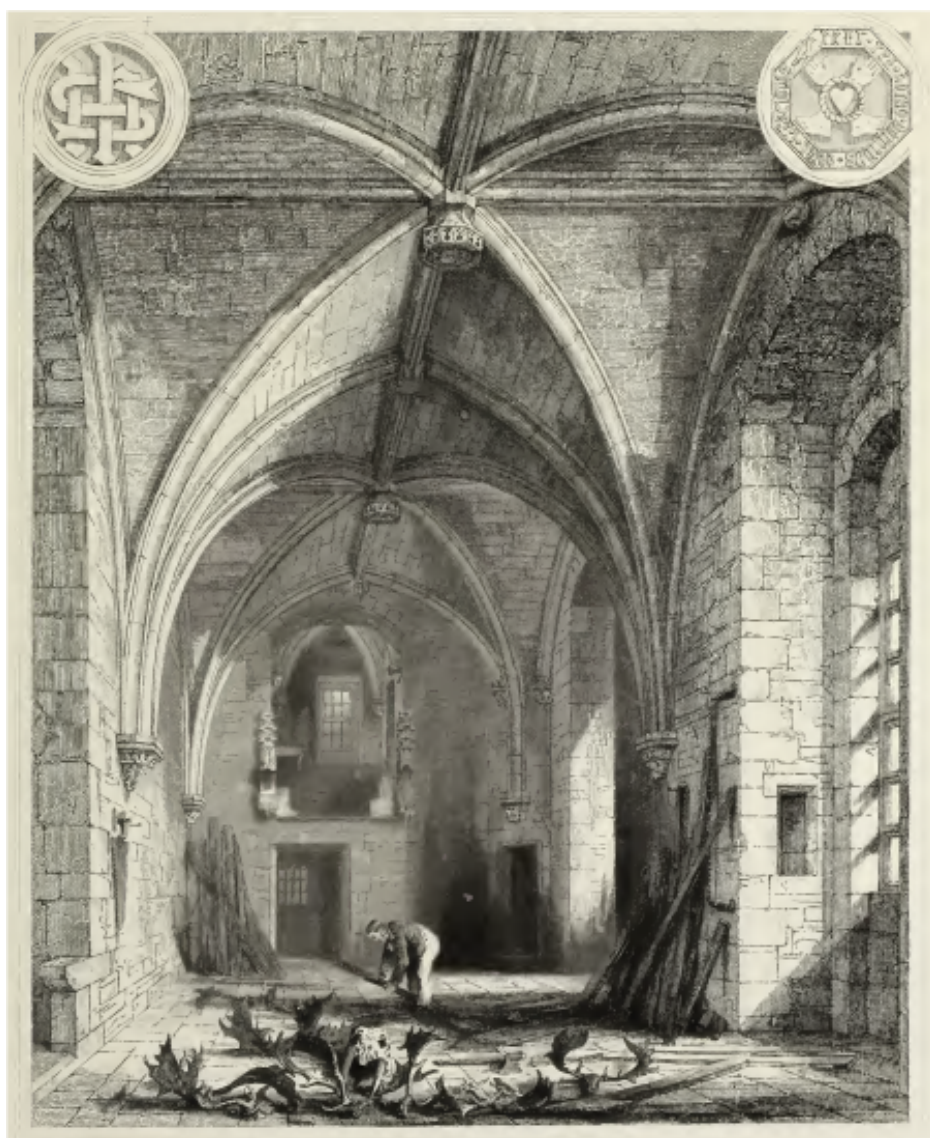


Figure One: Towie Castle interior during demolition works in the nineteenth century. [9]

[1] John Maitland Thomson, ed., *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scottorum*, I (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1882), app.2, no.411; Cosmo Innes, ed., *Registrum Episcopatus Aberonensis*, II (Edinburgh: Spalding Club, 1845), pp.281-2.

[2] Joseph Bain, ed., *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, IV (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1888), app., no.14; Francis Palgrave, *Documents and Records Illustrating the History of Scotland*, I (London: Record Commission, 1837), no.CXLII(87).

[3] John P. Ravilious, "The Ancestry of Euphemia, Countess of Ross: Heraldry as Genealogical Evidence," *The Scottish Genealogist*, Vol. LV No.1 (March 2008), pp.33-38.

[4] Joseph Bain, ed., *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, II (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1884), no.922.

[5] *Ibid.*, no. 1399c

[6] *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, 1308/1  
[<https://www.rps.ac.uk/trans/1308/1>]

[7] Felix Skene, ed., *The Book of Pluscarden*, II (Edinburgh: William Patterson, 1880), p.177.

[8] Joseph Bain, ed., *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, II (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1884), no.1811a, b.

[9] Robert William Billings, *The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland*, IV (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1852), plate 56.

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## Clan Barclay International

Be in touch: [leah@clanbarclayinternational.org](mailto:leah@clanbarclayinternational.org)

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