

## The Irish Kingdom in Scotland

### *Phases of Irish history*

Eoin Mac Neill

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IT was about the year 470 when the sons of Erc, Fergus and his brothers went from Ireland to Scotland. Fergus was king of Dál Riada in the north-eastern corner of Ireland. We are not to understand that the main Irish migration to Scotland took place at that time. There are no data to show when the earliest Irish settlements were made in Argyleshire and the adjoining islands, but we have seen that, at the close of the third century, when Constantius Chlorus commanded the Roman power in Britain, the Britons were already "accustomed" to Irish enemies. If the Irish were then strong enough to raid the Roman frontier, they were probably in possession of the Cantire peninsula. The crossing over of the Sons of Erc means that these princes established their rule over the Irish settlements in that region. It is a common mistake of histories to suppose that Fergus, when he became king on the other side, established there a new dynasty. Editors of the Irish annals, taking this for granted, actually undertake to tell us that certain men whom the annals style kings of Dál Riada were kings of the Scottish Dál Riada, and certain others who are also entitled kings of Dál Riada, were kings of the Irish Dál Riada. Here again the genealogies supplement the annals and show clearly that all these kings belonged to one undivided dynasty. Dál Riada in Ireland and the Irish settlers in Scotland were ruled by the same kings from the time of Fergus macEirc until the Norsemen occupied Cantire and the neighbouring islands, and thus cut off the Irish territory of these kings from the Scottish territory in which the kings of Dál Riada had become resident. When this separation took place, the title "king of Dál Riada" was abandoned. The last king who bears that title in the Irish annals is Donn Coirci, who died in 792; and in 794 the same annals record "the devastation of all the islands of Britain by the heathens."

The account of the Irish migration given by the Venerable Bede has often been repeated. It is true in so far as it indicates that the migration did not begin under the Sons of Erc. In other respects it is a fictitious legend. "In process of time," writes Bede, "besides the Britons and Picts, Britain received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader Reuda, either by fair means or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander they are to this day called Dalreudini; for in their language *dal* signifies a part.

"Ireland," he goes on to say, "in breadth and for wholesomeness and serenity of climate far surpasses Britain; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days; no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there and no snake can live there; for, though often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are good against poison. In short, we have known that when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water and given to them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading poison and assuaged the swelling." (We see that when people in Britain in those days wanted something that came from Ireland, the first thing and the sure thing was a book.) "The island," he continues, "abounds in milk and honey; nor is there any want of vines, fish or fowl; and it is remarkable for deer and goats." (But vines were not cultivated in Ireland, and if Bede supposed they were, it must have been because wine was abundant, as an article of continental trade imported in exchange for Irish products.) "It is properly," he adds, "the country of the Scots, who migrating from thence, as has been said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is a very large

gulf of the sea [he refers to the Firth of Clyde] which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons. It runs from the west very far into the land, where to this day stands the strong city of the Britons called Alcluith [Dumbarton]. The Scots arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.”

Bede gives no date for this event, but relates it before the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar (B.C. 54). No Irish leader Reuda headed an Irish migration to Scotland. The Irish genealogists tell us that Dál Riada takes its name from Cairbre Riada, an ancestor of Fergus and nine generations (*i.e.* about three centuries) earlier than Fergus ; and they agree with the annals in saying that the first of Cairbre Riada’s line who settled in Scotland were Fergus and his brethren.

In 563, Conall, great-grandson of Fergus, granted the island of Iona to St. Columba. Conall was succeeded in the kingship by Aedan, with whom St. Columba lived on most friendly terms. It was in Aedan’s reign, in 575, that the relations between his kingdom and the kingdom of Ireland were decided at the assembly of Druim Ceata, St. Columba being present. A great deal of fanciful comment has been made on this decision. One writer after another assures us that St. Columba secured a declaration of independence for the kingdom beyond the sea. The sole ancient authority on the subject is the commentary on Dallán’s Eulogy of St. Columba. It says nothing about independence, nor does it suggest that the independence of the Irish kingdom in Scotland was ever called in question. The problem that demanded adjudication was this : the old territory of Dál Riada in Ireland had become attached to two independent jurisdictions. Being part of Ireland, it was subject to the suzerain claims of the kings of Ireland. But its kings, as we have seen, were kings also of a realm beyond the sea over which the Irish monarch had no authority. A conflict of rights and claims was possible. The decision at Druim Ceata, pronounced by a lawyer of celebrity and accepted by the assembly, was in the nature of a compromise : Dál Riada was to serve the Irish monarch with its land forces, and to serve the king who reigned in Scotland with its sea forces. Obviously it is the services of the Irish territory that are the subject of this judgment. It would be absurd to lay down that the Irish colony in Scotland was to serve the king of Ireland with land forces and not with ships.

Scottish writers look upon the Life of St. Columba by Adamnanus as the oldest native document of Scottish history. It was written about the year 692. If I am not mistaken, we have a document about twenty years older, written in Scotland, probably in Iona, and now preserved in the preface to the genealogy of the Scottish kings in the Books of Lecan and Ballymote. At the time when it was written, the realm of the Scots in Scotland did not extend beyond Argyleshire and the adjacent islands. That was about the year 670. Northwards of Argyleshire, the Picts held sway. On the eastern side, the Pictish territory extended southward to the Firth of Forth. From the Firth of Forth to the Tweed, along the eastern coast, the country now comprised in the Lothians and Berwickshire was occupied by the Angles under the king of Northumbria. The south-western portion was held by the Britons, who, in Bede’s time, half a century later, possessed the strong fortress of Dumbarton on the Clyde. The frontier between the Britons and the Angles was probably no certain line. In the south-western corner, in Galloway, there was an isolated Pictish population. The borders separating these four nations, Scots, Picts, Angles, and Britons, speaking four distinct languages, were a land of constant war.

St. Columba, we are told by his biographer, warned the king of Dál Riada to refrain from making war in Ireland on the king of Ireland, and foretold that, if this warning were disregarded, disaster would befall the line of Aedán. Adamnanus goes on to say that this prophecy was fulfilled many years after St. Columba’s death. This was written by Adamnanus about fifty years after the event to which he alludes, which was therefore within the memory of many who read his words. Domhnall Breac, king of Dál Riada, he relates, invaded the

realm of the king of Ireland. And now, he says, the fulfilment of the warning is visible in the miserable condition to which the kings of Dál Riada are reduced, humiliated by their triumphant enemies.

He refers to the events connected with the battle of Moira in 637. The king of Ireland at the time was Domhnall son of Aedh, that is, son of the king who presided over the Assembly of Druim Ceata. Taking advantage of a quarrel between the Irish monarch and a prince of the north-eastern Picts of Ireland, the Scottish king, as we may call him, put himself at the head of a combination of the north-eastern province and took the field in Ireland. The battle between the two Domhnalls took place at Moira, near Lisburn, and the king of Ireland was victorious. Here we have an instance of the method of contemporary Irish chroniclers. To the chronicler's mind, everybody knew everything that was to be known about this battle and its circumstances, and his record of the event is a mere memorandum in two words. But what were the disastrous results, which, on the testimony of Adamnanus, were notorious when he wrote, *i.e.* about the year 690? The Irish kingdom in Scotland seems as strong as ever, and is on the eve of a great increase of its power and territory. Once more, as in the instance of the judgment of Druim Ceata, the reference must be particularly to the old Irish kingdom of Dál Riada, which drops into obscurity in the Irish records about that time, possibly becoming tributary either to the neighbouring Picts or to the Northern Ui Néill, whose territory had then extended to the banks of the Bann.

Bede, writing about forty years after Adamnanus wrote, tells about certain things that happened in the lifetime of both, and shows how great an expansion was made by the Irish kingdom of Scotland in the meantime. In the year 684, he relates, his own sovereign, "Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending Beorht, his general, with an army into Ireland, miserably wasted that harmless nation, which had always been most friendly to the English." This statement shows that the power of the Northumbrian Angles extended at the time to the Irish Sea. "In their hostile rage," says Bede, "they spared not even the churches or monasteries." The contemporary Irish chronicler says briefly: "The English devastate the plain of Bregia and many churches in the month of June." Bede continues: "Those islanders, to the utmost of their power repelled force with force, and imploring the assistance of the Divine mercy prayed long and fervently for vengeance; and, though such a curse cannot possess the kingdom of God, it is believed that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety did soon suffer the penalty of their guilt from the avenging hand of God; for the very next year, that king, rashly leading his army to ravage the province of the Picts, much against the advice of his friends and particularly of Cuthbert of blessed memory who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made show as if they fled, and the king was drawn into the straits of inaccessible mountains, and slain, with the greatest part of his forces, on the 20th of May." The Irish chronicle says: "On the 20th of May, on Saturday, the battle of Dún Nechtain was fought, in which Ecgferth, king of the English, was slain together with a great multitude of his soldiers."

Bede, writing forty-six years later, says that from the time of this overthrow the power of the Northumbrian Angles began to decline, and the Picts recovered some of their territory which had been in the possession of the Angles, as well as some which had been taken from them by the Scots. The ancient territory of Northumbria extended to the Firth of Forth. Skene identifies the scene of the battle with a narrow pass in the Sidlaw Hills, north of the Firth of Tay. The territory which the Picts recovered from the Angles must have been between these two firths, corresponding to the modern Fifeshire; and this is apparent from a further statement by Bede. Among the English fugitives from the lost territory, he says, was Bishop Trumwine, who had been made bishop over the English settlers, and who withdrew along with his people who were in the monastery of Abercorn. Abercorn is near the Forth Bridge, about ten miles west of Edinburgh. If the Anglian bishop and his people were forced to abandon this place, it is clear that the recovered Pictish territory reached the Firth of Forth on

the opposite side, the north side. But, writing forty-six years after these events, Bede calls the Firth of Forth “ the arm of the sea which parts the lands of the Angles and the Scots,” not the lands of the Angles and the Picts. Consequently, within those forty-six years, the Scots, who a little earlier appear to have held little or nothing of the mainland outside of Argyleshire, must have extended their power eastward into Fifeshire, occupying that district from which the Picts had expelled the encroaching Angles.

The Britons of south-western Scotland appear to have been hard pressed by this eastward expansion of the Scots and by the Angles of Northumbria, and modern Welsh historians trace an extensive southward migration of Britons through Cumberland and Lancashire into Wales. These migratory Britons, headed by the sons of Cunedda, became thenceforward the dominant people in Wales. They completely displaced the power of the Irish settlers in North Wales, and the descendants of the Irish in South Wales became subordinate to them. About this time, too, many of the displaced Britons took service in Ireland under Irish kings. In 682, a victory was won near Antrim, we are not told by whom, over a combination of Britons and Ulster Picts. In 697, the district of Dundalk was devastated by Britons in alliance with the Ulidians. In 702, Irgalach, king of Bregia, was killed on Ireland’s Eye by a party of raiding Britons. In 703, the Ulidians defeated a body of Britons near Newry. In 709, Britons are found fighting in the service of a king of Leinster. In 711 and again in 717, forces of Britons were defeated by Dál Riada. These events all occur within a period of thirty years, about the year 700, and after this time the British incursions are no longer heard of. The movements of the Britons thus chronicled correspond in time with the eastward and perhaps southward expansion of the Scots from Argyle.

Some of the Venerable Bede’s pupils must have lived to witness the first appearance of the swarming fleets of heathen Norsemen, towards the close of the eighth century. Within a few decades, the Norsemen held possession of nearly all the islands of Scotland. They also settled on the mainland in Caithness, Argyle, Cunningham and Galloway—at what dates does not appear to be recorded. By thus infesting the entire coast of Scotland, they weakened the power of the Picts in the North and the Angles in the South-east. That there is no sign of any concurrent weakening of the Scots may be taken as proof that the Scots by this time, the early part of the ninth century, had a firm grip of the interior. It may well have been, indeed, that their displacement from Argyle and the islands—their sole possessions in Scotland in the seventh century—may have strengthened the hand of Cinaedh, son of Ailpín (called “ Kenneth MacAlpin” in English writings). As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the sons of them that have been beaten out. Cinaedh died in 858 after a reign of sixteen years, during which he overthrew the kingdom of the Picts and became ruler of the main part of the country afterwards called Scotland. In recording the death of Cinaedh the Annals of Ulster style him “ king of the Picts,” meaning that he had brought the Picts under his authority. According to later histories he also obtained the submission of the Britons and Angles of southern Scotland ; they certainly ceased to have any considerable power after his time. The Britons held out in their fortress at Dumbarton until 870, when, after a siege of four months, the place was taken by Olaf and Imar, the joint-reigning Norse kings of Dublin. These kings, with a fleet of 200 ships, returned next year to Dublin, “ bringing a great spoil of men. Angles and Britons and Picts, in captivity.” The Northumbrian kingdom, even south of the Tweed, was crumbling away. In 867, the Norsemen occupied York and defeated the Angles who came against them ; and in 876, Halfdene, a Norse commander, parcelled out the remnant of Northumbria among his followers, who settled upon the lands, says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and thenceforth set about ploughing and tilling them. In the same year, 876, Rolf the Ganger, of the line of the Norse earls of the Orkneys, took possession of Normandy.

Here it is well to consider the various fortunes of the Norsemen in different countries. About this period, they became masters of a large part of Russia.

In France, they were able to wrest the northern sea-board, between Flanders and Brittany, from the powerful Frankish kings. Over England they effected a gradual conquest, which was only checked, not overcome by the stout resistance of Athelstan and Alfred. In 1013, the year before the battle of Clontarf, all England submitted to Sveinn, king of Denmark. The Normans mastered southern Italy and Sicily. But the Celtic countries, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany, though particularly exposed to conquest by a people who were then undisputed rulers of the seas on every side, yielded them only a small fraction of their mainland territories. The resistance of Scotland is especially noteworthy. From Norway and Denmark, Scotland was then two days' sail. All the islands and forelands of Scotland were occupied by the Norsemen—the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the Hebrides, Arran and Bute, Caithness, and the peninsulas of Argyle and Galloway ; as well as the Isle of Man. But the recently established Scottish monarchy checked all further attempts at conquest, and ultimately recovered the whole country, both mainland and islands.

Another noteworthy fact about this new kingdom was its adoption of a polity quite distinct from that of the older established Britons and Irish in their own countries. In Ireland, the population ranged itself around local places of assembly, according to the traditional habit and convenience of coming together ; and the chiefs who presided over these local assemblies took the rank and title of kings. Each of these assemblies was a court of law as well as a court of state. For modern convenience, there are about 150 places in Ireland in which courts of quarter sessions are held. In ancient Ireland, in the ninth century, there were a little more than 100 courts, and the president of each was a king. Everywhere, there was a strong sentiment of local autonomy and the strongest and most ambitious of the superior kings could only maintain a limited degree of centralised power. Probably the Celts came into Ireland in small separate bodies, each colony having its own government, and so no tradition of centralisation ever grew up. In Scotland, on the contrary, from the fifth century onward there was but one kingdom of the Scots, and this one kingdom effected a gradual conquest of the whole country. Thus the Irish system of petty states was not transplanted to Scotland. The highest magnates under the Scottish monarchy bore the title of *mór-mhaor*, “ great steward,” which in later times was regarded as the equivalent of “ earl.” This title is mentioned in the Annals of Ulster under the year 918 and in such a way as to show that it was then a recognised and customary dignity among the oversea Scots. In that year, just 1000 years ago, Ragnhall or “ Reginald,” founder and king of the Norse colony of Waterford, carried his forces into Britain, finding a small part of Ireland large enough for him. On the banks of the Tyne, in Northumbria, he was met by the army of the Scots—the place indicates how far the power of the Scots at that time extended. An indecisive battle took place, in which, says the annalist, the Scots “ lost neither king nor *mór-mhaor*.”

That the conquest of the mainland was followed by a very extensive Gaelic colonisation is evident from the abundance of Gaelic place-names in almost every part of Scotland. They are least numerous in the old Anglian territory of the Lothians and Berwickshire, and from this it is evident that the Anglian population was left for the most part undisturbed. The surname Scott indicates that, among their Anglian neighbours, the great border sept that bore the name was recognised to be of Irish origin. Even in Galloway, a region of Picts and Britons and Norsemen, the Gaelic language became prevalent and the Gaelic people abundant—for in the twelfth century the population of Galloway was known to the Irish and also to the Norsemen as Gall-Ghaedhil, *i.e.* “ Norse-Irish.” Though Alan, the Norse earl of Galloway, set himself up as an independent sovereign about the year 1200 and formed an alliance with the English under King John, his language was Irish, for he gave his daughter a name that bespeaks an Irish-speaking household—Dearbhorgaill. The Irish annals call him “ king of the Gall-Ghaedhil.”

The Scots opposed a successful resistance to William the Conqueror and his successors, whenever they attempted a conquest. To the Conqueror they were especially obnoxious, for

Maol Choluim Ceanmhór (“Malcolm Canmore”) took under his protection the refugee royal family of England, the Athelings. In 1067, Malcolm married a princess of this line, Margaret, grand-daughter of the Saxon king Edmund—St. Margaret of Scotland, for she was canonised after her death. This queen exercised great influence over her husband, and brought about a partial feudalisation of the Gaelic system in Scotland. From her time onward, the small Anglian population not merely acquired a favourable status but gradually took on the appearance of being the most considerable element in the kingdom.

Various causes contributed to this end. The Northumbrian dialect of English, now chiefly represented by the Lowland Scotch dialect, became the most convenient medium of intercourse not only with England but also with the Norsemen and the people of the Low Countries. To this day Lowland Scotch bears a close resemblance to Dutch and Flemish, and we have it on the ancient testimony of the Norsemen themselves that they were able to hold speech with the Angles, each people using their own language. In consequence, the Anglian dialect of Scotland spread westward across the Lowlands and northward along the coast of the North Sea. There is, however, one little fact which shows us how effectively Margaret’s influence operated against the Gaelic tradition of the Scottish court and its outlook. Before her time, the kings of the Dál Riada line bore Irish names. Only two names that are not Irish are found in their list—Constantine and Gregory, the names of a celebrated Emperor and a celebrated Pope. The names of the six sons of Malcolm and Margaret were : Edward, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred, Alexander, and David ; of their two daughters, Maud and Mary — not one of them Gaelic ; and with the exception of Malcolm’s immediate successor, Domhnall, and another Malcolm, no king of the Scots after his time bore a Gaelic name.

Malcolm’s kingdom, though it did not extend over the Norse settlements in the north and west of Scotland, included a territory roughly corresponding to Cumberland and Northumberland in the north of England.

A frequent effect of the feudal law of succession by primogeniture was the breach of succession owing to the failure of heirs in the male line. Under the Irish (and also Welsh) law of succession, by election from a family group, this difficulty was avoided. After Malcolm’s death in 1093, his brother, Domhnall Bán, secured the kingship and, we are told, expelled all the foreigners who had come to Scotland under the protection of Malcolm and Margaret. In effect, the reign of Domhnall represents a brief Gaelic reaction against the new-come feudalism. In 1097, Domhnall was overthrown by Malcolm’s eldest surviving son Edgar, with the assistance of the English, and thenceforward the feudal system took hold and the Irish kingdom may be said to have come to an end. Nevertheless, the Irish tradition was not wholly abandoned. The last of the Dalriadic kings was Alexander III who reigned from 1249 until 1285. In his reign, all the Norse possessions formerly subject to the suzerainty of the kings of Norway, comprising the Orkney and Shetland islands, Caithness, the Hebrides and Argyleshire, became subject to the kingdom of Scotland. The failure of the direct line, upon Alexander’s death without male heir, brought about the wars of the Scottish succession, terminated by the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. An interesting account has been preserved of the coronation ceremony as exemplified at the accession of this last king of the direct Irish line in Scotland, Alexander III. “The ceremony was performed by the bishop of St. Andrews, who girded the king with a military belt. He then explained in Latin, and afterwards in Gaelic, the laws and oaths relating to the king. . . . After the ceremony was performed, a Highlander”—we may understand that he was the official *seanchaidh*—“repeated on his knees before the throne, in his own language, the genealogy of Alexander and his ancestors, up to the first king of Scotland.” Gaelic, therefore, continued to be the language of the Scottish court, of king, bishop, and courtier, until 1285, when the direct line of Fergus son of Erc became extinct.

Having endeavoured to trace the principal phases in the history of an Irish kingdom which, established in Argyle and the western islands of Scotland, became gradually more and more alienated from the mother country, let us now glance through the history of another kingdom, a foreign kingdom established in the same forelands and islands, a realm which became gaelicised as the Scots kingdom became feudalised and anglicised, and which drew closer and closer to Ireland, so as to bring a decisive element into the affairs of this nation during a critical period in its history.

I have already shown how, while the Scots were becoming masters of the mainland in northern Britain, the Norsemen took possession of the old Dalriadic territory of Argyle and the islands. On the mainland, the Norsemen also occupied Cunningham in Ayrshire, Galloway to the north of the Solway Firth, and Caithness in the far north. In the Gaelic of Scotland, both Galloway and Caithness are named Gallaibh, *i.e.* the Foreigners' territory, and the Irish name of the Hebrides after they passed into Norse hands is Innse Gall, "the Foreigners' islands."

We have no records to show the precise date at which these colonies were established, but in view of the Norse supremacy on the seas from the close of the eighth century, their establishment is not likely to have been later than the foundation of the first Norse colony on the Irish mainland, namely, the colony of Dublin, in 841. The year after this, 842, Cinaedh, the future conqueror of the Picts and Britons and Angles, became king of the Scots.

The first clearly defined authority found among these Norse settlements is that of the Orkney earls, dating from before 880. Before that time, a mixed Norse and Gaelic population, called Gall-Ghaedhil, is seen taking part in the Norse wars in Ireland, some on the Norse and some on the Irish side, as may be seen from the annals of the years 856 and 857. These people doubtless came from Scotland, perhaps also from the Isle of Man, also occupied by the Norsemen. Their language was broken Irish, as may be judged from the words of an Irish tract which, in praising the accurate utterance of a speaker, says "it is not the *giog-gog* of a Gall-Ghaedheal." But they must also have used the Norse language.

About the year 880, Harold the Fair, king of Norway, came over and established the supremacy of Norway over the settlements in the Orkneys, the Hebrides, Argyle and the Isle of Man.

A century later, in 980, we find the Hebrides used as a recruiting ground by the Norse king of Dublin. In that year Mael Sechnaill, king of Ireland, won the battle of Tara against "the Foreigners of Dublin and the Islands." After this defeat, Olaf, king of Dublin, laid down his kingship and retired into religious life in Iona, where he died not long later. The incident shows that the Norse islanders had by this time accepted Christianity, and that Iona, which they had barbarously ravaged again and again, had regained among them the religious prestige that it held before among the people of Ireland and Scotland.

About this time, the Danes, who first appear on our coasts in hostility to the Norwegians, established a kingdom of the Hebrides, under Godred, son of Harold. Godred invaded Dál Riada in Ulster in 989, and was killed there. His son Rögnvald became king of the Hebrides and died in 1005. With his death, the Danish kingdom in the islands appears to cease.

In 1014, the chief magnate of the Hebrides was Earl Gilli. He held aloof from the great muster of Norsemen from many regions that came to Contarf to win the sovereignty of Ireland for Earl Sigurd of the Orkneys. From 1041 till 1064, the Hebrides appear subject to the Orkney earl Thorfinn. During this time, the islands supplied forces to Harald Hardrada, king of Norway, for an invasion of England. After this time, there are indications that the predominance of the Orkney earls was replaced in the Hebrides by that of the kings of the Isle

of Man. Later on, the kings of Man are seen to occupy a middle position of authority between the kings of Norway and the local rulers of the Hebrides. In the title of the bishops of Sodor and Man, the name Sodor is an abbreviation for Sudreyar, "the southern isles," this being the ordinary Norse name for the Hebrides, in contradistinction to the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland.

In 1098, Magnus Barefoot, king of Norway, came with a fleet and re-established the somewhat shaky Norwegian sovereignty over the Orkneys, the Hebrides, Cantire, and the Isle of Man. Four years later, in 1102, he again visited these dominions and was received without opposition. The following year, 1103, king Magnus landed in eastern Ulster and was cut off and slain.

In 1134, a young Hebridean named Gilla Críst, claiming to be a son of Magnus, became king of Norway under the name of Harald Gilli. About this time, the most prominent magnate in the Hebrides was named Holdbodi, who lived in the island of Tiree. The Norse documents dealing with these times and with the succeeding century never suggest that the masters of the Hebrides use any language but Norse, though some of them bear Gaelic names; and the same documents apply the name Scots to the mainlanders only, never to the people of the islands.

In 1157, we find the first mention of a ruler named Sumarlidi, who dwelt on the mainland of Argyleshire. In Irish he is called Somhairlidh, and in recording his death in 1164, the Annals of Tighernach entitle him "king of the Hebrides and Cantire." Fordun's Chronicle calls him "king of Argyle." Sumarlidi was in fact the founder of a new Norse kingdom of the Hebrides and Argyle, which lasted from his time, about 1150, until 1499, when the last king of his line was captured by the king of Scotland and hanged, along with his son and grandsons, on the Boroughmuir at Edinburgh. Sumarlidi was killed in 1164, in an attempt to invade the mainland south of the Clyde.

This Sumarlidi was the ancestor of the families of MacDomhnaill (MacDonnell, MacDonald), Mac Dubhghaill (MacDugall, MacDowell, etc.), and Mac Ruaidhri (MacRory). More than two centuries after his time, when many of his descendants had settled in Ireland, a pedigree was forthcoming to trace his descent from one of the Three Collas who overthrew the ancient kingdom of Ulster in the fourth century. In Scotland, his descendants seem to have been provided with another pedigree, which established their descent from Fergus, son of Erc, who founded the Irish kingdom in Scotland. Ultimately a blend of the two pedigrees found acceptance, and no doubt there are many MacDonnells and MacDugalds and MacRorys who believe in it. Apart from its other weak points, this genealogy of the race of Sumarlidi is too short by about nine generations or three centuries.

Scottish writers in general show a remarkable shyness in dealing with this kingdom of Argyle and the Hebrides, and the highest title they are accustomed to accord to its rulers is that of "Lords of the Isles." In contemporary Norwegian and Irish records, the title is always "king."

Internal dissensions in Norway left the Hebrides practically independent for half a century after the rise of Sumarlidi. In 1210, when these dissensions were composed, the kings of the Hebrides and the Isle of Man made haste to Norway and renewed their fealty to King Ingi. On the death of this king without heir in 1217, and the renewal of the disorders of Norway, the Hebrides again fell away from their allegiance. In 1224, Hakon, of doubtful paternity, was accepted as king of Norway. At this time Alan of Galloway threatened to extend his dominion over the Hebrides and the Isle of Man. King Hakon found a Hebridean adventurer named Ospak, who had long lived in Norway and had taken part in the wars of the factions. He appointed this Ospak king over the Hebrides. For greater prestige he re-named Ospak after himself, Hakon, and sent him with a small fleet in 1230 to bring the Hebrides under his

authority. After a partial success, Ospak fell sick and died. Fresh troubles breaking out in Norway prevented Hakon from following up his Hebridean policy and encouraged the king of Scotland, Alexander II, to aim at the recovery or annexation of the islands. To this end, in 1242, Alexander sent an embassy to Norway offering to buy out the Norwegian claims. This proposal was rejected by Hakon. It was afterwards renewed and again rejected.

In the meantime, Alexander, stronger by land than by sea, made war on the Hebridean kings for the possession of Argyle, Arran, and Bute, and appears to have gained a strong foothold in those parts. In 1248 a dispute arose between two of Sumarlidi's descendants over the kingship. Both went to Norway to seek a decision from King Hakon. Hakon disliked decisions, and was content to keep the claimants for a year in Norway. Next year Alexander of Scotland renewed his efforts. He sent a third offer of purchase to Hakon and at the same time made open preparations for conquest. He also endeavoured to win over Jon, king of the Hebrides, from his allegiance to Norway. Jon held out, and in the midst of the preparations for invasion, Alexander died (1249).

He was succeeded by his son, Alexander III, already spoken of in this lecture, last of the Dalriadic kings in the direct line. When that interesting coronation ceremony in Latin and Gaelic was performed, Alexander III was only nine years of age. During his minority, the connection between Norway and the Hebrides was maintained. In 1252, Arch-bishop Sorli of Drontheim in Norway, being then at Rome, assisted in the consecration of a bishop named Rikard for the Hebrides. In 1253, Jon and Dubhghall, joint kings of the Hebrides, went again to Norway to assist king Hakon in a war against Denmark.

In 1261, Alexander III, having come of age, took up his father's policy of annexing the Norse dominions adjoining Scotland, and sent a fresh embassy to Norway. Failing to make terms, he began next year the invasion of the islands. He reoccupied Bute and Cantire, and sent a marauding expedition under the Earl of Ross into the island of Skye. King Jon of the Hebrides wrote informing Hakon of what was going on, and from the sequel we may judge that he held out no hope of being able to resist Alexander. Hakon called together his council, some of whom proposed to relinquish the islands to Scotland, but the king ordered that an expedition at full strength should be raised next year. It was always the next opportunity with King Hakon. Next year, 1263, he spent the time until the end of July in making ready. In the meantime, King Jon made terms for himself with Alexander and transferred his allegiance to Scotland. Hakon made a slow progress with his fleet through the islands and reoccupied part of Cantire and also Arran and Bute. Alexander, relying on the approach of winter, re-opened negotiations and kept them going till the arrival of the equinoctial gales. On October 1, Hakon's fleet was partly scattered by a violent storm. Some ships were driven on the coast of Ayrshire. Here a trifling encounter took place with the Scottish forces. It has been magnified in Scottish histories into the battle of Largs, in which, we are told, 16,000 Norwegians were slain.

The misadventures of his fleet and the defection of Jon convinced Hakon that he could only hold the Hebrides by main force, and he decided to return to Norway and come again next year with a still stronger expedition. When he reached the Orkneys, he fell sick and died.

In the meantime, he had received an embassy from the Irish offering him the kingdom of Ireland on condition of expelling the English power. I propose to deal with this occurrence in a later lecture.

With the death of Hakon in 1263 the Norwegian sovereignty over the Hebrides and Argyle came to an end; and in 1265 his son Magnus made a formal cession of the territory to Alexander.

During all this time, the chief power in the Hebrides belonged to the MacDubhghaill line, the sons and grandsons of Dubhghall son of Sumarlidi. In the wars of the Scottish succession, these kings supported the side of John Balliol and the English. Their kinsfolk, the MacDomhnaill and MacRuaidhri chiefs took the side of Robert Bruce. After Bruce's triumph at Bannockburn in 1314, MacDomhnaill became king of Argyle and MacRuaidhri became king of the islands. These two kings joined Edward Bruce in Ireland and along with him fell fighting in the battle of Fochairt in 1318.

In 1387, Domhnall of Isla, head of the MacDomhnaill line, became king of the Hebrides, and through his mother inherited also the great earldom of Ross on the mainland, his power becoming thus a menace to the kingdom of Scotland. The regent Albany sought by legal chicane to deprive him of Ross. Domhnall took up arms and engaged the regent's army in the bloody battle of Harlaw near Aberdeen in 1411. The battle was not decisive in the military sense, but Domhnall succeeded in keeping the earldom of Ross.

His brother Eoin Mor, about the year 1400, by marriage with the heiress of Biset, lord of the Glens in Ireland, came into possession of that lordship, extending from the Giants' Causeway to a line a little south of Larne. In 1431, James I of Scotland sent an army into Argyle. This army was defeated in the battle of Inverlochy by Domhnall Ballach, son of Eoin and at that time king of Argyle and the Islands. In 1462, Eoin son of Domhnall entered into a secret treaty to assist Edward IV of England in the conquest of Scotland. This pact was discovered by James III of Scotland in 1475. An expedition was prepared against Eoin by land and sea, but he obtained peace by a timely submission and by relinquishing the lordships of Ross, Knapdale and Cantire. In 1493, Eoin again became obnoxious. He was attainted in the Scottish parliament and his feudatories were forced to swear direct allegiance to the Scottish crown. James IV made a new grant of Cantire to a son of Eoin Mor, named Eoin Cathanach from his having been fostered by O'Catháin in Ulster. The Scottish king came in person to Cantire in 1499 and placed a garrison in the castle of Dunaverty which he had reserved to the crown. James had only put out to sea from Dunaverty when, still in his sight, Eoin Cathanach attacked and captured the castle and hanged the governor from the wall. This time there was no forgiveness. Before the year was out, Eoin Cathanach and his aged father, the king of the Hebrides, fell into the hands of Giolla Easpuig, the new earl of Argyle, head of the house of Campbell which the Scottish kings aggrandised as a check on the power of the MacDonnells. The captives were handed over to King James. The sequel is recorded by a contemporary Irish chronicler in the Annals of Ulster :

“ A sad deed was done in this year (1499) by the king of Scotland, James Stewart. Eoin Mac Domhnaill, king of the Foreigners' Isles, and Eoin Cathanach his son, and Ragnall the Red and Domhnall the Freckled, sons of Eoin Cathanach, were executed on one gallows the month before Lammas.”

So ended the kingdom of the Hebrides, which the line of Sumarlidi had held for three centuries and a half.

Another son of Eoin Cathanach escaped, and retained the lordship of the Glens. This was Alasdair Carrach, father of the celebrated Somhairle Buidhe and ancestor of the Earls of Antrim. A grand-daughter of Alasdair Carrach was the Inghean Dubh, mother of Aodh Ruadh O'Domhnaill.

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